

TRANSCRIPTIONS



**Head Coach Kyle Shanahan
Press Conference – November 22, 2019
San Francisco 49ers**

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Opening comments:

“Alright, the injuries for today: [RB Matt] Breida will be doubtful, [K] Robbie [Gould] will be doubtful, [T Joe] Staley is out, [DL] Dee Ford is out, and [TE George] Kittle, [WR] Deebo [Samuel] and [WR] Emmanuel [Sanders] are all questionable.”

DL D.J. Jones?

“He’s good to go.”

Kittle responded well from yesterday’s work load. Did you ramp him up at all today?

“No, it was kind of the same yesterday. He walked through yesterday and we had all walk through today. That’s what allowed us to get him out there.”

Are you encouraged with how far he’s come the last couple weeks?

“Yeah, a lot better than it was two weeks ago, but still hoping he can get there.”

You guys are usually, well, you are usually very forthright when it comes to injuries but you haven’t been with Kittle. Is there a reason for that?

“If he was for sure had no chance of playing these last two weeks then I would have said that, but he did. Not many people would have, but Kittle did. This week, I think if it was a normal person, I’d probably make him doubtful, but Kittle’s different than most people and, as I said, he won’t allow me to rule him out too early because he keeps telling me he’s going to surprise me by game day. We’ve got a little bit more time this week and he’s a little bit ahead. I always tell the truth if I can and if I know the answer.”

Is RB Raheem Mostert also good to go?

“Raheem? Yeah, anybody I didn’t mention is good to go.”

You said a normal person would be doubtful or out. What makes Kittle just so extraordinary?

“I think, watch how he plays and watch how he walks around. I think we’re all a little different, but he’s unique and you see it on the field. He has a personality where he goes 100 miles per hour in whatever he does. That’s probably why he’s going to have a WWE career after this. What’s cool is that’s kind of who he is and then you see it on the field. That’s why whether he does perfect or not, he always makes plays with his attitude when

the ball is in his hands. It's just different. Last year he played with ribs all year. The fact that he did that in a game, most people would have been out right away, and he was able to come back and play in that first Arizona game for three quarters with nothing. You can't rule Kittle out. He's earned it."

Some of the guys have said the Seattle game was a playoff-like atmosphere and I'm sure Sunday night will be similar. Given that you have a younger team, do you think it's beneficial to have these games in the season before January?

"Yeah, definitely. You need those games to get to January. I mean, the NFL comes down to the wire. You never, by no means are we a lock to go to the playoffs at all. That's why every game I see is a playoff game from here on out. The Seattle game definitely felt like it based off the atmosphere and everything like that, based off the record of the team we were going against and everything because I know people are expecting them to be there. But, I felt the exact same way about the Arizona game. The atmosphere wasn't quite the same with it not being Monday Night Football and stuff, but that game was just as important as the one before and I see every one being like this from here on out."

We saw Robbie out there kicking a little bit today, but he's still listed as doubtful. What do you have to see?

"It's more just talking to him. We didn't practice special teams today. If you guys saw him kicking, that's part of his rehab routine. He does a little bit. If he doesn't play, I know he'll try to do a little bit on Sunday. If it was another position he would definitely be good enough to go, but like I was trying to explain earlier in the week, when it's a kicker, you never know until they get a few of those big kicks in a game. You do that in pregame warmups and they're out and now you're in a big bind and you don't have him for five weeks. That's why he's a guy who we've got to, it's a position we've got to be delicate with."

Was that the first time he's kicked since the injury?

"No. No, he's kicked a number of times. Each week he's tried to do it and see how it feels. There's been a little pain and each time he does it, it's a little bit better. We're trying to get to where there's none."

With your injury situation, going back even to last week, was there ever any thought given to having QB C.J. Beathard up to play special teams?

"Definitely. Yeah, I think we were two guys away from that. You never dress the third quarterback, but if the other option is dressing 45 people, we would definitely dress 46 before doing that and that would be C.J. The neat thing about dressing C.J. is he could help us on special teams. He's got the attitude, he knows how to do it, and he would give it all. You guys see how he plays quarterback. He could help us on special teams, so if it ever came to that, we would definitely get him in there."

At what capacity would that be? What would his role be on special teams?

"Punt returner, kick returner (laughter). Backup kicker. No, it probably wouldn't be a huge one, but we would use him if he was up."

Was he your special teams, look team player last week?

“Yeah, last week he got special teams player of the week for the scout team, given real good looks at that. C.J. loves the physicality of this game and he can run too.”

With Dee Ford out, do you anticipate that you'll have to make a roster move to address the sort of limited options you have at the end?

“No, I don't see us making a roster move. It's a little too late right now. We like what we've got, we can mix guys up and get it done here until Dee Ford is back.”

You guys knew that you'd have a few primetime games this season and you got flexed into this next one. Obviously, every game means the same in terms of playoff positioning and whatnot, but how is it more special? What do you see, how does it affect the players, the assistant coaches or even just the other employees throughout the building?

“I try not to make too big of a deal about it. I think it's cool for an organization. I think it's cool for the fans. I think everyone likes to be on primetime and be the one game on. As I've said, I think players and coaches like when the rest of your peers, other players and coaches around the league, can watch you. I don't try to hype it up too much and make a big deal about it because it's not once the ball is kicked. It's still the exact same game as any other game is and they're all just as tough. They all mean the exact same amount. When everyone is watching you, there might be more judgement, there might be more publicity the next day and during it, but that stuff that really doesn't matter so you try not to let it matter.”

Do you get more feedback from friends, family, other coaches the next day?

“Yeah, when you're the only team on. After a win I get a lot of texts after a game. After a loss you don't get as much, you get a couple. After a win on Monday night and stuff you get a bunch because everyone sees it. Not everyone sees all your games on Sundays.”

You talked about you learned a lot about this team through 9-1 and resiliency and everything, but you're coming up on this historically brutal stretch, according to ESPN stats and info. So, are you curious in any way how you guys will handle this because it is unlike anything you've had before or do you feel like “Hey, I know what we have here?”

“No, I mean we know what we have here, but it is a lot of people's first time going through it. We were just looking today. I think we have, [LB] Kwon [Alexander] was out, so in our defensive meeting today we were looking around and I think we had two people in there that have had a winning record before in [CB Richard Sherman] Sherm and Dee Ford. It hit me and I was like 'holy cow,' and you go at that and that does surprise you. I did the same thing on offense. We have a number of guys who have been places and have had a winning record before, but, yeah, a lot of guys haven't been in this situation. What I try to remind guys of, when you don't know what the situation is like everyone thinks how miserable being in this situation is when you're not playing for anything and how tough it is. It's the exact same when you're playing for everything. People are telling you how good you are. The league is hard every year. It doesn't really matter what's going on, they're just different reasons why. I just try to tell guys that if you get too caught up in the moment and stuff it doesn't seem as much fun and you need to make sure you enjoy this moment.”

Two guys on the defense have had a winning record before. I don't know anyone in our building who's started out 8-0 and we have some people who have won Super Bowls, even some coaches and things like that. You don't get to do this a lot and if you sit and get consumed with what that means and where you're at, it's not fun and you don't play as well. You try to get guys to just know that all that matters is that you work and try to get better. There's going to be 31 teams at the end of this year not happy and there's going to be one team who did it right. No matter what happens, that's going to be the end result. Everyone hopes that's their team, but that's all you can think about and just focus on getting better, doing it as good as you can. If you do that week-in and week-out, then you can always live with the results."

How much does it help to get D.J. Jones back and what kind of year is he having?

"I think D.J.'s had a great year. When he's out there in the run game and the pass game, he's a load and he's hard to handle. He's a pain for us in practice every week. [C/G Weston] Richburg having to go against, not throughout training camp because Richburg had some time off, but all of our centers going against him. He's always tough to deal with. D.J. is going to be a real good player in this league, he already is. We've just got to keep him healthier so he can stay out there a little bit longer."

Has there been growth for him in terms of pass rush?

"Yeah, I think so. I think he always has that ability. I think his stamina is getting better. He holds the A-gap all day. I think it helps that we're penetrating a lot more. It's kind of a you start off as a pass rush, react to run, which I think helps him get more opportunities as an A-gap player, but he is a stout dude, is always going to be good versus the run and when he has the quickness and he's not tired, he can beat any center or guard."

What are some of the signatures of a Green Bay Packers defensive coordinator Mike Pettine defense and have they carried over from when you were with him in Cleveland?

"Yeah, it's similar. Everyone has the foundation of what they believe in. Mike's as good a coordinator as there is. It's chaotic. There's a lot of stuff that they do. They have tons of personnel groupings. They have tons of fronts. They have tons of coverages. You have to be ready for any type of blitz. It could be five-man overloads, it could be double-corner blitz, they have everything. He's not scared to use it at any time. When you go against stuff like that, you've got to realize there's going to be a bunch of bad play calls in the game where you don't expect guys to be there and it's going to happen. They're going to have some big plays when that does happen. You've got to weather the storm and stay out there because just like when offenses are real aggressive, you're also vulnerable for bad plays. They are going to get some of theirs, we've got to make sure we get some of ours. It's always very competitive when you go against someone like Mike because he is attacking every play and that's what we like to do also. It's going to be hit or miss usually for one team."