

TRANSCRIPTIONS



**Head Coach Kyle Shanahan
Conference Call – September 9, 2019
San Francisco 49ers**

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Do you have an update on RB Tevin Coleman and what the MRI showed?

“Yeah, it’s a high ankle sprain so I’m pretty sure he’s not going to be around this week and we’ll take it week-to-week after that.”

Is IR a possibility or do you think you can write that out?

“No, I don’t think IR is a possibility right now so I think we’ll ride it out.”

Will you add a running back from the practice squad or somewhere else to increase the numbers this week?

“Most likely. We’ve got to see how the week goes, how many of them we are going to need on Sunday. There’s plenty of times, in Atlanta, I think we played every game but two or three with only two running backs so sometimes that’s a risk you take in a game, it all just depends how the rest of our roster is and what we feel gives us the best chance by Saturday.”

How is everybody else? Did any other injuries crop up? How did DL Nick Bosa’s ankle come out of it?

“I think he came out successful, didn’t hurt it worse. But, there’s always some wear and tear in the game. I think most guys dealt with dehydration. [DB] Tarvarius Moore, [RB Matt] Breida, [K] Robbie Gould, even [CB Richard Sherman] Sherm a little bit, but there were no serious injuries after that except for Tevin.”

Is WR Dante Pettis’ groin injury the reason he’s not starting or is this something that this is WR Deebo Samuel’s job?

“It’s definitely not Deebo’s job. It’s not anyone’s right now. That’s something that I kind of talked about all preseason. No one’s really taken that role. Dante got a setback with his groin injury where he just missed some time to practice so that gave him a little bit of a setback leading into Week 1, which made it easier for Deebo to start over him. We went in knowing Deebo was going to get more playing time. I definitely didn’t plan on Dante getting only two reps. He should have been in more than that. That starts with me. I’ll make sure not to let that happen again.”

After watching the tape, what did you see from Bosa yesterday? How did you think he played?

“He definitely had an effect on the game which is what we were hoping for. He got in the backfield a lot. I know he got that one sack which started with [DL] Dee Ford running into him. He had a number of times where he got free, which I thought were impressive. [Tampa Bay Buccaneers QB] Jameis [Winston] made some very impressive escapes from the pocket on a number of those too. I thought it was a good first game. Still a lot of areas to improve, but considering what he’s been going through here the last few weeks, I thought it was a success.”

He said after the game that he was kind of pretty quickly introspective, just thinking about his own game and the kind of the mindset he has to have compared to college. Are you surprised or is there anything that stands out to you about his mental approach to the game that maybe you didn’t expect when you drafted him?

“I think, just being around him, I think you can see why that’s such a huge part of why he is so good. We all know he’s talented and stuff, you have to be to be the second pick in the draft. Being around him, you can see why he’s such a good football player. The guy is extremely smart and knows a lot about football, looks at it the right way. He’s not just always trying to win on ability, he’s trying to win on technique and discipline, plus his ability. That’s why I think he always plays to his best and can always get better too.”

After all this talk all training camp about takeaways and interceptions, was it important psychologically for you guys to come away with the four takeaways, three interceptions? Do you think they needed that?

“I think so. As long as we went last year with that, I can tell you that the longer we went without interceptions and stuff last year, the harder it got. It became just a burden on everyone non-stop. To open up this year and to beat our interceptions from last year in one game, we’re not proud of last year at all, but we’re proud that we were able to beat that right away so we can move on from that and hopefully have a better record or a good record this year. But no, the guys ran around hard and when [LB] Fred [Warner] had his, when we really had almost three turnovers in a row. Fred had the one fumble to start and then it kind of becomes contagious after that. The next time they got up, I believe the next play [LB Mark] Nzeocha got his pick. I want to say the next play they downed it to go into halftime and then they came out and I think they fumbled the first snap and then they threw it on the next down and that was the pick-six. So, we really got three turnovers in the next four plays. Just like not getting them can be contagious, so can getting them.”

How would you evaluate your pass protection in general and then specially what happened on the play when QB Jimmy Garoppolo got sacked?

“That was just a bad play call. I thought they were going to go two-shell in that two-minute situation and we had a bad front with a guy blitzing. We had a guard pulling around who needs to get one of them and the halfback needs to get another, but they had a little too much penetration and our guard got picked off. That leaves [RB] Raheem [Mostert] to block two people. I didn’t like the play call though. They would have had to been real good to not get that sack. They had a good blitz on. They kind of got me on it and we couldn’t overcome it.”

How about the pass protection in general? How would you evaluate that?

“Overall, I thought the pass protection was good enough to win with. They got us on a blitz there, but pass protection wasn’t the issue.”

How impressed were you with defensive coordinator Robert Saleh’s game plan and play calling yesterday?

“I thought he did a good job. He mixed it up, kept them off-beat. Guys didn’t know where we were always lined up. He mixed the coverages up, moved the D-Linemen, stunted them some, rushed some straight some, mixed in some pressure. I thought he did a real good job. Anytime you can keep the quarterback and the play caller off-base, it helps the players have a chance to get turnovers.”

What did you make of CB Ahkello Witherspoon’s performance after reviewing the tape and also Richard Sherman talked a lot about Ahkello’s renewed mindset and how he’s sort of bouncing back from adversity differently this year? I’m wondering if you’ve noticed that as well?

“Yeah, I definitely have. We’ve been noticing it here over the last couple weeks even in the last couple months. But, you don’t get to play a lot in the preseason so you really want to hold your judgement to the regular season and I felt really good after the game. Just watching him during the game and when I got on the plane and watched it and when I watched it this morning again I only felt stronger. I thought he had a hell of a game, got a change to break up some balls. Even the third-and-four that they moved the chains on him and he drove on that ball and Jameis made a perfect throw and if it wasn’t perfect he would have stopped them there. I really liked how Ahkello played. I also thought he was more physical in the run game and just played out there with a lot more confidence and it helped us win.”

You put some of the onus on yourself last night, needing to be more consistent. What would you say is it you need to do differently or what would you have done differently in your play calling?

“When our offense isn’t consistent, I mean I look at it when our team isn’t consistent, I look at it as a reflection of myself. As an offensive play caller, when the offense isn’t, then I’m even stronger on myself. As far as play calling and stuff, I wasn’t really looking at it that way. Our goal was to go in and try to get 30 runs. We thought if we got 30 runs in that game, we’d win. You count our two kneel downs I think we got 32. That was the goal of it. Wish we could have ran better, but I think that has to do with helping us not turn it over and things like that. When we don’t execute some things that I believe we should, that we are good enough to do, that’s all of us. If a player doesn’t make the play, I’m the one who coaches him, so are the other coaches on our staff. Anytime a player misses something we think that they should make, the onus is on me, it’s on the position coach and it’s on the player. That’s kind of how we look at everything.”

How did you feel like Mostert performed? He had 40 yards. Do you feel like he can be an every down back if Tevin Coleman is to miss time?

“Yeah, I do. I mean, he’s going to have to step it up for us if that is the case and really just like he did last night. I know Raheem wants to get on the field as an offensive player and he’s had his opportunities here and there. It’s been a little harder for him this year

with Tevin coming in and it's always hard when you're mixing guys like Tevin and [RB Matt] Breida, but when Tevin went down, Raheem stepped right in, didn't hesitate, broke a couple tackles for us and there were a couple plays especially there at the end where I thought we blocked it for five and he got about 25 plus the 15 yards at the end of it. So, Raheem stepped in and was really a pivotal part of us winning that game."

Do you feel comfortable with Raheem as a receiver?

"Yeah, I feel comfortable with Raheem as a receiver. He can catch the ball, he's very fast. All of our guys are pretty fast, all of them have good hands. We're a little selective on who runs certain routes better than others, but anytime you have all our backs are in that 4.4 to below area and they have good hands, they're always threats as receivers."

Were you happy with DB Tarvarius Moore's play? I know outside the obvious PBU on the fourth down, I'm wondering how you evaluated him yesterday.

"Was the obvious PBU a good play or a bad play for you?"

It seemed like a good play. What was it like for you?

"I'm just joking. It was a good play, but it could be a better play, too. We wanted him to get a pick-six right there and end the game. It was a hell of a job, a big time stopping that and I just enjoyed watching Tarvarius play yesterday. I enjoyed it live and I enjoyed it on tape. By no means was it perfect, he can get a lot better in those areas, but he's a football player. We know he can cover, we know he can run and you can see it on the tape, he does not mind hitting at all. He's got a knack for the ball out there. It comes pretty natural to him. If he can stay healthy and the more he plays, I think the better he'll get."

How do you diagnose the inconsistencies you guys had yesterday with the running game?

"I mean, I think when, I thought they had a pretty good game plan for us. One thing is they've got some pretty good run players in there, especially on the inside with the big nose and obvious [Tampa Bay Buccaneers DL Ndamukong] Suh, but all their guys play hard and they play the run well. They had a pretty good game plan running a bunch of blitzes into our runs, dare enough to pass at times, and at times we did. We needed to hit a couple of those to get them out of that and we didn't. When you don't make them pay for some of the stuff they're doing in their run blitzes, they're not going to get out of it. You can choose to keep throwing, but the way our defense was playing and getting the turnovers we did, having the lead, we stuck with the run a lot more. Our goal as a team, not just as an offense, our goal as a team was to get 30 runs and I always say, when you say that to a team, everyone's like, "Why don't you just run it the first 30 plays of the game?" Because that's not how it works. You've got to play good defense, you've got to do decent on third down. We didn't do decent on third down, so we were able to do good enough on defense to keep a few drives going to where we could get those 30 runs. When you do that, that's a huge team effort and I was happy with the result because of it."

Do you know when Coleman got hurt?

"I know he got hurt on the first play. He got hurt on the first play of the game, I think they landed on his ankle and then it just got worse as the game went. He tried to battle through

it throughout the second quarter and I think he was done at halftime if I remember correctly.”

How did QB Jimmy Garoppolo look on film? Were there things that you saw where he was more efficient or he didn't look as comfortable? This is the first chance you've gotten to see him in about a year for a full game.

“Yeah, he made some good plays yesterday for sure. I thought the best play that he made was a huge scramble when we were backed up. The pocket opened up and he just hit it and ran and moved the chain for us, which was a big one. Unfortunately, we got the holding call on that play, so it got taken back so it didn't count, but he had a number of good things. Just like the rest of the offense, I didn't think we were very consistent. I thought we missed too many opportunities and I think we'll be better going forward next week.”

After his pick-six, does that change, as a play caller, does that change the way, I don't know, just how you look at the game or call the game? I guess what I'm asking is did you get more conservative after you see something like that?

“No. I mean, every play affects everything. I don't think me personally as a play caller I changed after that. I think our idea of how we went into the game, we planned on running the ball a lot. We had a few checks and stuff like that that got us out of a few run calls to go into passes and things like that. But no, we stuck with it the same way. I don't think anything really changed.”

As far as the wide receivers, I realize it's one game and I realize most of those guys are pretty young and still kind of learning. But as you said, no one kind of emerged throughout the summer and no one really emerged yesterday. What level of concern do you have with that group?

“Well, what I'm excited about is I know we've got the answers in our building and it's taken a while to do that. We do have guys that are young. We have guys that are very young. We have guys that are also injured. So, we're working through that right now, which is always concerning. Whenever you have a young group, you've got to play young guys, you don't want to have to put the pressure on guys who aren't quite ready. I felt like we've dealt with that in the two years previously also. Dante had some setbacks throughout camp, which has made him a little bit behind the eight-ball, but I'm very confident in the ability of Dante and I know he'll get there. I'm just trying to be patient. I also feel that way about our rookies that we've added, but they are rookies also. If we can get some of these guys back healthy, that'll help. What I like is the answer is in our building. I don't see that we have to go outside or anything like that. We've got to continue coaching these guys real hard, putting the pressure on them and we need them to respond. I get to deal with these guys every day, I get to talk to them all the time and I truly believe we've got the right men in our room. We've got guys who can handle coaching, that work hard, it is important to them and they know that I'm going to be tough on them, but it's because I believe in them. We need them to come through and I know they will.”

LB Dre Greenlaw had a bigger role after LB Kwon Alexander was ejected from the game. How did he look on film when you watched him?

“I think Greenlaw did some good things. He’s definitely a good tackler, he’s not afraid to hit you. It was good for him to get that experience and to come away with a win, which is similar to even Tarvarius who was like that. Tarvarius planned on being out there that long, so Greenlaw was a little surprise. That’s the NFL. You only have five guys up, especially with [LB Mark] Nzeocha focusing mainly on special teams. Once we lost Kwon, it was a chain reaction to everybody, so he had to step it up. He had to play a lot. Had a few rookie mistakes like they all do, but he played good enough for us to win and I was happy with him. Now, we need to get better going forward.”

Why did DL Solomon Thomas only play 12 snaps? Was that just part of the game plan or did anything happen?

“No, I expected him to play a little bit more than that. We’ve also got a pretty deep D-Line group. [Defensive line coach Kris] Kocurek rotates them throughout the game, how he feels accordingly to what personnel they’re doing, what the down and distance is. Solly isn’t starting on the outside or the inside, but he’s one of our key guys right behind all four of those positions. There’s games that will play out where he plays more and there’s some where he’ll play less. I knew he wasn’t going to get more reps than the starting guys did, but I thought he would’ve gotten more than 12, but it worked out that way.”

Do you guys have any plans here in town outside of the community events you’re doing tomorrow? Are you guys doing any team bonding stuff?

“No, it’s a normal week. I think there might be a dinner for the guys tomorrow night, but none of the coaches are going to that. I’m not quite sure about that. Players will know though. I think the York’s are having everyone in an area for dinner, but the coaches won’t be at that one.”