

TRANSCRIPTIONS



**Head Coach Kyle Shanahan
Press Conference – December 17, 2019
San Francisco 49ers**

[Listen to Audio](#) | [Media Center](#)

Opening comments:

“Alright injuries today: [DL] Dee Ford wont practice, [CB Richard Sherman] Sherm, we’re having all walk-through today, but Sherm will be full-go, [S Jaquiski] Tartt will not practice, [DL] Jullian Taylor will not practice, [CB] K’Waun [Williams] is out of the protocol so he’s full-go now, and [OL Mike] Person will be limited with a neck. Sore neck.”

Sherman and K’Waun are good to go, you said?

“Yes.”

With Sherman, I mean, does that surprise you at this point?

“No, we’ll see out there. I mean, Sherm has been better since he got in the locker room at New Orleans, according to him, and because he has that mindset is what gives him a chance to be better. I know our trainers feel good with letting him go out today. It will be a walk-through and stuff. But, we’ll be able to test that a little bit more tomorrow.”

Where is Jaquiski Tartt at in his recovery?

“Just day-to-day, still just waiting on his ribs to recover. Feels a lot closer than last week, but not good enough to go today. Give him a chance tomorrow.”

What’s the situation with LB Kwon Alexander? Can he come back like in January?

“Yeah, he can come back. Not to get you tweeting that out right away. It would be awesome if he could, but I mean, it’s a really big injury and that would be down the road. There would be an outside chance at it, but we haven’t ruled it out.”

WR Kendrick Bourne said on his Instagram that Kwon told him that he’s coming back.

“That’s what I heard. That’s why I was ready for your guys’ question.”

But, has he been talking about it?

“Oh Kwon, I mean, he’s the same as Sherman. Kwon thought he could have come back the next week, you know? They’re made of the right stuff. When you think that way, even though it’s your mind, sometimes your body will follow. So, we won’t rule it out, but it’s a longshot and it’s not any time soon. Now I’ll let you guys tweet it out.”

Just in terms of how everybody's getting over this loss on Sunday, what do you see out of them? I mean, TE George Kittle was saying it would light a fire under them. Are you seeing that now as you start the week?

"Yeah, I mean today's the first day I saw them. When you're on a short week, you know, yesterday felt like two days for us, but it's kind of good when it's something like that. You don't have much time to dwell over it. Like I said after the game, we tip our hats off to Atlanta, but we've got to play a lot better on all three phases. Got to play better, got to coach better and you watch the tape and we know we can. It's just about doing it. Yeah, it was disappointing to lose. There was an opportunity that we had that we missed, and you address that. It pissed us off for a while, but the neat thing about today is after you go through it for 24 hours you get to go talk to the team. It's neat to be able to say to the team that 'look guys, last week before we played them we controlled our own destiny. It was a tough loss that we feel we were good enough to win and didn't get it done, but we still control our own destiny.' We can't sit and harp on that too long. We correct the mistakes, but we've got to go out there and play good football on Saturday."

Seems like one of the hallmarks of the offense throughout the season has been the ability to spread the ball around and find a bunch of different pass catchers and get them going. What happened on Sunday that prevented you guys from spreading the ball around like you typically would?

"Yeah it was more, I mean, some of the coverages they were playing. We wanted to go to George, we liked the matchups. They did a number of man coverage and we didn't feel like they were taking away George that much. When they do, you get to number two and stuff. I thought they did a real good job of progressing, so a lot of our concepts kind of turned into a, they did a good job rushing which makes it tough to progress to number two and number three, which makes it a one-man show a lot. It was more everybody. George got most of the play calls and stuff. The other guys did too, but they had some bad luck on it. When things were good, we had a couple drops. When it wasn't that, it might have been a protection issue. Usually it's not like that. We don't always want it to be like that, but we also don't mind if we get the win done. We thought we had a chance to, but that wasn't why we lost."

In New Orleans, you pulled out a double-reverse receiver pass, a read-option from a fullback. How conscious were you trying to be conservative in this game whether it be keeping guys healthy or--?

"It's never about keeping guys, I mean, you keep guys healthy because you don't want guys to get hurt, but that game was everything in my mind. It felt that way all week. You call plays based off of what you think it takes to win. The plays you're talking about that, we probably saw a record of them, and the New Orleans game seemed pretty important to pull those off to win. Definitely didn't feel as strongly about that during the Atlanta game, especially when we have a 19-10 lead with eight minutes to go. I don't feel the need to be as aggressive on some of those things. I think we did what we needed to do to win, but we obviously didn't get it done."

You talked at length last week about beyond your respect for that system or that type of defense, why you brought defensive coordinator Robert Saleh, why you

wanted to go to Atlanta. On Sunday's game, is that still a tough nut to crack, so to speak?

"No, I think we are all pretty used to it. I mean, we've gone against that system a lot here, even this year. Didn't look a lot like that system on Sunday. They made a lot, a ton of adjustments and stuff that we weren't expecting going in, but you're always going to see something new. It's the foundation for all these teams, but every team runs that system doesn't run it the exact same way they used to. Everyone's had to expand as people get more used to it and Atlanta's done a good job of that over the last half of the year."

There's going to be Pro Bowl announcements later today. Do you prefer a lot of guys get recognized or would you like a few guys to get snubbed so you can kind of use that as fuel?

"I would love anything that gets guys to play better, but the Pro Bowl doesn't mean much in terms of anything for the team or what it does for the team. I think it's really cool for those guys so I want everyone to get a Pro Bowl vote who deserves it. I think we've got a lot of guys who deserve it, but I try to tell them, don't put too much into it because not everyone who deserves to go to the Pro Bowl goes to the Pro Bowl and some people do, so I'm not taking that away also. I'm really happy for guys if it happens because a number of guys deserve it, but those guys also better not be too upset if it doesn't happen because it's not guaranteed for them even if they deserve it."

What kind of trickle-down effect have some of the injuries, particularly on the defensive line? How have you seen that hamper what the defense has done over the last few weeks?

"I think the obvious answer in terms of the less depth you have, the more reps people take and the more reps people take they can't go as hard for every time they're in. I think guys do wear down a little bit with that. It's something you fully expect this time of year, as the year goes, but it does add up. We do have some more guys coming back, but this is what happens when these injuries happen. And the type of game, hopefully we can get in a game where we can rotate the guys better despite who's out there, but that happens with everyone. The more you're out there, the more you wear down, but it's time to go, there's not a lot of time left anyways."

How do you think DL Solomon Thomas did with a bigger role playing in there?

"I thought he did his job. I definitely thought he did his job. He wasn't out of place at all. Every time they got to his gap, he was holding it, but nobody across the board made any game-changing plays. That's what we needed there at the end, especially. We gave [Atlanta Falcons QB] Matt Ryan and [Atlanta Falcons WR] Julio [Jones] a few too many chances and those guys are too good to give that many chances."

How did OL Ben Garland handle his first start at center?

"I thought Garland in both his game and a half he's played has done a real good job. He's done a real good job getting to the second level. He's done a real good job at getting out on our screens and stuff. He stepped it up well."

When you watch the Rams, what makes them so difficult?

“They’re very talented, they’re very well-coached. I think over this last month they’ve been playing as good of football as anyone in the league. I think until the Sunday game got a little out of hand, they had a top-10 offense, a top-10 defense before that. They have a very good special teams. So, talent and coaching.”

You guys went from being the underdog at the beginning of the season to now very much having a target on your back. CB Ahkello Witherspoon on Sunday said the character of this team has not wavered no matter what. How do you continue to keep these guys even-keeled?

“I think we’ve got smart guys to put things in perspective. Target’s always on your back no matter how good you do. You’re as good as your last game and it’ll be that for every team in the NFL, all 32 teams, until the end of the year. I talk about it a lot, but if you’ve been in this league you pretty much realize that only one team is happy at the end of the year no matter what happens. Usually, it’s the team who wins the last game. That’s why we’ve got to make sure that happens. I think our guys realize that. There are a lot of ebbs and flows throughout the year, but we know we’ve worked all year just to get to this point we’re at. That’s where we’re pumped to be at right now.”

You guys reportedly put in a claim for Kansas City Chiefs DE Terrell Suggs. Is that a function of those injuries, specifically Dee Ford?

“We just thought he would help us, a good pass rusher out there who’s a vet. Could help a lot of teams and we would’ve definitely preferred for him to help us over people we have to go against.”

At the start of the season you were having a lot of success forcing turnovers, getting sacks and the last three weeks you’ve only had three and only one turnover in each of the last four games. How much of that do you attribute to attrition and the injuries you’ve had on the defensive side of the ball?

“Anytime you miss people it definitely gets harder. But, as every single person says when someone asks them that question, it’s not an excuse, it doesn’t put that in the win-loss column. The more we have had people out, I think the chances of turnovers does go down, but if we want to win we’ve got to find ways to create them and hopefully our guys can get going and create some more. If not, we’ve got to do something schematically, but it’s tough to win when you don’t get turnovers and we’ve got to make sure we find a way to do it.”