

49ers Clips – February 8, 2017

Local Media

***How Much Credit Does Kyle Shanahan Deserve for Matt Ryan's MVP Season?***

By Joe Fann, 49ers.com

<http://www.49ers.com/news/article-2/How-Much-Credit-Does-Kyle-Shanahan-Deserve-for-Matt-Ryans-MVP-Season/2f766d00-b7bd-47c0-92a1-0c88f17f30c5>

***Source: Kaepernick has not decided whether to opt out of contract***

By Kevin Lynch, SFGate.com

<http://blog.sfgate.com/49ers/2017/02/07/source-kaepernick-has-not-decided-whether-to-opt-out/>

***49ers GM Lynch discusses 'huge emphasis' on QBs***

By Eric Branch, San Francisco Chronicle

<http://www.sfchronicle.com/49ers/article/49ers-GM-Lynch-discusses-huge-emphasis-on-10916407.php>

***49ers John Lynch on QB crisis: 'We're looking at every scenario'***

By Cam Inman, San Jose Mercury News

<http://www.mercurynews.com/2017/02/07/49ers-john-lynch-on-qb-crisis-were-looking-at-every-scenario/>

***49ers part ways with strength and conditioning staff***

By Matt Kawahara, Sacramento Bee

<http://www.sacbee.com/sports/nfl/san-francisco-49ers/article131365699.html>

***49ERS RELEASE STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING STAFF***

By Matt Maiocco, CSNBayArea.com

<http://www.csnbayarea.com/49ers/49ers-release-strength-and-conditioning-staff>

***With coach and GM on board, Niners' focus turns to quarterback***

By Nick Wagoner, ESPN.com

[http://www.espn.com/blog/san-francisco-49ers/post/\\_id/23280/with-coach-and-gm-on-board-niners-focus-turns-to-quarterback](http://www.espn.com/blog/san-francisco-49ers/post/_id/23280/with-coach-and-gm-on-board-niners-focus-turns-to-quarterback)

***2017 offseason predictions for all 32 NFL teams***

By Nick Wagoner, ESPN.com

[http://www.espn.com/nfl/story/\\_page/32for32x170207/offseason-predictions-all-32-nfl-teams-2017](http://www.espn.com/nfl/story/_page/32for32x170207/offseason-predictions-all-32-nfl-teams-2017)

***McShay's 2017 NFL Mock Draft 2.0***

By Todd McShay, ESPN.com

[http://www.espn.com/nfl/draft2017/insider/story/\\_id/18632945/todd-mcshay-2017-nfl-mock-draft-20](http://www.espn.com/nfl/draft2017/insider/story/_id/18632945/todd-mcshay-2017-nfl-mock-draft-20)

***John Lynch declines to set timeline for construction of new offense***

By Mike Florio, ProFootballTalk.com

<http://profootballtalk.nbcsports.com/2017/02/07/john-lynch-declines-to-set-timeline-for-construction-of-new-offense/>

***49ers will have all new strength and conditioning staff***

By Zac Jackson, ProFootballTalk.com

<http://profootballtalk.nbcsports.com/2017/02/07/49ers-will-have-all-new-strength-and-conditioning-staff/>

National Media

***What's next for Seahawks? Here are some key off-season dates to remember***

By Bob Condotta, The Seattle Times

<http://www.seattletimes.com/sports/seahawks/whats-next-for-seahawks-here-are-some-key-off-season-dates-to-remember/>

***Rams pursuing Falcons' Matt LaFleur as offensive coordinator as Atlanta hires Sarkisian***

By Gary Klein, Los Angeles Times

<http://www.latimes.com/sports/rams/la-sp-rams-lafleur-sarkisian-20170207-story.html>

***Browns release Josh McCown and Tramon Williams; Will RG3 be next?***

By Mary Kay Cabot, Cleveland Plain Dealer

[http://www.cleveland.com/browns/index.ssf/2017/02/browns\\_released\\_josh\\_mccown\\_an.html#incart\\_river\\_index](http://www.cleveland.com/browns/index.ssf/2017/02/browns_released_josh_mccown_an.html#incart_river_index)

***Eagles approach LT Jason Peters about pay cut***

By Tim McManus, ESPN.com

[http://www.espn.com/blog/nflnation/post/\\_id/230893/eagles-approach-lt-jason-peters-about-pay-cut](http://www.espn.com/blog/nflnation/post/_id/230893/eagles-approach-lt-jason-peters-about-pay-cut)

***Packers release RB James Starks***

By Rob Demovsky, ESPN.com

[http://www.espn.com/nfl/story/\\_id/18640746/green-bay-packers-release-rb-james-starks](http://www.espn.com/nfl/story/_id/18640746/green-bay-packers-release-rb-james-starks)

## Local Clips – Full Version

### ***How Much Credit Does Kyle Shanahan Deserve for Matt Ryan's MVP Season?***

By Joe Fann, 49ers.com

Let's be clear, Matt Ryan has always been a talented NFL quarterback, and he's no stranger to huge statistical seasons. The Atlanta Falcons quarterback recorded five 4000-yard seasons and made three Pro Bowls prior to 2016. But this year, Ryan's numbers were otherworldly.

So while this article isn't to say that Kyle Shanahan created Ryan, it is a fair argument that the San Francisco 49ers new head coach helped the signal-caller reach his MVP potential.

The quarterback threw for 4,944 yards and a staggering 38 touchdowns, both career-highs. Ryan's 9.3 yards per attempt and 117.1 quarterback rating both led the NFL. The Falcons offense (playoffs included) finished as the third-ranked scoring unit of all-time with 648 total points (the 2013 Denver Broncos own the NFL record with 664 points).

So just how much credit does Shanahan deserve in Ryan's 2016 campaign? Quite a bit, says ESPN NFL insider Field Yates.

"He helped reinvigorate the career of Matt Ryan and led him to an MVP this season," Yates said. "He certainly catapulted his play to a new level.

"When you have an offensive system that is so multiple – 13 players caught a touchdown for the Falcons during the regular season, the most in league history – that right there speaks to a system that puts players in a position to succeed."

Interceptions (red-zone turnovers specifically) was one area in particular where Ryan improved the most during his second season working with Shanahan. From 2012-15, Ryan threw at least 14 picks in each year. Many of those miscues came inside the opponent's 20-yard line.

In 2016, Ryan threw just seven interceptions, a new career-low.

"Those were essentially a thing of the past in 2016," Yates said. "So the areas that you say, 'Where did Kyle Shanahan help Matt Ryan specifically?' One of them was decision-making, because that was one area he was much better in this season compared to the season before."

Ryan himself was very complimentary of Shanahan throughout Atlanta's recent postseason run all the way to Super Bowl LI.

"I think Kyle has pushed me to become a better player," Ryan told the MMQB back in January. "He's pushed me to expand my game, to do some things different than I'd been doing for a few years. He's pushed me to throw more on the run, and I think that's helped us as an offense. He's helped our entire offense become better players."

Shanahan's role in Atlanta's historic 2016 season earned him the NFL's Assistant Coach of the Year award. It was only a matter of time before the talented offensive mind landed his first job as a head coach.

Yates went as far as to say it was a "coup" for the 49ers to land Shanahan with so many other teams interested.

"Kyle Shanahan was not one of the most coveted coaching candidates by accident," Yates said. "Teams understood exactly what he's done and why he's such a good fit for teams looking to rejuvenate their offensive system."

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**Source: Kaepernick has not decided whether to opt out of contract**

By Kevin Lynch, SFGate.com

Quarterback Colin Kaepernick has yet to determine whether he will opt of his contract, despite a story from ESPN that he will do so. A source close to Kaepernick said no decision has been made, and it really makes no sense to make a decision now before Kaepernick talks to new head coach Kyle Shanahan and new general manager John Lynch.

Kaepernick told sfgate.com at the end of last year that he was frustrated by an NFL media story in December saying he would opt out.

"I would like to talk to the person who said that," Kaepernick said.

Additionally, the source close to Kaepernick said he continues to be frustrated by stories saying he will opt out, because he doesn't want the 49ers believing he wants to leave. Kaepernick said at the end of last season that he feels greatly supported by his teammates and the fans.

Kaepernick won the Len Eshmont honor last year, which is voted on by the players to the teammate who best exemplifies courageous and inspirational play. Kaepernick also felt most 49ers fans understood his decision to kneel for national anthem in protest of violence, racism and unequal treatment of people of color.

"(The support) is something I appreciate and it's not just football," Kaepernick told sfgate.com. "They are having conversations and spreading that knowledge and spreading that awareness. Ultimately that creates change. Fans didn't give up on me or the team. Spreading the word, talking, interacting is something that goes unnoticed, but it's something I really appreciate."

Kaepernick also feels his relationship with the team has never been better and doesn't want the team to think he wants to leave.

With that said, the 49ers could terminate his deal or ask him to opt out, if they don't want to retain him. Also, Kaepernick could opt out if another team offers him a better deal and the promise of a starting job.

However, none of those things have materialized. Consequently, talk of opting out is premature according to the source.

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**49ers GM Lynch discusses 'huge emphasis' on QBs**

By Eric Branch, San Francisco Chronicle

Former 49ers general manager Trent Baalke, who didn't use a top-200 pick on a quarterback in his final five drafts, didn't seem to have a full appreciation for the most important position in the NFL.

It doesn't sound as if his replacement will have that problem.

John Lynch, an ex-safety who began his career at Stanford as a quarterback, said he recognized during his decorated, 15-year NFL career how an elite signal-caller can dominate games.

"In my mind," Lynch said Tuesday on KNBR, "I think I knew, but I couldn't really admit to myself because it would almost be surrender: That when you go against a great one, you're helpless."

Lynch went on to cite a stat that illustrates the point: Fourteen of the past 16 AFC champions have counted Tom Brady, Peyton Manning or Ben Roethlisberger as their quarterback.

“That just speaks to how important that position is,” he said.

This brings us to Lynch’s current quandary with the 49ers, who won’t have a quarterback under contract when free agency begins if Colin Kaepernick opts out of his deal.

The situation is partly a result of Baalke’s inattention to the position. The fact is, even if Lynch didn’t value quarterbacks highly, he’d be forced to grab several this offseason given the 49ers’ depth chart.

On Tuesday, Lynch spent part of his day discussing draft prospects, including quarterbacks, with his staff. On Wednesday, he’ll have his first chance to sit down in Santa Clara with head coach Kyle Shanahan, who will be spending his first day in the Bay Area.

“We’ve already discussed it, but we’re going to get together and find out exactly what he’s looking for in a quarterback,” Lynch said. “And then we’re going to evaluate the guys we have, we’re going to evaluate the draft, and we’re going to look hard at free agency, trades, whatever we need to do to get a guy.

“And it may not be this year. It may be that we draft and develop. We’re looking at every scenario. We both are big believers - I don’t think this is anything revolutionary, everyone knows how important that position is -- but we certainly place a huge emphasis on it and we’re going to work hard to get that right.”

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***49ers John Lynch on QB crisis: ‘We’re looking at every scenario’***

By Cam Inman, San Jose Mercury News

SANTA CLARA — Solving the 49ers quarterback crisis will be what general manager John Lynch calls a “huge emphasis” in his newfound union with coach Kyle Shanahan.

Lynch, in fact, spent Monday discussing college prospects with 49ers scouts. It’s part of a cram session that will last the next couple months, and it’s a discovery process Shanahan will join full-throttle once he arrives in town Wednesday.

“We’ve already discussed it but we’re going to get together and find out exactly what he’s looking for in a quarterback,” Lynch said on KNBR 680-AM.

“We’re going to evaluate the guys we have. We’re going to evaluate the draft. We’re going to look hard at free agency, trades, whatever we need to do to get a guy.”

The four guys they have all could flee in free agency come March 9. Colin Kaepernick can opt out next month from his revised deal, while backups Blaine Gabbert, Christian Ponder and Thad Lewis are all unsigned.

Kirk Cousins, Matt Schaub and Brian Hoyer are pending free agents who previously played on teams with Shanahan as their coordinator. Other options would be to trade for a quarterback (see: Jimmy Garoppolo, Jay Cutler, Philip Rivers, Tony Romo) or, as Lynch said, “draft and develop” a college prospect.

Deshaun Watson, Mitch Trubisky, DeShone Kizer and Patrick Mahomes are perhaps the top QB candidates in the draft. Lynch is leery of the learning curve most college players face, and that especially could hold true for Shanahan’s complex offense.

“You get in Kyle Shanahan’s system and you’ve got 15-word plays,” Lynch said. “The coach is in your ear but you still have to replicate that with confidence and authority. It’s a big challenge.”

Lynch held separate, drive-time interviews Monday with KNBR and 95.7 The Game. He and Shanahan will be introduced by CEO Jed York to the Bay Area media in a Thursday press conference.

“We’re looking at every scenario,” Lynch said of the QB situation, “but we’re both big believers — and I don’t think this is revolutionary, everyone knows how important that position is — but we certainly place a huge emphasis on it and we’re going to work hard to get that right.”

Lynch watched on with York at the Super Bowl while Shanahan and the Falcons fell 34-28 in overtime to the New England Patriots.

“It was an incredible football game,” Lynch said on 95.7 The Game. “Unfortunately the guy that was named our head coach was on the losing end of it. But fortunately for Kyle, he’s got a lot to look forward to out here and a lot of work to do. People will really like what they see in Kyle Shanahan.”

While Shanahan spent last week finishing up Super Bowl preparations, Lynch spent his first week in the GM role by interviewing for the revamped coaching and personnel staffs.

“Given the circumstances, how late in the game it was, we really pulled off a coup with the staff we’re putting together,” Lynch said.

The 49ers have yet to formally announce any coaching changes, but Lynch noted the “huge” personnel-side addition of Adam Peters as vice president of player personnel.

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#### ***49ers part ways with strength and conditioning staff***

By Matt Kawahara, Sacramento Bee

The 49ers’ offseason makeover will include a new strength and conditioning staff.

A team spokesman confirmed the 49ers have parted ways with director of human performance Mark Uyeyama; strength, conditioning and nutrition assistant Kurt Schmidt; and strength and conditioning assistants Taylor Johnson and David Young.

Another strength and conditioning assistant, Brian Johnson, accepted a job with Texas A&M, while Taylor Johnson could still be re-hired, the spokesman said. CSNBayArea.com first reported the moves.

Uyeyama, whose release was first reported last week, had survived four previous head coaching changes during nine seasons with the team. The 49ers on Monday announced the hiring of head coach Kyle Shanahan, who will be introduced in a press conference at Levi’s Stadium on Thursday.

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#### ***49ERS RELEASE STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING STAFF***

By Matt Maiocco, CSNBayArea.com

The 49ers have not retained any members of the team’s strength and conditioning staff, the club confirmed on Tuesday.

The 49ers official website no longer lists director of human performance Mark Uyeyama; strength, conditioning and nutrition assistant Kurt Schmidt; and strength and conditioning assistants Brian Johnson, Taylor Johnson and David Young.

The 49ers will bring in a new strength and conditioning staff under new coach Kyle Shanahan and general manager John Lynch.

The organization's decision to release Uyeyama was reported last week. Uyeyama served nine seasons with the 49ers under head coaches Mike Nolan, Mike Singletary, Jim Harbaugh, Jim Tomsula and Chip Kelly.

Schmidt spent four seasons with the organization after working as strength and conditioning coordinator at Arkansas from 2008 to '12. He worked at Utah State with Uyeyama from 2006 to '07.

Young was with the 49ers for three seasons. Brian Johnson was recently hired at Texas A&M after spending two seasons with the 49ers. Taylor Johnson, who has spent the past two seasons with the club, is a possibility to remain with the new staff, a source said.

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### ***With coach and GM on board, Niners' focus turns to quarterback***

By Nick Wagoner, ESPN.com

SANTA CLARA, Calif. -- If you want to copy the blueprint of most successful NFL franchises, it starts with football's version of a holy trinity: a head coach, a general manager and a quarterback.

After hiring Kyle Shanahan as coach and John Lynch as general manager, the San Francisco 49ers hope they have found their solution for the first two. Now, their attention turns to finding the third and perhaps most important piece, the quarterback.

About a month from now, Colin Kaepernick, the only quarterback the team currently has under contract for 2017, probably will cease to have that designation when he's expected to opt out of his deal. When he does, he'll join Blaine Gabbert, Thad Lewis and Christian Ponder as free agents. With Shanahan and Lynch taking over, there's no guarantee that any of them will be back, though it also can't be ruled out.

Which means there's likely a full-blown makeover coming to the Niners' quarterbacks room. As you'd expect, even before Shanahan officially signed on for the job, there were plenty of rumors and reports connecting the 49ers to various quarterbacks around the league. That speculation is only expected to heat up in the days, weeks and months to come.

It's too early to pinpoint which direction Shanahan wants to go, especially since he hasn't even had time to evaluate the various college prospects yet. But, yes, there will be options on the trade and free-agent market that could make sense as short and long-term options of Shanahan's Niners. There will be no shortage of competition, though as teams like the Cleveland Browns, Chicago Bears, New York Jets, Houston Texans, Buffalo Bills and Denver Broncos could be in the market for immediate starters, with others like the San Diego Chargers and Arizona Cardinals possibly looking for future solutions.

Keeping in mind there's a very real chance the Niners will (and have to) bring in more than one quarterback, here's a look at some of the options they'll have to consider over the next few months:

**Kirk Cousins:** This is one that probably won't vanish anytime soon, because Shanahan was in place and a fan of Cousins when he was Washington's offensive coordinator. It's also probably the most difficult and expensive move to make. Cousins played on the franchise tag a year ago and the Redskins are likely to use it again to prevent him from leaving without compensation. That doesn't mean the Niners couldn't facilitate a deal with Washington, but it would cost a lot of draft capital and even more on a long-term contract. And remember, Cousins had his two best seasons (2015 and 2016) after Shanahan departed for Atlanta.

**Matt Schaub:** Like Cousins, Shanahan and Schaub have a history, having worked together in Houston and Atlanta. ESPN's Adam Schefter reported last weekend that Shanahan would like to bring Schaub with him to San Francisco, presumably as a steady hand to help guide young quarterbacks in understanding Shanahan's scheme. Schaub is a free agent and wouldn't cost a lot to bring on board.

Jimmy Garoppolo: Garoppolo is under contract for one more year with the Patriots, meaning it would take a trade to acquire him. It's been reported that the Patriots will seek a first-round pick for him, though perhaps something could be worked out if that price isn't met. Either way, Garoppolo won't come cheap and would also come with a fairly large price tag for a contract extension. Garoppolo has only started two games and though he played well, giving up valuable draft picks and a lucrative contract would come with more inherent risk than other alternatives.

Jay Cutler: Cutler played for Shanahan's father Mike in Denver after the Broncos selected him in the first round of the 2006 NFL draft, and Lynch has spoken highly of Cutler's arm talent in the past. At 33, Cutler is what he is at this point but would offer more upside as a bridge quarterback to the next starter than someone like Schaub. He also might not cost as much to obtain if the Bears cut him loose, a move that would save Chicago \$13 million worth of cap space. The Bears also need help at quarterback, though, so they might not be inclined to let him go without at least getting something in return.

Brian Hoyer: Hoyer would make sense in a role similar to the one described for Schaub above. It wouldn't make much sense to bring in both but like Schaub, Hoyer has experience playing for Shanahan and the duo even had some success together in Cleveland. He'd also make a good mentor for a younger quarterback or two and could even be a bridge starter if need be.

Mike Glennon: Glennon is an intriguing case because he's actually started 18 games in his career and thrown for 30 touchdowns against 15 interceptions. At 6-foot-6, Glennon is the type of pure pocket passer Shanahan supposedly covets, though he's only completed 59.4 percent of his career passes. Glennon isn't likely a franchise solution, but he profiles as the type Shanahan might be able to elevate to solid starter status.

A drafted rookie: Again, Shanahan hasn't even had a chance to evaluate this year's draft class and until he does, he won't be able to determine the direction he wants to go at the position for the long-term. The Niners own the No. 2 overall pick, which means they should have their pick of quarterbacks if there's one they really like. The early read on this draft class is that there won't be a signal-caller worth taking that high, though North Carolina's Mitch Trubisky, Clemson's Deshaun Watson and Notre Dame's DeShone Kizer have been mentioned as possibilities in media circles. The Niners could also wait until the middle rounds to find someone Shanahan believes he could develop while using their top pick to get the best player available. Either way, it's a safe bet the Niners will spend a pick on a quarterback at some point.

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### ***2017 offseason predictions for all 32 NFL teams***

By Nick Wagoner, ESPN.com

San Francisco 49ers

Colin Kaepernick will opt out of his contract, and the Niners draft a quarterback.

At this point, it would be a major surprise if Kaepernick didn't opt out. Even if he elected not to, chances are the Niners will release him, so it makes sense for him to get ahead of it and begin gauging his market. That doesn't mean a return at a reduced rate can be ruled out, however, but with or without Kaepernick, it's safe to assume San Francisco will prioritize taking a quarterback relatively early in the draft.

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### ***McShay's 2017 NFL Mock Draft 2.0***

By Todd McShay, ESPN.com

2. San Francisco 49ers, 2-14

Deshaun Watson, QB, Clemson



We don't have a first-round grade on Watson because of his inconsistent accuracy and decision-making (30 INTs the past two seasons). But his outstanding leadership skills and intangibles will help him during pre-draft meetings with teams, and he does have intriguing physical tools, including a good arm and athleticism. Kyle Shanahan's offense would be a good fit for Watson -- or UNC's Mitch Trubisky, who I thought about putting here. Shanahan has had success with mobile QBs in the past.

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***John Lynch declines to set timeline for construction of new offense***

By Mike Florio, ProFootballTalk.com

With Kyle Shanahan taking over as coach of the 49ers, it's safe to say he won't be crafting an offense based on the players available to him. Instead, he'll embark on putting together the kind of personnel who will be able to run his chosen offense.

As a result, it will take some time to get the 49ers offense to the point at which the players can run the offense the way Shanahan wants it to be run — with quarterback obviously being the most important factor.

New G.M. John Lynch declined to provide a timeline for the adjustment of the offense to the Shanahan approach during a visit to PFT Live that will be included in Wednesday's show. For those of you who frequent the website, you get a preview. And by preview I mean the entire, wide-ranging, 20-minute, unedited interview.

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***49ers will have all new strength and conditioning staff***

By Zac Jackson, ProFootballTalk.com

The 49ers confirmed to CSNBayArea.com that the team's entire strength and conditioning staff will not be retained.

Such change is common across the NFL when teams change head coaches. The 49ers officially hired Kyle Shanahan as their new head coach on Monday and will formally introduce him on Thursday.

No longer with the team are director of human performance Mark Uyeyama; strength, conditioning and nutrition assistant Kurt Schmidt; and strength and conditioning assistants Brian Johnson and David Young.

CSNBayArea.com had previously reported the departure of Uyeyama, who spent the last nine years with the team under five different head coaches. Johnson took a job at Texas A&M last month.