

TRANSCRIPTIONS



**Defensive Coordinator Robert Saleh
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San Francisco 49ers**

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Has DL Nick Bosa graduated from bobblehead status yet?

“He’s getting better. It’s great competition for him to be able to go against [T] Joe [Staley] and [T Mike] McGlinchey every day. At the same time, good for those guys, because he’s kind of unique in his pass rush set and then how he operates. It’s good for him. He’s got to continue to evolve and keep his foot on the pedal and keep rolling.”

Do you guys have any kind of incentive for when guys actually get an interception? Do they get any kind of reward?

“No, we’ve got a gold-digger program where you get points and all that stuff, and they’re very prideful on all that stuff. You guys see the gold ball rolling around. No money’s being exchanged or anything, but there is a self-pride and taking the gold ball to your group for that particular day.”

Are you, how are you just in terms of how these guys are reacting to the ball? S Jaquiski Tartt dropped one at the end.

“Yeah, it’s been going good. I think they’re learning how to, I don’t think, you can tell that they’re learning how to tie themselves to the rush, which is the whole key to this defense is rushing coverage and tying yourself, everybody on a string. [LB] Fred Warner is really, really good at that, understanding what’s happening with the rush while he sees the, he’s very unique in that he can feel the routes, feel the rush and see the quarterback and he ties himself really well. You can tell that the rest of the defense is starting to try to pull that same thing and trust what they’re actually seeing.”

How does somebody in the secondary tie themselves to the rush? What does that mean?

“There’s a lot of feel and instincts. I’ll use Fred as the example. We’re in the vision on the quarterback defense. As you look at the quarterback, you can feel whether or not your color’s flashing in front of the quarterback’s face which, through studying pre-snap indicators and all that, you can trigger on routes, whether they’re routes that are happening in front of you, because you know whether or not the quarterback can check it down. [Seattle Seahawks LB] Bobby Wagner is spectacular at it, [Jacksonville Jaguars LB] Telvin Smith, the guys up in, down in Los Angeles, the Chargers, are really good at it, so they’re starting to tie themselves to it, and it’s really just an instinctual feel for football. That’s basically it.”

You said when we talked to you last that DB Tarvarius Moore was far away from being a starting caliber safety. After these last few practices working with the first team, is he getting closer?

“He’s getting better. Tarvarius does not lack athleticism, does not lack instincts, he does not lack burst or anything like that. That’s not his problem. He’s not a dumb guy, he’s actually really smart. And so, for Tarvarius, he’s only been playing the position for a couple weeks, if you think about it, here for our team. He’s been a corner. If you take the week or week and a half that he had in OTAs plus the first week here, so he’s kind of got to accelerate his learning which is going to be more on him as a player. He does not lack the skillset and for him to just continue to get better, be confident in his alignments, where he needs to place his eyes. The instinctual part, you can see it. He gets on course very well. He’s got good feel in the backend on when to stay deep and when to cut it short. It’s just, he takes really good angles, so he’s got a chance to be good. He’s just got to continue to get better every day.”

When DB Jimmie Ward is worked back into the practice mix, do you anticipate him being stuck with the first team immediately or is he going to have to earn those reps?

“You know, that’s going to end up being, I’m sure he’ll be on a pitch count to make sure that he’s eased into it. I don’t know that for sure, still. Once we cross that bridge with the trainers and how the performance staff sees it, we’ll cross it.”

Talk about S Marcell Harris. Outside of his physicality that we’ve seen, what other traits do you like about him?

“Marcell has no hesitation in his game. He is very physical, he’s a really good box safety, needs to improve his middle of field play. He’s getting better every single day, becoming more confident. You can tell when he is 100-percent sure of what’s about to happen on a play, because he triggers just as fast as all of them. When he triggers, there’s a lot of power and violence that comes with it. So, for Marcell, the more he can train himself to be 100-percent sure every single snap, the faster and the more explosive he’s going to look on tape. We’re still in the first week of training camp, so for him, it’s just again, continuing to get better, because we don’t have a big install. To master your technique and to be a master of what you’re being asked to do is how you’ll pull all your athletic trait out of yourself. They’re all, every single one of them, D-Line, linebackers and DBs are all working for that.”

What kind of progress have you seen from CB Jason Verrett?

“Verrett, he looks really sharp. He had a really nice play yesterday, showed great patience on [WR] Marquise Goodwin, which is very hard to do when he’s screaming up the field. His foot quickness and speed and all that is right there, so I like the progress he’s going into or he’s showing. He just needs to continue to get better. He’ll get more of a load as we go and keep gaining confidence that he’s healthy and that he’s going to make it through this year, 16 games. That’s the mindset.”

What does it mean to you that Joe Staley, a veteran like that, is picking the brain of Nick Bosa, who's just a brand-new rookie?

"I think as a, whether you're a veteran or a rookie, you should always be looking to get better. Joe Staley is one of the best tackles in football because he's always doing his homework, he's always trying to find ways to get better. If you just look at a rookie and say, 'Ah, he can't teach me anything,' I mean we could all learn anything from anybody. I learn things from my kids every day and my oldest is eight. You should always be looking for knowledge, and it doesn't matter who you're getting that knowledge from, if somebody has something important to share with you, you can always learn. It doesn't surprise me because Joe is where he is. He's been in the league this long and he's been having success, he's had success for as long as he's had."

I don't know if it was the last time we talked to you, but Bosa had a good day against Staley but you noted we're not in pads, etcetera. Have you been pleased with his performance since he put pads on?

"So far he's been doing a very good job getting better every day. He is winning some one-on-ones, he's not winning all of them, which you don't expect. He is getting better. His whole deal is to continue to get better, stay healthy, improve on his game, and add a second repertoire to keep adding to his skillset with regard to pass rush. He's really good in the run game, could get better, but he's progressing the right way."

Has he been, I don't want to shower him with too much praise just because he's a rookie?

"Always. Rookies."

Will you guys do a live tackling period at any point during training camp?

"That would be more for [head coach] Kyle [Shanahan]. I doubt it, but that's more for Kyle with how he operates."

As far as DL Dee Ford, is the plan to keep him out for a little bit to make sure that knee is right?

"So, Dee Ford with what he has going on, that's going to be completely on the performance staff and when they say he's ready to come in, he'll be ready. He's got nothing to prove to us."

I know you said he has nothing to prove to you, but how steep is the learning curve coming from the defense that he played in versus this one?

"I think, for him, his learning curve should be much less. I mean, he's played in a 3-4 outside backer where he had drop responsibilities and coverage and pressures and all that stuff. Where here, he's playing solely defensive end. The learning curve should be much less."

How is CB Ahkello Witherspoon and what's the exact issue that he's dealing with?

"That would be a question for the performance staff also. I'm sorry."

With him out, CB Tim Harris Jr. saw a lot of snaps today. What did you see from him?

“I like the direction he’s going in also. For him, it’s going to be about confidence and that he’s a hell of a ball player and he can play in this league. He’s got good size, athleticism and stuff, but most of what makes a great corner is confidence and knowledge of what you’re getting from a route standpoint. It’s a good opportunity for him to get those extra reps, and now he’s just got to advantage of them.”

Are the specifics of DL DeForest Buckner’s role much different from when you guys tinker with the D-Line?

“No.”