

SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS

TRANSCRIPTIONS



**General Manager John Lynch, Head Coach Kyle Shanahan
& QB Jimmy Garoppolo**

Press Conference – October 31, 2017

San Francisco 49ers

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Opening comments:

QB Jimmy Garoppolo: “I’d like to start off just thanking everyone from this organization, you know, starting with [CEO] Jed [York], [chief strategy officer & executive vice president, football operations] Paraag [Marathe], [general manager] John [Lynch] and [head coach] Kyle [Shanahan] here, it’s a privilege to be here. I mean, going back to New England, thanking the Kraft family for giving me that first opportunity, thanking [New England Patriots head coach Bill] coach Belichick for believing in me from the start. Things have really worked out. So, just thrilled to be here right now.”

General Manager John Lynch: “I think Kyle will tell you a great quality of a quarterback, taking charge. I thought I was starting, but hey have at it Jimmy. Welcome to everybody and most of all we want to welcome Jimmy Garoppolo. An unbelievable opportunity came our way in the midst of what’s really been a tough season. Where we are right now, you know, it’s not fun, but Kyle and I, and I think everybody in the building, feels positive things. I can tell you that what happened this weekend felt a lot better after yesterday. Is that going to fix all our ills? Absolutely not. But, we had an opportunity to get better as an organization. We took advantage of that. Could not be more excited to have Jimmy with us. We think we improved our football team at a very important position, and we’re just very, very excited to get going. Kyle probably wants to end this in a hurry so he can go back to work, so Jimmy can go to work and get ready to play. I’m sure you have a lot of questions for Kyle and I, but really, this is about Jimmy, and you guys, you know, I do want to thank the New England Patriots. I think it’s refreshing to find people where you cannot belabor things. You bring something up and you come to a quick resolution and you don’t grind people out. That’s what we were able to do. So, I want to thank them, and I have a lot of respect for that organization. Obviously their success speaks for itself, but also just the way they handle things. Without further ado, welcome to Jimmy Garoppolo.”

Can you kind of take us through the past 24 hours and what was your immediate reaction when you found out that you would be coming to the 49ers?

JG: “Yeah, it’s been a bit of a whirlwind for sure, no doubt about it. Just when I first found out, I can’t even describe how excited I was. Just, I mean, my time in New England was great, you know, I thank them for everything. But, to come in here, coming

to such a great organization, it really is a privilege. I'm excited about it. It's going to be a good thing."

You and John were very clear from the moment you got here how important this position was. Why is Jimmy the guy that you have put your stock in?

Head Coach Kyle Shanahan: "Because we believe in him. I put a lot of time into Jimmy throughout college, studied a lot of tape on him at Eastern Illinois, got a chance to go down there and work him out when he was coming out, got to go out to dinner with him. I watched a lot of college tape on him and felt very good about him coming out of college. Obviously didn't get him when I was at Cleveland, but watching the times that he has had in the NFL, his regular-season games, throughout the preseason, he's looked exactly like the player that we hoped he could be. Watching how he handles himself, how he carries himself, talking to people that have a lot of respect for him and what they say about him as a man, as a leader, I think he's the exact type of guy you're looking for."

What specifically do you like about the way he plays?

KS: "I like, first of all, it starts with ability. Jimmy has the ability to make plays with his legs. He's a very good thrower. And most importantly, to me, he hangs in that pocket, keeps his eyes downfield and is up for any challenge."

I think you mentioned that you tried to make a trade at draft time with New England. Was this essentially the same trade and was this on the table this whole time and waiting for New England or how did it happen right now?

JL: "You know, in talking with the Patriots, one of the things, we're not going to get into a ton of details. I will tell you that I think getting, wanted to do a trade this offseason, we inquired and were quickly shut down. It never even became. They didn't, it never came to fruition at all. In the last couple days, it did. We were very pleased that that was the case."

Are the terms similar from what you proposed?

JL: "Well, there never were any terms because we never got to propose because it was basically not an option. That's what I appreciated. You get an answer really quick from them and that was the case then. So, there never were terms. We're very pleased with the way it worked out."

What's realistic about Jimmy getting in and getting in a game and how long do you think that will take?

KS: "We'll look at that week-to-week. It's a huge challenge. You know, Jimmy coming here, never playing in this offense before. I know it's a completely different terminology from what he had in New England and college. That takes a lot of time. I know Jimmy is going to come in here and do everything he can to get ready. I know we are too, but by no means are we trying to rush the process. I would definitely not expect it this week. We'll look at it each week and when we feel that he's comfortable and has a chance to go in there and have some success, with the time he's put in and the reps that he's got in practice, then we'll decide when that time is right."

I'm sure you guys are aware he's not signed beyond this year. Do you have hopes of getting an extension done soon? What is the plan as far as that goes?

JL: "Look, I just met Jimmy for the first time. You know, we're here, I know his representative, [agent] Don Yee, is in the room, and he's sitting right next to the guy that will be talking to him. There's a lot of options at our disposal. We're just getting to know him. Honest to God, we need to get him in the playbook, so that's where we're going to start, first thing's first. But, I can tell you, second-round picks are very valuable in this league, particularly where we are at as an organization. And so, this is a guy we wanted and were willing to give what we thought was a very valuable commodity and exchange for him. So, we're excited moving forward that he's going to be a part of our future."

There's obviously, regarding that stuff, things to be worked out, but do you view this as you've found your home for quite some time?

JG: "You know, I guess we'll see what happens, type of thing. You know, thrilled to be here. I mean, just got here this morning. I mean, I couldn't be happier. But you know, we're just, got to take it week-by-week right now. I've got a whole playbook to learn. The terminology, I mean, it's going to be like learning a different language. I'm looking forward to the challenge and enjoying the process."

Your collaboration with Kyle is a little different than it works at some other teams. How did it work in this case? Did you defer to Kyle any more because it's the quarterback position?

JL: "You know, there's been a lot of talk about that. But, hey, Kyle and I came in here and we never made any bones about it. We were going to do this as a team, and we do. Through good times, there haven't been a whole lot of those in the regular season, but throughout the whole process, we've been together. That's the way we operate. I actually think that's a cool thing. This process was no different."

Along the lines of what you said about the value of a second-round pick and a relatively short sample size with Jimmy, even in his career, what is it about him that made you decide it was worth that second-round pick?

JL: "Well, I think Kyle spoke to that. Kyle followed him a lot in college and thought very highly of him. I think when he has played, it's been very impressive. I've learned a lot in the last seven months. I learned a lot in my broadcast career. We meet with quarterbacks every week. I kind of know, I feel like I have a feel for the characteristics. Kyle has a very specific feel for what he wants out of a quarterback. Jimmy kind of checked off all the boxes, and the film's just impressive. I don't think you have to be some quarterback savant to see that albeit limited time, it's very impressive. You have to love the pedigree, where he came from, the organization. We've got a lot of respect for organization, had an opportunity to sit back and learn from one of greatest, if not the greatest. I know that's not a popular sentiment in this area where there's another guy who is in that conversation and I'll leave that to everyone else. But, he had an opportunity to sit behind [New England Patriots QB] Tom [Brady], to learn from Bill, to learn from some great people. We think that's important. He brings so much that we're excited to work with."

How much did you know about the type of offense Kyle runs and how do you think it suits your game?

JG: "Well, not a ton, but just seeing it on film, you know, watching it, trying to pick up certain things when we were in New England and use them. I mean, it's a fun offense to run. It looks like it, at least. I'm excited to learn it, get the verbiage down and everything, get in the huddle with the guys. That's what I'm really looking forward to, just meet my new teammates, meeting all the staff and everything like that. It's going to be a great experience. I'm looking forward to it."

What kind of things have you learned from your time spent in New England, backing up Tom and learning from coach Belichick? What do you think you can bring to this organization from that?

JG: "Well, those guys, they taught me a ton, going all the way back to rookie year. But, I think some of the important things is just how to prepare, how to practice, how to prepare to practice. Those things just, it's a little thing, but those are kind of what set the tone for the team. All those things going forward are only going to help me."

Kyle mentioned the meetings before the draft. What do you remember about that process?

JG: "Yeah, we were actually just talking about it. We met a couple different times. All of them were good meetings. I thought from the first time I met Kyle, there was a connection there. You know, things didn't really work out how, one way or another, but in the long term, I think it worked out for the best."

How long had the 49ers been on your radar since knowing Kyle was the coach here and your contract was coming up and there might be some opportunities? Did you think in the back of your mind that this could happen?

JG: "You know, I try to stay focused on the season as much as possible. Being a quarterback in this league is tough. There's so much going on that you don't really have time to think about those kinds of things. But, I'm thrilled it worked out the way it did."

Did you have a chance to talk to Tom on your way out here from New England?

JG: "I actually didn't even get to the facility. So, I didn't get to really see anybody in person. But, yeah, he texted me. We talked for a second."

You mentioned that it was like it's going to be like a foreign language, trying to pick up the playbook. I noticed a couple years ago, I read an article, where you said a similar thing when you first joined the Patriots. Having been through that once already, do you have a little bit more confidence, and do you think that given your connection with Kyle and the fact that you speak the same football language, it will go quicker this time?

JG: "You know, I'd like to think so. Being in my fourth year in the league, I think that only is going to help me. Coming out of college, trying to pick up a playbook, I didn't have a playbook in college. I know it sounds crazy, but we really didn't. Hopefully it goes a little

smooth. I would imagine it would, just having more experience. But, it's going to be a challenge but I'm looking forward to it."

You have a relationship with Belichick. Do you think that relationship helped make this happen?

JL: "I don't know. I think relationships are important. One great lesson I learned from Bill Belichick in a very short time there in New England is speak for yourself. Don't speak for other people. So, I'm not going to try to get into his head. But, I do know that relationships are important in this business. I've learned that thus far."

Did the call come from New England or did you initiate?

JL: "Like I said, we agreed with the Patriots that we are going to leave the details. There's a lot of details. As Bill said, it's a big puzzle and I think it's very complex to get into and we're just going to leave it at that, and we're thrilled to have this guy sitting next to me right now."

Why not wait until free agency and make a play at that point and keep your draft picks? What was the risk in doing it that way?

JL: "We had an opportunity right now. We thought about it for about 10 minutes and said this is too good of an opportunity to not take advantage of and so we jumped at it."

Three and a half years as a backup, how ready were you for this and were you ready a little earlier for this, to become a starter?

JG: "Yeah, just excited about it really. You know, kind of eager to get this opportunity. You know, I'm going to try and make the best of it and take full advantage of it."

Is Jimmy the quarterback of the future here or is it possible he could be just a rental?

KS: "No, I think we brought him here because we want him to be the quarterback of the future. That's up to Jimmy and how it works out here and we're going to work our best to get him ready. We talked about, we're going to look at every opportunity to find that guy, and this opportunity came up, and Jimmy is a guy that we believe can be that guy. So, when that opportunity came up, and it's a guy that you believe in from what you've seen on tape and what you've heard of people that know him, that's something that's too good of an opportunity to pass up on. So, we didn't hesitate."

How much legwork goes into, obviously you were quick to make the decision when you could get him, but before that the legwork that goes into maybe evaluating what could be available in the offseason? How much work did you do on draft prospects and all that type of stuff?

JL: "One thing that Kyle and I did when we first got together, we spent as much time as we could, just the two of us and watching a lot of film and seeing what's important to Kyle at each position. You know, perhaps Jimmy was a guy we watched a lot of this offseason. You know, we were looking for qualities that he covets. And so, we watched some of the people that Kyle felt did it in a way that he thought was, that would lend to success in this league. So, we did a lot of legwork in the offseason, looking at a lot of

different quarterbacks, looking at a lot of different reasons, as I said, to get a good feel for what Kyle covets at that position. But, there was a lot of work done on Jimmy and so when this came up, we were really going off that work.”

Considering Jimmy's contract situation and where you guys may land in the first round of the draft, does this change how you guys approach the offseason once you guys get there and what avenues you guys may look at as far as the quarterback position moving forward?

JL: “I think Kyle just said, we believe in this guy. Listen, we're just happy to have him here. We're very, we believe very much that Jimmy is going to be our quarterback of the future and we'll let everything else play out from there.”

There was a report that going into the 2014 draft that you were asked to evaluate the quarterback position, you ranked Jimmy as one of the top two quarterbacks and neither one of your top two quarterbacks were the ones who ended up being drafted in the first round. Is that correct? Did you have him way up there?

KS: “Yes, I did.”

And was it Oakland Raiders QB Derek Carr and Garoppolo?

KS: “I'm not going to say exactly, but he was definitely up there.”

You made it clear that there's no timetable for getting him on the field. But, is it important to get him under center as much as possible this year, to get a look with your eyes, as opposed to watching film?

KS: “I think it is important, but I don't put everything into games either. You play 16 games a year. You practice all the time. You can learn a lot from a guy in practice, too. Our goal here, we didn't just bring Jimmy here to just help us right now. We would love for him to help us right now. But, this is more about the big picture, too. And you can look into anything about when and why, but it's hard to find, it's hard get opportunities in this league. I've seen it throughout my whole career, but it's hard to come across opportunities to get guys that you believe have a chance to be your quarterback for a while. I think every team is looking for that about except for probably six teams. And when those opportunities come around, if you believe that's the case, you don't hesitate and you don't look back. It's not about looking into every other situation possible. That's, to me, leaving stuff up for hope and chance. When something comes across and that's available, which this did, over the last few days, very recently, and it was to our surprise, but once we did have an opportunity and we believe in someone like we do with Jimmy, that's something that I would never hesitate on and never look back and never question the timing or the what ifs.”

Getting him on the field, is that purely contingent on Jimmy having a command of the offense, or is it also contingent on the offensive line kind of settling down a little bit as well?

KS: “I think it's contingent on everything. I want Jimmy to have a chance to go out there and be successful. I don't expect anyone to fully understand it unless you've been in that situation before. But, coming in and just learning completely new terminology, is a

big deal. You guys asked Jimmy to compare it to college to now, terminology-wise, it's always going to be a foreign language when you change what everything is called. I think one benefit he has now is our offense is a lot more similar to New England's, conceptually, than it would be to Eastern Illinois's. I don't mean that in any other way. It's totally, it's a pro scheme and more of a spread-out scheme. I think that will be easier to where he could relate some plays to other plays. But the verbiage, and the quarterback's got to communicate everything so the other 10 guys know what to do. And that's when you talk about language, and then that takes a while to get comfortable with. Some guys go through that for a whole year and it's not totally natural to them. I know Jimmy is going to do everything he can to work at that. We are not going through two-a-days either where we can just give him a ton of reps of it. So, a lot of it's going to be in the classroom and everything and we are going to still continue to prepare [QB] C.J. [Beathard] to play in these games because he needs the reps, also. So, we've got to work and figure out the best way to get our team ready. But one thing I know is I'm very excited to have Jimmy here and I'm looking forward to the chance when he does get his opportunity to play for us."