

TRANSCRIPTIONS



QB Jimmy Garoppolo
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San Francisco 49ers
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How's the knee?

"It's feeling good, coming along good. Me and [RB Jerick McKinnon] Jet going through the process together, it's been a good offseason. Very productive."

What's been the most difficult part of this for you?

"Of what? The knee?"

Yeah, just the rehab and doing what you've had to do.

"I think initially probably was the hardest part, the acceptance of everything. The first couple weeks, really, you can't put any weight on it with the meniscus and all that stuff. Probably the first month or two was the worst. But, after that, you get running and everything and you start to feel like yourself again."

Has it been a lift having all the guys back this week, the rehabbing guys, is it a little different for you guys around here?

"Yeah, definitely. It's that first day of school type feeling. You see there's a lot of new guys and a lot of the same faces. It's exciting. It's always good to get back to it."

CEO Jed York, general manager John Lynch and head coach Kyle Shanahan all talked about kind of watching you from afar throwing. You've been doing drops and throws. How much better does it feel for you to be able to do that?

"Much better. Initially, your body just isn't used to those movements. It's been so long since you've did them that you're like, 'That's not what it usually was.' Then, you start to get back into it and your body starts to react the right way. It's very encouraging."

Jet talked about the difference between the new medical staff coming over and he likes it a lot better. What changes do you see?

"Every staff has their own way of doing things. Bringing in [head of player health & performance] Ben [Peterson] and [head athletic trainer] Dustin [Little], I think they've done a good job. It's a smooth process. There's no time wasted. One thing after another, especially this time of year, we're so condensed with time that every minute counts. Those guys have really done a good job. I think guys are buying into it."

What's been the benefit of being able to go through this with Jerick?

“A lot of things. Initially, you’re so down after the surgery and everything like that. But, Jet was about three weeks ahead of me I think it was. He always had some tips for me, ‘I did this,’ or ‘Try doing this,’ type of thing. It’s encouraging being with someone, especially with Jet. The guy is so positive every day. How could you not be in a good mood with him?”

John Lynch had mentioned that he saw you throw a pass to him once and he got all excited just seeing that. Do you recall that? Were you able to do that much with Jerick during this time?

“We were condensed. At times, we were able to, and at times, we weren’t. We were on a different schedule. He was a couple weeks ahead of me and everything so I was trying to play a little catch-up game with him. But, we never know when those guys are watching. The windows are hard to see through. They must put tints on them or something.”

Is it kind of creepy knowing that they’re watching you?

“No. It actually kind of turns it into more of a practice. Kind of ramps you up a little bit, gets the energy going.”

How do you think TE George Kittle is handling his new higher profile after last season?

“George who?”

Kittle.

“Ah, yes. No, George is the same old guy, he is. A great guy to have in the locker room. He keeps everyone’s spirits up and he’s a high energy guy. You love to have that.”

Is it true his tweet to Raiders WR Antonio Brown was a dare from you?

“It depends who you ask.”

He said it was.

“I’d take it with a grain of salt, then.”

A lot of times, players say that once something is repaired like that, it’s the mental hurdle in trusting it again. How long did it take for you to kind of get it back in your head, ‘Hey, I can actually trust the stability of this knee again?’

“Trust is a good word for it because it’s really the movements, they’re things you haven’t done in a while. So, I’d say that cutting, for example. The first cut you do, you kind of have to go half-speed. Then, you go 75 and you build it up slowly. I think it’s a process. Every movement, throwing, cutting, jumping, whatever it is. But, once you’ve done it a couple times, your body reacts pretty quickly and remembers how to do it.”

With the schedule coming out today, how excited are you looking forward to just the season opener? How has that fueled you through the rehab to make sure that you’re ready for Week 1?

"I haven't seen the schedule. I've heard rumors and everything. But, it's exciting. You just kind of see that first opponent. It's difficult to look past training camp and preseason and all that stuff, obviously. But, it's always in the back of your head."

Is it good to be throwing again? Where are you at in terms of that process?

"Very good to be throwing again. It's what I do, you know. It's encouraging. Every day gets easier and easier. Able to make this throw better than I was a week ago. It's small victories like that. Throughout the whole process, it's all about small victories because you're not going to jump out and be able to throw it 60, 70 yards again. Small victories."

Kyle said his hope is for you to be as much of a part of OTAs and this offseason program, bar team drills where no one is even anywhere close to you. Is that nice for you, knowing that you're going to be able to be around the guys and you're not going to be necessarily removed from this entire two-month process?

"Absolutely. If I was removed, I would feel very weird about it. But, yeah, the coaches have put together a pretty good plan and it's kind of whatever they feel is right for me between the medical staff, the coaches and all that. I'm willing to do whatever. Whatever they say, I'll do."

OTAs start next month. Does the plan include you doing seven-on-seven stuff in that very first initial OTA session?

"We'll see. Like I said, the medical staff, combined with the coaches, talking to one another, will kind of try to come up with a game plan. I think we'll try to be a little precautionous, but I'd love to be out there."

One of the big words ahead of last season was hope. There seems to be a very decisive shift in that, more so determination. How would you describe the mindset heading into this season?

"I think it's still a new group of guys. We haven't even brought in the rookies. So, there's still parts of our team, there's holes that we're trying to fill. I think encouraged. Guys come back with a lot of energy this time of year. It's exciting. It's exciting to get everyone back together in there. The energy is high right now. It's good stuff."

What can having four running backs who are 4.4 guys do for the offense and help it evolve a little bit?

"I think a couple of those are 4.3 guys. No, Kyle's done a great job with those guys in the past, having dynamic running backs like that. It's a good group. Getting to know [RB] Tevin [Coleman] and obviously knowing the guys that have been here before, it's exciting. It's going to be a lot of fun."

Is the expectation that you'll be ready and medically cleared for training camp?

"I hope so. We'll see. A lot of time between now and then, but that's the goal."

Did any other quarterbacks reach out to you in these past few months to check on you, give you advice or encouragement?

"I think more so initially when the injury happened. I had a couple guys text me and reach out, just giving me encouragement, guys that have actually had it happen to them. It's nice just having that."

Far down the road, but would you have to wear or want to wear or be asked to wear a brace on your knee?

"Hell yeah. Yeah, I think that's a for sure."

Is that for the rest of your career? What's the time frame on that?

"I think that's kind of one you play by ear. I wore one initially as a rookie. Then, I kind of got away from it. I think this year it's a certainty. But, we'll see how it goes down the road."

Are you talking about both knees or just the left?

"Just the left. I've still got to be able to move a little bit."

Is that why you took it off, just to increase mobility?

"Yeah, it was a number of things. I never played with one before in college or high school or anything like that. So, it was different. But, these new ones that they got are titanium, lightweight. It's like you're not wearing anything sometimes."

What's the one thing that you're really looking forward to doing that you haven't done yet, on the field?

"I think just going through a full practice. I was out there at practices last year and everything and on the sideline for the games, but it's different when you're not in there, in the huddle, talking to the guys. You still interact with guys, but there's just a different feel to it. So, I think just that interaction between me and the O-Linemen or the skill guys, whatever it is, or talking trash to the defense. It's different. I'm excited to get back to it."

Due to circumstances in your career, you haven't actually been able to play a whole bunch. Was there anything you could last year? Obviously, it doesn't replicate having actual NFL snaps, but was there anything you could do to speed up the process?

"There's a number of things, whether it's film room or getting with the coaches. It was tough during the season because they were busy game-planning and stuff like that. But, like I said before, it's been a very productive offseason. Whether it was in the film room or out on the field. Even trying new things. Different drops, how your movement is. It's been a very productive offseason."

What did you get out of that time in December with former NFL head coach Mike Shanahan?

"A lot of different things. He's one of the best to every to do it, obviously. A Hall of Fame guy. He's just incredibly smart. Seeing the game from his point of view is different. He was looking at it differently than a quarterback. It's hard to describe. It's going to help me a lot going forward."

Are you just using him as a sounding board? Did you ask him for tips? Are you guys watching your 49ers games or random NFL games?

“Literally, everything. We watched our offense, our defense, other teams, teams that played two years ago that he thought a clip could help me. It’s applicable in different ways. He’s so smart that it was incredible to have that experience and I thank him a lot for that.”