

SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS

# TRANSCRIPTIONS



**Head Coach Kyle Shanahan**  
**2017 NFL Scouting Combine Press Conference – March 1, 2017**  
**San Francisco 49ers**  
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**When you would face the Bucs, you faced them four times, Tampa Bay Buccaneers DT Gerald McCoy their defensive tackle. What does he bring to the table that's so special and how did you try to game plan against him?**

"You try and tire him out. When he's going, if he knows what's happening, it's tough for anyone in the league to block him. He comes off the ball too hard, too quick, too physical. So, you've got to tire him out, you've got to wear him down, you've got to keep him guessing how you're going to block him. Are you going to cut him? Are you going to stay high? Are you going at him or are you on the backside? But, if he knows, it's going to be a long day."

**(Inaudible)**

"I wish I could talk to him, but he's under contract with someone else. So, I can't. Sorry. I would love to, just learning I can't."

**(Inaudible)**

"Yeah, I mean since the Super Bowl ended, so we're going on about a month, almost, it's been a whirlwind for us. We started way behind. It took a while to get our staff together, feel pretty good about that now, and we spent the last few weeks just studying our own personnel. So, feel good with everyone we've got on tape that's had film. We could get a good look at them and also stack them up against all the open free agents that are going to be available here over the next week or so."

**(Inaudible)**

"Well, I know that we don't have any really under contract. I know [QB Colin] Kaepernick is, but just seeing that today that he's probably going to opt-out here in a week or so, whenever that is. So we don't have anybody on our roster, so I've thrown them all into the category of everybody else who's free agents and possibilities going into the draft. So, those are the guys we're comparing. Who you guys see in the free agent market, who there is in the draft and trade possibilities and our guys who were on our roster last year is really the group we're picking from."

**What are your thoughts about this quarterback draft class as a group?**

"I'm not really there yet. I've spent this last three week or last three weeks doing a coaching staff and our own personnel. And that's pretty much how I am every year

**BOB LANGE**

Vice President  
of Football Communications

[Bob@49ers.com](mailto:Bob@49ers.com)

**DAN BECKLER**

Director  
of Football Communications

[Dan@49ers.com](mailto:Dan@49ers.com)

**MIKE CHASANOFF**

Senior Manager  
of Football Communications

[Mike.Chasanoff@49ers.com](mailto:Mike.Chasanoff@49ers.com)

**PETER VOLMUT**

Football Communications  
Assistant

[Peter.Volmut@49ers.com](mailto:Peter.Volmut@49ers.com)

anyways. The combine is really where we start this process. I usually am about a week ahead in tape with college guys than I am right now. But, I'll spend this week getting to know the guys, watching a lot of tape back in the hotel room and really have an idea of who everyone is just from the interview process and stuff and that will help us stack the board and where I go to look at it when I get back."

**Defensive coordinator Robert Saleh, what impressed you about him?**

"I knew Saleh when we were in Houston together. He was a quality control. So, I've been around him, I know him as a person. I haven't coached with him in about 10 years, but I know the path he's taken and the people he's been around. I know how valuable he was to [Seattle Seahawks head coach] Pete Carroll's staff in Seattle. I know how valuable he was to [Los Angeles Rams defensive coordinator] Gus [Bradley] in Jacksonville. Saleh's a very smart guy who can understand any scheme, who has a plan. Being around the defense, being in Atlanta, the Seattle-type defense, I knew it was a type of scheme that I respected a lot, that was tough to go against. Knowing that Saleh was a possibility with what I knew of him as a man and as a person and knowing the scheme that he wants to do, it was an easy decision."

**You now have running backs coach Bobby Turner. You were both together in Washington and Atlanta. How important is he just to your offense and what you want to do?**

"Bobby is just a guy I respect as much as anyone I've been around. He has been a long-time running backs coach. He's coached a lot of great ones. He's coached all different types of guys, different styles. He's found some guys high in the draft. He's found guys low in the draft. Bobby was born to be a running backs coach. It's what he prides himself on and every time he has been the coach, you don't have to worry about the running backs. Those guys are hard to come across and Bobby's as good as anyone."

**Did you consider having co-defensive coordinators?**

"I considered every possibility. When I was going through the long playoff stretch and into the Super Bowl, you were behind. So, I didn't rule out anything. I needed to see what the options were going to be when it came time where I'd have a chance to look into people. That could have been a possibility, but it was never a direction I was for sure going. I was just throwing everything out there that was possible."

**When you interview the different quarterbacks, are you going to be looking at film?**

"Probably not. You don't get enough time on it. You really just want to get to know the guys. That's usually something you do on the personal workouts or when you fly them up and you have your 30 visits. We could get to it. Depends on how the conversations go. Depends how much our position coaches get in their one-on-one interviews and how much time we have left in the big room."

**When you go through those college quarterback evaluations, over your career, what have you found the most important elements of that to be?**

“The tape’s by far the most important. You want to block out everything else. If you don’t like what you see on the tape, then nothing else matters. So, it’s a little backwards because we’re coming to Indy first, I get to know the guys a little bit better first. I wish I could do it differently but there’s just not enough time. So, here I get to know them, I go back and watch the tape and if you like the tape and you remember liking the guy, then you’ve got to look into all the stuff that is very hard to find. There’s a lot of pressure in this business, especially on the quarterback position. So, how are they going to handle pressure? How are they going to handle adversity? No matter how good you are, everyone is going to tell you how bad you are at some time during the year. So, all that stuff goes into play when you’re talking about, to me, one of the most scrutinized positions in sports.”

**Does the same go for the pro personnel side if you’re looking at whether it’s a free agent with limited exposure or maybe a backup elsewhere that hasn’t, is it the tape in that limited amount or what are the other challenges if you’re looking at pro prospect?**

“The less tape, the harder it is. So, you have to go off what you have. If there’s not a lot of tape in pros, you study everything in preseason, you study everything they’ve done in college, you study everything that’s available. You have to communicate with people and find things out. You’ve got to find the tape to believe anything. If they don’t have much NFL tape, you’ve got to go off the college.”

**Besides size and speed and the obvious, what are you looking for? What stands out to you?**

“In anybody?”

**A quarterback.**

“Really, how quick they process things. You can tell talking to people who’s capable of processing a lot, but the smartest people aren’t always the best quarterbacks either. You can over process things. So, it’s how quick they react in the pocket. Do they watch the rush? Are they fearless? If they’re watching the rush at all and things like that, it’s very hard to make the reactions you need to make in this league with how quick these windows close. So, you want to see how quick their decision making is. Not on the board, but in the pocket when they’re under duress.”

**What is Los Angeles Rams offensive coordinator Matt LaFleur going to bring to the Rams as offensive coordinator?**

“They’re getting a hell-of-a coach. I’ve been with Matt for a while. We spent a lot of time together. I know he had a year at Notre Dame when we were apart when I was in Cleveland. He was at a few places in college before we got together in Houston. But, Matt understands the game. He played college quarterback. He knows a lot about that position. He knows the run game, he knows the pass game, he knows how to tie them together and I think that you guys are getting a very good coach.”

**Is he ready to be a play-caller?**

“Yeah. He’s been ready for a while.”

**How do you see RB Carlos Hyde fitting into your offensive scheme?**

"Right now, I see Carlos being our back. We've studied a lot of the guys on tape. He's the guy that's got the most. Carlos is a guy who I was a fan of coming out of college. He had a real good career there. I looked at him hard when, I think I was in Cleveland at the time and had a good feeling he was going to be a great back then. I don't think he's a finished product. I think there's a lot more to his game and I look forward to us helping him bring that out."

**I'm sure every stop you've been at has prepared you for this moment, but from your time in Washington, are there any kind of things you look back on that helped you get here and made you a better coach?**

"I think everything's part of the process. I think every job you go through, whether it's coaching or what you guys do, each thing you learn from, you get better from it. Whether it's labeled a good thing or a bad thing, the main thing is it's all experience. Went through a lot of different things in Washington. Different quarterback situations, different schemes. Being under the microscope out there, having to deal with the media and having the same last name as the head coach also puts you out there a lot more than a normal coordinator. So, going through Washington I think helped me a lot. I feel more battle tested going through that. Don't feel like it's necessarily my first time being a head coach after being known in Washington. But, it's good experience. It helps in everything and I wouldn't take Washington back for anything."

**It's been almost a month since the Super Bowl. You've talked about learning from your experiences. Have you been able to watch the tape and break things down and kind of go over things in your mind or is it still too fresh?**

"No. I did that the next day, mainly with the second half. Went to watch through it just so I could, when you see things live, you want to make sure watching the tape that you confirm what you saw and it went pretty much how I thought. I haven't gotten back to the first half yet, but other things have been more important right now. But, no, the Super Bowl was a great experience. I know it didn't work out the way we wanted. Every time it ends that way, you're going to second-guess everything that you did. I'm proud of what we did, why we did the things we did. One thing I learned from it is I hope that opportunity comes again because it's a fun thing to be a part of and it makes you realize how special it is to get a win there."

**Have you second-guessed not running the ball and calling the pass on third-and-two?**

"Yeah. I second guess just like all you guys do. Any time a play doesn't work, you, 'dang, I wish I called what works.' But, the reasons for calling those, why we did that, what we were thinking, I don't second guess at all."

**What did you think of Los Angeles Rams head coach Sean McVay getting his chance in LA?**

"I was pumped for Sean. Sean's a real good dude, someone who I've coached with for a while. He's a great coach, great person and I knew it was going to be a matter of time

before he was a head coach. I didn't know it would come this young, but I'm happy for him and he deserves it."

**Were you surprised at that? He knew he'd get interviews this offseason, but--?**

"You never know. I knew he had a good chance with the year that they had done. I knew Sean, just how charismatic he is, how smart he is, I knew he would do a great job in interviews. So, once his name started coming up, I knew it would always be a possibility."

**(Inaudible)**

"I don't think so. I think a lot of coaches do that. I think it's important that some of the reasons that you get the job, you keep doing that stuff. I enjoyed being a coordinator. I enjoyed calling plays and I will always do that if I feel it helps the team. The day that I feel that it doesn't then that would be the day that I would change."

**We've seen the spread offense and what kind of impact it's had in high school and college. When you're trying to evaluate guys and looking for those NFL prototype guys, how has that changed the way people view what is a prototype NFL player at certain positions?**

"It makes it tougher each year to evaluate. The more spread-out it gets, the more up-tempo it gets, the more sloppy it gets. That happens at the NFL level too. Guys get tired and you're going no-huddle all the time, it does affect things. It also puts fast players in space so those fast players really have a better chance to succeed. But, you can't always do it at the next level. That's something that I think all coaches have experimented. I think there's a place for everything in the NFL. Everything goes through cycles too. It's really what defenses aren't used to preparing for and the more they get used to preparing for the spread, the worse the spread will get and it might go back to old-school football eventually and then 10 years later it will come full cycle. So, all these systems are good as long as they make sense, it's just what you commit to. I know a lot of colleges have committed to the spread which I think is a good way to move the football, a good way to score points, but it does make it harder to evaluate if you don't plan on doing the same thing."

**Why do you feel the NFL hasn't completely been engulfed in that considering, look at all these guys who have learned the spread offense since grade school these days? All these tweeners that typically wouldn't have been in the NFL. Why do you feel that is now that the NFL still hasn't, I guess the spread offense hasn't taken over like it has in high school and college?**

"I think it all depends on whether it's successful or not. I think a lot of teams have dabbled in it. I know I have myself and there's at times it succeeds and sometimes it doesn't. So, you've got to pick and choose, you've got to know what your personnel is and you've got to know what you're capable of running. But, there's no reason it can't succeed. It's had its times and it's done it, but there is no clear-cut answer in anything in football. Whatever is the best way eventually will be the worst way because people will figure out how to stop it. So, it's all good ways. It's just what do you want to do based off your personnel and what do you want to commit to coaching."

**Atlanta Falcons RB Devonta Freeman and your run-game scheme looked like a match made in heaven. When you watch Carlos Hyde, what do you see that may translate?**

"I think Devonta in our scheme in Atlanta is how Devonta, to me, would have been in any scheme. If you're a real good running back, you're going to be a real good running back. I think people overrate that a lot personally. Carlos was a great running back in college and he has put some real good things on tape so far in the NFL and that's why I look forward to having him and getting to work with him. I think it goes the same across the board. People I think overrate a little bit too much the scheme. If you're a good running back in this league, you're going to be good in your scheme, whatever that is."

**(Inaudible)**

"Yeah, you need to be able to see on tape the way people move, if that's going to be the way you're asking them to move and certain things that you do. You can't always see that on tape. Sometimes you go through 80 plays on a college tape and only like eight of them are truly gradable where they're at the point of contact and they're doing something that you're going to ask them to do. What you never want to do as a coach is ask the player to do something that they're not capable of doing and so if you can't see that on tape, to me the next most important thing is personal workouts where you can get down there, you can get a position coach to go down there, take them through some drills and things. Yeah, it's not football, you can't see their toughness and everything like that that you can on tape, but just the physiology of how a guy moves and things like that sometimes you have to send a guy down there to take them through it."

**I know it's only been a few weeks, but what has the transition been like for you moving from coordinator to head coach? What are you doing this time of year?**

"Yeah, just mainly this time of year in the past I've gone into the office in my sweats, I've shut the door and turned on the tape and came out of it for lunch and then to leave to go home. As a head coach, it's different. A lot more things come up in the building especially when we're all new and stuff which I'm sure that will go smoother next offseason, but just trying to put together an entire coaching staff, learn how the building works out, being able to balance between being downstairs with the coaches and making sure I take the time to go upstairs with all the personnel guys who are working on that year-round. It takes time to get on the same page and you can't just do that by talking all the time. You've got to watch tape together. You've got to do it again. You've got to go over and over with a bunch of people. In the past for me it's just been the offensive staff, so that's always been a little bit easier. Now it's a bit of everyone."

**(Inaudible)**

"You have to prioritize. You can't do everything. Some things are more important than others. I can't just choose to do a bunch of press conferences over watching tape and getting ready to call a game. So, I have to balance those types of things out. But, if that does ever take away then you do have to make that decision. I think that's why it's important to have people on your staff that have been with you, who know what you're expecting, that you don't have to spend a year training them in every way. You've been

spending the last 10 years doing that and you have guys who you can count on, who understand what you want, understand how you do things. So, you don't feel like you have to be in every single thing. There's guys who I've worked with who have been waiting years to have a chance to do certain things and a lot of those guys are getting those opportunities and those are guys I'll depend on a lot."

**(Inaudible)**

"Honestly, that's why I don't look at it as why are people saying they dropped off is the first thing. Is it because his touchdown-interception ratio was drastically different? Was it because his win percentage was drastically different? That's why rarely do I know people's numbers at all. You'll hear it after you watch it or sometimes you can't help it but people tell you before, but it has to do with how they play and you can't do that by looking at numbers or a record. You have to watch each play and just because they make a mistake on a play doesn't mean that it's always their fault. You have to watch the protection, you've got to watch what the receiver was doing, what the coverage was doing. You've got to know the situation in a game and it takes everything into account. That's why there's no exact science to this. That's why you can't go off numbers either. It takes a while to study it all, which most of them have been doing for a long time and each year you go through it and you get better. You have guys you fall in love with on tape and then they don't make it. It's good to go back and look at why? What did you love about them? Is there something that you could have saw that could have showed you this. Each year I think we all get better at it, the more you work at it. There's no exact science. I always go to when you shut the door and you turn on the tape and what you see in there by yourself or the coaches that you work with and you can block out all the other noise. That's usually your best.

**How are you going to evaluate a quarterback with only one year of experience, a college quarterback?**

"Well, I mean, the more tape the better. Everything I'm saying is pretty much going off the tape. So, the more tape the better. The more you feel confident in it. A year of tape is pretty good. You get to see a lot. But, when people have done it over time, it makes it a lot more easy to make some decisions we've got to make. You only get so many draft picks. There's a salary cap, you want to invest in those wisely. You know the commitment you're making to these players and there is no exact science. There's some people, all 32 teams are in love with this one guy and then he's out of the league in two years. Doesn't mean that all 32 of those teams didn't know what they were doing. It's tough and so you've got to look at all of it and the more resources you have, the better chance you have to make the right decision."

**(Inaudible)**

"No one in particular. I feel we've got a bunch of good players that we feel we can compete with and we know we've got to add some too. We're going to add as many as we can to help our roster and we also want to add some competition, because we feel the more competition we have in OTAs, the more competition you have in training camp. If you end up cutting some people at the end of training camp who you think can

play in the NFL, then that shows that your organization's going the right direction. That's really our goal."

**(Inaudible)**

"There was no one in particular. I was pretty familiar with the roster, so there wasn't one guy who just jumped out. I think we've got a lot of good players and some young guys who I know better from college and some older guys who have had some success in this league. But, you've got a pretty good idea as a coach just playing against people and going through the draft each year who is on the roster."