

# TRANSCRIPTIONS



**Defensive Coordinator Robert Saleh  
Press Conference – August 13, 2019  
San Francisco 49ers**

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**How did you feel about, just assignment-wise, how your guys performed on Saturday night?**

“I thought for the most part it was a clean game. Obviously, there are things that everyone can improve on with the details with regard to technique and all that, but from an assignment standpoint I felt like it was very clean.”

**How was LB Dre Greenlaw from that aspect?**

“Dre did a nice job. Again, same thing, he can clean up some details. There are some nuances that he can clean up, taking his game to another level with understanding when a back flares this is what happens versus a back to the flat. Just simple nuances that happen in our scheme that tells you to do something post-snap is where he can get cleaner and he will as he gets reps.”

**Is that stuff that he’s been already taught that he just needs to refresh or stuff that’s still being introduced?**

“It’s stuff that, it’s just refreshing, it’s seeing it over and over because defensively you’re just on reaction. So, you can see it on paper all you want, but until you’ve actually gone through it and react where it becomes second nature. That’s the beauty of this whole training camp thing, you just get so many opportunities at it to perfect it.”

**He seemed to bite on the play action in the first quarter. How has he been just in the practice as far as pass coverage and those types of things?**

“He’s been really good in coverage. Again, it’s simple nuances, so Dallas presented different things that our offense doesn’t do that attack our system and that’s the beauty of these preseason games and why I’m excited to go up to Denver. They’re going to give us certain things that our offense doesn’t and our offensive is going to see certain things that we don’t give them. For him, being able to recognize those different nuances and how we get attacked and understanding how to play within yourself and to your issues, it will only help him. So, getting those scars, that’s a good thing.

**Dallas is a good rushing team, they didn’t rush for very many yards in the game. Can you figure anything out from that? Were you happy with the run defense and how that looked?**

“For the most part. There are some things that we can obviously improve on too, from a run game standpoint. For the first go of it, I thought the guys did a good job. We were gap disciplined. People staying disciplined within their gap strain and to get off blocks, making each other right. If one person did get gapped out, another person was overlapping because they were playing so, there was a relentless feel to the defense and how we were playing and when you’ve got that a lot of guys can make people right on the fly. But, it was clean. The run game was clean for the most part. They didn’t present us with a lot of different things. They ran three runs that we’ve been wanting to work against and I think those three carries, one yard, on a particular yard that I think we are going to see a lot this year and we knocked it out. Those were the three runs I wanted to see, everything else was no different than what we’ve been getting from our offense.”

**You guys sat, obviously, all your starters with the exception of maybe a couple guys. But, in terms of the injured guys, particularly the defensive ends, what are they missing at this point in training camp? Obviously, you want everybody healthy, but are you concerned about their lack of work getting ramped up to the preseason?**

“As a coach I’m always paranoid, but a lot of those guys are proven that they can come out. I mean, [Los Angeles Rams DT] Aaron Donald comes out and doesn’t skip a beat. [Los Angeles Chargers DE] Joey Bosa’s missed time, doesn’t skip a beat. To me, you’re missing that, you’ve got a new D-Line coach, you’ve got new nuances to different techniques that he’s teaching especially from a game standpoint when you’re working with a three technique and you’re trying to create that continuity. That stuff, to me, is important. Do I think it will hinder us from still being able to get after the passer? No, I don’t think it will be too bad. I feel like there’s going to be an adjustment in terms of, we’re going to have a high ceiling once those guys get back of trying to master those techniques and master the relationship they have with one another so they can operate at a very high level.”

**Last year at this time we were talking about how raw DL Jullian Taylor was because he hadn’t played too much. Now a year later having a chance to develop, how would you kind of characterize his progress from Point A to Point B.**

“He’s put on about 20 to 30 pounds from last year. Last year he played around 270, now he’s around 305 which we challenged him in the offseason to do that because we wanted to move him exclusively inside. And he’s taken that challenge. He’s been doing a very nice job. He’s heavy handed, he’s violent when he plays. He’s got that old school flatback great balance and footwork. What happened to him a year ago was more, he just got tired towards the end of training camp. He’s been doing a good job taking care of his body, making sure that he stays fresh. But, when he’s fresh and he’s on it, he is a very violent player and he moves people. He’s been good so far and he’s got to continue to just get better”

**How do you view that DB Adrian Colbert play? You just used the word violent and that was a very violent hit. Is there a part of you that likes that aggression, but channeling it in that way where he ends up getting disqualified and a penalty? How do you look back on that play?**

“We’re fortunate, because we had two plays exactly like that for [DB Antone] Exum [Jr.], delivered a shoulder shot right to the chest, which is what we teach. You’ve got to do everything as a defender to make sure that you’re not leading with your head and be deliberate to show the refs that you are not trying to lead with your head. I don’t think Adrian was trying to lead with his head. I know his intent, I know the man. Being able to show why he got flagged versus why Exum did not get flagged, when really, it was the same type of play, it was great for us so we could teach them, to show them exactly where it went wrong. From an ejection standpoint, the league office decided that. I know the intent of the man. You could see it. It’s such a bang-bang play. They’re going to call it 100-percent of the time, I just don’t know about the ejection. I’m still trying to learn that one.”

**As far as Adrian goes, last year he was a starter. Any sense now that maybe he didn’t approach that the right way with some distractions and stuff? Do you see that he’s more focused this year, and it looks like there’s quite a numbers game going on at that safety position, where does he stand?**

“There’s a great competition going on in that safety room. There are legitimate safeties all over the place in that group. I’m very excited about them. I’ll go back to the second-year issue of most second-year players, not all of them understand what made them great their first year. They think they do, but they forget. They always go into that second year thinking they’ve got it. The three most dangerous words in the NFL are, “I’ve got it.” For him, getting back in touch to what made him great as a rookie, I was really excited for him to play in that game. If you remember the play before he got knocked out, if you guys got a chance to go watch it, they have what to me should be a 50-yard run, and when the back spilled out the back door, broke a couple tackles, and Adrian Colbert comes flying out of the middle of the field and tackles for nine. Those are the plays that made him special his rookie year, and when you watch that clip, it was awesome. For him, I mean, it leads to a second and one, which we get the sack, goes to third and five which goes to him getting knocked out of the game. If he can reconnect to what he was as a rookie in terms of just playing disciplined in the middle of the field and understanding that he’s got a special talent with regards to tracking, his speed, finding the ball from the middle of the field, going red line to red line, and tracking the ball coming out. He’ll have a chance. Again, for that safety room to answer your question, there’s great competition all over the place”

**I think in June, he got up to 210 pounds. Has that affected his speed? Do you want to see a free safety at 210 or would you rather have more of a smaller?**

“We always, I’m on the same philosophy as coach [head coach Kyle] Shanahan in terms of be as big and as strong as you can without sacrificing your speed. If you watch the play before, the first down before he gets ejected, he has not lost a step. He actually looked faster. I think he clocked in as the second fastest time during the game on whatever the GPS thing is. His speed is not an issue.”

**Who was the fastest?**

“I don’t know. I think it was [WR] Deebo [Samuel], A.C. and I don’t know. You’d have to ask coach. I think he has it.”

**LB Azeez Al-Shaair showed up a couple times, particularly on that screen. What is your assessment of him during the summer?**

“Azeez, you know, he’s been doing good. He missed all of OTAs, undrafted rookie. He’s progressing the right way. These next two weeks are going to be big for him in terms of proving that the league’s not too big for him. Still trying to make sure that we get a good evaluation on him before we speak up. You figure he’s still fresh in terms of just getting here. So, this Denver week, Kansas City and then, of course, our fourth preseason game will go a long way. So, a lot of stuff for him before I could put a stamp on him.”

**He had that serious knee injury last year. Have you been careful with him because of that or are you treating him like OK, now--?**

“Are we still talking about Azeez? Yeah, we’re following the direction of the performance staff. Day-to-day, they’ve got a plan for him and we’re just adhering to it.”

**What do you hope to accomplish when you guys go to Denver and looking a little bit beyond that, it seems like the schedule gets a little bit strained? How are you guys going to manage that?**

“From a defensive standpoint with Denver, the message is no different. You can feel a defense. When you watch tape, when you watch a live copy, when you’re watching football, you can feel a defense on TV just turn off the sound and just watch it. So, the intent is to go up there, compete our tails off and make sure that Denver feels every last bit of you. It’s not from a cheap shot or anything, but just your speed, your technique, your effort, all of it that was kind of represented in that Dallas game. Take that up to Denver along with the execution part and that’s all we’re looking for. The results, we never talk about results, but with Denver, it’s to go up there, compete, and do exactly what they’ve been doing all camp. It’s just going up against a different team.”

**Do you plan on having more starters play on Monday night?**

“That’s up to Kyle. We haven’t talked about that one yet.”