

SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS

# TRANSCRIPTIONS



**Head Coach Kyle Shanahan  
Conference Call – August 28, 2017  
San Francisco 49ers**

**Do you have any update on T Joe Staley's knee?**

"Yeah, it was like we thought, came back good. He's obviously got some tendonitis and things like that in his knee, some wear and tear. But, we feel good about it and we think he'll be good by Week 1."

**What else jumped out at you about the start of that game, that first half especially, that gets you pretty confident going forward with your starting unit?**

"I was happy on both sides of the ball and special teams. Just the effort and the energy we came out with. By no means was it perfect. I told you guys two weeks ago it felt real bad out there and you watch the tape and it wasn't quite as bad as it looked. Early in the game it felt real good, then you watch the tape and there were a lot of good things. It's always not quite as good as it feels, and it's never as bad as it feels. I was happy mainly with the energy we came out and how hard I thought we played. I thought we were much more ready, we seemed more ready to play than the week before."

**You guys got an extended look at T John Theus. How did he do over the course of the game?**

"He battled. He's going up against a pretty good player in [Minnesota Vikings DE Everson] Griffen. He wasn't great on all his protections, but he stayed in front of him and we were able to get rid of the ball. Did we take one sack? Yeah, I think [QB] Brian [Hoyer] only got knocked down once. The protection was not perfect, but I thought he battled in there and helped us get through it."

**Last week you said you called a deep pass and you didn't get the right coverage to take a shot downfield. What were the coverages you got in this game that allowed Hoyer to make those deep passes? Can you just take me through those plays?**

"We got it versus a quarters defense. [Minnesota Vikings S] Harrison [Smith] had more run support and he just hesitated. Last week we got it versus quarter, quarter-half. When the weak side safety didn't have run support, he just had half. So they stayed on top of him. That was the one that we ended up hitting [FB Kyle] Juice [Juszczyk] in the flat last week for about a 25-yard gain. You can go back and look, it's the same play. We just had a more aggressive safety in run support."

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**I noticed on the touchdown to RB Carlos Hyde, when I was watching the replay there, Brian had a really quick hitch or a look toward WR Marquise Goodwin and that's what caused the linebacker to get out of the way and open that window. I'm wondering if there were any other examples off the top of your head of Brian really manipulating the defense like that? And, has that been something that you saw with him your first time coaching him or has his skill set kind of developed through those little intricacies now the second time around?**

"I think Brian's always had that. It's hard to be a drop back quarterback in this league if you can't be like that. When you play against zoning coverages, that's to me what playing the position is. Anybody with a big, strong arm can go against man to man. If guys get open it's just about throwing to a guy. That's really what you can see on air if they're tough enough to stay in the pocket. Playing quarterback in this league is about going through progression, having to manipulate zones when you have the time to do it based off the pass rush and knowing when to check it down also because those zones close fast. I think one of the things that helps us is we got against a lot of zone defense in practice every day. When you go against three deep, four under every day you get pretty good at it. And you've got to be because their coverages are sound like that. So, he did a good job on that play. It's a very tight throw. If you aren't balanced and good with your eyes, you can't make it."

**We've seen RB Matt Breida do well obviously all offseason and camp and through the exhibition season. Is he your number two running back behind Carlos Hyde going into the season?**

"No, I'm not going to predict any of that until after the game this week. We wanted to give him a chance. He's done a good job. We wanted to see him out there as little bit earlier in the game, especially against a good defense like Minnesota. I thought he did a good job. I thought the other guys did too. We've got some tough decisions here to make at running back, but we're going to let it all play out. We definitely need this game on Thursday to see the other guys too. They've all made it real tough on us."

**You made a decision to release LB Ahmad Brooks early. Is the plan to wait until Thursday for the rest of the cuts or will it happen throughout the week?**

"We're going to go over all that tonight. Basically, this whole day, after we recovered a little bit this morning from getting back so late, we've been going through all the game. With the coaching staff we went all morning and we just finished with the players about 40 minutes ago where we put it to bed. When I'm done with you guys I'm going to eat some food and we're going to all get together and go over exactly who's playing in this game, who we're not going to allow to play at all. Once we know exactly who's not going to play in this game, we've got to see all the people we need to play in this game. If there's a number of people that we don't feel have a chance to make the team and we don't play on playing them on Thursday, then we will let them go, give them a chance to go somewhere else. But, I won't really be able to decide that until later tonight."

**Where does RB Tim Hightower fit into that mix? Is he a guy that you kind of already know what you have or do you still need to see more from him moving forward?**

“Tim definitely should get some more carries here on Thursday. I have a great feel for Tim. I’ve coached him before, got to play against him the last two years with him being in New Orleans. I see what he does in practice every day. I’ve seen him in NFL games. The game is not too big for him. It’s unfortunate for Tim, he’s only got two opportunities, which is always tough because you’d love to show everyone who’s watching on T.V. and show your fans and stuff. But, we’ve got a pretty good idea of what Tim can do. That’s why we’ve brought him here. Definitely going to give him more opportunities Thursday. He’s definitely in this mix. We just had a bunch of guys that we haven’t seen before and we’ve had to get some of these rookies more opportunities because you never know what you’ve got with them until you see them in NFL games.”

**Last week you said Carlos Hyde left some yards on the field. How’d he do in this game carrying the ball?**

“I thought he did a good job with the holes that he ran to. I actually just watched it with him. There was one run that I thought he made the wrong cut on and he ended up getting seven yards on that run. Couldn’t fault him too much for it. There was one run I didn’t think he hit the exact right hole and he ended up getting one of our bigger gains on the day on it. So, I know Carlos would love to have better stats. I know he really would love to get that big play, but he’s got to let the game come to him. We’ve got to get him some better looks and we’ve got to get him a few more opportunities. I think that will happen for him eventually.”

**After getting a chance to go back and see LB Reuben Foster last night on the film, I know it’s only been a month of practice where he’s been full-go, but how far has he come just in terms of being assignment-sound and doing the things you want him to do on a consistent basis?**

“He’s come a long way. I think that’s what’s been real exciting about Reuben. Missing all of OTAs, not playing in a system this way in college, not being the MIKE linebacker down in and down out like he was in college, and really not being able to go through it in OTAs. I did have a lot of worries about it, knowing it would take some time. I think he’s ahead of schedule. He’s a very smart person. He works at it. He loves football. He gets a lot out of the meetings, gets even more obviously out of practice and games. He is further along than I anticipated in terms of the X’s and O’s part. I think last night was the first time we all saw him really cut it loose.”

**How would you assess the pass coverage? Minnesota Vikings QB Sam Bradford completed almost 80-percent of his passes, but most of those were short.**

“I thought we did a real good job. I want to say we gave up one explosive in the first half and that was an off-schedule scramble that was the last play of the first half where I think they threw it to [Minnesota Vikings WR] Adam Thielen, 19, and I think they got it inside the five and ran out of time. Besides that play, I want to say we didn’t have one other explosive in the entire first half. Obviously, we gave up some big plays in the second half which got them back in the game. We definitely have to tighten that coverage up, get the pass rush going a little bit better. But, I was happy with the coverage in the first half.”

**On the offensive end you've obviously got WR Pierre Garçon, Brian, WR Aldrick Robinson, those are all guys that you've worked with before. Yesterday obviously that first team was really sharp offensively. How much of that would you attribute to the fact that they're familiar with your system and how has that helped you install it quicker here during training camp?**

"I think that's an important part for any coach. Whether you're a head coach or a coordinator, you'd always like to have guys who have been through it before. That's the way guys learn, through reps and doing it over and over again. Succeeding. Failing. Then succeeding again. That's how you get better at things. The only way you can do that is by going through it. Whenever you can have guys who you've gone through the battle with it makes it easier because they get the adjustments, they get the learning curve. They know step A, but they also know step B too. It makes it easier, but those guys also have to still be able to play. Those guys are competing just like everyone else is here to make this team. We've got some tough spots for a lot of people."

**Joe Staley's knee is obviously a preexisting thing. What happened last night? Was it just a case of him just aggravating it and it felt funny?**

"You can see it a little bit on the tape. I think it was on the touchdown pass. I think he was just running real hard and cleared out the pocket for us to throw that deep ball to Marquise. You could tell he just caught it a little bit on the turf. I think it scared him more than anything and I know he's got some stuff in there. I know he wanted to fight through it and I'm sure he could have, but he landed a little awkwardly on it. You could see it if you saw it on the end zone copy. We just wanted to be safe with him and we'll take it safe with him this whole week up to Carolina, make sure he's 100-percent when we start that game."

**Since you spent a few years in Houston, and I know TE Vance McDonald is from just outside of there and you have a lot of coaches on your staff, do you have any thought on what's going on down there?**

"Yeah. I've been updated on all of it and you know my prayers are with them. I have spent some time down there in Houston and in Austin also. Tons of good people out there. It's a great town. I know they're going through a lot of stuff now, just even talking to guys like [defensive quality control coach] DeMeco [Ryans] and [defensive line coach Jeff] Zgonina. [Special teams coordinator] Richard Hightower has got a home down there. I know it effects a bunch of our coaches whose families have been evacuated. I know there's a number of players like Vance and other guys on our team. So, our prayers are with them. It's a tough situation and hopefully we can find a way to do our part to help."

**Will you play any of your starters on Thursday night?**

"We plan on sitting a number of guys. Not saying that's going to be all starters. There's certain people we need to see more on that we're trying to figure out who this 53 is. There's some guys we want to rest to just make sure they're healthy because they are a little banged up. Especially playing last night and having to get ready for an NFL game on Thursday. So, we're going to go through that tonight. I know for sure we're going to sit a number of people, most of the starters, but it's always hard to sit all of them."