

A banner featuring a close-up of several American footballs with their laces. The background is a deep red with a subtle pattern of white stars. The text "SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS" is in a gold, sans-serif font, and "TRANSCRIPTIONS" is in a large, white, bold, sans-serif font. The San Francisco 49ers logo is in the bottom right corner.

SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS

# TRANSCRIPTIONS



**Head Coach Kyle Shanahan**  
**Press Conference – September 22, 2017**  
**San Francisco 49ers**  
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**After watching the game on film, how do you reconcile the slow start versus the fast finish, as a head coach? Do you come away ultimately happy with the team or what's your sense?**

"You know, it's about executing. And the more you execute, the better you do. I feel like the more some guys make plays, sometimes you can overcome 11 people having to execute. I think the more people do that, the more people feed off each other. You know, we started that game slow. We started as bad as you could with a pick that got inside the two-yard line, so you know, that was a tough way to start it. But, the guys did come out and respond. You know, not everything was perfect that second drive, but we ended up finishing, making a play, getting into the end zone and I think that kind of takes the monkey off of everyone's back, makes you relax a little bit more. I think the key in playing at a high level in sports is playing with a clear mind where you're confident and aggressive. That only happens through success. The more success you can have, the easier that comes naturally."

**You said they can relax a little bit more. Was there a sense that they were straining to make things work?**

"I don't necessarily, I don't totally think it's that. I think it's pretty obvious. If you just think about it, I think it's human nature. When you put a lot of effort into stuff, you put a lot of work into it. I mean, those guys want to perform as good as they can more than anything in the world just like everyone wants to in their jobs, also. So, when that means the world to you and you don't feel like you're living up to that in your first two weeks, it starts to mount. I don't know if it's pressing. I don't know if it's anxiety, but it's more of that, how important something is to you. You know you can do it, but you have to go out and get it done. And once it does happen, you get more in a flow, you get more confidence and things become easier."

**After the game, LB NaVorro Bowman said something about learning how to win. Is there something to that, and if so, how does the team go about it? Or is it as simple as you've got to win to figure out how to make it happen?**

"Yeah, I think it's similar to my answer to that last question. There's nothing you can read in a book that tells you. It's something that, and there's nothing you can talk yourself into. All that stuff is pretty fake. You have to believe it. The way you believe it is you do it, and if you do it over and over again, and that's the way games end up, then

everyone starts to believe it. If you haven't done it before, and you lose a bunch of close ones, it's tough to believe it. You've got to get it done and you've got to do it again and again and again, and the way you develop that and the way you learn how to win and know how to win is you start winning. Then it becomes contagious and guys feed off each other and you get better. That's why you see this in this league a lot that teams go on win streaks a lot and sometimes when things go bad, teams go on losing streaks a lot. It's a very big mental part of this game. It's not just physical. Everyone is pretty close in talent. You've got to fight through a lot of things. You've got to stay healthy. But, the more continued success you have, the easier it gets."

**When you drafted DL Solomon Thomas, you and general manager John Lynch said you envisioned him as an interior rusher. He's been rushing a lot from the edge so far, and it seems he's struggling to disengage from the offensive tackles. He doesn't have any sacks yet. Is he out of position right now, and if not, what's the issue with him?**

"No, I don't think he's out of position. I think we need to move him around a lot. I think in this game yesterday, I do think he was on the outside more. I'd like to see him on the inside. But, I don't only want to see him on the inside. I think he's capable of being at all four spots. That's what we like about him. He has the quickness and he has the size to do both, so I think the more we can move him around, the better. But, that's also a lot to put on a guy, too. Each position is slightly different. There's different stunts, different coverages, different ways to play protections and stuff. That takes time. We need him to get better. He will get better. You know, he's in his third game in the NFL after missing OTAs, too. I think he has done some real good things. You don't always get those sack numbers. Those come. I think it took [Atlanta Falcons LB Vic] Beasley a while to get some sack numbers for us, too, in Atlanta. He ended up getting quite a bit last year. I wouldn't base it all off numbers. I'm very excited with Solomon. I'm very excited that he's on our team, and I think he's going to be a hell of a player for us."

**How do you diagnose the issues with rushing the passer last night after being able to watch the film?**

"It wasn't good enough, you know? I can't tell you exactly why, but our guys didn't win. They blocked us pretty well. We didn't affect the quarterback enough. You know, I thought we did a very good job of that versus Seattle and I thought we took a step back on that last night. I give credit to them. They blocked us well, but we've got to find a way to get pressure on the quarterback because if you don't get pressure on the quarterback with four, that's going to trickle to your coverages. And if we can't do that, eventually you've got to get it with pressures and blitzes, and that's going to leave a lot more holes in the coverages. So, you always want to get there with four and we didn't do a good job of that last night. I know our guys are disappointed about that and hope to improve that versus Arizona next week."

**It seems like they didn't put themselves in a lot of third-and-long situations. Does that, I imagine that factors into it, the personnel that you use, getting LB Elvis Dumervil on the field, that sort of thing?**

“Yeah, definitely. Elvis comes in in more of our speed rush packages which is obviously pass downs, third and long when the run is taken out of it. We can use Elvis at both, too, but that's really what he specializes in. The more third-and-longs they have, the easier it is to get to the quarterback because they've got to hold onto it longer. But, we definitely didn't do a good enough job last night at getting to the quarterback.”

**I know the situation in the game kind of dictates some of it, but you went up-tempo in the second half, seemed like the rhythm started to pick up a little bit. Is there something to that, that maybe picking up the pace and going can help get an offense rolling a little bit?**

“It does at times. It also gives you a quick way to get out of there to give the ball back to the defense if you don't succeed. We've done that in all three games. We did in the first half, too. We went up-tempo after the pick on our first play. The next series we went up-tempo and hit that big crossing route to [WR] Pierre [Garçon]. I think it was a 30-yarder. That was no-huddle. We went into the next one, I forget what ended up stopping us. When you go no-huddle, it's great if you execute because it's quick and you attack them. But, it's also a quick way that if someone doesn't execute and you miss a block, it's a quick way to get into a second and long, and it's a quick way to get the defense back out there. There's some balance with that. It's great when it works and it's bad when it doesn't. You just try to get a feel when you have the defense on their heels and when to really step on the gas. Sometimes, I've learned both ways, sometimes it's been good and sometimes it's been bad.”

**On the Rams muffed punt, have you ever seen a long snapper get there first? I think Kyle recovered that.**

“It was kind of funny because, I forget who it was, but we try to show turnovers during the week from around the league. And [defensive backs coach Jeff] Hafley our DB coach showed us that, and there was a long snapper who stripped a guy and got a fumble last week. I was giving [LS/TE] Kyle [Nelson] some grief, telling him that he needed to show us that this week. I told him I wasn't going to like him until he did. I was kind of being sarcastic, but he ended up doing the exact thing, so it was pretty cool to see him do that.”

**Do you remember which game that was?**

“I don't remember. Sorry.”

**So you like Kyle Nelson now?**

“Yes, now he set a standard. Now he's got to do it every week.”

**When you saw the tape, what did you see on the offensive pass interference on WR Trent Taylor?**

“I saw a very good route.”

**On the two-point conversion, QB Brian Hoyer said the route was designed for it to be the same route that Taylor ended up scoring a touchdown on. Is there, after looking back at it, do you look at it like maybe we install, or based on the**

**technique that the defender was playing that you give yourself an opportunity to throw it outside where it looked like Taylor had an opening over there?**

"I would love to. I would love every time you run a man-to-man route for the receiver just to call an audible based on where the guy is and run wherever he wants to. The problem is he's third in the progression. Brian is not going to know where he is. If he was number one, if we called like, a route we call choice, where he's number one, which we ran earlier in the game on third down when we hit Trent breaking inside. It was a big third down early in the game and he got like a 15-yarder on that. There we were staring at him. He's number one, he can go any way based off of man, and Brian is looking at it so he has a feel. That two-pointer we're trying to get it to [WR] Marquise [Goodwin] first who runs a shallow, he's covered and then we go to Pierre second and now we have one guy left because it's max protection and we're expecting zero and that's Trent who is last. So, we're coming to him way late and he's supposed to be returning back into the play. And definitely, the guy was trailing behind him. He had him beat on the way out. If he was number one, would have scored on it. But, we're going to other guys and we come to him last. They defended the other two guys well based off their coverages and then it was just unfortunate that he was inside on him."

**It seems you went to Taylor in a bunch of key moments in the game. What did you see from him and what do you like about him?**

"Trent is a tough player. The game is not too big for him. He's got very good separation ability. He's a quick guy who plays strong. I know he's not the biggest guy out there, but he is tough. He fights for every yard. He does not mind the contact in the games. He has good hands and I like what he can do once he gets the ball in his hands. That's why we liked him coming out of college. That's why we drafted him and he's been what we've anticipated so far."

**Is that as well executed of an onside kick as you've seen?**

"Yeah, that was a great kick. That would be tough for anyone to recover, the way it hung up there. It was a great kick by [K] Robbie [Gould]."

**We saw LB Reuben Foster on the sideline. Any update on his prognosis, when he could come back to practice?**

"Yeah, not right now. I'd be shocked if he came back this week. I'd be surprised. We're taking it week-to-week. I'm not really expecting him this week, but you never know with some of these athletes. He might be there but not expecting it right now."

**Same with S Eric Reid?**

"Yes, definitely not expecting Eric, either. I think he's behind Reuben."

**After the second preseason game, you were noticeably ticked off, I guess. Now that you're 0-3 and I know that's not where you want to be, but you don't seem like your emotional level is at that same point. You seem like you're optimistic. Is that a fair assessment?**

"I think I'm more realistic in terms of how we play. I was very upset after that second game because I was just extremely disappointed and embarrassed about some of the

things we did out there. I was very proud of our guys last night. By no means did we play perfect, and I don't think we played as good as we can, but I thought the guys gave it everything they could. I thought they competed hard, and I was proud of that. I'm very disappointed we didn't come away with the win, especially one that I thought we could have. I felt the same way after the Seattle game, too. But, you know I feel like guys can control their effort and can control how hard they can go. You can't always control the outcome of the game. You can control everything you give. I feel like our guys are giving a lot. I think they have been working very hard and I've been happy with the people and the character that we have in there. Now it's up to me, the whole coaching staff, all the players, everyone in this building that, yeah we got the right people and we've got to make sure we keep getting them better. That's what we've got to focus on."

**Is part of that, too, the fact that you've got a really good defensive game Sunday, and then you've got a pretty good offensive game last night, just knowing, hey, if we put this together, we could be much more competitive than maybe people thought?**

"Yeah, I believed that going into the season. I believed it versus Carolina, I believed it versus Seattle and I believed it last night. So, I'm extremely disappointed when we don't get the job done. There's always reasons why, and I think the way you just summarized it, you can look at each game that way as this side of the ball there and this side of the ball there. You know, you never know what it's going to take to win a game. Very rarely do all three phases play the best. And so, it doesn't totally matter to me, so I'll say to the team always I don't know if we have to win the game 2-0 with a safety or 50-48. It really doesn't matter, just as long as we find a way to win. And there's lots of ways to win games. You can do it defensively, you can do it offensively, and you can do it on special teams. Very rarely are all three going to play at the top of their game. And when they don't, someone else has got to step it up. I feel like we've done that at times in these three weeks, but obviously we haven't done it good enough to get a W and we're going to keep working to do that until we do."

**Following up on that, have you been pleased with your special teams, kind of quietly these first three weeks, it seems like they have made a difference in just about every game?**

"Yeah, I have, definitely. I think they have been playing very good. I think they have gotten better each week, too. I thought they played solid versus Carolina. I thought they did better versus Seattle and I thought they did even better last night. I thought we've had some big challenges with [Carolina Panthers RB Christian] McCaffrey, [Seattle Seahawks WR Tyler] Lockett, and [Los Angeles Rams WR] Tavon [Austin] last night. So we've had some big challenges with the returners. None of them have really done much. And last night, not only did they make sure that those guys didn't affect the game, I thought they gave us a chance to win the game with the turnovers they got for us."

**Speaking of special teams, they recovered a punt at the 12-yard line, the Rams 12-yard line in the second quarter. Then your offense made a couple of critical mistakes and ended up going backwards and kicking a field goal instead of**

**scoring a touchdown. You could argue that was the difference in the game. What do you want your players to take away from that series in particular?**

"Every series. When you get an opportunity, you want to score. So, you look at each play, why didn't you score. Was it a penalty, was it a missed block, was it a guy just getting beat, was a bad play call? You're looking at everything. Definitely after a turnover, especially when you get it down there, you want to get seven. That changes the game fast. At least you get three. You don't want to turn it right back over. So worst-case scenario, you like to look at it as a three-point play. But that's four that you leave it on the field and that's where you've got a chance to really turn a game or run away with it. Those are missed opportunities and you hope for a lot of opportunities, but you can't miss too many of them. I look at that, though, the same as every series. Every series, if we don't score a touchdown, I'm always disappointed and I hope our players are too."

**Are you going to go back and try to get clarification on any calls or will you just put it behind you in terms of any penalties that are called?**

"No, we do. We submit them in. They tell us which ones they thought they were right on, which ones they thought they were wrong on. We do that. I've done that every team I've been on over the years. Now at least as a head coach, I can call people and have some more conversations which I plan on doing over the weekend. But, it doesn't change what happened."

**On the two reviews that you got right there, how did that process work? Did somebody upstairs alert you, hey, throw the challenge flag?**

"Always. Guys alert that there's a chance. [Vice president/executive producer] Rob [Alberino Jr.] and the guys in the stadium did a great job getting on the scoreboard, so I had a chance to really see it. Because you never really for sure know. Guys see it pretty quick and guys are moving fast, so you never know 100-percent. But, when our guys get that stuff on the scoreboard that fast, it gives us a chance to throw it. You're never 100-percent sure, but if I think there's a good chance, I'm usually not going to hesitate and throw it."

**Seemed like the sideline, the TV broadcasters when I re-watched it today really enjoyed your second one, where you threw it pretty emphatically.**

"I was. We were running out of time and I didn't quite know for sure and then I was probably amped up and getting aggressive with them. Glad I didn't hit anybody with the flag."

**Finally, after the game when you shook hands with Los Angeles Rams head coach Sean McVay, did you guys just say, 'Wow, our first game against each other was pretty wild there.' Was there any talk?**

"A little. It was more, I'll hit you up over the weekend when not everyone is watching, we'll talk then. There was 100 people around you looking at each other. So just give each other a hug, say what's up, good job. We both gave the look like, wow, that was crazy and I'm sure we'll catch up this weekend about it."

**Was there any update on DL Tank Carradine and how he's feeling or any of the other guys who had to leave last night?**

“Yeah, we’ve got three guys in the protocol. We’ve got [LB] Brock [Coyle], we’ve got [FB Kyle Juszczyk] Juice, we’ve got [S Jaquiski] Tantt, with concussions in the protocol. So, I’m not sure with that, how long it could be. We’ll find out more on Monday, but they will go through that. Tank has got a high ankle sprain. We haven’t gotten his MRI back, but we’re going to have to get that and really decide whether IR or not, because any time you’ve got a high ankle sprain, it’s going to be a while. So we’re not exactly sure how long it’s going to be. We’ll have to decide that probably Monday.”

**When you watched the film of that first inception, first play of the game with Brian Hoyer, do you coach him to just throw that pass away in the future or to go with someone else?**

“No, it’s man coverage. So, all your check-downs aren’t going to be good. We thought we could motion him over there, get the corner off of Marquise, get the bump off of him and give him a quick speed-out just to start the game. The corner played it great. He squatted all over it. And all Brian could do there is, the only play he can do is throw it away. He just left it inside, still tried to get the pass and that was the only mistake he made, and I did not like the call because it wasn’t open. I just wish he threw it away. He didn’t, and that’s what the result was. But, I was very, you know, I was very excited how everyone responded to that and it was cool watching our team after that. You know, they went and scored right away. But, I could see our whole defensive side, as they were running out on the field, go right up to Hoyer, and ‘Hey, keep ripping it, we’ve got your back. We’re not going to hesitate.’ And stuff like that I think is what really helps a person when your teammates show they still believe in you.”