

# TRANSCRIPTIONS



**Head Coach Kyle Shanahan  
Press Conference – December 11, 2019  
San Francisco 49ers**

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**Opening comments:**

“Injuries for today: not practicing will be [DL] Dee Ford, [DL] D.J. Jones, [CB] Richard Sherman, [S Jaquiski] Tartt, [DL] Jullian Taylor and [CB] K’Waun [Williams].”

**Do you plan to open the practice window for any of the IR guys?**

“No one new this week.”

**And where is DL Kentavious Street at? How do you feel about his possibility?**

“He’s got a chance to get up this week.”

**Are you optimistic about D.J. Jones and his ankle?**

“Not really. I’m a little worried about it. We’re waiting on some other opinions and stuff, but it’s a pretty significant one.”

**If you’re without him and Taylor, who slides in at nose tackle?**

“That’s why Street would have a chance to get up this week. We’ve got [DL] Sheldon [Day] who can do it. We’ve got [DL] Solomon [Thomas] who can do it. We’ve got all our guys on the inside who can do it, [DL Arik] Armstead, [DL DeForest Buckner] Buck.”

**When you say significant injury, could that be season-ending?**

“Yes, possibly.”

**Did he aggravate the same injury Sunday?**

“It was a different ankle, yeah a different ankle.”

**When you look at your experience in Atlanta, what did you gain from that experience there and how much of your memories are shaded by the last game you had there?**

“Not at all. I loved my time in Atlanta, loved the people I was there with. I went there at a tough time in my career and just the two previous places I had been and went with a head coach that I hadn’t known, just talking to him on the phone and stuff where we developed a real good relationship. I didn’t know a lot of guys there, but got to know [Atlanta Falcons head coach] Dan [Quinn] over the phone. The first day I met him was the day after the Super Bowl when Seattle lost to New England, I was already sitting there in the office so

I met him that Monday in person. I always thought he was going to be a great guy on the phone and then after being able to spend two years there with him, learned a lot from him. It was good to be in a good place like that and really enjoyed the players too.”

**Do you think this offense is at all approaching what you did in '16 there?**

“I think we have signs of it. What we did there in '16 was pretty special. Just from the first game to the last game, it was all year, there was really no letup in that. I think we had one game where we were under 20, I think, was at Philly, but besides that everyone was just moving pretty good that year consistently. I think we've shown signs of potential of that this year. Hopefully we can get there week in and week out.”

**When you left Cleveland, was it specially to go to Atlanta or just to open your door to possibilities?**

“I was specifically hoping to go to Atlanta, but Dan still had another five weeks going through their playoff run, their Bye Week and Super Bowl. I knew that talking to him that it would be a chance if he did end up taking a job and stuff, but he turned one down the year before. Sitting there without a job, it wasn't like I was just totally set and confident that it was going to happen, but I was definitely hoping it would.”

**Just what about his style did you think I want to attach myself to him?**

“Just watching the defense that he ran. I really wanted to be with a defensive coach like that. Also, we had a bunch of mutual friends, guys who had worked together so I had heard a lot about him as a person and I think he had about me too. Just from what I had heard, I really was intrigued with him as a person. Then just talking to him on the phone and not knowing him that well or ever meeting him before in person, but just seeing the loyalty he had and the type of person he was on the phone and everything made it a guy that I really wanted to go work for. I waited all the way until after the Super Bowl and had a couple other opportunities that were pretty good ones also that were really tough for my wife and I to decide. But, the decision was Dan and just how loyal he was to me from the beginning and I wasn't going to change that in those four stressful weeks I didn't have a job, waiting for one.”

**How familiar is the Falcons defense now as opposed to when you were there?**

“They've got some players that were still leftover, definitely some coaches and just like ours we all come from the same foundation and where we started with the fronts and coverages. But, just like all the places who started running Seattle's scheme, they've adjusted year by year, different personalities come in building and they tweak it a little bit. There's little differences and stuff, but you can tell where we've all come from and that's all of our base defense.”

**Your respect for the Seattle defense came before you even got to Atlanta?**

“Yeah definitely, just playing against it and having to coach against it. Just the different types of philosophies and coverages and fronts, lots of different ones. And they all are tough when you're going against good players and stuff, but what ones you think are the toughest.”

**Does it ever factor in that the closer you are to a team that runs that defense can help you out down the road?**

“Yes, obviously. That’s why I wanted to go to a place like that as a coordinator and that’s why when I became a head coach I was hoping to get someone who knew that type of defense and also knew how to expand it.”

**What are some of the things you took from your experience there that has helped you?**

“I think Dan and I were a little bit different personality-wise. He was always very upbeat and always positive. I was just always focused in on being a coordinator and whatever the task at hand was totally. It was cool to watch him and be in a building like that. Just to watch him run his team meetings, involve everyone, how entertaining they were, how loose he kept guys, how he communicated with everybody. I loved how he involved the Navy SEALs in what he did. He involved a lot of boxing stuff in what he did. Things that I’ve taken also that weren’t that big of a deal to me before I was with Dan, but I saw how cool it was for him and I really gravitated to it, saw the players did and I’ve used it here. Just the type of person he was day in and day out, no matter what was going on.”

**Did you have Navy SEAL’s on this trip?**

“Yeah, they usually come to most of the games. I want to say they come to every one. They might have missed a couple, but they are usually at every one.”

**This is probably not on the top of the list of things you do and think about, but do you ever have a chance to take a moment and reflect on how far you guys have come since last season to where you’re at now?**

“No, not yet. Hopefully I’ll enjoy doing that after the year, if it ends the right way. But, if I start doing that now I have a feeling I won’t enjoy this year very much and how it ends. Once you start thinking about that it’s over. You’re always as good as your last game or as good as the next one coming up. We’ve got to make sure we take care of Atlanta this week.”

**You’ve mentioned the defensive line dominating in those OTAs and we saw it in training camp. Was it really remarkable just to see that happen to your offense?**

“Definitely, that’s what the goal was. You watch some of these teams just over the years, going back to, it started to me with my age, just watching Baltimore in the Super Bowl, I think in 2000 or 2003, something like that. You watch when Tampa Bay won the Super Bowl with their D-Line. You watch when Chicago got there with their D-Line. You watch when Indy was finally able to get over the hump with what they had with their D-Line with [former Indianapolis Colts DE Dwight] Freeney and [former Indianapolis Colts OLB Robert] Mathis and stuff. You watch Denver, who had the best offense in the history of the NFL at the time and how much they struggled versus Seattle. Then the next time Denver went and they didn’t have a very good offense, but they had an unbelievable pass rush with [Denver Broncos OLB] Von Miller and stuff and that was when they were able to win it that last year with [former Denver Broncos QB] Peyton [Manning]. I think that’s the stuff that I’ve watched over my life, that the teams that have a chance no matter what the situation is are the ones with the D-Lines. If not, you’re always trying to get that big

offense and not turn it over and stuff like that. If you've got a pass rush, I at least no from an offensive coordinator standpoint, if you can't handle the pass rush it doesn't matter what's behind it."

**Did you sense that the first OTA? Was it a literal thought that went through your head?**

"I mean, I sensed it with what we had here and as soon as we were able to get that trade for Dee Ford and as soon as [DL Nick] Bosa didn't go first we knew what we had. We hoped it would look that way and it did and then we were really just trying to make sure they stayed healthy. We've been able to do it for the most part. I know we've been banged up here the last few weeks. It is a little bit of a trickle-down effect with the guys, but hopefully we're getting our legs back a little bit. We're going to have to walk-through today and stuff, take care of our guys, but when they're going, they're very tough to deal with."

**Where do you think QB Jimmy Garoppolo's made strides within these last couple months, as opposed to the first handful of games during the season coming off the knee injury?**

"I think he's continued to make big throws and stuff, but he's obviously eliminated some of the turnovers, which I think is huge. Sometimes when guys make a bunch of big plays and turnovers, the only way to get them to eliminate the turnovers is to stop trying to make those big plays. I don't think Jimmy has done that. I think he's continued to make big plays, maybe even made more of them, and the turnovers have gone way down, which has been a huge step in the right direction."

**So, how much has the evolution of WR Deebo Samuel, obviously adding WR Emmanuel Sanders, how much has that impacted what Jimmy's been able to do?**

"A ton. The better those guys are, the more consistent those guys are, the easier it makes his job also. Same thing with the O-Line and the running game, too. Getting [TE George] Kittle back has helped. It's not just the pass game. I think our run game has been better these last couple weeks and stuff. When you do that, that gives the quarterback a lot better looks and better protection in the pass game. It's been a little bit of everyone."

**When you look at the wins Atlanta has had over the last couple of weeks, what stands out to you about their personnel and the way that they've played?**

"They're playing hard, you can tell. They battled injuries all year and they've got a couple guys back, which has helped. I think they've won three out of their last five games. I think their defense is playing a lot better. There was some stat I was looking at, I think they have like four sacks in their nine losses, but they have 18 sacks in their four wins and three of those have come in the last five weeks. They've got, I think, eight turnovers but only two in their nine losses. They've really started playing very aggressive, playing with nothing to lose, and it's really made a lot more opportunities for the offense, too."

**What has Jimmy done to, like you said, still make the big plays and not turn it over? What has he done either mindset-wise or just work?**

"Just work. I mean, there's nothing, no conscious decision you make. It's being out there more. The more you're out there and the more situations you go through, good or bad,

it's how are you going to react to them. What are you going to learn from them? Some people, the more they are out there, the more nervous they get and they go into a shell and just get worse. Jimmy, no matter whether a good thing or a bad thing happens to him, I feel it's made him better each week. He learns from it, he doesn't overanalyze it and freak out about it. He just learns from it, files it in the bank and then goes to the next week and tries to keep stacking them up."

**What has the trickle-down effect of the injuries on the defensive line been? What have you seen?**

"I mean, just guys' reps go up a lot more. I don't even know the numbers, but I'm sure you guys do. The more guys are out there, the more guys have to play, the more that guys play, the more they get tired. You want your best guys out there the most, but there also is a reason we rotate. When D-Linemen are coming off the ball and going, and O-Linemen they don't rotate, they are very hard to deal with."

**Is that an unintended consequence of wanting to score quick but you guys were scoring in one or two plays there in the first half, did that make the defense more tired?**

"Yeah, it doesn't help. When they were having those drives, you want to give them a rest but you never want to apologize for scoring too fast. If you had your choice, you'd rather take some time and give those guys some time to recover, which they kind of needed in that game."

**The RB Raheem Mostert touchdown, the run up the middle, I know you guys have had a ton of success running to the edges, does that open up the safeties a little bit wider sometimes because they have to respect that?**

"Not necessarily in that case. I mean, that's just cover-two. They've got to back up the clouds and stuff down the sidelines. I think in that when you have a Tampa-two look and the MIKE's over the top on everything, we ran an outside zone play like five plays before that where the MIKE's unblocked and he went to go meet Raheem there and Raheem is just so fast and it surprised him that he thought he had an angle and Raheem just out ran him for 15 yards untouched. Then you get a similar look like that where he's unblocked again and so he runs a little bit harder but it's a gap scheme and it's inside so he over runs it. Then, Raheem can go inside just right into the end zone. I think we blocked it well on the play, but I think it was Raheem's speed on the outside zone play earlier that kind of panicked the linebacker a little bit and made him over run the next power scheme."

**WR Kendrick Bourne has mentioned that you've cussed him out at certain times. Can you talk about just how to keep him focused and what his evolution has been?**

"Bourne's a funny guy. He reminds me a lot of my son who's nine. I don't mean that as an insult, kind of. I'm good with Bourne so he should be alright on it. When you sit there and get on him, he still sits there and smiles at you. And at first, it used to drive me crazy because it's like are you not bothered by it? He is. He's trying his hardest, he's trying to go out there. He really loves to play football. I think you guys can see how he plays and sometimes I think that can get taken the wrong way in terms of he's not locked in and detailed on it, and he is. He works at it all week. He has a lot of fun out there, which

sometimes he will make some mistakes, but I also think it's kind of his gift and his curse. It's also why he's never freaking out out there, either. I mean, he is loose and the game is not too big for him, no matter what the situation is. Sometimes I'm like I'm glad he doesn't know how big this moment is because he looks fearless as can be. You've got to deal with that stuff a lot, but sometimes you've got to make a point. And if you really want him to lock in, sometimes you've got to make it a little bit personal and usually then he locks in, still with a smile, which I've gotten used to. But, usually they remember those and I only have to do it a couple times. Usually when you do, he doesn't forget about it."

**What's unique to you about Atlanta Falcons QB Matt Ryan? What does he do well?**

"Matt's one of the best quarterbacks in our league and he's been it for a long time. Since he came in this league playing as a rookie, all the way up until now. He's obviously a very talented guy, being the third pick in the draft. How tough he is, how good of a thrower he is, how well he can stay in that pocket. If you do not get to him, he will pick you apart just like the guy who did it to us last week with [New Orleans Saints QB] Drew [Brees]. You have to get to him and you have to guard his guys. That's why when he has some receivers, which he seems to usually do, and you give him just one hitch, that's why he has his numbers year in and year out."

**Matt Ryan and T Mike McGlinchey are cousins. Would you guess there's a relation there? It strikes me that maybe Ryan comes off as more intense.**

"No, they're almost like the same guy. I mean, one is an O-Lineman his whole life and one has been a quarterback his whole life, so that is a different personality to a degree, but I knew Matt Ryan had a cousin in the draft, and when I went to Indy, I'm not ready yet, I'm just soaking it all in, but I knew he had a cousin and McGlinchey came in and I didn't know it was him. Just the way he came in and introduced himself to everyone in the room, the way he sat down and talked, right then I was like 'Man, this guy reminds me of Matt Ryan.' Then I looked down at my notes that we get from everyone and it says it's his cousin and stuff. I always joke with him, they're both CEOs. Right when they walk in a room they know everyone's name, they know how to handle themselves. They are very similar to me. They come from good families, they've been raised the right way and they both love football. They are both extremely intense."

**You've got Armstead and Buckner on the field goal team. Their option? Does it seem a little weird to you to have those two guys blocking for field goals?**

"No, we want big guys with long arms, so you need those guys out there. It's hard to protect on that. You don't have to do it very long, but you get some fast guys off the edge where you need some long arms and you've got some big guys up the middle so you need some size there. You get O-Linemen there a lot, but sometimes D-linemen are the best at it."