

49ers Clips – February 23, 2017

Local Media

***49ers' Lynch, Shanahan have 'positive discussion' with Kaepernick***

By Eric Branch, San Francisco Chronicle

<http://www.sfchronicle.com/49ers/article/49ers-Lynch-Shanahan-have-positive-10952317.php>

***49ers executive Gamble no longer part of reshaped front office***

By Eric Branch, San Francisco Chronicle

<http://www.sfchronicle.com/49ers/article/49ers-executive-Gamble-no-longer-part-of-reshaped-10952456.php>

***Colin Kaepernick meets with 49ers new brass***

By Cam Inman, San Jose Mercury News

<http://www.mercurynews.com/2017/02/22/colin-kaepernick-meets-with-49ers-new-brass/>

***Assistant GM Tom Gamble leaving 49ers***

By Daniel Mano, San Jose Mercury News

<http://www.mercurynews.com/2017/02/22/assistant-gm-tom-gamble-leaving-49ers/>

***Assistant GM Tom Gamble leaving 49ers***

By Matt Barrows, Sacramento Bee

<http://www.sacbee.com/sports/nfl/san-francisco-49ers/article134379259.html>

***Kaepernick meets with 49ers' brass; evaluation of QB still 'fluid'***

By Matt Barrows, Sacramento Bee

<http://www.sacbee.com/sports/nfl/san-francisco-49ers/article134356894.html>

***LYNCH, SHANAHAN HOLD 'POSITIVE' DISCUSSION WITH KAEPERNICK***

By Matt Maiocco, CSNBayArea.com

<http://www.csnbayarea.com/49ers/lynch-shanahan-hold-positive-discussion-kaepernick>

***49ers' John Lynch, Kyle Shanahan meet with Colin Kaepernick***

By Nick Wagoner, ESPN.com

[http://www.espn.com/blog/san-francisco-49ers/post/\\_id/23706/john-lynch-kyle-shanahan-meet-with-colin-kaepernick](http://www.espn.com/blog/san-francisco-49ers/post/_id/23706/john-lynch-kyle-shanahan-meet-with-colin-kaepernick)

***49ers sign K'Waun Williams, who has grievance pending vs. Browns***

By Nick Wagoner, ESPN.com

[http://www.espn.com/nfl/story/\\_id/18743520/san-francisco-49ers-sign-cb-kwaun-williams-1-year-deal](http://www.espn.com/nfl/story/_id/18743520/san-francisco-49ers-sign-cb-kwaun-williams-1-year-deal)

***Assistant general manager Tom Gamble leaves 49ers***

By Nick Wagoner, ESPN.com

[http://www.espn.com/blog/san-francisco-49ers/post/\\_id/23711/assistant-general-manager-tom-gamble-leaves-49ers](http://www.espn.com/blog/san-francisco-49ers/post/_id/23711/assistant-general-manager-tom-gamble-leaves-49ers)

***Personnel exec Tom Gamble leaving the 49ers***

By Zac Jackson, ProFootballTalk.com

<http://profootballtalk.nbcsports.com/2017/02/22/personnel-exec-tom-gamble-leaving-the-49ers/>

***49ers' evaluation of Colin Kaepernick is still fluid***

By Mike Florio, ProFootballTalk.com

<http://profootballtalk.nbcsports.com/2017/02/22/49ers-evaluation-of-colin-kaepernick-is-still-fluid/>

***John Lynch: Colin Kaepernick left 'excited' after visit***

By Marc Sessler, NFL.com

<http://www.nfl.com/news/story/0ap3000000787283/article/john-lynch-colin-kaepernick-left-excited-after-visit>

***49ers assistant general manager Tom Gamble leaves team***

By Staff, Associated Press

<http://pro32.ap.org/article/49ers-assistant-general-manager-tom-gamble-leaves-team>

***49ers sign free agent CB K'Waun Williams to 1-year deal***

By Staff, Associated Press

<http://pro32.ap.org/article/49ers-sign-free-agent-cb-kwaun-williams-1-year-deal>

National Media

***Broncos get best odds for landing Tony Romo, but Texans make sense***

By Charean Williams, Fort Worth Star-Telegram

<http://www.star-telegram.com/sports/nfl/dallas-cowboys/cowboys-corner-blog/article134393044.html>

***DeSean Jackson and Pierre Garcon are probably done in Washington***

By Rick Snider, Washington Post

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/express/wp/2017/02/22/desean-jackson-and-pierre-garcon-are-probably-done-in-washington/?utm\\_term=.6dfa2c0df1a1](https://www.washingtonpost.com/express/wp/2017/02/22/desean-jackson-and-pierre-garcon-are-probably-done-in-washington/?utm_term=.6dfa2c0df1a1)

***For Ravens, Joe Flacco-to-Dennis Pitta a recipe for 'failed completions' in 2016***

By Jonas Shaffer, Baltimore Sun

<http://www.baltimoresun.com/sports/baltimore-sports-blog/bal-for-ravens-joe-flacco-to-dennis-pitta-a-recipe-for-failed-completions-in-2016-20170222-story.html>

***Lions could answer OL question marks in free agency***

By Justin Rogers, Detroit News

<http://www.detroitnews.com/story/sports/nfl/lions/2017/02/23/lions-could-answer-ol-question-marks-free-agency/98282592/>

***Panthers linebacker A.J. Klein: I'm looking for an opportunity to start elsewhere***

By Jourdan Rodrigue, Charlotte Observer

<http://www.charlotteobserver.com/sports/nfl/carolina-panthers/nfl-blog/article134352219.html>

***The Chargers' Anthony Lynn has surrounded himself with head-coaching experience***

By Dan Woike, Los Angeles Times

<http://www.latimes.com/sports/chargers/la-sp-chargers-coaching-staff-20170222-story.html>

## Local Clips – Full Version

### ***49ers' Lynch, Shanahan have 'positive discussion' with Kaepernick***

By Eric Branch, San Francisco Chronicle

Will this be the year the 49ers quit Colin?

Maybe not.

A year after Colin Kaepernick requested a trade that didn't materialize, general manager John Lynch provided news Wednesday that suggested the 49ers' new regime is open to retaining the quarterback who has been expected to land elsewhere in 2017.

On KNBR, Lynch said he and 49ers head coach Kyle Shanahan met with Kaepernick in Lynch's office at the team's Santa Clara facility Wednesday. The meeting came after Kaepernick had reached out to Lynch shortly after he was hired last month.

Lynch said they had a "very positive discussion," but are continuing to assess their quarterback situation.

"We had a great discussion. I think Colin left excited; we left excited," Lynch said. "As Kyle and I really believe, the evaluation process is still very much fluid. We've only been on the job a couple of weeks. And I can tell you we both very much enjoyed being around Colin. And he seems like he's in a real good place."

Kaepernick, 29, can opt out of the final year of his contract as early as next week to hit the market before free agency begins March 9. If Kaepernick doesn't opt out, the 49ers almost certainly will release him to avoid paying him a \$14.5 million base salary in 2017, but they could negotiate another deal.

In 11 starts last season, Kaepernick threw 16 touchdown passes and four interceptions. His passer rating (90.7) was his best since 2013. He also averaged 6.8 yards a carry, and his 468 rushing yards ranked second among quarterbacks. Kaepernick ranked 26th in completion percentage (59.2) and 24th in yards per attempt (6.8).

It's possible the 49ers won't have a quarterback under contract at the start of free agency: Blaine Gabbert, Christian Ponder and Thad Lewis were signed through 2016.

Given their situation, the 49ers are likely to at least explore trades for New England's Jimmy Garoppolo, 25, and Washington's Kirk Cousins, 28. Shanahan was Cousins' offensive coordinator from 2012 through '13 and they share a mutual respect. Washington is expected to place the franchise tag on Cousins, but the designation wouldn't prevent a trade.

Exec exits: Tom Gamble's tenure with the 49ers' reshaped front office was brief.

The team announced the assistant general manager is leaving the organization, barely three weeks after Lynch replaced Trent Baalke. Gamble's exit wasn't a surprise after Lynch hired Denver director of college scouting Adam Peters as vice president of player personnel and former Detroit general manager Martin Mayhew as a senior personnel executive.

Lynch termed Gamble a "class act."

Gamble, a 29-year NFL veteran, spent 10 seasons with the 49ers. He was with the team from 2005 through '12 before returning in 2015 after a two-year stint as the Eagles' vice president of player personnel.

Cornerback signed: The 49ers signed former Cleveland cornerback K'Waun Williams, 25, who spent his first two seasons with the Browns before sitting out last year with an ankle injury. Williams signed a one-year deal.

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***49ers executive Gamble no longer part of reshaped front office***

By Eric Branch, San Francisco Chronicle

Tom Gamble, the 49ers assistant general manager last year under Trent Baalke, is, like Baalke, out of a job.

Gamble's tenure with the 49ers' reshaped front office was brief. The team announced he was leaving the organization today, just over three weeks after John Lynch replaced Baalke. Gamble's exit wasn't a surprise after Lynch hired Broncos director of college scouting Adam Peters as vice president of player personnel and former Lions general manager Martin Mayhew as a senior personnel executive.

"(Gamble) is a class act who has helped a great deal in this transition, and I thoroughly enjoyed getting to know him," Lynch said. "After working together over the last month, Tom and I agreed that it would be in both of our best interests for him to pursue other opportunities."

Gamble, a 29-year NFL veteran, spent 10 seasons with the 49ers. He was with the team from 2005-12 before returning in 2015 after a two-year stint as the Eagles vice president of player personnel.

"I must thank Jed, the York family and the entire 49ers organization for the wonderful memories they provided me and my family, but it is time I move on," Gamble said. "This past month, I have had the pleasure of working alongside John Lynch and the talented staff he has assembled. The team is in capable hands and I wish them nothing but the best."

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***Colin Kaepernick meets with 49ers new brass***

By Cam Inman, San Jose Mercury News

Colin Kaepernick met Wednesday with 49ers coach Kyle Shanahan and general manager John Lynch, the latter of whom termed it "a really positive discussion" that all parties vowed to keep the conversation's details private.

"We had a great discussion and I think Colin left excited. We left excited," Lynch told KNBR 680-AM. "As Kyle and I really believe, the evaluation process is still very much fluid," Lynch added. "We've only been on the job a couple of weeks and I can tell you we both really, very much enjoyed being around Colin, and he seems like he's in a real good place."

Kaepernick can formally opt out of the final year of his contract as early as March 2 to hit free agency for the first time in his career. Discussions can begin with other teams March 7 and deals can't be finalized until March 9. Kaepernick, who is owed \$14.5 million in base salary for next season, is currently without an agent, according to the NFL Players Association registry.

The 49ers' other quarterbacks last season — Blaine Gabbert, Christian Ponder and Thad Lewis — are among the team's 17 scheduled unrestricted free agents.

Kaepernick went 1-10 last season upon reclaiming his starting role from Gabbert. Teammates honored Kaepernick with the Len Eshmont Award for courage and leadership, having led an equal-rights movement with his national anthem protest.

— Free agent defensive tackle Earl Mitchell visited the 49ers on Wednesday and headed next to the Denver Broncos on his recruiting tour, according to the Sacramento Bee. Mitchell first visited the Seattle Seahawks upon his release last week from the Miami Dolphins.

— The 49ers confirmed signing cornerback K'Wuan Williams to a one-year deal. He did not play last season in the NFL after spending his first two seasons with the Cleveland Browns.

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***Assistant GM Tom Gamble leaving 49ers***

By Daniel Mano, San Jose Mercury News

49ers assistant general manager Tom Gamble's second stint in San Francisco is over, the team announced Wednesday.

"I must thank Jed, the York family and the entire 49ers organization for the wonderful memories they provided me and my family, but it is time I move on," Gamble said in a statement. "This past month, I have had the pleasure of working alongside John Lynch and the talented staff he has assembled. The team is in capable hands and I wish them nothing but the best."

New 49ers GM John Lynch applauded Gamble's assistance as Lynch takes the reigns in San Francisco.

"He is a class act who has helped a great deal in this transition, and I thoroughly enjoyed getting to know him," Lynch said in a statement. "After working together over the last month, Tom and I agreed that it would be in both of our best interests for him to pursue other opportunities. Tom is a true professional and we wish him and his family great success in the future."

Unlike when he left in 2013 for a position with the Eagles, Gamble's next destination is not known.

Gamble rejoined the 49ers in 2015 after two years as Philadelphia's vice president of player personnel during the Chip Kelly era. He returned to San Francisco as a senior personnel executive and later became assistant GM for this past season.

Gamble first came to San Francisco as director of pro personnel in 2005 and served as director of player personnel from 2011-12.

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***Assistant GM Tom Gamble leaving 49ers***

By Matt Barrows, Sacramento Bee

SANTA CLARA -- A year after he was promoted to assistant general manager, Tom Gamble is leaving the 49ers.

Gamble, who had two stints with the 49ers, was re-hired by then-general manager Trent Baalke in 2015 and promoted last year. The team parted ways with Baalke at season's end and hired John Lynch as his replacement. Lynch, in turn, has hired two others with front office experience, Adam Peters and Martin Mayhew.

In a statement, Lynch said the 49ers have "tremendous respect" for Gamble.

"He is a class act who has helped a great deal in this transition, and I thoroughly enjoyed getting to know him," he said. "After working together over the last month, Tom and I agreed that it would be in both of our best interests for him to pursue other opportunities. Tom is a true professional and we wish him and his family great success in the future."

Gamble thanked the organization but said, "it is time I move on." "The team is in capable hands and I wish them nothing but the best," he said in a statement.

Gamble recently completed his 29th year in the NFL. He spent the 2013-14 seasons with the Philadelphia Eagles as vice president of player personnel before being fired by the organization. Gamble originally joined the 49ers in 2005.

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***Kaepernick meets with 49ers' brass; evaluation of QB still 'fluid'***

By Matt Barrows, Sacramento Bee

SANTA CLARA -- Quarterback Colin Kaepernick, who for the second consecutive year faces a murky offseason with the 49ers, met coach Kyle Shanahan and general manager John Lynch at team headquarters Wednesday for what Lynch said was "really a positive discussion" during a KNBR radio interview.

Kaepernick is the only quarterback under contract with the 49ers for the 2017 season. However, he's due to earn a little less than \$15 million in base salary and the team can cut him with little penalty. Likewise, Kaepernick can get out of the deal as early as next week and enter free agency a week after that.

Kaepernick has been living with his girlfriend, radio personality Nessa Diab, in his New York apartment and recently sold his San Jose home. He parted with his longtime agents this month and has not hired a replacement. Kaepernick was on his way back to New York on Wednesday afternoon.

Lynch declined to divulge any specifics about the conversation, saying only the participants "left excited." He said the team's evaluation of Kaepernick is "still very much fluid."

"We've only been on the job a couple weeks," Lynch said. "I can tell you, we both very much enjoyed being around Colin, and he seems like he's in a real good place."

Kaepernick struggled to get back to his playing weight last year following surgeries to his shoulder, knee and thumb. He is believed to be back to his full weight now.

Lynch, Shanahan and Kaepernick had conversed over the phone and through text messages in recent weeks, and Lynch already was familiar with the quarterback after meeting him several times in Lynch's former job as a television broadcaster.

Kaepernick has said he does not intend to opt out of his contract and is open to playing with the 49ers this season. The 49ers, however, could force his hand by telling him they plan to release him instead of pay his 2017 contract. That, in turn, almost would compel him to enter free agency.

In one scenario at play, the 49ers release him and re-sign him to a more modest deal. After all, they could be his best chance to win a starting job.

Last year, Kaepernick tried to engineer a trade but found only two serious suitors, the Cleveland Browns and Denver Broncos. He decided against Cleveland after seeing the Browns let go of some of their better free agents, and he did not like the pay cut the Broncos wanted him to take. It's not known whether those teams will be options for him this offseason.

Kaepernick took over the 49ers' starting job from Blaine Gabbert in 2016 after five weeks. He finished with 16 touchdown passes against four interceptions and a 90.7 passer rating, his highest mark since 2013.

The three other quarterbacks on San Francisco's 2016 roster – Gabbert, Christian Ponder and Thad Lewis – will be unrestricted free agents next month. So will a couple of quarterbacks Shanahan has worked with, the Chicago Bears' Brian Hoyer and the Atlanta Falcons' Matt Schaub.

The 49ers also have been linked to Washington Redskins free agent Kirk Cousins, who could get the franchise tag from his team, and the New England Patriots' Jimmy Garoppolo, for whom they would have to trade.

San Francisco has the No. 2 overall pick in the draft. The top three quarterbacks are believed to be Clemson's Deshaun Watson, North Carolina's Mitch Trubisky and Notre Dame's DeShone Kizer, although one or more could fall into the second round.

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### ***LYNCH, SHANAHAN HOLD 'POSITIVE' DISCUSSION WITH KAEPERNICK***

By Matt Maiocco, CSNBayArea.com

General manager John Lynch confirmed during a radio interview that he and 49ers coach Kyle Shanahan met with quarterback Colin Kaepernick at his office Wednesday morning at the team headquarters in Santa Clara.

"I would characterize it as just a really positive discussion," Lynch said during an appearance on KNBR, confirming a CSNBayArea.com report the sides met for the first time since Lynch and Shanahan were hired in their new roles.

Lynch said he and Shanahan have committed to being completely honest with Kaepernick, who can opt out of his contract to become an unrestricted free agent as early as next week.

Lynch did not divulge the topics of conversation. He said a commitment was also made to Kaepernick to not speak publicly about the specifics of their conversations.

"I do think that there are some things that are sacred," Lynch said. "We did have a great discussion and I think Colin left excited and we left excited.

"And I think as Kyle and I believe, the evaluation process is still very much fluid. We've only been on the job a couple of weeks and I can tell you we both very much enjoyed being around Colin, and he seems like he's in a real good place."

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### ***49ers' John Lynch, Kyle Shanahan meet with Colin Kaepernick***

By Nick Wagoner, ESPN.com

SANTA CLARA, Calif. -- On the day he was officially announced as the San Francisco 49ers new general manager, John Lynch said he planned to meet with quarterback Colin Kaepernick to discuss his future with the team.

That meeting has apparently taken place. Lynch, speaking to KNBR radio in San Francisco, confirmed that he and coach Kyle Shanahan met with Kaepernick on Wednesday afternoon. Lynch declined to offer specifics of the discussion out of respect for Kaepernick.

"I would characterize [it] as just a really positive discussion," Lynch said. "I think from the start Kyle and I have committed, I was a player once and you just want to be honest, you want people to be honest with you.

"And so we committed to doing that. We also committed to what we talked about remaining between us. And so I'm not talking out of both sides of my mouth because I say, 'Hey, we're going to be transparent.' But I definitely do think that there's some things that are sacred."

The meeting comes a little more than a week from when Kaepernick will have the ability to opt out of his contract and become a free agent. It's expected that Kaepernick will take that opportunity to explore his options, but he could still theoretically return if Lynch and Shanahan view that as the best option.

Lynch told Bay Area media at his introductory news conference that he and Kaepernick had developed a strong rapport when Lynch was working as a color analyst on FOX.

Kaepernick reached out to Lynch soon after his hire to set up Wednesday's conversation. In the time since, Lynch and Shanahan have been spending plenty of time evaluating potential quarterback options.

"We had a great discussion," Lynch said. "And Colin left excited, we left excited and I think as Kyle and I really believe, the evaluation is still very much fluid."

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### ***49ers sign K'Waun Williams, who has grievance pending vs. Browns***

By Nick Wagoner, ESPN.com

SANTA CLARA, Calif. -- The San Francisco 49ers got an early start on free agency Wednesday, signing cornerback K'Waun Williams to a one-year deal.

After spending the 2016 season out of football because of an ankle injury, Williams chose the Niners over interest from the New York Jets, Detroit Lions, Minnesota Vikings and Miami Dolphins.

Williams, 25, will be reunited with defensive backs coach Jeff Hafley, who coached Williams with the Cleveland Browns in 2014 and 2015 before joining the 49ers staff.

The Browns waived Williams in August after he was suspended and fined for saying his ankle was too sore to play in a preseason game. The Chicago Bears claimed Williams off waivers but released him two days later because a physical showed he needed surgery to remove bone spurs from his ankle.

Williams' grievance against the Browns is pending; a hearing is scheduled for May 16 in Cleveland. He is seeking his \$600,000 base salary from 2016 and the cost of his ankle surgery.

For the Niners, Williams will compete in a crowded secondary for the nickel cornerback job. Will Redmond and Keith Reaser are among the corners expected to compete for that role in the slot. Restricted free agent Chris Davis also could be in the mix if he returns.

Williams originally signed with Cleveland as an undrafted free agent out of Pittsburgh in 2014. He appeared in 26 games for the Browns, posting 69 tackles, 10 passes defended, three forced fumbles, two fumble recoveries and two sacks.

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### ***Assistant general manager Tom Gamble leaves 49ers***

By Nick Wagoner, ESPN.com

SANTA CLARA, Calif. -- With changes abound in the San Francisco 49ers personnel department, assistant general manager Tom Gamble's position was becoming increasingly less defined.

And so it was that on Wednesday afternoon, the Niners announced that Gamble is leaving the organization. In a statement, general manager John Lynch said he and Gamble agreed that it would be best for Gamble to seek other opportunities.

"The 49ers organization has tremendous respect and appreciation for Tom Gamble and his many years of service," Lynch said. "He is a class act who has helped a great deal in this transition, and I thoroughly enjoyed getting to know him. After working together over the last month, Tom and I agreed that it would be in both of our best interests for him to pursue other opportunities. Tom is a true professional and we wish him and his family great success in the future."

Gamble's role with the team moving forward had become more unclear after Lynch hired Adam Peters as his vice president of player personnel and Martin Mayhew as senior personnel executive earlier this month. That came after a period in which Gamble served as the de facto general manager while CEO Jed York was seeking candidates to replace Trent Baalke as general manager.

Although York made it clear he held Gamble in high regard, he said at the beginning of that search that he did not view Gamble as a candidate to replace Baalke. Still, Gamble has spent a decade with the organization and his statement indicated that the sides are parting on good terms.

"I must thank Jed, the York family and the entire 49ers organization for the wonderful memories they provided me and my family, but it is time I move on," Gamble said. "This past month, I have had the pleasure of working alongside John Lynch and the talented staff he has assembled. The team is in capable hands and I wish them nothing but the best."

Gamble wrapped up his 29th season in the NFL in 2016 after returning to San Francisco in January of 2015. He was promoted to assistant general manager from senior personnel executive in July of last year. Before that, he spent two years as the Philadelphia Eagles vice president of player personnel. His first stint with the 49ers began in 2005 and lasted eight years, including two as director of player personnel before he went to Philadelphia.

With free agency set to begin soon, the timing of Gamble's departure isn't ideal for the Niners. While Mayhew and Peters have been on the job for a few weeks, neither has worked in pro personnel recently and Lynch is just beginning his work at any level of personnel. The 49ers do still have director of pro personnel Mike Williams in place. Gamble's departure would presumably clear the way for Mayhew to get a new title and more clearly defined role.

More often than not, substantial changes to personnel departments come after the draft and the Niners could make more at that time after Lynch has more chances to evaluate his staff.

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### ***Personnel exec Tom Gamble leaving the 49ers***

By Zac Jackson, ProFootballTalk.com

The 49ers announced Wednesday that longtime personnel executive Tom Gamble is leaving the team.

Gamble has spent 10 of his 29 NFL seasons with the 49ers. He returned to the team for the past two years after serving as vice president of player personnel with the Eagles in 2013-14.

"The 49ers organization has tremendous respect and appreciation for Tom Gamble and his many years of service," new 49ers General Manager John Lynch said in the team's release on Gamble's departure. "He is a class act who has helped a great deal in this transition, and I thoroughly enjoyed getting to know him."

"After working together over the last month, Tom and I agreed that it would be in both of our best interests for him to pursue other opportunities. Tom is a true professional and we wish him and his family great success in the future."

Gamble was director of pro personnel with the 49ers from 2005-10 and director of player personnel in 2011-12 before going to Philadelphia. He was the team's assistant G.M. last season, putting him in position to help Lynch transition into his first front office job.

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#### ***49ers' evaluation of Colin Kaepernick is still fluid***

By Mike Florio, ProFootballTalk.com

49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick can bail on the balance of his contract between March 2 and March 7. The 49ers can do so at any time. For now, both sides are still weighing their options. The process included a recent meeting between the player and his new coach and G.M., Kyle Shanahan and John Lynch, respectively.

"We had a great discussion and Colin left excited, we left excited and I think as Kyle and I really believe, the evaluation is still very much fluid," Lynch told KNBR, via Chris Biderman of USA Today.

"And we've only been on the job a couple weeks. I can tell you, we both really very much [like] being around Colin and he seems like he's in a real good place."

Kaepernick is due to earn \$14.5 million in 2017, and the 49ers surely won't be paying him that kind of money for one more year. Given that Shanahan and Lynch are newcomers, Kaepernick is no different to them than any other free agent quarterback would be. Because he's still under contract with the 49ers, however, the team has the ability to talk to him and to negotiate with him before he voids the contract and becomes a free agent.

There's a chance that, in the end, both sides will decide that it's in their mutual best interests to give it another try. The final decision will depend on the other options for the team and the other options for the player. Given that multiple other teams will not be inclined to alienate a large swath of the fan base by signing the player at the heart of the 2016 anthem protests, staying in San Francisco could be his best option.

In weighing his options, Kaepernick would benefit from some third-part advice. For now, though, he still doesn't have an agent.

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#### ***John Lynch: Colin Kaepernick left 'excited' after visit***

By Marc Sessler, NFL.com

Colin Kaepernick has touched base with his employer.

The San Francisco 49ers quarterback visited the team's Santa Clara headquarters on Wednesday, per Matt Maiocco of CSN Bay Area.

"I would characterize it as a really positive discussion ... Colin left excited," new general manager John Lynch told KNBR-AM in San Francisco after the visit.

The meeting comes one day after Lynch told 95.7 The Game that he and first-year coach Kyle Shanahan planned to "communicate" with the 29-year-old signal-caller, saying: "I think that's very important for both sides. Like everything else, that process is well in the works. We'll continue to do that and we'll be very up-front with him, in terms of what we're thinking and we'll want to know what he's thinking, as well."

It's a refreshing approach by the 49ers, but Kaepernick is widely expected, on March 2, to opt out of a contract set to pay him \$16.9 million in salary and bonuses.

What unfolded between the team and passer behind closed doors on Wednesday could impact that decision. So could San Francisco's pursuit of another starter -- namely Washington's Kirk Cousins or New England's Jimmy Garoppolo. If Shanahan can wrestle away either in a trade -- assuming the Redskins tag Cousins -- then paying Kaepernick his hefty salary makes zero sense.

Speaking this week, Shanahan expressed no desire to panic under center, telling KNBR-AM: "You don't want to gamble. You want to be aggressive in everything, but you got to do what's right. You have to build your team the right way and that's what I mean by being patient."

Pretty words, but Shanahan is no newbie. He knows the honeymoon will end quickly in San Francisco if the team endures another season of horrid quarterback play.

No matter what anyone says, Kaepernick is hardly atop the coach's wish list.

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#### ***49ers assistant general manager Tom Gamble leaves team***

By Staff, Associated Press

SANTA CLARA, Calif. (AP) — Longtime San Francisco 49ers personnel executive Tom Gamble is leaving the organization after a front-office overhaul this offseason.

General manager John Lynch announced on Wednesday that he and Gamble decided it would be in the best interest for the team and Gamble for him to leave the team.

Lynch was hired as GM to replace Trent Baalke late last month. Lynch then hired former Detroit general manager Martin Mayhew as a senior personnel executive and Adam Peters as vice president of player personnel to be his top personnel executives.

Gamble has 29 years of experience in the NFL, including 10 years with the 49ers. He was assistant general manager for San Francisco this past season.

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#### ***49ers sign free agent CB K'Waun Williams to 1-year deal***

By Staff, Associated Press

SANTA CLARA, Calif. (AP) — The San Francisco 49ers have signed free agent cornerback K'Waun Williams to a one-year deal.

The team announced the deal on Wednesday in the first roster addition since the hiring of new general manager John Lynch and coach Kyle Shanahan.

Williams originally signed with Cleveland as an undrafted free agent in 2014. He spent two years with the Browns before being waived last August. Williams was claimed off waivers by the Bears but was cut two days later and did not play in 2016.

Williams has played 26 career games with 10 starts. He has 69 tackles, 10 passes defensed, three forced fumbles, two fumble recoveries and two sacks.