

49ers Clips – April 29, 2017

Local Media

***What We Learned on Day 2 of the 2017 NFL Draft***

By Joe Fann, 49ers.com

<http://www.49ers.com/news/article-2/What-We-Learned-on-Day-2-of-the-2017-NFL-Draft/acf1e731-4364-4fcb-a604-bdcf5c0bbd26>

***Solomon Thomas and Reuben Foster 'Already Feel Like Brothers'***

By Joe Fann, 49ers.com

<http://www.49ers.com/news/article-2/Solomon-Thomas-and-Reuben-Foster-Already-Feel-Like-Brothers/4ac8717a-92b6-4831-9d17-70a886415450>

***San Francisco 49ers Draft Colorado CB Ahkello Witherspoon***

By Joe Fann, 49ers.com

<http://www.49ers.com/news/article-2/San-Francisco-49ers-Draft-Colorado-CB-Ahkello-Witherspoon/71d6c88c-d807-47c6-ba5c-970c4b12826d>

***San Francisco 49ers Draft Iowa QB C.J. Beathard***

By Joe Fann, 49ers.com

<http://www.49ers.com/news/article-2/San-Francisco-49ers-Draft-Iowa-QB-CJ-Beathard/8ad2add8-d6e7-46b4-9576-dfaff4f507d1>

***49ers ILB Foster: 2nd shoulder surgery not necessary***

By Eric Branch, San Francisco Chronicle

<http://www.sfchronicle.com/49ers/article/49ers-ILB-Foster-second-shoulder-surgery-not-11107597.php>

***49ers select CB Witherspoon; pick up 2018 second-round pick in trade***

By Eric Branch, San Francisco Chronicle

<http://www.sfchronicle.com/49ers/article/49ers-select-CB-Witherspoon-pick-up-2018-11108029.php>

***49ers trade up for Iowa QB Beathard in third round***

By Eric Branch, San Francisco Chronicle

<http://www.sfchronicle.com/49ers/article/49ers-select-CB-Witherspoon-grab-2018-2nd-round-11108093.php>

***49ers notes: Vance McDonald trade talk, Reuben Foster shoulder, Solomon Thomas' mentor***

By Cam Inman, San Jose Mercury News

<http://www.mercurynews.com/2017/04/28/49ers-notes-vance-mcdonald-trade-talk-reuben-foster-shoulder-solomon-thomas-mentor/>

***Reuben Foster becomes a 49er with help from call waiting — 'The Saints are still on the other line'***

By Cam Inman, San Jose Mercury News

<http://www.mercurynews.com/2017/04/28/reuben-foster-becomes-a-49er-with-help-from-call-waiting-the-saints-are-still-on-the-other-line/>

***49ers draft cornerback with Northern California roots***

By Cam Inman, San Jose Mercury News

<http://www.mercurynews.com/2017/04/28/49ers-draft-cornerback-with-northern-california-roots/>

***49ers trade up to draft surprising QB choice***

By Cam Inman, San Jose Mercury News

<http://www.mercurynews.com/2017/04/28/49ers-draft-up-for-surprising-qb-choice/>

***49ers take CB Ahkello Witherspoon, QB C.J. Beathard in Round 3***

By Matt Barrows, Sacramento Bee  
<http://www.sacbee.com/sports/nfl/san-francisco-49ers/article147538014.html>

***Surprise! 49ers grab a quarterback, C.J. Beathard, in Round 3***

By Matt Barrows, Sacramento Bee  
<http://www.sacbee.com/sports/nfl/san-francisco-49ers/article147558049.html>

***REUBEN FOSTER: SHOULDER RECOVERY ON PACE FOR TRAINING CAMP CLEARANCE***

By Matt Maiocco, CSNBayArea.com  
<http://www.csnbayarea.com/49ers/reuben-foster-shoulder-recovery-pace-training-camp-clearance>

***49ERS SELECT CB AHKELLO WITHERSPOON IN THIRD ROUND OF THE 2017 NFL DRAFT***

By Matt Maiocco, CSNBayArea.com  
<http://www.csnbayarea.com/49ers/49ers-select-cb-ahkello-witherspoon-third-round-2017-nfl-draft>

***49ERS TRADE UP, SELECT QB C.J. BEATHARD IN THIRD ROUND OF 2017 NFL DRAFT***

By Matt Maiocco, CSNBayArea.com  
<http://www.csnbayarea.com/49ers/49ers-trade-select-qb-cj-beathard-third-round-2017-nfl-draft>

***Trades give 49ers chance to get franchise quarterback ... next year***

By Nick Wagoner, ESPN.com  
[http://www.espn.com/blog/san-francisco-49ers/post/\\_id/24736/trades-give-49ers-chance-to-get-franchise-quarterback-next-year](http://www.espn.com/blog/san-francisco-49ers/post/_id/24736/trades-give-49ers-chance-to-get-franchise-quarterback-next-year)

***Todd McShay's Day 2 NFL draft awards***

By Todd McShay, ESPN.com  
[http://www.espn.com/nfl/draft2017/insider/story/\\_id/19267138/todd-mcshay-day-2-nfl-draft-awards-2017](http://www.espn.com/nfl/draft2017/insider/story/_id/19267138/todd-mcshay-day-2-nfl-draft-awards-2017)

***2017 NFL Draft: First Impressions of First Round***

By Andy Benoit, MMQB.com  
<http://mmqb.si.com/mmqb/2017/04/28/nfl-draft-first-round-picks-trades-analysis#>

***49ers underscore commitment (for now) to Brian Hoyer***

By Mike Florio, ProFootballTalk.com  
<http://profootballtalk.nbcsports.com/2017/04/29/49ers-underscore-commitment-for-now-to-brian-hoyer/>

***Mike Mayock's pick-by-pick draft analysis***

By Mike Mayock, NFL.com  
<http://www.nfl.com/news/story/0ap3000000804115/article/mike-mayocks-pickbypick-draft-analysis>

***Winners and losers after Day 2 of the 2017 NFL Draft***

By Gregg Rosenthal, NFL.com  
<http://www.nfl.com/news/story/0ap3000000804516/article/winners-and-losers-after-day-2-of-the-2017-nfl-draft>

***2017 NFL Draft: Quick-snap grades for every team through Day 2***

By Chad Reuter, NFL.com  
<http://www.nfl.com/news/story/0ap3000000803905/article/2017-nfl-draft-quicksnap-grades-for-every-team-through-day-2>

***49ers get Solomon Thomas, extra picks in 1st round of draft***

By Josh Dubow, Associated Press  
<http://pro32.ap.org/article/49ers-get-solomon-thomas-extra-picks-1st-round-draft>

***49ers add CB Witherspoon, QB Beathard on second day of draft***

By Michael Wagaman, Associated Press

<http://bigstory.ap.org/article/3c03c09af02742c98e27dc05544f423f/49ers-add-cornerback-third-round-and-make-another-trade>

## National Media

### ***Once they start drafting, Seahawks go big on defense***

By Bob Condotta, The Seattle Times

<http://www.seattletimes.com/sports/seahawks/once-they-start-drafting-seahawks-go-big-on-defense/>

### ***Arizona Cardinals active traders for players they want in Day 2 of NFL draft***

By Kent Somers, The Arizona Republic

<http://www.azcentral.com/story/sports/nfl/cardinals/2017/04/28/arizona-cardinals-select-budda-baker-second-round-nfl-draft/307820001/>

### ***Rams pick their spots, then spot their picks in Day 2 of the draft***

By Gary Klein, Los Angeles Times

<http://www.latimes.com/sports/rams/la-sp-rams-nfl-draft-20170428-story.html>

### ***Giants hope Davis Webb can 'learn the game,' eventually take over***

By Jordan Ranaan, ESPN.com

[http://www.espn.com/nfl/draft2017/story/\\_/id/19269641/new-york-giants-draft-davis-webb-cal-contacted-eli-manning-let-know](http://www.espn.com/nfl/draft2017/story/_/id/19269641/new-york-giants-draft-davis-webb-cal-contacted-eli-manning-let-know)

### ***DeShone Kizer a relatively low risk with a potentially high reward for Browns***

By Dan Labbe, Cleveland Plain Dealer

[http://www.cleveland.com/browns/index.ssf/2017/04/deshone\\_kizer\\_a\\_relatively\\_low.html#incart\\_river\\_in dex](http://www.cleveland.com/browns/index.ssf/2017/04/deshone_kizer_a_relatively_low.html#incart_river_in dex)

### ***Cowboys draft two cornerbacks, deny Scandrick trade reports***

By Clarence Hill, Fort Worth Star-Telegram

<http://www.star-telegram.com/sports/nfl/dallas-cowboys/article147562299.html>

## Local Clips – Full Version

### ***What We Learned on Day 2 of the 2017 NFL Draft***

By Joe Fann, 49ers.com

How naïve were we to think that John Lynch wasn't going to try and top his opening act?

Day 1 of the 2017 NFL Draft saw the San Francisco 49ers add two standout defensive prospects while adding several other picks. So how could Day 2 live up to that benchmark?

After taking cornerback Ahkello Witherspoon with the 66th overall pick and trading away pick No. 67, Friday was fairly quiet by comparison, albeit productive all the same. Lynch met with reporters, and it appeared that the 49ers were content to stand pat through the rest of the third round.

And then the phone rang. The Minnesota Vikings expressed their interest in moving out of Pick No. 104, a compensatory selection towards the end of Round 3. San Francisco jumped at the chance and handed Minnesota pick Nos. 109 (fourth round) and 119 (seventh round).

With the 104th pick, the 49ers took Iowa quarterback C.J. Beathard.

Here's what we learned about Witherspoon, Beathard and a pair of savvy trades from Lynch on Friday.

#### 49ers Stay Defensive

San Francisco used the 66th overall pick on Witherspoon, who at 6-foot-3, provides the 49ers with another long and athletic option in the secondary. Lynch told reporters that his staff went back and watched Witherspoon's tape again this afternoon.

"That made it clear that he was the guy we were going to take, if available," Lynch said. "I feel like he's got a lot of room for growth but his movement skills and his profile allow him to be an excellent scheme fit for us."

The GM reached out to Colorado head coach Mike McIntyre last week to discuss Witherspoon's potential as a pro. McIntyre, a former DB coach in the NFL, still has a keen eye for evaluating talent at the position. He sold Lynch on Witherspoon's potential.

Witherspoon is still relatively new to the sport as he only played one year of football in high school. The Sacramento native spent most of his prep days as a baseball and soccer star.

"He has excellent feet," Lynch said. "Soccer is a great sport for developing that. Coach McIntyre said that it's a rare quality for the size he has. ... He has a very unique skillset that we feel is going to translate well to what we do on defense."

It appears that the 49ers have taken note of the Seattle Seahawks success with that style of corner. He joins Rashard Robinson and Dontae Johnson as defensive backs with similar build on the roster.

"I believe there's a big upside with Ahkello Witherspoon," Lynch said. "I believe he can hang with big-time receivers."

#### Kyle Shanahan Has His Developmental Quarterback

Beathard had a more impressive 2015 season than 2016 season from a statistical standpoint. He threw for 2,809 yards in 2015 compared to 1,929 yards this past year. Shanahan said the tape showed him a different story.

"I saw him battle through adversity. Numbers are something that I very rarely look at. I just turn on the tape and watch it," Shanahan said. "If you go through an entire game, does he do his job? I think he does his job very well, and he gives his team a very good chance to win."

Beathard's football pedigree was another draw. His grandfather is renowned NFL executive Bobby Beathard. Shanahan did make it clear that this move was not made to challenge Brian Hoyer's spot on the depth chart. He does believe, however, that Beathard has the tools to eventually become an NFL starter.

"We're bringing him in here to develop him," Shanahan said. "We've got a lot of confidence in him. That's why we took him. But he's got a lot of work to do, and he's got to earn his way here just like everyone else."

#### Still Wheeling, Still Dealing

Lynch said that the "phone went crazy" as the third round approached. That will happen when you own two consecutive picks. The GM explained that there were players that the 49ers liked, but the New Orleans Saints trade offer was too rich to turn down.

In exchange for the 67th pick, the Saints gave San Francisco a seventh round pick in this year's draft (229) and a second round pick in 2018.

"We felt like that was a really enticing offer," Lynch said. "We were still able to get the guy we wanted (Witherspoon)."

The 49ers have now acquired two future selections over the past few days: the second-rounder from New Orleans and a third round pick from the Chicago Bears. San Francisco did send the seventh-rounder back to the Vikings in addition to their own fourth round pick.

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#### ***Solomon Thomas and Reuben Foster 'Already Feel Like Brothers'***

By Joe Fann, 49ers.com

They are in this together, so to speak. The pair of 2017 first round picks will be forever linked together in San Francisco 49ers history. That fact is not lost on Solomon Thomas and Reuben Foster, despite never meeting one another before arriving at team headquarters on Friday afternoon.

To say the standout defensive prospects became fast friends appears to be an understatement.

"No, we haven't met before, but I've spent about 10 minutes with him and I already feel like he's my brother," Thomas said at a joint press conference on Tuesday to introduce the first-rounders.

"That's right," Foster chimed in. "He's right about that."

That wasn't the only reference to family during the presser. Foster explained that the allure of coming to San Francisco stemmed from the vibes he got from John Lynch during the pre-draft process.

"It was funny, fun, home, welcoming," Foster said, "it was like a real home, like love, like family."

The team's new defensive cornerstones will be relied upon to be tone-setters in Robert Saleh's 4-3 defensive scheme.

Thomas, a heralded pass-rusher out of Stanford, and Foster, a sideline-to-sideline wrecking ball of a linebacker, represent a continued focus towards building a young nucleus on defense. San Francisco has

used six first round picks on defensive players since 2013: Eric Reid ('13), Jimmie Ward ('14), Arik Armstead ('15) and DeForest Buckner ('16) being the other four.

But first things first, Foster and Thomas will have to earn their stripes before they see a prominent role on gameday.

"I can't come in here and say I'm just going to start right away," Thomas said. "I have to work with the guys, get to know my teammates, become a great teammate, become a great practice player and just earn my stripes as I go on and keep working and working until I can say I can get there."

Added Foster: "No, I don't think about starting. I'm coming in humble. I'm coming in to pick some brains, just get to know the coaches and the players and just really be humble and love one another and just let them carry me and show me the way, show me the ropes."

Things will come quick from here. Rookie minicamp is next week, and then they'll continue the offseason program with the rest of their brothers on the roster.

"I'm ready to go to work with these guys and have a great time," Thomas said.

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### ***San Francisco 49ers Draft Colorado CB Ahkello Witherspoon***

By Joe Fann, 49ers.com

With the 66th pick in the 2017 NFL Draft, the San Francisco 49ers have selected Colorado cornerback Ahkello Witherspoon.

The long, athletic defensive back is 6-foot-3, 195 pounds and started for three seasons with the Buffaloes. Witherspoon finished his career at Colorado with 71 tackles, three interceptions, 24 passes defended and one fumble recovery. He led the country in pass breakups in 2016 per Pro Football Focus.

At the NFL Scouting Combine, Witherspoon impressed with a 40.5-inch vertical jump and a 11.60-second 60-yard shuttle.

More to come on San Francisco's new defensive back.

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### ***San Francisco 49ers Draft Iowa QB C.J. Beathard***

By Joe Fann, 49ers.com

We thought John Lynch and the San Francisco 49ers were done for the day. The general manager had already met with the media to recap Day 2 of the 2017 NFL Draft.

The 49ers made their fourth trade of the draft and snuck back into the third round. San Francisco sent the Minnesota Vikings pick Nos. 109 (fourth round) and 219 (seventh round) for pick No. 104. The 49ers used the selection on Iowa quarterback C.J. Beathard.

Beathard had an outstanding season in 2015 with 2,809 passing yards and 17 touchdowns. His production dipped a bit in 2016 with 1,929 passing yards and 17 touchdowns.

"Played in pro-style passing attack, working under center and from shotgun," reads his profile on NFL.com. "Capable and confident rolling out. Squares shoulders to deliver strikes. Completed 57 percent of his passes outside of the pocket at Iowa."

"Has the arm strength to throw the deep out without laboring. Trusts his line and keeps eyes downfield. Plays with relatively calm demeanor. Good feel and timing for screen game."

Kyle Shanahan told reporters that Beathard is a guy who they grew to like during the pre-draft process. He joins veteran signal callers Brian Hoyer and Matt Barkley as the third quarterback on San Francisco's roster. Shanahan made it clear, however, that this is not a move designed to challenge Brian Hoyer's starting job.

"We are bringing (Beathard) in here to develop him," Shanahan said, who added that he believes the Iowa product has the tools to one day be an NFL starter.

Mike Mayock said on NFL Network that the former Hawkeye impressed at his pro day leading up to the draft. He joins veteran signal callers Brian Hoyer and Matt Barkley as the third quarterback on San Francisco's roster.

"I'm confident in my abilities, and I'm just thankful the 49ers and coach Shanahan's staff saw the potential in me and they believe in me enough to give me this opportunity," Beathard said on a conference call. "And like I told them, they won't regret it."

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#### ***49ers ILB Foster: 2nd shoulder surgery not necessary***

By Eric Branch, San Francisco Chronicle

Inside linebacker Reuben Foster, the second of two first-round picks by the 49ers on Thursday, said Friday that reports he might require a second shoulder surgery "are not accurate at all" and that his rehabilitation is on schedule after he underwent a procedure to repair his rotator cuff before the NFL combine in February.

"I'm making good progress," Foster said. "I'll be limited in OTAs. In training camp I'll be a full go. If it's my decision, I think I can go now."

Foster's medical file partly explains why he slipped to the No. 31 pick in the first round of the draft. However, off-the-field issues were also a factor.

He was sent home from the combine after he got into an argument with a hospital employee during his physical. And he also tested positive for a diluted urine sample at the combine, which the NFL counts as a positive drug test.

Foster's draft party Thursday night in Miami was sponsored by a tobacco and marijuana vaporizer company. He was asked about the decision to attach himself to the company.

"It's a new leaf and I'm not answering that," Foster said. "I'm not answering that. I'm sorry. Next question."

But Foster was otherwise happy to talk. In fact, he shared a humorous story about the eventful moments just before he learned the 49ers were drafting him after trading up three spots to No. 31.

Before 49ers general manager John Lynch contacted him, Foster was on the phone with the Saints, who planned to pick him at No. 32. He clicked over to speak with Lynch and didn't know the 49ers had jumped ahead of New Orleans in the draft order: "I said, 'Man, coach you're the 34th pick. It's too late. The New Orleans Saints are about to get me.'"

So what did Foster tell the Saints once Lynch told him the 49ers were picking him. Was that awkward?

"No," Foster said. "I hung up."



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### ***49ers select CB Witherspoon; pick up 2018 second-round pick in trade***

By Eric Branch, San Francisco Chronicle

The 49ers are staying on the defensive.

After grabbing two defensive players in the first round of the NFL draft on Thursday, the 49ers used their third selection (No. 66) on Colorado cornerback Ahkello Witherspoon, an Oak Park native who played at Christian Brothers High-Sacramento and Sacramento City College.

The 49ers then traded the No. 67 pick to the Saints in exchange for a 2018 second-round pick and 2017 seventh-rounder (No. 229). The 49ers picked up a 2018 third-round pick Thursday as part of a trade with the Bears. The 49ers have two picks in the each of the final four rounds.

The 49ers selected Witherspoon to address a position that had become a need after the release of starting cornerback Tramaine Brock following his arrest for felony domestic violence earlier this month. In addition, Jimmie Ward, their other starting cornerback in 2016, has been moved to free safety in their new 4-3 defense. Rashard Robinson, Will Redmond and Dontae Johnson are candidates to assume their starting spots this season.

Witherspoon (6-3, 198), who has 33-inch arms, is the type of rangy press cornerback defensive coordinator Robert Saleh is seeking in his scheme. Witherspoon is raw - he played just one year of high school football and made just 20 Division I starts - but his draft stock soared after he led the nation in pass-breakups (22) last year and was a second-team All-Pac 12 pick.

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### ***49ers trade up for Iowa QB Beathard in third round***

By Eric Branch, San Francisco Chronicle

After the much-discussed top five quarterbacks in the NFL draft, there wasn't a consensus on which player headlined the second tier.

The 49ers determined it was Iowa's C.J. Beathard.

The 49ers traded up five spots into the third round of the NFL draft on Friday to select Beathard, the sixth quarterback off the board. The move was a bit of a surprise. NFL Network analyst Mike Mayock said most teams he spoke with had given Beathard a sixth-round grade.

Rookie general manager John Lynch said he and first-year head coach Kyle Shanahan had spoken before the draft about not following the herd.

"One of the things Kyle and I talked about is, of course you have to understand how the league views certain players, but we really wanted to rely on our own eyes and where we saw people," Lynch said. "This was an instance where we saw a player that we grew to like throughout the process. And he had qualities that we thought would be great to work with."

Beathard, the first quarterback the 49ers have selected with a top-200 pick since Colin Kaepernick in 2011, joins QBs Brian Hoyer and Matt Barkley on the roster. Shanahan said Beathard will not compete for a starting spot as a rookie.

"I don't look at it all like that," Shanahan said. "We're bringing him in here to develop him, give him a chance, just like every other position. Everyone competes. Brian is our starting quarterback."

Beathard, 6-foot-2 and 219 pounds, completed 59.3 percent of his passes for 4,738 yards and 34 touchdowns with 15 interceptions in his two seasons as a starter. A factor that attracted the offensive-minded Shanahan was that he is one of the few quarterbacks in this year's draft who played in a pro-style offense.

"One thing that helps is seeing guys play the way you're going to ask them to play," Shanahan said. "... It's easier to see."

And Shanahan saw many of the qualities he prizes in quarterbacks. Beathard, a two-year team captain, played with a brace last year after suffering a sprained knee before the season.

"He's a leader," Shanahan said. "He's tough. He processes very well. He's extremely accurate, and I think he lives and dies football."

Before selecting Beathard near the end of the third round, the 49ers used the second pick of the round to grab Colorado cornerback Ahkello Witherspoon, from Sacramento.

Witherspoon (6-3, 198), who has 33-inch arms, is the type of rangy press cornerback whom defensive coordinator Robert Saleh is seeking in his 4-3 scheme. Witherspoon is raw — he played just one year of high school football and made just 20 Division I starts — but his draft stock soared after he led the nation in pass breakups (22) last year and was a second-team All-Pac-12 pick.

Witherspoon had the best vertical jump (40½-inches) among cornerbacks at the combine and the longest wingspan (79¾ inches) of any cornerback in the draft. However, he had just 22 tackles last year.

His tackling is "something that we raised to him and we didn't hide from it," Lynch said. "I showed him the film — 'That bothers me, help me out here' — and he was aware that it does need to improve and committed to making it improve."

The 49ers had the No. 67 pick, but they dealt it to the Saints in exchange for a 2018 second-round pick and a 2017 seventh-rounder (No. 229). The 49ers traded a fourth-round pick (No. 109) and a seventh-rounder (No. 219) to move up five spots for Beathard.

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#### ***49ers notes: Vance McDonald trade talk, Reuben Foster shoulder, Solomon Thomas' mentor***

By Cam Inman, San Jose Mercury News

The 49ers entered Day 2 of the draft shopping tight end Vance McDonald for a potential trade, according to former NFL executive Michael Lombardi of The Ringer.

McDonald, a 2013 second-round pick, received a three-year contract extension (\$9 million guaranteed) in December from outgoing general manager Trent Baalke. McDonald has seven touchdowns through four injury-plagued seasons.

Another veteran tight end was to hit the market Friday when the Cleveland Browns said they were releasing tight end Gary Barnidge. The 49ers have the first right to claim Barnidge off waivers.

Shanahan, who's surrounded himself with former coaches and players from his previous stops, was the Browns offensive coordinator in 2014. Barnidge set career highs the following season with 79 receptions for 1,043 yards and nine touchdowns.

— Linebacker Reuben Foster disputed a USA Today report that he might need a follow-up surgery on his shoulder, which he predicted would be cleared for training camp contact. "I'm making big progress," Foster said. "I'll be limited in OTAs. Training camp, I'll be full-go, but if it's my decision, I think I can go now."

— Among those to send Solomon Thomas a congratulatory text was Miami Dolphins defensive tackle Ndamukong Suh. Thomas has considered Suh a mentor since meeting him at a Nike youth camp in 2014, when “he recognized me as being respectful and he texted me after to keep doing what I’m doing. He’s awesome.”

Unlike the 304-pound Suh, Thomas weighs 270 pounds and figures to play at 275. He’ll line up on the end in base defense and on the interior in sub packages. “That’s what my skills are and that’s what this team is going to use me as,” said Thomas, noting he played “way more” on the interior at Stanford.

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***Reuben Foster becomes a 49er with help from call waiting — ‘The Saints are still on the other line’***  
By Cam Inman, San Jose Mercury News

Some NFL hopefuls spend their whole lives waiting for a call on draft day.

Reuben Foster got the call twice. On the same day. At the same time.

“It’s a funny story,” the Alabama linebacker said upon arriving at 49ers headquarters on Friday.

The New Orleans Saints were so sure that they were going to land Foster with No. 32 pick of the first round Friday that they called the Butkus Award Winner and asked to speak to his girlfriend. Because the woman was a Louisiana native, the Saints wanted to talk to her about helping Foster transition to his new surroundings.

Click!

That was the sound of the 49ers on the other line.

“I said, ‘The New Orleans Saints are still on the other line,’” the 6-foot-1, 228-pounder recounted. “I wanted to be a 49er so bad, it wasn’t funny. It was crazy.”

Cam Inman ✓ @CamInman

Reuben Foster was on phone with #Saints (32nd pick) when #49ers called to say he was theirs at 31. Here he tells how story goes:

What Foster didn’t know right away was that 49ers General Manager John Lynch had traded up to the No. 31 spot.

Lynch recalled his side of the awkward conversation.

“I said, ‘No, we’re taking you.’ It was hard because it happened late in the process,” the GM said. “He was really excited when he found out that we had pulled off that trade. And we were certainly very excited.”

Once Foster understood, he didn’t bother being diplomatic: He hung up on the Saints. (Not out of disrespect, he said Friday, but out of an obligation to stay on the line with his new boss.)

Now, that they’re done with that a cute story about how they met, Foster and the 49ers are hoping for a long-term marriage.

“What I’ve learned about them is love,” Foster said during his Friday news conference, where he was joined by fellow first-rounder Solomon Thomas, the No. 2 overall pick from Stanford.

“I grew up loving the 49ers. And Patrick Willis was one of the greats. I want to become one of the greats. I know I need to wait my turn, and do a step at a time. But I’m willing to do that.”

The fresh start is welcome for Foster, whose path to wasn't exactly filled with funny phone calls. Once considered a top-10 pick, his stock tumbled because of a double-whammy of injury concerns and character questions.

At least one team's medical staff still feels Foster needs another surgery to fix the torn rotator cuff in one of his shoulders, according to USA Today. The paper also quoted an executive from another team saying the shoulder issue is "problematic, and the way he plays, how long can he hold up?"

At his news conference Friday, Foster said that he was aware of such reports but insisted he does not need a second procedure.

"That is not accurate at all. I'm fine. I'm on schedule," Foster said.

He did acknowledged that he will be limited during OTAs, but would be a "full go" by training camp. "If it's my decision, I think I can go now," Foster added.

A trickier issue for Foster to address was some of the behavior that knocked him down draft boards.

Foster was sent home from the NFL Scouting Combine after an argument with a hospital worker. According to a Sports Illustrated report at the time, Foster grew impatient with the long lines for exams and "pulled the 'do you know who I am' card," wrote reporter Robert Klemko.

That led to a heated exchange between Foster and the hospital worker, who told the star he'd have to wait like everyone else.

Compounding matters: Foster tested positive for a diluted urine sample given that day. Under provisions of the NFL's substance abuse policy, a diluted sample is treated like a positive test.

Foster spoke several times about a "new leaf" during his news conference Thursday. Once he was off the podium, the Bay Area News Group asked him how the incident at the Scouting Combine changed him.

"You live and you learn," Foster said. "And at the end of the day, I'm the one who got disciplined for it. But it's a new day, it's a new chapter. I'm looking forward to doing great things for the 49ers."

Foster was clearly thrilled to be at Levi's Stadium, a place where his favorite player once roamed. Willis, a seven-time Pro Bowl selection, played for the 49ers from 2007-14.

Foster became a Willis fan by the time he was a 12-year-old growing up in Auburn, Alabama. Though the two linebackers have never met, it's a good bet Willis and Foster will cross paths soon.

"Who wouldn't want to be like Patrick Willis?" Foster said. "He played nasty. He played like a savage. He played the game like I want to play it."

Willis would approve of the 222 tackles Foster was credited with over 51 career games at Alabama. Last season, Foster was the SEC Championship Game MVP and the Butkus Award winner as the nation's top linebacker.

Foster's scouting profile at NFL.com describes his strengths this way: "Alpha mentality with ferocious hitting style that puts offensive skill positions on alert. Outstanding athlete with springy, reactive feet."

For now, though, Foster sounds willing to play the role of the quiet rookie.

"I'm coming in humble. I'm coming in to pick some brains," he said. "I'm just getting to know the coaches and the players. I'm here to be humble and just love one another. They can show me the ropes."

Sounds like a good call.

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### ***49ers draft cornerback with Northern California roots***

By Cam Inman, San Jose Mercury News

After a stunningly productive debut on their first draft night, the 49ers new regime waited until Friday's third round to spring back into action, selecting Colorado cornerback Ahkello Witherspoon at No. 66 overall.

The 49ers had the ensuing draft pick (No. 67) before trading it to the New Orleans Saints. In return, the 49ers acquired the Saints' 2018 second-round draft pick, as well as a seventh-round selection Saturday (No. 229).

Witherspoon (6-foot-3, 198 pounds) hails from the Sacramento area, attending Christian Brothers High School and Sacramento City College before transferring to Colorado.

"Being close to home is an incredible opportunity," Witherspoon said on a media conference call.

The 49ers' new scheme will have cornerbacks employ more press techniques at the line of scrimmage before eventually converting into man coverage with single-high safety help.

"They like my ability to press, be up in your face and be physical, and that's what I intend to do," Witherspoon added.

Witherspoon acknowledged he needs to improve as a tackler and in run support but has set a goal to dominate the NFL by 2020.

"Yes, I'm capable and exceptional right now. But I was telling them my potential and where I'll be in three years is what's really exciting for me," Witherspoon said. "I'm as interested to see how good I can be as well as they are, and I feel we can take this to a very special place."

Witherspoon was the 11th cornerback drafted, five of whom went in Friday's first round.

Witherspoon is a tackle-football novice, as his freshman year at Sacramento City College marked only his second season in tackle football. He transformed into a NFL-caliber player as his body shot up in height, growing some eight inches from senior year in his high school to college.

Witherspoon is tight with another Sacramento-area product on the 49ers: defensive tackle Arik Armstead, their 2015 first-round draft pick.

"I grew up playing basketball with him and specifically training with his father," Witherspoon said. "He was like a big brother and an inspiration to me. I'm excited to have the opportunity to play next to him. It's going to be a great place."

The 49ers created a vacancy in their starting lineup at cornerback when they released veteran Tramaine Brock earlier this month in light of a domestic-violence arrest. In this week's veteran minicamp, Rashard Robinson and Donate Johnson lined up as the starting cornerbacks, while other leading candidates are Will Redmond and Keith Reaser.

Redmond was a third-round selection last year by former general manager Trent Baalke, and knee reconstruction kept Redmond sidelined his rookie season.

After picking Witherspoon and trading away the next selection, the 49ers hold eight picks in Saturday's final rounds, including two in each remaining round: fourth (Nos. 109, 143), fifth (Nos. 146, 161), sixth (Nos. 198, 202) and seventh (Nos. 219, 229).

Perhaps more pertinent to their rebuild effort is the second-day picks they've acquired for next year, when they might need capital to trade up for a quarterback. The Saints' 2018 second-round pick went to the 49ers a day after they acquired the Chicago Bears' 2018 third-round choice, part of a clever deal that also netted the No. 8 pick (used on Thomas), No. 67 (traded to Saints) and No. 111 (dealt to Seattle to acquire Foster).

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### ***49ers trade up to draft surprising QB choice***

By Cam Inman, San Jose Mercury News

The last time the 49ers came off a 2-14 season and used a third-round draft pick on a quarterback, they selected Joe Montana in 1979.

C.J. Beathard, good luck following that gold standard.

The 49ers made a late trade Friday night into the No. 104 spot overall and drafted Beathard, an Iowa product and the grandson of former NFL executive Bobby Beathard.

Coach Kyle Shanahan, the 49ers' perceived offensive savior, strongly cautioned about Beathard's immediate capability. Shanahan left no doubt that Brian Hoyer and Matt Barkley, last month's free agency additions, are 1-2 on a revamped unit that last season struggled to a 2-14 record behind Colin Kaepernick and Blaine Gabbert.

Any chance Beathard pushes for the starting job as a rookie?

"No, I don't look at it at all like that," Shanahan answered. "We're bringing him in here to develop him and give him a chance.

"Brian is our starting quarterback, Matt Barkley is our second and I look at him to come in and be our third, with us only having three on the roster."

Five quarterbacks went in the draft before the 49ers got a call from the Minnesota Vikings proposing a trade. To move up five spots, the 49ers swapped their fourth-round selection (No. 109 overall) and a seventh-round pick (No. 219).

"Now that the 49ers believe in me, I'm going to give it my everything," Beathard (6-foot-2, 215 pounds) said on a media conference call. "They won't regret it."

General manager John Lynch said the 49ers "grew to appreciate" Beathard, and even though neither Lynch nor Shanahan met with him through the pre-draft process or even at the scouting combine, quarterbacks coach Rich Scangarello served as the 49ers' contact.

Added Shanahan: "By no means did we come into this draft thinking, 'Hey, we're going to get a guy to compete with Brian.' We're just trying to add people to our roster."

Mitchell Trubisky (No. 1 overall, Chicago Bears), Patrick Mahomes (No. 10, Kansas City Chiefs) and Deshaun Watson (No. 12, Houston Texans) went in Thursday's first round. Friday saw DeShone Kizer (No. 52, second round; Cleveland Browns) and Cal product Davis Webb (No. 87, third round; New York Giants) go before Beathard surfaced on the 49ers' radar and roster.

"C.J. Beathard in the third round? Guess no one cares about arm strength," Bleacher Report draft analyst Matt Miller tweeted immediately after Beathard's selection.

So why Beathard, who had a 58.1 career completion percentage at Iowa with 40 touchdowns and 19 interceptions?

Shanahan puts his stock in analyzing film, and he raved about Beathard being fearless, extremely intelligent, diligent, accurate, a football junkie and a two-year starter in a pro-style system. Shanahan also noted Beathard's abundance of wins, particularly a 12-2 mark in 2015 before last season's 8-5 record.

"He can process and play the game very fast in the pocket, and that gives you a chance to play in the league," Shanahan said. "By no means does that mean he's ready to do that. But that's a great guy you have a chance with. Just throw him in the battle with all these other guys."

Shanahan noted that Beathard comes from a football family. His grandfather served as general manager in Washington (1978-88) and San Diego (1990-2000). "He told me to stay positive and you never know what's going to happen on draft day," C.J. Beathard said of his grandfather.

C.J. Beathard heard he would be drafted between the third and sixth rounds. Back in 1979, a Notre Dame quarterback thought he would go in the first or second and ended up being the last pick of the third round (No. 82 overall).

— The 49ers enter Saturday's final rounds with six picks: fourth round (No. 143), fifth (Nos. 146, 161), sixth (Nos. 198, 202) and seventh (No. 229).

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### ***49ers take CB Ahkello Witherspoon, QB C.J. Beathard in Round 3***

By Matt Barrows, Sacramento Bee

Two years after drafting Arik Armstead in the first round, the 49ers took another Sacramento area product on Friday, cornerback Ahkello Witherspoon, who played at Christian Brothers High School.

The 49ers envision the 6-foot-3, 200-pound Witherspoon as an athletic, press cornerback in their aggressive 4-3 defense. A late bloomer who weighed less than 100 pounds as a high school freshman, Witherspoon played only one year of high school football before going to Sacramento City College and then to Colorado where last year he led the nation with 22 pass breakups.

As the third round was ending, the 49ers made a late trade with Minnesota to take quarterback C.J. Beathard, who attracted the attention of coach Kyle Shanahan because of his plucky playing style at Iowa.

The 49ers took long looks at the most prominent quarterbacks in this year's draft. Beathard (6-2, 219) is more obscure, and he expected he could be selected as late as the sixth round.

He's the grandson of former Washington and San Diego general manager Bobby Beathard, and Shanahan said it was obvious football is important to him.

"He's a leader. He's tough. He processes (information) very well," Shanahan said. "He's extremely accurate, and he lives and dies football."

Beathard completed only 56.5 percent of his passes last season and threw 17 touchdowns and 10 interceptions, none of which are sterling numbers. But Shanahan noted his statistics were better in 2015 when Iowa had a stronger team and that he operated in a pro-style system, which doesn't produce gaudy numbers like the spread attacks other draft-eligible quarterbacks ran.

“One thing that helps is seeing guys play the way you’re going to ask them to play,” Shanahan said. “... To watch him over the years – he was a three-year starter, led his team to a bunch of wins, especially in 2015 when they had a better team. I think he played unbelievably.”

The 49ers hosted Witherspoon earlier this month.

“He’s a really smart kid – that was quite apparent when he came on his visit here,” general manager John Lynch said. “... From what I understand, I think back in high school he was 5-9 and then just really sprouted up. He has the athleticism, still, of a guy who is 5-9 but yet he has that great length and size that we covet at his position.”

Lynch said he, Shanahan and personnel executives Adam Peters and Martin Mayhew – a former NFL cornerback – went over Witherspoon’s film one last time when they arrived for work Friday. The session sealed him as the player they would target in the third round.

Witherspoon and Armstead, a defensive end, already know each other. Each spent a year at Jesuit High School in Sacramento before transferring elsewhere – Armstead to Pleasant Grove and Witherspoon to Christian Brothers where he played soccer, basketball and eventually football.

Witherspoon also trained with Armstead under Armstead’s father, Guss, who works with elite basketball players in the area. Guss Armstead said Witherspoon is the rare athlete who could have played at the Division I level in four sports. The Toronto Blue Jays remain interested in him as an outfielder.

“He was always like a big brother – physically and like being an inspiration,” Witherspoon said of Arik Armstead. “I’m just excited to have the opportunity to play next to him. It’s going to be a great place to play.”

Witherspoon said he credits his soccer background – he was a midfielder through high school – with the footwork needed at cornerback. He said his sister Alexis, who is 5 years older, was an excellent soccer player who got him interested in the sport.

“I’m most thankful for that sport because it gave me the footwork, the body awareness that I now take into football,” Witherspoon said. “Without her, I don’t know if I would have played soccer, if I would have had that urge. So I’m extremely thankful for her.”

Lynch said the soccer background is apparent when watching film of Witherspoon.

“The one things that strikes you and anyone who watches football – it caught my eye – is that he has great feet,” Lynch said.

Witherspoon weighed 200 pounds when he visited the 49ers and had the most impressive wingspan – 79 3/8 inches – of any defensive back in the draft. He noted that he’s still growing and estimated that he’ll eventually top out at at 210 pounds.

Critics noted that while his coverage skills improved over time at Colorado, Witherspoon was an unwilling tackler who needs to be more rough and tumble in that part of his game. Lynch said it was an issue he raised with Witherspoon and something he said he’d work on.

“It needs to improve,” Lynch said. “... I like physical players, and I think what helps is I saw examples on film where he can do it. And that’s why you go get guys like (first-round picks) Solomon Thomas and Reuben Foster to draw that out of him. I always believe that when you put people in a room that are exhibiting how you want to play, the other guys have no choice if they want to be on that field.”

The 49ers selected Witherspoon with the 66th overall pick. They traded the 67th pick to the Saints – who chose Tennessee running back Alvin Kamara – for a seventh-round pick this year and a second-round selection next year. They already had acquired an extra third rounder in Thursday’s trade with the Bears.



San Francisco selected Beathard at pick 104, which had been a Vikings' compensatory pick. In return they sent the 109th pick (fourth round) and 219th (seventh round) to Minnesota.

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### ***Surprise! 49ers grab a quarterback, C.J. Beathard, in Round 3***

By Matt Barrows, Sacramento Bee

The 49ers, who took long looks at the most prominent quarterbacks in this year's draft, ended up taking a more obscure one -- C.J. Beathard from Iowa.

San Francisco traded back into the third round with Minnesota to take Beathard at pick 104, which had been a Vikings' compensatory pick. In return they sent the 109th pick (fourth round) and 219th (seventh round) to Minnesota.

Beathard (6-2, 219) is the grandson of former Washington and San Diego general manager Bobby Beathard, and 49ers coach Kyle Shanahan said it was obvious that football is very important to him.

"He's a leader. He's tough. He processes (information) very well," Shanahan said. "He's extremely accurate, and he lives and dies football."

Beathard completed only 56.5 percent of his passes last season and threw 17 touchdowns and 10 interceptions, none of which are sterling numbers. But Shanahan noted that his statistics were better in 2015 (61.6 percent, 17-5) when Iowa had a stronger team and that he operated in a pro-style system, which doesn't produce gaudy numbers like the spread attacks other draft-eligible quarterbacks ran.

"One thing that helps is seeing guys play the way you're going to ask them to play," Shanahan said. "... To watch him over the years -- he was a three-year starter, led his team to a bunch of wins, especially in 2015 when they had a better team. I think he played unbelievably."

Beathard agreed that his background at Iowa gave him an advantage over other passers in this year's draft.

"They put a lot on the quarterback at Iowa -- the run game, the pass game," he said. "In the NFL, that's what you have to do. And I think that gave me a step ahead of all the other guys."

Shanahan said Beathard was a little like a fourth-round pick his team selected when he was with Washington -- Kirk Cousins -- in that he's not a starting caliber passer now but could develop into one over time. He said that Brian Hoyer is the clear starter this season and that Matt Barkley is the backup.

Both Shanahan and general manager John Lynch said they thought Beathard might be available in the fourth round but decided not to take the risk. Beathard said he was told he'd be taken anywhere from the third to the sixth round.

"We felt like it was worth it knowing that we had a player that we liked and want the opportunity to develop at the quarterback position," Lynch said.

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### ***REUBEN FOSTER: SHOULDER RECOVERY ON PACE FOR TRAINING CAMP CLEARANCE***

By Matt Maiocco, CSNBayArea.com

Linebacker Reuben Foster is likely to be a spectator when the 49ers hold their rookie minicamp next week.

But Foster said he is on pace to be fully cleared for football activity by the time the 49ers open training camp in late July. Recent national reports have suggested Foster would require another surgery on his right shoulder.

"That's not accurate at all," said Foster, who took part in a press conference on Friday after the 49ers selected him with the No. 31 overall pick in the draft on Thursday. "I'm fine. I'm on schedule."

Foster said he sustained the tear of the labrum in his right shoulder during Alabama's national semifinal game against Washington. He played in the championship game against Clemson with the injury.

He underwent surgery on his rotator cuff that forced him to sit out drills at the NFL scouting combine in February. Foster was sent home from Indianapolis after an argument with a hospital worker while he was waiting to undergo a physical.

There were reports Foster could require additional surgery after he went through the medical re-check in Indianapolis.

"I'm making big progress," Foster said. "I'll be limited in OTAs. Training camp, I'll be full-go, but if it's my decision, I think I can go now."

Later, Foster said the 49ers have all of his medical information.

"I guarantee they have enough X-rays, exams, MRIs to know where I stand," he said. "I had the surgery. They already knew how many weeks I was out."

Foster dropped in the draft over apparent concerns about his shoulder and character issues. Alabama coach Nick Saban told AL.com on Thursday that Foster did not consult him before undergoing surgery.

"Look, the way we like for things to get handled, that didn't get handled," Saban said. "We have the best doctors in the world in Dr. (James) Andrews and Dr. (Lyle) Cain who operate on most NFL players and his agent chose to take him someplace else. I think (Andrews and Cain) have tremendous credibility.

"So, you know, all these choices and decisions that you make have consequences and I hate it for our players when they do it, but he didn't seek my advice in what he should do. So, if that was an issue, that was an issue. It shouldn't have been an issue but if it was, I don't really know much about it."

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#### **49ERS SELECT CB AHKELLO WITHERSPOON IN THIRD ROUND OF THE 2017 NFL DRAFT**

By Matt Maiocco, CSNBayArea.com

AHKELLO WITHERSPOON

Position: Cornerback

College: Colorado

Height: 6-2 3/4

Weight: 193

Selection: Third round, No. 66 overall

The 49ers selected Colorado cornerback Ahkello Witherspoon, a Sacramento native, in the third round of the NFL draft with the No. 66 overall pick.

"Being close to home is an incredible opportunity, as well as the type of defense they play -- press man, up in your face," Witherspoon said. "When I came in for a visit, they were asking me if I've adopted that role and if I'd be willing to continue that. And I said, 'Absolutely.'"

"It's an opportunity to play for such a great organization, close to home, with such a savvy defensive mentality. I think it's going to be a great place for me."

The 49ers were also scheduled to have the next pick, but traded the selection at No. 67 for the New Orleans Saints' second-round pick in next year's draft, as well as a seventh-round selection (No. 229 overall) this year. The 49ers now have 10 picks in next year's draft.

The Saints used that pick at No. 67 to select Tennessee running back Alvin Kamara.

Witherspoon began his college career at Sacramento City. He played his final three college seasons at Colorado. He started 12 games last season and earned second-team All-Pac-12 honors.

Witherspoon led the nation with 22 pass breakups. He recorded one interception -- a game-saving pick in the end zone to preserve a 41-38 victory over Oregon. A pre-med student majoring in ecology and evolutionary biology, he said he aspires to be a doctor after his football career.

But Witherspoon said he is committed to football and promised the 49ers during his visit to Santa Clara that he will make huge strides over the next few years as he continues to develop as a player.

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#### **49ERS TRADE UP, SELECT QB C.J. BEATHARD IN THIRD ROUND OF 2017 NFL DRAFT**

By Matt Maiocco, CSNBayArea.com

C.J. BEATHARD

Position: Quarterback

College: Iowa

Height: 6-2

Weight: 219

Selection: Third round, No. 104 overall

The 49ers traded back into the end of the third round to select a quarterback to join Brian Hoyer and Matt Barkley on the 49ers' roster.

General manager John Lynch's fourth trade of the draft netted the team the grandson of legendary NFL personnel man Bobby Beathard. His grandson, C.J., joins the 49ers after a four-year career at Iowa. Beathard completed 58.6 percent of his passes last season with 17 touchdowns and 10 interceptions.

Beathard was not generally expected to be chosen within the first two days of the draft. He was the sixth quarterback selected, falling behind Mitch Trubisky, Patrick Mahomes, Deshaun Watson, Deshone Kizer and Davis Webb.

"They won't regret it," Beathard said on a conference call with the Bay Area media.

The 49ers traded up with the Minnesota Vikings. The Vikings had the No. 104 pick, and called the 49ers to see if they were interested in a trade. After some consideration, the 49ers decided to move up from No. 109 while also giving the Vikings a seventh-round pick at No. 219.

"Might he have been there at 109? That's what we had to weigh," 49ers John Lynch said. "But at the end of the day, we felt like it was worth it to be able to go to bed knowing that we had a player that we liked and want the opportunity develop at the quarterback position."

And that's what coach Kyle Shanahan plans on doing. He said Beathard is not coming to the team this season to compete with Hoyer for the starting job.

"We're bringing him in here to develop him and give him a chance, but just like any other position, everyone competes," Shanahan said. "Brian is our starting quarterback and, right now, Matt Barkley is our second. And I look at him to come in and be our third with us only having three on the roster."

"By no means did we come into this draft thinking we're going to get a guy to compete with Brian."

Shanahan said Beathard and Pitt quarterback Nathan Peterman were the two quarterbacks in the draft who ran offenses in college most similar to the offense he will install with the 49ers.

"One thing that helps is being able to see guys play the way you're going to ask them to play," Shanahan said. "It helps being at Iowa and watching the system he's in. It's easier to see to watch him over the years. He's a three-year starter. He's led his team to a bunch of wins, especially in 2015 when they had a better team and he played unbelievable."

As a junior at Iowa, Beathard completed 61.6 percent of his pass attempts for 2,809 yards with 17 touchdowns and five interceptions.

"He's a leader. He's tough. He processes very well," Shanahan said. "He's extremely accurate and he lives and dies football."

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### ***Trades give 49ers chance to get franchise quarterback ... next year***

By Nick Wagoner, ESPN.com

Notre Dame's DeShone Kizer was the only quarterback to go off the board before the San Francisco 49ers were on the clock in the third round Friday night. With two picks at the top of that round, the Niners found themselves with the pick of the rest of the quarterbacks and only four of them previously selected.

The 49ers did eventually move back late into the third round to take Iowa quarterback C.J. Beathard to fill a developmental role, but he's unlikely to be the long-term answer. Earlier in the round, after filling a need with Colorado cornerback Ahkello Witherspoon with the first of two picks, the Niners passed on the available quarterback options. In fact, they passed on everyone. Instead, they dealt the No. 67 overall pick to the New Orleans Saints for a 2018 second-round pick and a seventh-round choice this year.

"When you get offered a second-round pick in next year's draft and now all of a sudden we have a first, two twos and two threes next year," general manager John Lynch said. "There were players we liked, but that and a seventh-round pick in this year's draft, we just felt like that was a really enticing offer. We've got a couple of fours, couple of fives, so we've got a lot of picks with a lot of players left that we like, so that was what went into our decision there."

That move likely will slide under the radar as just another transaction on the wire Saturday morning, but it actually means much more for the long-term future of the Niners. Combined with the deal the Niners made with the Chicago Bears on Thursday night, they now own extra picks in the second and third rounds in the 2018 draft.

Why does that matter other than simply having more access to fairly valuable draft capital? The Niners have positioned themselves to land their franchise quarterback in 2018.

"I think that's in the back of your mind," Lynch said. "I think there's multiple ways that we'll continue to explore to continue to improve at that position. I've said many times we're happy with what we have here with Brian Hoyer and Matt Barkley, and the first two days on the field gave us a strong indication that it's a really good system fit. They understand, they are both good play-action passers and I think that fits into what we're doing."

"I think we're getting a lot of ammunition to go acquire players, either by drafting them or ... it gives us some flexibility to do a lot of things."

What that looks like remains to be seen but consider the options, all of which clearly were more appealing to San Francisco than drafting a quarterback in the first or second round this year and hoping he becomes the long-term solution.

Since his name will continue to be connected to the Niners until he signs a long-term contract elsewhere, let's start with Washington Redskins quarterback Kirk Cousins. The fit in a reunion with 49ers coach Kyle Shanahan is obvious, and Cousins almost certainly would be willing to sign with the Niners. But if the Redskins find a way to continue controlling his rights next year via a tag, the 49ers now have extra picks to deal for him. The same is true of New England quarterback Jimmy Garoppolo.

And what if Garoppolo and Cousins aren't available and the Niners perform too well to find themselves in position to draft a top prospect such as USC's Sam Darnold, Wyoming's Josh Allen or UCLA's Josh Rosen? Again, having extra picks means the Niners might not have to mortgage their future if they find themselves having to make a bold move up the draft order to land their quarterback.

From the moment Shanahan and Lynch arrived in the Bay Area, they made it clear they are viewing things with a wide-angle lens, but they also know they have to move on a possible franchise quarterback relatively soon. It's not happening this year but they can't afford to wait until year three. Which makes next offseason critical.

And it isn't lost on the Niners that other teams around the league also are positioning themselves to chase potential franchise quarterbacks. The Cleveland Browns, who easily could be competing for a top quarterback again next year, own extra first- and second-round picks in 2018. The Buffalo Bills, another quarterback-needy team, also have an extra first-round pick.

As always, the competition for top quarterbacks will be fierce in 2018 and it's entirely possible that the options will have far more appeal than any group at the position in a long time. It's an arms race and the moves the 49ers have made in the first two days of this year's draft are a sure sign they know it's already begun.

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### ***Todd McShay's Day 2 NFL draft awards***

By Todd McShay, ESPN.com

Biggest surprises

San Francisco 49ers

C.J. Beathard, QB, Iowa (pick No. 104)

Entering the season, I gave Beathard a mid-third-round grade. I loved his leadership and toughness. He was a tough evaluation this season, as his pass-protection fell apart and he lost key WRs to injuries. We ended up giving a fringe fourth/fifth-round grade and ranked him No. 156 overall. While I'm surprised the 49ers traded back into the third round to select Beathard with higher-ranked options like Joshua Dobbs (No. 63) and Nathan Peterman (No. 69) still on the board, I do understand why they'd be intrigued by his 2015 tape.

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### ***2017 NFL Draft: First Impressions of First Round***

By Andy Benoit, MMQB.com

### 3. San Francisco 49ers: Solomon Thomas, DT, Stanford

Where will Thomas play? The Niners are installing a 4-3 zone defense and already have a pair of quality young interior pass rushers in DeForest Buckner and Arik Armstead. Thomas can rush off the edge, but he's only worth a No. 3 pick because of his ability in confined areas. There's time for head coach Kyle Shanahan and defensive coordinator Robert Saleh to figure it out, and too much talent is a good problem to have. But as it stands, one quality young defensive lineman, be it Buckner, Thomas or, most likely, Armstead, will have to play slightly out of position in San Fran's predominant nickel package.

### 31. San Francisco 49ers: Reuben Foster, LB, Alabama

Nobody doubts the ability. Foster is a true three-down linebacker with multidirectional speed. But there are three questions: 1) His reported shoulder problem; 2) the off-field issues, including a diluted sample at the combine; and most interesting, 3) his struggles with drawing up plays on the board. The good news is you can work around classroom difficulties; football IQ on the field is what matters most. And San Francisco's scheme, which will be Seahawks style under new coordinator Robert Saleh, is not overly complex. It allows for guys to pin back their ears and play. If Foster's shoulder and maturity are sound, he has a chance to stabilize a linebacking corps that was rocked by injuries last season.

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### ***49ers underscore commitment (for now) to Brian Hoyer***

By Mike Florio, ProFootballTalk.com

In Chicago, \$15 million-per-year starter Mike Glennon instantly was undermined on Thursday night via the selection of Mitchell Trubisky. In San Francisco, \$6 million-in-2017 starter Brian Hoyer had his status cemented via the team's decision not to pick a quarterback in round one or in round two.

In round three, the 49ers took Iowa quarterback C.J. Beathard. Does that mean Beathard could challenge Hoyer for the starting job?

"I don't look at it at all like that," coach Kyle Shanahan told reporters on Friday. "We're bringing him in here to develop him, give him a chance. But, just like any other position, everyone competes. Brian's our starting quarterback and right now, Matt Barkley's our second and I look at [Beathard] to come in and be our third with us only having three on the roster. But, every single day of practice, whether it's an OTA, whether it's workouts, whatever it is, people are always competing and we'll always play the best guy, but by no means did we come into this draft thinking, 'Hey, we're going to get a guy to compete with Brian.' We're just trying to add people to our roster to improve the overall talent of our team."

Unless Beathard develops quickly, the decision not to use a higher pick on a quarterback this year could mean that the 49ers are indeed a year away from making a run at Kirk Cousins. But consider this: Cousins was a fourth-round pick. Beathard arrives via round three, and the 49ers felt compelled to move from 109 to 104 to get him. So the 49ers see something in this guy, and this contract will be much more affordable over the next four years that what it would cost to pay Cousins.

Beathard wasn't highly regarded by the draft experts but he became the sixth quarterback taken, exiting the board before the likes of Nathan Peterman, Josh Dobbs, and Brad Kaaya. Shanahan presumably believes Beathard can run Shanahan's offense the way Shanahan envisions it being run. And if Beathard can do that, maybe they won't need Cousins or Hoyer in 2018. And maybe by 2019 Beathard will be another one of those mid-round quarterbacks who arrive in the NFL with limited fanfare but who become one of the better ones in the league.

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### ***Mike Mayock's pick-by-pick draft analysis***

By Mike Mayock, NFL.com

66. Ahkello Witherspoon, CB San Francisco 49ers

Analysis: "You love the size and the speed combination that he brings to the table. ... Witherspoon is the most intriguing of all of Colorado's defenders. I also think he is the most inconsistent of all of them."

104. C.J. Beathard, QB, San Francisco 49ers

Analysis: "C.J. Beathard had mostly fifth-, sixth-round grades from the teams I spoke with. Obviously has great NFL lineage, the Beathard name famous for talent evaluation, and I thought his tape was down a little bit this year. I thought he was better as a junior. Very smart, understands where to go with the football, better arm than expected when you really sit down and study him. I haven't seen him live, and the people who went to his Pro Day told me he had an excellent day."

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***Winners and losers after Day 2 of the 2017 NFL Draft***

By Gregg Rosenthal, NFL.com

**Winners**

Niners GM John Lynch, again: The new 49ers general manager keeps winning. He picked up the Saints' 2018 second-round pick (and a seventh-round pick) in exchange for his third-rounder. While the Saints sell out for this season, Lynch is thinking long term like a veteran.

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***2017 NFL Draft: Quick-snap grades for every team through Day 2***

By Chad Reuter, NFL.com

San Francisco 49ers

Draft picks: Solomon Thomas (No. 3 overall), Reuben Foster (No. 31 overall), Ahkello Witherspoon (No. 66 overall), C.J. Beathard (No. 104 overall)

Day 1 grade: A

Day 2 grade: C+

Overall grade: B+

The skinny: GM John Lynch found a much-needed cornerback in Ahkello Witherspoon, a long and lean player who will need a bit of time to get ready. In the late fourth, they picked up Iowa quarterback C.J. Beathard, a solid backup pick-up. That's a bit early for him, going over Joshua Dobbs and Nathan Peterman. In Round 1, the 49ers got their guy at No. 3, and picked up two thirds (one future) and a fourth in the process. That's a big win. They picked the second-best player in the draft in Solomon Thomas. Then Reuben Foster was sitting there just waiting for someone to grab him, so they traded a fourth-round pick to Seattle to get him. If Foster's shoulder is OK, he'll be another Patrick Willis in the middle.

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***49ers get Solomon Thomas, extra picks in 1st round of draft***

By Josh Dubow, Associated Press

John Lynch came out of his first draft as an NFL general manager with two of the top three players on San Francisco's board and a couple of extra picks to boot.

The rookie general manager would have had a hard time scripting the day any better. He traded down one spot to No. 3 to get Stanford defensive lineman Solomon Thomas and then packaged one of the extra picks from that deal with his own second-rounder to get Alabama linebacker Reuben Foster at 31.

"We got two of our top three players," Lynch said. "We're thrilled. We're ecstatic. We think these guys have traits that encompass what we want to be about as a football organization."

The trading started when Chicago wanted to move up one spot to select quarterback Mitchell Trubisky. With other teams interested in that pick, the Niners were able to get extra picks in the third and fourth round this year and a 2018 third-rounder and still draft their second-highest rated player in Thomas.

"There were other people involved," Lynch said. "The trade improved the last day because of that."

Then when Foster started slipping possibly because of concerns about his injured shoulder and off-field character issues, San Francisco started making calls midway through the round to get an additional first-round pick.

They were finally able to move from 34th to 31st by sending the fourth-round pick acquired from Chicago to Seattle and added the Butkus Award winner to their defense. Coach Kyle Shanahan said Foster's play jumped off the film every time he studied Alabama's defense.

"No matter who I was studying and watching, No. 10 was flying around passing everybody up," Shanahan said. "No matter who I studied. I had a hard time not watching No. 10, which was Reuben. The way he plays, the way he hits, the way he runs, that's why you want him on your team."

But Foster was hurt by a shoulder injury that he said should be fully healed by training camp, as well as off-field issues. Foster was kicked out of the combine over a confrontation with a hospital worker and had a diluted drug test sample, turning him from a projected top 10 pick to one that almost didn't make it in the first round.

"They gave me a chance," Foster said. "I really appreciate the 49ers. I'm ready to go hard and work hard and prove I'm worthy of the spot. They're not going to regret it."

The 49ers sent VP of football affairs Keena Turner and team pastor Earl Smith to Alabama to meet with Foster and came away convinced that he was not a character risk.

There were no off-field questions surrounding Thomas, who was the third straight defensive lineman taken with San Francisco's top pick, following Arik Armstead in 2015 and DeForest Buckner last year.

Lynch, as a Stanford graduate, is quite familiar with Thomas. He has spent time around the program in recent years and even took a class on decision-making with Thomas where they collaborated on a project.

"I was star struck the first day of class," Thomas said. "I tried to cling on to him, learn from him. It was a really cool experience to be in class with him."

Thomas said the two kept in touch since then and now he wants to make Lynch proud as his first draft pick ever as a general manager.

Thomas has the versatility to play outside on the base defense where he is an elite run stopper and inside as a pass rusher in nickel situations. He had eight sacks and 15 tackles for loss last season at Stanford when he was named the top defensive lineman in the Pac-12.

Thomas has been compared to Seattle defensive end Michael Bennett and is expected to play a similar role in San Francisco under coordinator Robert Saleh, a former assistant for the Seahawks.



"We're both very versatile," Thomas said. "We're quick. But I have to earn my stripes before I even get compared to him. I have to play my first down, earn my stripes from my teammates and earn their respect. That's what I'm trying to do right now."

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### **49ers add CB Witherspoon, QB Beathard on second day of draft**

By Michael Wagaman, Associated Press

Having used his first two picks to shore up the front end of San Francisco's defense a day earlier, John Lynch turned his attention to the secondary while continuing to bolster his growing reputation as the busiest general manager in the draft.

The 49ers drafted Colorado cornerback Ahkello Witherspoon on Friday with the 66th overall pick then made two more trades, the last of which they used to move back into the third round to grab Iowa quarterback C.J. Beathard.

Like first-rounders Solomon Thomas and Reuben Foster, there's a very good chance that Witherspoon will start in 2017 while Beathard will back up Brian Hoyer and Matt Barkley.

"I think we can throw him out there next year and he can play," Lynch said of Witherspoon. "He's demonstrated that he can hang with big-time receivers. Led the nation I believe in pass breakups. He's around the ball a lot and that's something we like."

San Francisco did not have a second-round pick after trading it to Seattle as part of a deal for the 31st overall pick on Thursday. Beathard was taken 104th overall after Lynch's second trade of the day and fourth of the draft. San Francisco sent the 109th and 219th picks in this year's draft to get the selection from Minnesota.

The 49ers also owned the 67th pick from a trade with Chicago a day earlier but traded it to New Orleans in exchange for the Saints' seventh-round pick this year and a second-round selection in 2018.

Witherspoon's selection comes as San Francisco tries to revamp a defense that finished last in the NFL a year ago.

Lynch used the third-overall pick on defensive lineman Thomas from Stanford then moved back into the first round to get Alabama linebacker Foster.

Adding Witherspoon addresses a pressing need in the 49ers secondary. Tramaine Brock, a starter in 2016, was released earlier this month after being arrested over an alleged domestic violence incident. Jimmie Ward is being moved to safety.

Witherspoon led the nation with 22 pass breakups in 2016 and had three interceptions in three seasons at Colorado while playing right cornerback. The 6-foot-3, 195-pound Witherspoon has played inside and outside, though in San Francisco he's likely to stay on the outside where his size can be an advantage.

"I can play both," Witherspoon said. "In college, people cut down their splits so I'm essentially playing in the slot with a lot of green. I can play both and I intend to do so."

Beathard, the grandson of former NFL general manager Bobby Beathard, passed for 1,929 yards and 17 touchdowns as a senior. He was the sixth quarterback taken in the draft after starting every game over the past two years for the Hawkeyes.

San Francisco coach Kyle Shanahan said that playing in Iowa's pro-style offense will help Beathard's transition to the NFL.

"One thing helps is being able to see guys play the way you're going to ask them to play," Shanahan said. "That helps with being at Iowa, watching the system that he's in. It's easier to see. He's a leader, he's tough, extremely accurate and he lives and dies football."

Before the trade with Minnesota, things were much calmer at 49ers headquarters after Lynch's busy debut 24 hours earlier.

Lynch used the third-overall pick on Thomas after moving down a spot in a trade with Chicago that also netted San Francisco additional lower-round picks, including the third-rounder that the 49ers later dealt to New Orleans.

San Francisco also made the deal with Seattle to move back into the first round to get Foster. As part of that deal, the 49ers sent their second-round pick this year to the Seahawks.

Thomas and Foster spent a few minutes getting acquainted before meeting with reporters at team headquarters Friday.

"It's going to be a lot of fun, and getting to play with a guy like Reuben, it's a dream come true," Thomas said. "I watched his highlight tape before and he can hit. I can't wait to see him hit someone."

Foster won't be hitting anyone for a while. The 2016 Butkus Award winner underwent right shoulder surgery and will be limited during OTAs, although Foster said he expects to be cleared in time for training camp.

The Alabama linebacker had been projected to go early in the first round but concerns over his shoulder — along with being sent home from the scouting combine and a diluted urine test — made teams leery.

"I don't look back at that," Foster said. "Since (San Francisco) picked me, there's a new leaf. There's a new journey for me. I'm just looking forward to becoming great."