

49ers Clips – February 18, 2017

Local Media

5 Things to Know about 49ers Defensive Coordinator Robert Saleh

By Joe Fann, 49ers.com

<http://www.49ers.com/news/ninerfeed/article-2/5-Things-to-Know-about-49ers-Defensive-Coordinator-Robert-Saleh/6297a130-1b5b-4c70-af02-5f26d6345f1e>

Kid coordinators: 49ers' staff features youthful leaders

By Eric Branch, San Francisco Chronicle

<http://www.sfchronicle.com/49ers/article/Kid-coordinators-49ers-staff-features-10941747.php>

49ers reveal more of Kyle Shanahan's coaching staff; OL job may go to Broncos recent hire

By Cam Inman, San Jose Mercury News

<http://www.mercurynews.com/2017/02/17/49ers-reveal-more-of-kyle-shanahans-coaching-staff-ol-job-may-go-to-broncos-recent-hire/>

Report: 49ers to meet with DT Earl Mitchell

By Matt Barrows, Sacramento Bee

<http://www.sacbee.com/sports/nfl/san-francisco-49ers/article133568419.html>

COMINGS AND GOINGS: 49ERS COACHING STAFF

By Matt Maiocco, CSNBayArea.com

<http://www.csnbayarea.com/49ers/comings-and-goings-49ers-coaching-staff>

TARVER, HAFLEY RETAIN POSITIONS ON 49ERS' COACHING STAFF

By Matt Maiocco, CSNBayArea.com

<http://www.csnbayarea.com/49ers/tarver-hafley-retain-positions-49ers-coaching-staff>

49ers officially hire Robert Saleh as defensive coordinator, add eight others

By Nick Wagoner, ESPN.com

http://www.espn.com/blog/san-francisco-49ers/post/_id/23550/49ers-officially-hire-robert-saleh-as-defensive-coordinator-eight-others

49ers announce nine more coaching hires

By Zac Jackson, ProFootballTalk.com

<http://profootballtalk.nbcsports.com/2017/02/17/49ers-announce-nine-more-coaching-hires/>

Matt Schaub, Brian Hoyer could be among 49ers' targets

By Michael David Smith, ProFootballTalk.com

<http://profootballtalk.nbcsports.com/2017/02/18/matt-schaub-brian-hoyer-could-be-among-49ers-targets/>

49ers hire Saleh as DC, Hightower as special teams coach

By Staff, Associated Press

<http://pro32.ap.org/article/49ers-hire-saleh-dc-hightower-special-teams-coach>

National Media

Sherman Smith says Seahawks wanted to make a change at running backs coach

By Bob Condotta, The Seattle Times

<http://www.seattletimes.com/sports/seahawks/sherman-smith-says-seahawks-wanted-to-make-a-change-at-running-backs-coach/>

NFL coaching veteran Brian Daboll to lead Alabama offense, sources say

By Chris Low, ESPN.com

http://www.espn.com/college-football/story/_/id/18708647/alabama-crimson-tide-name-new-england-patriots-assistant-brian-daboll-new-offensive-coordinator

Re-signing Stills remains a Dolphins priority — but what would it cost? History says a lot

By Adam Beasley, Miami Herald

<http://www.miamiherald.com/sports/nfl/miami-dolphins/article133462439.html>

Patriots running backs: Blount's future the biggest question mark

By Mark Daniels, Providence Journal

<http://www.providencejournal.com/sports/20170217/patriots-running-backs-blounts-future-biggest-question-mark>

Bears' QB search: Exploring 4 paths GM Ryan Pace could take

By Dan Wiederer, Chicago Tribune

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/sports/football/bears/ct-bears-quarterback-search-ryan-pace-spt-0219-20170218-story.html>

Local Clips – Full Version

5 Things to Know about 49ers Defensive Coordinator Robert Saleh

By Joe Fann, 49ers.com

The San Francisco 49ers made another crucial hire on Monday, bringing on Robert Saleh to be the team's new defensive coordinator. Saleh joins Kyle Shanahan's coaching staff after spending the last three seasons as the linebackers coach for the Jacksonville Jaguars.

The 49ers are the fourth NFL club that Saleh has coached for since coming to the league in 2005. Here are five things to know about San Francisco's defensive coordinator.

1. He's got ties to Shanahan

Saleh and Shanahan worked together with the Houston Texans from 2006-09. During that four-year stretch, Saleh served as a defensive quality control coach and as an assistant linebackers coach. He worked with a pair of heralded linebackers during his tenure in Houston. DeMeco Ryans (2006) and Brian Cushing (2009) were each named AP Defensive Rookie of the Year.

2. He's a Super Bowl Champ

Following his time with the Texans, Saleh spent three years as a defensive quality control coach for the Seattle Seahawks from 2011-13. Saleh won a ring in 2013 as a part of Seattle's championship run through Super Bowl XLVIII. That season, the Seahawks defense led the NFL in both points and yards allowed.

3. He's a first time defensive coordinator

Saleh has 11 seasons of NFL coaching experience. In addition, he got his career started with five seasons in the college ranks. Saleh was an assistant coach with Michigan State (2002-03), Central Michigan (2004) and Georgia (2005). An internship with the Texans in 2005 helped him make the full-time leap to the NFL in 2006.

4. He was ticketed to be in L.A.

Former Jaguars head coach Gus Bradley has been hired as the new defensive coordinator for the Los Angeles Chargers. Bradley planned on bringing Saleh to Southern California with him in the same role of linebackers coach. Shanahan was able to land Saleh in the Bay Area with the promotion to defensive coordinator.

5. He's a former all-conference tight end

Saleh is a Dearborn, Mich., native, which is only 10 miles outside of Detroit. He moved across the state to Marquette, Mich., and played college football at Northern Michigan University. Saleh became an all-conference tight end during his four seasons with the Wildcats.

Kid coordinators: 49ers' staff features youthful leaders

By Eric Branch, San Francisco Chronicle

The 49ers' rookie head coach will be joined by a rookie defensive coordinator and first-time special-teams coordinator.

The 49ers announced the hiring of nine assistants and the group includes defensive coordinator Robert Saleh, 38, and special-teams coordinator Richard Hightower, 36. They were hired by Kyle Shanahan, 37, the league's second-youngest head coach, who will also serve as the 49ers offensive coordinator.

Hightower was the Bears assistant special-teams coach in 2015 after serving in the same role with the 49ers in 2014. Saleh has spent the past three seasons as the Jaguars linebackers coach.

Last year, the 49ers' trio of coordinators had an average age of 38.0 at the start of the season, which made them the youngest in the league. Shanahan, Saleh and Hightower will have an average age of 37.0 at the start of the 2017 season.

The 49ers have retained defensive backs coach Jeff Hafley, who coached with Shanahan in Cleveland in 2014, and former outside linebackers coach Jason Tarver, who is now a senior defensive assistant. Tarver has spent 13 of his 20 seasons in the NFL with the 49ers.

They have also hired Johnny Holland, 51, as their linebackers coach after he had the same role with the Browns last year. Holland was the No. 41 pick in the 1987 draft and spent seven seasons as a linebacker with the Packers.

The 49ers' other hires are: Jeff Zgonina (defensive line); Bobby Slowik (defensive quality control); Marquis Johnson (strength and conditioning assistant) and Dustin Perry (strength and conditioning assistant).

49ers reveal more of Kyle Shanahan's coaching staff; OL job may go to Broncos recent hire

By Cam Inman, San Jose Mercury News

Kyle Shanahan's debut coaching staff with the 49ers is nearly complete as nine more hires became official Friday, including defensive coordinator Robert Saleh and special teams coordinator Richard Hightower.

Finding an offensive line coach remains Shanahan's last major move to his staff. That job could go to long-time NFL assistant John Benton, who the Denver Broncos hired as their assistant offensive line coach last month but are allowing to interview with the 49ers, as first reported by the Sacramento Bee.

Benton was the Houston Texans offensive line coach from 2006-13 — overlapping with Shanahan from 2006-09 — before moving on to the Miami Dolphins from 2014-15. He was the Jacksonville Jaguars assistant offensive line coach last season.

Friday's wave of hires were defensive oriented, including the retention of Jason Tarver as a senior defensive assistant and Jeff Hafley as defensive backs coach. Tarver spent the past two seasons primarily coaching linebackers in his second stint with the team; his first was from 2001-10 before coaching at Stanford and with the Raiders. Hafley held the same role last season and previously with the Cleveland Browns, where he worked with Shanahan in 2014.

Also working under Saleh, a first-time coordinator, will be Jeff Zgonina (defensive line), Johnny Holland (linebackers) and Bobby Slowik (quality control).

Marquis Johnson and Dustin Perry were named as assistants to Ray Wright, who was named head strength and conditioning coach last Friday.

Shanahan's offensive assistants, as announced previously, are Rich Scangarello (quarterbacks), Bobby Turner (running backs), Jon Embree (assistant head coach/tight ends), Taylor Embree (quality control), Mike LaFleur (wide receivers), Mike McDaniel (run game coordinator) and T.C. McCartney (offensive

assistant). Nick Kray is Shanahan's administrative assistant, making 18 hires thus far for the first-time head coach.

Report: 49ers to meet with DT Earl Mitchell

By Matt Barrows, Sacramento Bee

SANTA CLARA -- Former Dolphins defensive tackle Earl Mitchell is scheduled to meet the 49ers and three other teams next week as the 29-year-old seeks a new home for the 2017 season, according to the NFL Network. Miami released Mitchell on Thursday.

The Seahawks, Falcons and Broncos also are expected to meet with Mitchell, who played in a 4-3 defense the last three years. The 49ers, Seahawks and Falcons all will use the same defensive system in the upcoming season -- a base 4-3 -- and the 49ers could use a big-bodied run stuffer at the point of attack.

That's what Mitchell, who is listed at 6-3, 310 pounds, appears to be. The 49ers, meanwhile, set a record for yards allowed and rushing yards allowed in 2016. Their top nose tackle from last season, Glenn Dorsey, is scheduled to be a free agent next month.

Mitchell played in Houston from 2010-13 where he would have overlapped for one season (2013) with new 49ers defensive line coach Jeff Zgonina. The 49ers' new defense calls for a big, run-game oriented player who lines up over the center like a nose tackle.

Matt Barrows: @mattbarrows, read more about the team at sacbee.com/sf49ers.

COMINGS AND GOINGS: 49ERS COACHING STAFF

By Matt Maiocco, CSNBayArea.com

First-year coach Kyle Shanahan is close to completing his 49ers coaching staff.

Shanahan will handle the duties of the offensive coordinator, the position he held with Houston, Washington and Atlanta over the past nine NFL seasons.

Robert Saleh is the 49ers' new defensive coordinator, while Richard Hightower has been hired as the special-teams coordinator.

Here's a look at the 49ers' coaching staffs under Shanahan and last season under Chip Kelly:

2017 49ERS COACHING STAFF

Position: Coach (2016 job)

Head coach: Kyle Shanahan (Falcons, offensive coordinator)

Defensive coordinator: Robert Saleh (Jaguars, linebackers coach)

Special teams coordinator: Richard Hightower (Bears, assistant special teams)

Assistant head coach/tight ends: Jon Embree (Buccaneers, tight ends)

Run game specialist: Mike McDaniel (Falcons, offensive assistant)

Quarterbacks: Rich Scangarello (Wagner, offensive coordinator)

Running backs: Bobby Turner (Falcons, running backs)

Wide receivers: Mike LaFleur (Falcons, offensive assistant)

Offensive line: Vacant

Offensive assistant: T.C. McCartney (LSU, offensive assistant)

Senior defensive assistant: Jason Tarver (49ers, outside linebackers)

Defensive line: Jeff Zgonina (N.Y. Giants, assistant defensive line)

Linebackers: Johnny Holland (Browns, inside linebackers)
Defensive backs: Jeff Hafley (49ers, defensive backs)
Offensive quality control: Taylor Embree (Chiefs, defensive assistant)
Defensive quality control: Bobby Slowik
Head strength and conditioning: Ray Wright

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2016 49ERS COACHING STAFF

Position: Coach (current status)
Head coach: Chip Kelly
Offensive coordinator: Curtis Modkins (Bears, running backs)
Defensive coordinator: Jim O'Neil
Special teams coordinator: Derius Swinton
Quarterbacks: Ryan Day (Ohio State, quarterbacks)
Running backs: Tom Rathman
Wide receivers: Bob Bicknell
Tight ends: Jeff Nixon (Baylor, co-offensive coordinator/running backs)
Offensive line: Pat Flaherty (Jaguars, offensive line)
Assistant offensive line: Eric Wolford (South Carolina, offensive line)
Defensive line: Jerry Azzinaro (Cal, defensive line)
Assistant defensive line: Vince Oghobaase
Outside linebackers: Jason Tarver (49ers, senior defensive assistant)
Inside linebacker: Joe Bowden
Defensive backs: Jeff Hafley (49ers, defensive backs)
Assistant defensive backs: Roy Anderson (Bears, assistant secondary)
Assistant special teams: Michael Clay
Offensive quality control: Mick Lombardi (Jets, offensive assistant/assistant QBs coach)
Defensive quality control: Tem Lukabu
Senior analyst: Dana Bible
Director of human performance: Mark Uyeyama

TARVER, HAFLEY RETAIN POSITIONS ON 49ERS' COACHING STAFF

By Matt Maiocco, CSNBayArea.com

The 49ers announced the hirings of nine assistant coaches, including two members who have been retained from Chip Kelly's staff.

Jason Tarver, who coached outside linebackers last season, has been placed in the new role of senior defensive assistant under first-year coach Kyle Shanahan. And Jeff Hafley will return as the 49ers' defensive backs coach.

The 49ers officially announced the hiring of defensive coordinator Robert Saleh. Shanahan publicly confirmed Saleh's appointment earlier on Friday.

The other additions to the staff are Richard Hightower as special teams coordinator, defensive line coach Jeff Zgonina, linebackers coach Johnny Holland, defensive quality control coach Bobby Slowik, and Marquis Johnson and Dustin Perry as strength and conditioning assistants.

Tarver, 42, has served two stints as a 49ers assistant coach in a variety of different roles. Shanahan becomes the seventh different head coach under whom he has worked, following Steve Mariucci, Dennis Erickson, Mike Nolan, Mike Singletary, Jim Tomsula and Chip Kelly.

He served as co-defensive coordinator/inside linebackers for one season at Stanford under David Shaw before working as defensive coordinator three seasons with the Oakland Raiders. Tarver coached outside linebackers last season under Kelly.

Hafley, 37, remains as the 49ers' defensive backs coach. Hafley and Shanahan worked together on Mike Pettine's staff with the Cleveland Browns in 2014.

Zgonina played for seven teams in 17 NFL seasons. Zgonina, 46, left his post as assistant defensive line coach with the New York Giants to join the 49ers. Zgonina finished his playing career with the Texans from 2007 to '09. Shanahan was in Houston in 2008 and '09.

Richard Hightower, 36, a former college teammate of Shanahan, will be the 49ers' special-teams coordinator. Hightower and Shanahan were teammates at the University of Texas and they worked on the same NFL coaching staffs with Houston (2006-08), Washington (2010-13) and Cleveland (2014).

In 2015, Hightower was the 49ers' assistant special teams coach under Thomas McGaughey. He worked in the same role last season with Chicago.

Holland, 51, spent last season as the inside linebackers coach for the Cleveland Browns. Prior to Cleveland, he spent three years in the Canadian Football League, coaching linebackers with the Saskatchewan Roughriders (2013) and B.C. Lions (2014-15).

Henderson, 47, was the defensive passing game coordinator with the Atlanta Falcons last season. He spent the previous four seasons as the Dallas Cowboys' secondary coach. He has coached in the NFL for 10 seasons with the Jets, Browns, Cowboys and Falcons.

Henderson played eight seasons as a defensive back with four different teams after being a 1991 second-round selection of the New England Patriots. He played college ball at Clemson.

Slowik, 29, spent four years with Washington organization. He was video assistant for one season before spending three seasons as a defensive assistant (2011-13). Kyle Shanahan was offensive coordinator in those three seasons in which his father, Mike Shanahan, was the head coach.

Johnson, 31, was an assistant strength coach at the University of Tennessee last year. Perry, 31, spent four years (2012-15) as an assistant strength & conditioning coach at the University of Minnesota.

49ers officially hire Robert Saleh as defensive coordinator, add eight others

By Nick Wagoner, ESPN.com

SANTA CLARA, Calif. -- San Francisco 49ers coach Kyle Shanahan's staff is almost complete.

The Niners officially announced nine more additions to the coaching staff Friday afternoon, including Robert Saleh as defensive coordinator and a pair of holdovers. ESPN's Adam Caplan reported earlier this week that Saleh would be the defensive coordinator and that Richard Hightower would become the special teams coach. Both moves became official on Friday.

The only notable job on the staff not filled is offensive line coach, though John Benton of the Denver Broncos looks to be in line for that job, the Sacramento Bee reported.

Here's a breakdown of Friday's nine announced hires:

Richard Hightower, special teams coordinator: This is Hightower's second stint in San Francisco after serving as assistant special teams coach in 2015. He was with the Chicago Bears in that role last year,

but is entering his 11th season in the league. Hightower played collegiately at Texas with Shanahan and also was on staffs with Shanahan in stops with the Washington Redskins and Cleveland Browns.

Robert Saleh, defensive coordinator: Saleh spent the past three years coaching linebackers for the Jacksonville Jaguars and was a defensive quality control coach for the Seattle Seahawks for the three years before that. He also spent six seasons with the Houston Texans, working on that staff with Shanahan. He's expected to bring a version of Seattle's 4-3 'under' defensive scheme to San Francisco.

Jeff Hafley, defensive backs: One of two holdovers on the defensive staff, Hafley held the same title in 2016 after spending the two previous years in that job with the Browns. He coached with Shanahan in Cleveland for a year and has two additional years of experience on the staff of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

Johnny Holland, linebackers: Holland coached inside linebackers for the Browns in 2016 and previously spent a year coaching linebackers for the Oakland Raiders as well as five years in that position with the Texans. He's also had NFL stops with the Detroit Lions, Seahawks and Green Bay Packers in a variety of roles. As a linebacker, he played in 103 games over seven seasons for the Packers.

Marquis Johnson, strength and conditioning assistant: Johnson has worked his way up through the high school and college ranks, and enters his first NFL job in 2017. He spent the 2016 season as an assistant at the University of Tennessee.

Dustin Perry, strength and conditioning assistant: Like Johnson, Perry is entering his first season in the NFL after spending four years as assistant strength and conditioning coach at the University of Minnesota.

Bobby Slowik, defensive quality control: The son of former NFL defensive coordinator Bob Slowik, Bobby Slowik comes to the Niners with four years of previous NFL experience in multiple roles with the Redskins.

Jason Tarver, senior defensive assistant: One of the most respected and experienced members of the Niners staff, Tarver is a 16-year NFL coaching veteran heading into his 13th season with the 49ers. He's transitioning into a new role after spending last season coaching outside linebackers. He also served as a defensive coordinator for the Raiders for three years and spent time as an offensive quality control coach (2001-03), assistant running backs/offensive assistant coach (2004) and outside linebackers coach (2005-10) in his first stint with the Niners.

Jeff Zgonina, defensive line: After working as the assistant defensive line coach for the New York Giants in 2016, Zgonina is making his debut as the primary defensive line coach. He previously worked three years on the defensive staff of the Texans and played in 219 games over 17 seasons as a defensive tackle.

49ers announce nine more coaching hires

By Zac Jackson, ProFootballTalk.com

The 49ers on Friday announced nine more coaching hires, most notably the hiring of Robert Saleh as defensive coordinator.

Richard Hightower was announced as special teams coordinator, and former NFL defensive lineman Jeff Zgonina was announced as defensive line coach.

Some of the announced hires had been previously reported. The team has not officially announced the hiring of an offensive line coach, though News 9 in Denver reported Friday that John Benton is expected

to be the team's offensive line coach. Last month he was announced as assistant offensive line coach with the Broncos.

Saleh was most recently the linebackers coach in Jacksonville for the last three seasons. Hightower was the assistant special teams coach with the Bears last season, while Zgonina joins the 49ers after serving as assistant defensive line coach last season with the Giants.

Former Raiders defensive coordinator Jason Tarver was announced as senior defensive assistant. He was with the 49ers the last two seasons in different roles under two different head coaches.

The team also announced Jeff Hafley as defensive backs coach, Johnny Holland as linebackers coach and Bobby Slowik as defensive quality control coach. Marquis Johnson and Dustin Perry have been named strength and conditioning assistants.

Matt Schaub, Brian Hoyer could be among 49ers' targets

By Michael David Smith, ProFootballTalk.com

New 49ers coach Kyle Shanahan wants to find a long-term solution at the quarterback position. But if that long-term solution turns out to be a rookie who's not ready to start in 2017, Matt Schaub and Brian Hoyer are among the possibilities for a stopgap starter.

Schaub and Hoyer both have connections to Shanahan, and Matt Barrows of the Sacramento Bee writes that he expects either Schaub or Hoyer or both to be added to the 49ers' roster.

Schaub was with Shanahan in Atlanta last season, was previously with Shanahan in Houston and has been linked to Shanahan as a possible 49ers quarterback in 2017. Schaub becomes a free agent on March 9.

Hoyer started 13 games for the Browns in 2014 when Shanahan was their offensive coordinator, and the two made for a pretty good combination, with the Browns going 7-6 in the games Hoyer started. Hoyer has heaped praise on Shanahan recently, and he also becomes a free agent on March 9.

Both Schaub and Hoyer are in their 30s and neither has ever been a great NFL starter, so they wouldn't exactly bring a ton of excitement to San Francisco. But as available veterans go, you could do worse than Schaub and Hoyer. It shouldn't surprise anyone if that's the direction the 49ers decide to go in for now, while drafting a rookie quarterback for the future.

49ers hire Saleh as DC, Hightower as special teams coach

By Staff, Associated Press

SANTA CLARA, Calif. (AP) — The San Francisco 49ers have hired Robert Saleh as defensive coordinator and Richard Hightower as special teams coordinator for Kyle Shanahan's new staff.

The team also announced the additions of seven other assistants on Friday, including the retaining of senior defensive assistant Jason Tarver and defensive backs coach Jeff Hafley from Chip Kelly's staff.

Saleh gets his first chance as a coordinator after spending the past 12 seasons as an assistant for Jacksonville, Seattle and Houston.

Hightower returns to San Francisco, where he was assistant special teams coach in 2015. He spent last season in that same role with Chicago.

The other coaches hired are Johnny Holland (linebackers), Jeff Zgonina (defensive line), Marquis Johnson and Dustin Perry (strength and conditioning assistants), and Bobby Slowik (defensive quality control).