

49ers Clips – January 30, 2017

Local Media

***Jan. 29, 1995: Steve Young Leads 49ers to Fifth Lombardi Trophy in Super Bowl XXIX***

By Joe Fann, 49ers.com

<http://www.49ers.com/news/article-2/Jan-29-1995-Steve-Young-Leads-49ers-to-Fifth-Lombardi-Trophy-in-Super-Bowl-XXIX/f18acb6c-1b1c-4326-af94-0367b8c8686e>

***49ers hire ex-safety John Lynch to be general manager***

By Eric Branch, San Francisco Chronicle

<http://www.sfchronicle.com/49ers/article/49ers-hire-John-Lynch-as-next-GM-10892879.php>

***49ers GM stunner: John Lynch, former Stanford and NFL star***

By Cam Inman, San Jose Mercury News

<http://www.mercurynews.com/2017/01/29/49ers-gm-stunner-john-lynch-former-stanford-nfl-star/>

***John Lynch: 10 facts about 49ers GM***

By Cam Inman, San Jose Mercury News

<http://www.mercurynews.com/2017/01/29/john-lynch-10-facts-about-49ers-gm/>

***49ers make surprise hire of John Lynch as general manager***

By Matt Barrows, Sacramento Bee

<http://www.sacbee.com/sports/nfl/san-francisco-49ers/article129528039.html>

***49ERS HIRE JOHN LYNCH AS GM***

By Matt Maiocco, CSNBayArea.com

<http://www.csnbayarea.com/49ers/49ers-hire-john-lynch-gm>

***LYNCH ON SHANAHAN DURING BROADCAST: 'I'D BE HIRING THAT GUY IN A SECOND'***

By Matt Maiocco, CSNBayArea.com

<http://www.csnbayarea.com/49ers/lynch-shanahan-during-broadcast-id-be-hiring-guy-second>

***Sources: 49ers to hire John Lynch as GM on six-year deal***

By Adam Schefter, ESPN.com

[http://www.espn.com/nfl/story/\\_/id/18581720/san-francisco-49ers-name-john-lynch-general-manager](http://www.espn.com/nfl/story/_/id/18581720/san-francisco-49ers-name-john-lynch-general-manager)

***Robert Kraft Made a 'Mistake' and Turned It Into a Dynasty***

By Peter King, MMQB.com

<http://mmqb.si.com/mmqb/2017/01/30/robert-kraft-patriots-nfl-super-bowl-51-falcons-peter-king>

***Jed York was fine with doing "something different"***

By Mike Florio, ProFootballTalk.com

<http://profootballtalk.nbcsports.com/2017/01/30/jed-york-was-fine-with-doing-something-different/>

***John Lynch wanted secrecy, got it***

By Mike Florio, ProFootballTalk.com

<http://profootballtalk.nbcsports.com/2017/01/29/john-lynch-wanted-secrecy-got-it/>

***49ers announce John Lynch as General Manager***

By Josh Alper, ProFootballTalk.com

<http://profootballtalk.nbcsports.com/2017/01/29/49ers-announce-john-lynch-as-general-manager/>

***Report: John Lynch will be 49ers' G.M.***

By Zac Jackson, ProFootballTalk.com

<http://profootballtalk.nbcsports.com/2017/01/29/report-john-lynch-will-be-49ers-g-m/>

***John Lynch on Kyle Shanahan: "I'd be hiring that guy in a second"***

By Darin Gantt, ProFootballTalk.com

<http://profootballtalk.nbcsports.com/2017/01/30/john-lynch-on-kyle-shanahan-id-be-hiring-that-guy-in-a-second/>

***San Francisco 49ers name John Lynch general manager***

By Conor Orr, NFL.com

<http://www.nfl.com/news/story/0ap3000000780496/article/san-francisco-49ers-name-john-lynch-general-manager>

***York on Lynch hire: Confident in something different***

By Kevin Patra, NFL.com

<http://www.nfl.com/news/story/0ap3000000780690/article/jed-york-on-hiring-lynch-49ers-confident-in-doing-something-different>

***49ers make surprise hire of John Lynch as general manager***

By Josh Dubow, Associated Press

<http://pro32.ap.org/article/49ers-make-surprise-hire-john-lynch-general-manager>

National Media

***Q&A: Rams General Manager Les Snead talks rookie Coach Sean McVay, draft needs and free agents at the Senior Bowl***

By Gary Klein, Los Angeles Times

<http://www.latimes.com/sports/rams/la-sp-rams-snead-qa-20170127-story.html>

***Saints WR coach John Morton to join Jets as offensive coordinator***

By Rich Cimini, ESPN.com

[http://www.espn.com/nfl/story/\\_/id/18579298/new-york-jets-hire-new-orleans-saints-receivers-coach-john-morton-offensive-coordinator](http://www.espn.com/nfl/story/_/id/18579298/new-york-jets-hire-new-orleans-saints-receivers-coach-john-morton-offensive-coordinator)

***5 things to know about new Colts GM Chris Ballard***

By Nat Newell, Indianapolis Star

<http://www.indystar.com/story/sports/nfl/colts/2017/01/29/5-things-know-new-colts-gm-chris-ballard/97222770/>

***Alex Smith will be the Chiefs' QB in 2017, but he knows the pressure is on***

By Terez Paylor, Kansas City Star

<http://www.kansascity.com/sports/nfl/kansas-city-chiefs/article129534259.html>

***If Romo hits free market, Broncos could express interest***

By Mike Klis, 9News.com

<http://www.9news.com/sports/nfl/denver-broncos/mike-klis/if-romo-hits-free-market-broncos-could-express-interest/393969290>

## Local Clips – Full Version

### ***Jan. 29, 1995: Steve Young Leads 49ers to Fifth Lombardi Trophy in Super Bowl XXIX***

By Joe Fann, 49ers.com

Jan. 29, 1995 – San Francisco 49ers 49 vs. San Diego Chargers 26 – Super Bowl XXIX

Location: Joe Robbie Stadium; Miami Gardens, Fla.

Favorites: 49ers -19.0

MVP: Steve Young

The 1994 season was all about redemption for the Young-led 49ers. San Francisco got a third crack at the Cowboys after losing to Dallas the previous two seasons in the NFC Championship game.

The 49ers hosted the Cowboys at Candlestick Park with a trip to Super Bowl XXIX on the line following a 44-15 win against the Chicago Bears in the divisional round.

A high-scoring first quarter saw the 49ers jump out to an early 21-0 lead behind an Eric Davis pick-six, a 29-yard pass from Young to Ricky Watters and a 1-yard run for William Floyd. Cowboys quarterback Troy Aikman had a monster statistical game, throwing for 380 passing yards and two touchdowns, and Michael Irvin caught 12 passes for 192 yards and both scores. Five turnovers, however, proved to be the Cowboys undoing as San Francisco went on to beat Dallas 38-28.

That rivalry clash was far more thrilling than the Super Bowl itself.

San Francisco throttled the San Diego Chargers 49-26 and scored two touchdowns in each of the first three quarters.

The 49ers scored three plays into the game on a 44-yard touchdown pass to Jerry Rice. Watters found the end zone three times in Super Bowl XXIX, twice as a receiver and once on the ground. The versatile running back joined Rice, Roger Craig and Denver Broncos running back Terrell Davis as the only skill players to ever score three touchdowns in a single Super Bowl.

Young won MVP honors for the game. The quarterback passed for 325 yards and set a Super Bowl record with six touchdown passes that still stands today.

Rice caught 10-of-13 targets for 149 yards and three scores. The receiver currently holds Super Bowl records for career receptions (33), career receiving yards (589), career touchdowns (8), single game receiving yards (215) and single game receiving touchdowns (3).

On that day, San Francisco also set an NFL record as the only franchise with five Lombardi Trophies.

Quoteworthy:

S Merton Hanks on playing the Cowboys in a third straight conference championship game:

"There are very few times in your life, I believe, that you can honestly say, 'Everything you've ever worked for has come to this moment, right here, right now. What are you going to do going forward?'"

Hanks on beating the Chargers in Super Bowl XXIX:

"I remember the elation for all of us for finally completing the journey of winning a World Championship. You really didn't want to leave the field."

TE Brent Jones on playing the Cowboys in a third straight conference championship game:

"The guys that had experienced the prior two losses, I think, felt it more than anybody else on the team. We knew what was at stake. This was it."

Jones on beating the Cowboys:

"It was the most remarkable sequence. You saw a team that was so prepared, so focused and so ready to play just come out and attack the Cowboys."

Young on beating the Cowboys after losing to Dallas the two seasons prior:

"It was like putting a flag on top of Mt. Everest. Dallas had gone down."

Young on winning his first Super Bowl as a starting quarterback:

"In the NFL, so many people focus on quarterbacks. No matter what happens, you'll have 1,000 reasons why you're no good and why you can't do it. Everyone lists them. 'He can't win the big game. He can't lead a team in two minutes.' It's like the nature of game where cynics win the day most of the time. So you end up responding to it because that's the nature of being an athlete. 'Oh you don't think I can do it? Well I'm going to prove you wrong.' I'm going to use that incentive to go achieve something."

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#### ***49ers hire ex-safety John Lynch to be general manager***

By Eric Branch, San Francisco Chronicle

John Lynch has a Stanford degree, nine Pro Bowl berths and a successful broadcasting career, but he possesses no experience as an NFL executive.

Despite that last little detail, the Pro Football Hall of Fame finalist now has this title: 49ers general manager.

On Sunday, the 49ers stunned the NFL by hiring Lynch, 45, to replace Trent Baalke as their GM. Lynch, a Fox analyst since 2008, has not worked in a front office and was not publicly connected to the 49ers' opening before Sunday night.

The 49ers could be making additional changes to their personnel department, a source said. It's possible that former Tampa Bay general manager Mark Dominik, who has ties to both Lynch and presumptive head coach Kyle Shanahan, could be considered for a front-office role.

They also still have executive Tom Gamble, who served as their assistant general manager last year and could help run the personnel department. On Jan. 2, York said Gamble wouldn't be considered for the GM opening because York was seeking a person from outside the organization.

The 49ers had conducted interviews with nine other candidates before Lynch flew from his home in San Diego to the Bay Area on Thursday afternoon, a source said. Lynch met with York and executive Paraag Marathe at York's house. The three then flew to Atlanta on Friday to meet with Shanahan, the Falcons' offensive coordinator. The 49ers and Shanahan also discussed the opening with Minnesota assistant general manager George Paton and Arizona vice president of player personnel Terry McDonough in Atlanta before Lynch was hired.

Lynch, who has a six-year deal, wasn't on the 49ers' radar until he called Shanahan about a week ago and volunteered for the job, ESPN reported.

The pairing, which will work for York, 36, is long on inexperience. Shanahan, 37, is in line to be a rookie head coach who will be the NFL's second youngest. In addition, it's likely Shanahan will have control of the 53-man roster, given Lynch's inexperience.

The 49ers are hoping Lynch will be as successful in a front office as he was on the field.

Lynch, who played for Bill Walsh as a senior at Stanford in 1992, is among 15 modern-day Hall of Fame finalists. He was a nine-time Pro Bowl safety during a 15-year career that ended in 2007. He spent his final four seasons with the Broncos playing for Mike Shanahan, Kyle's father.

The hiring of a general manager with no NFL front-office experience is rare.

Denver general manager John Elway had that distinction when he was hired by in 2011, although he was a co-owner and general manager of an Arena Football League team from 2002 to 2008. Former Detroit general manager Matt Millen, a linebacker who played for both the 49ers and Raiders, worked as a TV analyst before he worked in Detroit's front office from 2001 to 2008. The Lions were 31-84 during his tenure.

The 49ers considered Dominik for their GM opening but did not schedule an interview with him, a source said. Dominik, 45, an ESPN analyst, has a history with Lynch and Shanahan. He was Tampa Bay's director of pro scouting during seven of Lynch's 10 seasons with the Buccaneers. Shanahan was a low-level offensive assistant with Tampa Bay from 2004 to 2005. Dominik's five-year tenure as Tampa Bay's GM ended when he was fired in 2013.

After firing Baalke on Jan. 1, the 49ers had New England director of player personnel Nick Caserio and Kansas City director of player personnel Chris Ballard high on their wish list, but both declined interviews. Ballard subsequently interviewed with the Colts and was hired as their GM on Sunday.

Green Bay executive Brian Gutekunst, who was widely reported to be the front-runner for the position, withdrew from consideration Jan. 20. Green Bay executive Eliot Wolfe also pulled out of the running.

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#### ***49ers GM stunner: John Lynch, former Stanford and NFL star***

By Cam Inman, San Jose Mercury News

Former Stanford and NFL star safety John Lynch is the 49ers' stunning choice as general manager, ending a four-week search that never publicly connected him to the opening, the team confirmed Sunday night.

Lynch, 45, won over the 49ers brass with his leadership and communication skills, as well as his link to former 49ers coach Bill Walsh, who coached Lynch at Stanford 25 years ago, CEO Jed York told this newspaper.

Lynch, a finalist for Saturday's upcoming Pro Football Hall of Fame class, is expected to pair with presumptive coach Kyle Shanahan as the 49ers rebuild after a 2-14 season that cost the jobs of general manager Trent Baalke and coach Chip Kelly.

Shanahan, the Atlanta Falcons offensive coordinator, can not be officially hired until after next Sunday's Super Bowl. Both he and Lynch are expected to land six-year contracts despite no previous experience as a head coach or general manager, respectively.

The 49ers plan to introduce Lynch on a media conference call Monday, as he is out of town tending to a family commitment.

York noted that Lynch will surround himself with a “great staff” in his first foray into a NFL front office, where the 49ers are expected to complement him with a veteran personnel executive. One such candidate could be Mark Dominik, an ESPN analyst and former Tampa Bay Buccaneers general manager who was the Bucs’ director of pro scouting during Lynch’s playing career there. Another option could be Tom Gamble, the 49ers assistant general manager; he declined comment Sunday night.

Lynch flew up Thursday from his San Diego home to meet with York, who’s spearheaded the 49ers’ GM and coach search. Lynch stayed Thursday night at York’s Los Altos estate, according to ESPN’s Adam Schefter, who also reported that Lynch approached Shanahan last week about assuming the GM role.

On Friday, Lynch flew with York and 49ers chief strategy officer Paraag Marathe to Atlanta for a follow-up interview with Shanahan, who also sat in on Saturday’s sessions with the 49ers’ two presumed GM finalists, the Minnesota Vikings’ George Paton and the Arizona Cardinals’ Terry McDonough.

Kyle Shanahan “is good” with Lynch’s hiring, a source close to Shanahan told Bleacher Report’s Jason Cole. If Shanahan obtains roster control over Lynch, it wouldn’t be unheard of in the NFL, as between six and eight coaches wield that power, which was given to first-time coaches Dan Quinn in Atlanta and Adam Gase in Miami each of the past two years upon their hiring.

Lynch and Shanahan are bridged together through the Denver Broncos a decade ago, when Lynch was finishing his All-Pro career and Shanahan’s father, Mike, was coaching the Broncos.

The 49ers’ GM search included interviews with eight known candidates, and none has ever previously been a general manager. Some withdrew from consideration (Green Bay’s Eliot Wolf and Brian Gutekunst, and Seattle’s Trent Kirchner), and the 49ers could not procure interviews with two potential GMs, New England’s Nick Caserio and Kansas City’s Chris Ballard, the latter of whom filled the Indianapolis Colts’ GM job Sunday.

Lynch was a 1993 third-round draft pick by the Tampa Bay Buccaneers out of Stanford. He played for the Buccaneers through 2003, including winning a Super Bowl against the Raiders, before playing out his career with the Broncos from 2004-07. He made nine Pro Bowls and earned All-Pro status from 1999-2001.

Lynch was inducted this season into the Buccaneers’ and Broncos’ respective Rings of Honor, doing so in a 10-day span. He played in 224 regular-season games, totaling 26 interceptions and 13 sacks, according to his Pro Football Hall of Fame bio as a 2017 finalist.

He actually finished his hard-hitting career with the New England Patriots in the 2008 exhibition season, providing his last memories on a field.

“If you look at the stat sheet, I had like 14 tackles,” Lynch told the Tampa Bay Times in October. “I was like Junior Seau. They’d tell me it was zone coverage — and I would blitz. (Bill) Belichick was screaming, ‘What the hell are you doing?’ I came off one time and I gave him a hug. He finally just cracked a huge smile. I was out there just balling.”

Since retiring, Lynch has been a Fox Sports broadcaster. His hiring is sure to draw comparisons to the Detroit Lions’ appointment of Matt Millen as their CEO and personnel czar from 2001-07, as he left the broadcast booth a decade after his playing career.

Lynch has kept abreast of the 49ers’ decline in recent years, telling 95.7 The Game two years ago: “With all due respect to Jim Tomsula, they let go of Jim Harbaugh, a tremendous coach. I think it’s a failure of the organization.”

Baalke had presided over the 49ers personnel department since 2010, highlighted by three consecutive berths in the NFC Championship Game and a Super Bowl appearance, all with Harbaugh as coach.

Tomsula was ousted after going 5-11 in 2015, and Kelly coached the 49ers to a franchise-record 13 consecutive losses en route to this season's 2-14 record.

Lynch was a two-sport star at Stanford, and he played two seasons of minor-league baseball with the Florida Marlins organization as a 1992 second-round draft pick. He threw the first pitch in their history with their first farm team, the Erie Sailors.

The Stanford Athletic Hall of Fame enshrined Lynch in 2010, well after he earned second-team All-America honors in 1992 under Walsh, who returned that season for a three-year encore as Cardinal coach. Lynch originally went to Stanford as a quarterback before transitioning to safety.

Before going to Stanford, he attended high school Torrey Pines High School near San Diego, where he lives with his wife, Linda, and their four children.

As for his health after 15 years of hard-hitting NFL action, Lynch told the Tampa Bay Times in October: "My head was always good. For a guy who played 15 years, I'd put myself up against anyone in terms of fewest concussions. I'm very healthy today. I still run. My head feels great."

Lynch is a Pro Football Hall of Fame finalist for a third straight year, and this year's class will be revealed on Saturday in Houston, site of Super Bowl LI.

Lynch can only hope his transition to the front office goes as well as his from a player to a broadcaster.

"My first three years as an NFL player, I kind of was a special teams player struggling to find my way on the field. Broadcasting, I think I did well from the start," Lynch told the San Diego Union-Tribune two years ago. "It's really taken off here in the last couple of years. That's been fun, to see that progression, and I worked around a lot of great people that helped me."

He'll need a strong supporting cast upon joining the 49ers, and York is convinced Lynch indeed will do that. The 49ers certainly have the resources available for a needed rebuild. Beside an expected \$100 million in salary cap space, they have at least 10 draft picks this year, including No. 2 overall behind the Cleveland Browns.

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### ***John Lynch: 10 facts about 49ers GM***

By Cam Inman, San Jose Mercury News

John Lynch stunningly surfaced Sunday as the 49ers' selection for general manager. As secret a candidate as he was, he's also very well known through his NFL endeavors since coming out of Stanford in 1993.

Here are 10 facts to know about the 49ers new general manager, who figures to partner up with future coach Kyle Shanahan in a week once that projected deal can become official:

1. Lynch was such an exceptional, hard-hitting safety that he is a Pro Football Hall of Fame finalist for the third consecutive year, and this year's class will be unveiled Saturday. He played 15 seasons, the first 11 with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers and the final four with the Denver Broncos, though he made a 2008 exhibition-season cameo with the New England Patriots.

2. Lynch's NFL career saw him start 10 games his first three seasons combined. He considered returning to baseball until 49ers icon Ronnie Lott intervened one offseason. "He said I've got not only what it takes to be on the field, but I have a chance to be one of the best safeties in the game. That kind of changed my tune," Lynch told this newspaper before winning Super Bowl XXXVII with the 2002 Tampa Bay Buccaneers over the Raiders.



3. How tough was he? He ranked No. 10 on a NFL Films' production of "Top 10 Most Feared Tacklers," company he shared with the likes of Dick Butkus and Lawrence Taylor. Lynch's history of hard hits hasn't taken a toll on him physically, though he did experience nerve stingers in his neck in his final season with Tampa Bay in 2003.

4. Lynch closed out his Stanford career in 1992 under former 49ers coach Bill Walsh, who was starting his second stint with the Cardinal. "He tells me, not only can I help the Stanford team, but I can play in the NFL at Pro Bowl level at safety," Lynch recalled to the Tampa Bay Times in 2008. "I was trying to be as respectful as possible, but I said, 'What makes you think that? I've started three games in college.' " Lynch played quarterback his first two years in 1989-90, completing 17 of 39 passes for 229 yards with no touchdowns and three interceptions; he had 29 carries for 53 yards.

5. Lynch showcased his two-sport talents not only at Torrey Pines High-San Diego and Stanford, but also on the professional level. He had a 7.88 ERA in eight innings as a junior at Stanford before the expansion Florida Marlins drafted him with their second pick in 1992. Two weeks later, he threw the first pitch in Marlins history, doing so for the Erie Sailors of the Gulf Coast League.

6. Lynch hit a two-run home run in his first at-bat as a Stanford freshman in 1990, the only hit of his season. He batted .244 in his Cardinal career, where he was more reknown for his fastball on the mound. "John was a power guy. He had great arm strength but wasn't polished, " Stanford coach Mark Marquess told this newspaper in 2003. "John always had a football mentality in baseball. He didn't play too much in baseball, but the Marlins saw potential in him as a pitcher."

7. Lynch joined Fox as a full-time game analyst in 2009 after a two-game audition in 2008. He and broadcast partner Kevin Burkhardt worked only one 49ers game this season, a 37-18 loss at Seattle on Sept. 25. But they also worked the Falcons' playoff-opening win over the Seattle Seahawks, during which Lynch said of Kyle Shanahan: "I'd be hiring that guy in a second."

8. Both the Denver Broncos and Tampa Bay Buccaneers enshrined him in their respective "Ring of Honor" this season. That occurred during a 10-day span in which Lynch also broadcast a game in London. He wore No. 47 for both franchises but neither has retired his number.

9. Pro Bowl invitations came his way nine of his final 11 seasons, and he earned First-Team All-Pro honors in 1999 and 2000. He was a finalist for the 2002 and 2003 Walter Payton NFL Man of the Year Award, and he won the NFL Players Association's Byron "Whizzer" White NFL Man of the Year Award his final year, in 2007.

10. Lynch was born Sept. 25, 1971 in Hinsdale, Illinois. He lives in San Diego with his wife, Linda, and their four children. His father, John Lynch Sr., was a 13th-round pick of the Pittsburgh Steelers in 1969, and he suffered a career-ending knee injury as a rookie linebacker.

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### ***49ers make surprise hire of John Lynch as general manager***

By Matt Barrows, Sacramento Bee

SANTA CLARA, CALIF. -- The San Francisco 49ers made a surprise hire to fill their general manager void Sunday, hiring former NFL safety and Fox television analyst John Lynch to replace Trent Baalke.

Lynch comes into the job with no front-office experience, having gone straight from the playing field to the broadcast booth. But after a lengthy search that included interviews with nine other publicly identified candidates, team CEO Jed York settled on Lynch.

ESPN first reported the deal, saying Lynch had gotten a six-year contract.

After playing for former Niners coach Bill Walsh in college at Stanford, Lynch went on to have a stellar 15-year career with Tampa Bay and Denver that included three All-Pro selections and one Super Bowl title with the Buccaneers. He's a finalist this year for the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

Since retiring in 2008, Lynch has been an analyst at Fox.

Now he will be tasked to rebuild a once-proud franchise that has fallen from NFC champions in 2012 to a 2-14 record this past season that matched the worst in franchise history. That led to the firing of Baalke and coach Chip Kelly as York set to overhaul the operation after the struggles the past few years.

The 49ers made three straight trips to the NFC title game from 2011-13 under coach Jim Harbaugh, but got rid of him after an 8-8 season in 2014, in part because of a rift with Baalke. Jim Tomsula lasted one year as coach and then Kelly was also fired after one season, leading to this current search.

York said he was open to hiring either the coach or general manager first. He said the primary goal in the search is finding a coach and general manager who can work well together.

All signs point to Atlanta offensive coordinator Kyle Shanahan getting the head coach job. He had a second interview with York this weekend and is the only remaining candidate. He can't sign a contract with San Francisco until after the Falcons play the Super Bowl next Sunday against New England.

Lynch played for Shanahan's father, Mike, for four seasons in Denver.

York also gave second interviews this weekend to the two other general manager candidates: Minnesota assistant GM George Paton and Arizona vice president of player personnel Terry McDonough.

But after meeting with them and Shanahan, York decided to go with Lynch for the job. Lynch played the final four years of his career in Denver, where Shanahan's father, Mike, was head coach.

Lynch will need to rebuild a depleted roster that has few building blocks and holes at nearly every position. The biggest void is at quarterback where Colin Kaepernick and Blaine Gabbert both struggled this past season and can leave as free agents in March.

San Francisco has the No. 2 overall draft pick and plenty of salary cap room to make additions.

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#### **49ERS HIRE JOHN LYNCH AS GM**

By Matt Maiocco, CSNBayArea.com

The 49ers on Sunday hired former NFL star safety John Lynch as general manager, a source confirmed to CSNBayArea.com on Sunday night.

The team announced the hiring of Lynch at 7 p.m.

Lynch, 45, was hired to cap a weekend that saw presumptive 49ers coach Kyle Shanahan, the Atlanta Falcons offensive coordinator, meet with known finalists George Paton and Terry McDonough. The hiring of Lynch is a surprise move. Lynch has been an NFL analyst for FOX. He worked the Falcons' 36-20 victory over the Seattle Seahawks in the divisional round of the NFC playoffs and was effusive in his praise of Shanahan.

Lynch and Shanahan will each receive a six-year contracts from the 49ers, a source said. The 49ers' two previous head coaches, Jim Tomsula and Chip Kelly, received four-year contracts. Jim Harbaugh was hired in 2011 on a five-year deal.

Lynch spent Thursday night at the Bay Area home of CEO Jed York on Thursday night before traveling together to Atlanta to meet up with Shanahan. A week earlier, Lynch called Shanahan to offer his services for the GM position, ESPN's Adam Schefter reported.

Lynch, who played football at Stanford under legendary 49ers coach Bill Walsh, is also one of 15 modern-day finalist for the Pro Football Hall of Fame, which will be voted on Saturday in Houston.

Shortly after the 49ers concluded the season with a 2-14 season, that included a franchise-worst 13-game losing streak, York announced the firings of coach Chip Kelly and general manager Trent Baalke.

Shanahan was closely involved in the process to hire the team's general manager. The 49ers interviewed nine other candidates for the job that the team disclosed. CSNBayArea.com reported Sunday there was a mystery candidate, believed to be ESPN analyst Mark Dominik. While a source said the 49ers discussed Dominik, he did not receive a formal interview.

Paton, Minnesota's assistant general manager, and McDonough, Arizona's vice president of player personnel, were the announced finalists for the job, while Lynch wished to keep his candidacy for the position a secret, a source said.

Among the topics Shanahan covered with the general manager candidates was how the 49ers' personnel power would be handled, both contractually and functionally, a source told CSNBayArea.com. Shanahan has not insisted on control over personnel but he wants to be involved in the decision-making process, a source said.

Now with Lynch, who has no experience working in an NFL front office, Shanahan is expected to wield more power into personnel than he would have if the 49ers had hired an experienced NFL executive for the job.

The 49ers are prohibited from officially hiring Shanahan as head coach until after the Falcons finish their season in Super Bowl 51 against the New England Patriots on Feb. 5 in Houston.

Lynch played the final four seasons of his NFL career with the Denver Broncos under Shanahan's father, Mike Shanahan. Lynch played the first 11 seasons of his NFL career with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. He was a third-round draft pick in 1993.

Lynch was selected to the Pro Bowl nine times in his career. He finished his career with 26 interceptions.

Lynch was drafted to play for the Florida Marlins and in the early 1990s was considering leaving the Stanford football program to pursue a baseball career. But Walsh talked Lynch into continuing to play football after he transitioned from quarterback to safety.

"I'll never forget the day Coach Walsh called me into his office," Lynch told the Stanford Daily in 2013. "Bill saw something in me. He called me in that day and said, 'Look, I understand you got a great opportunity with the Marlins, but I think you can play in the NFL and not only can you play, but you can be a Pro Bowl player. He sold me on coming back, and I did, and the rest is history.'"

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### ***LYNCH ON SHANAHAN DURING BROADCAST: 'I'D BE HIRING THAT GUY IN A SECOND'***

By Matt Maiocco, CSNBayArea.com

John Lynch, whom the 49ers hired Sunday to be general manager, saw his future coach Kyle Shanahan two weeks ago and made a comment that proved to be a portent.

Shanahan, Atlanta's offensive coordinator, had just dialed up a play that resulted in a 14-yard touchdown pass from Matt Ryan to running back Tevin Coleman. The play gave the Falcons a 19-10 lead late in the second quarter against the Seahawks in the divisional playoff game.

Lynch was calling the game as a FOX analyst, alongside play-by-play man Kevin Burkhardt. It is customary for TV crews to meet with the top coaches and players for both teams in production meetings to gain insights leading up to the game.

"You know, Kyle, I think he goes in these production, er, excuse me, interviews and maybe comes off a little confident, a little arrogant," Lynch said. "I don't care. I want an arrogant coach. I want a confident coach. I'd be hiring that guy in a second."

Actually, it turns out that Shanahan, 37, played the major role in hiring Lynch, 45, to his first job as an NFL executive.

Lynch will come out of the broadcast booth to be in charge of the 49ers' personnel department. He and Shanahan will receive contracts of six years in length, according to a source. The 49ers are prohibited from officially hiring Shanahan until after Super 51 on Feb. 5.

Here are some other comments Lynch made about Shanahan during the course of Falcons' 36-20 victory over the Seahawks in an NFC divisional-round game on Jan. 14.

In the first quarter after Seattle cornerback Richard Sherman was called for defensive holding:

"When we met with the Falcons the other day, Dan Quinn and Kyle Shanahan, the offensive coordinator, said, 'Look, we're not going to complain about calls. When you play Seattle, you know you're going to get held on every play. Beat it.' Kyle Shanahan's dad, Mike Shanahan, I played for him. I used to hear him all the time. 'If you can't beat man coverage, you're complaining about holding, start selling cars. That's part of the job.'"

On the first play after taking over at their own 1-yard line in the second quarter, Ryan hit receiver Julio Jones for an 8-yard gain:

"One of the things I think they do, Kevin, we just saw them throw from the end zone. They don't play scared. They attack people. When you have great weapons, that's how you should play. Matt Ryan said the first thing Dan Quinn said to the team, 'Offense, defense, we're going to be the best attacking offense in football, the best attacking defense.' They attack people."

After Ryan hit Jones on a 12-yard gain early in the third quarter:

"Kyle Shanahan continuing to design plays that are really tough to defend."

Lynch referenced Falcons running backs coach Bobby Turner, who also coached with Kyle Shanahan and under Mike Shanahan with Washington, after Coleman's 7-yard gain in the third quarter:

"Bobby Turner, the running back coach for the Atlanta Falcons, is the same guy who coached in Denver. Terrell Davis. That's the style of running. You stretch, stretch, stretch, you see someone get cut down on the back side, and then you hit it downhill. Tevin Coleman doing it to perfection."

After running back Devonta Freeman was matched against Seahawks defensive end Cliff Avril on a play that went for a 53-yard pass play, Lynch talked about how Shanahan took advantage of the injury to that left the Seahawks without safety Earl Thomas:

"You got Cliff Avril right there on Devonta Freeman. That is a mismatch. And that's what Kyle Shanahan talked about. There you see the missing of Earl Thomas. That kind of move in space, Earl Thomas is likely to make that tackle and Steven Terrell can't. But Kyle Shanahan talked in the first matchup. They kept Freeman in and blocked when they ran those blitzes. This time, he said, 'We're not going to keep him in. We're going to put him out there on those defensive ends.' Great job by the Atlanta Falcons. They have so much speed on this offense."

On Coleman and Freeman as a pair of running backs:

"There's no better tandem in the league. They throw so much at you as all-around backs. They beat you rushing the ball. They beat you in the pass game. We've seen it. They both can fly. Kyle Shanahan is an offensive coordinator who knows how to utilize them."

Late in the game:

"I think Julio Jones said it really well. He said, 'John, Kevin, you've been there. When you're confident, when you know something inside and out, your talent can come to the forefront. Last year, Matt Ryan did not have a grasp of this entire scheme.' Kyle Shanahan throws a lot at you. He goes after people, so it's a different game plan each week. . . The familiarity. Dan Quinn said, 'You two are going to hang out this offseason.' Matt Ryan, Kyle Shanahan, they got the scheme down and you're seeing the rewards. . . This is a fabulous offense."

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**Sources: 49ers to hire John Lynch as GM on six-year deal**

By Adam Schefter, ESPN.com

The San Francisco 49ers have hired Hall of Fame candidate and Fox analyst John Lynch to be their general manager, the team announced Sunday night.

Sources told ESPN that the deal is for an almost unprecedented six years.

Less than a week before he is eligible to be voted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame, the former Stanford standout is returning to the Bay Area.

As the 49ers are signing Lynch to a six-year contract, the plan is to offer Atlanta Falcons offensive coordinator Kyle Shanahan a six-year contract to be their head coach, according to league sources. The 49ers' idea always was to have the head coach and general manager jobs tied together in terms of length of contract.

Lynch spent Thursday and Friday meeting with San Francisco officials. He spent Thursday night at 49ers owner Jed York's house, before the team flew him to San Diego on Friday night so he could attend a family function.

Lynch accepted the job on Sunday.

He has no front-office experience but has been connected to front-office jobs in the past. Some in Denver thought he could have been a candidate to replace John Elway one day, though that never materialized.

York told MMQB on Sunday night that he was willing to take a chance by giving Lynch his first front-office job and referenced Shanahan's input in the decision.

"So many opportunities are missed in the NFL because people don't want to do something different," York said. "We're OK with that, because I am confident in Kyle and John. John has watched John Elway and how he's built a team in Denver. As easy as it is to say he hasn't built a team yet -- I get that -- I talk to Kyle, and he says John is the most prepared of all the TV [people] he meets in the production meetings before games."

"We understand we'll have to live with growing pains, but I'm willing to do that because I believe the upside with both of them is so great."

The idea to hire Lynch was his own. He personally called Shanahan and volunteered for the job about a week ago.

Shanahan, expected to be named the Niners' coach after the Super Bowl, thought about Lynch, and the more he thought about it, the more he felt Lynch was a fit for the job. Lynch played for Shanahan's father, Mike, in Denver.

The 49ers confirmed that they had interviews with nine general manager candidates after firing Trent Baalke on Jan. 1, none of which were with Lynch. They narrowed that group down to four, and it then came down to two, after Green Bay Packers executives Brian Gutekunst and Eliot Wolf removed themselves from consideration.

From there, York and executive Paraag Marathe had second interviews with Arizona Cardinals vice president of player personnel Terry McDonough and Minnesota Vikings assistant general manager George Paton over the weekend.

Throughout the process, the Niners acknowledged that they would keep an open mind, but their primary goal was to find someone who could work in lockstep with Shanahan.

"We need to make sure that the head coach and the general manager know each other, have a good understanding for each other," York said at the beginning of the process. "It doesn't mean that they had to have worked together in the past, but they have to have a good respect for each other and a good understanding and know that they have similar visions and philosophies on building a football team."

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### ***Robert Kraft Made a 'Mistake' and Turned It Into a Dynasty***

By Peter King, MMQB.com

#### The Very Interesting Shanahan-Lynch Pairing

Sometimes, a story that seems so preposterous when you first hear it makes more sense the longer you digest it. A preface: I've always thought an arranged marriage between a coach and a GM is stupid. On very rare occasions (Pete Carroll-John Schneider) it works. Most often (Josh McDaniels-Brian Xanders, Chip Kelly-Howie Roseman, Rex Ryan-John Idzik, Rex Ryan-Doug Whaley, etc.) it does not. That's why it seemed odd that the 49ers would place Kyle Shanahan—their coach one week from today—in a room with ace Vikings scout George Paton and then with ace Cardinals scout Terry McDonough, and then smoke would come out of the chimney and Shanahan would say about one of them: "That's it! That's my GM!"

It's just not a smart way to form a partnership. So when Adam Schefter of ESPN reported that John Lynch had contacted Shanahan last week and told him he was interested in leaving TV to be a GM, and Shanahan returned the interest, the story began to make sense. Lynch spent Thursday night with Jed York in the Bay Area, then flew to Atlanta and had four more interviewing hours with York, and then York saw him debriefed by Shanahan in an Atlanta hotel room ... that's when York thought this was real, and possible.

After going through the Shanahan sessions with Paton on Friday night and then McDonough on Saturday morning, York thought the Lynch fit was best. As did Shanahan.

Shanahan is 37. Lynch is 45. Lynch has watched John Elway go from inexperienced former star player to Super Bowl champion GM. They are friends. Lynch has enjoyed his Fox analyst work, but I am told he longed for something more, something with more substance. Now he'll have to figure out whom to hire and trust as his football czars in San Francisco—as Elway has, with Tom Heckert and Matt Russell in Denver. Maybe it'll be former Tampa Bay GM Mark Dominik, or incumbent personnel man Tom Gamble in San Francisco. But Lynch is going to need help. Lots of it.

The reason why I'm not down on it? I know Lynch. He knows his limitations. He knows he needs a couple of great scouts to help him. Lots of people will recall the last Fox analyst to ascend to the throne of an

NFL team without personnel training—Matt Millen in Detroit in 2001—and how miserably he failed. This may be the same thing. If Lynch doesn't surround himself with strong personnel people, it will be the same thing. If Lynch and Shanahan don't find a long-term quarterback, regardless of their long contracts, they will fail in their quest to lead the 49ers out of the wilderness.

"Nothing is guaranteed," York said late Sunday night. (He also said, "I need some sleep.") "But so many opportunities are missed in the NFL because people don't want to do something different. We're okay with that, because I am confident in Kyle and John. John has watched John Elway, and how he's built a team in Denver. As easy as it is to say he hasn't built a team yet—I get that—I talk to Kyle, and he says John is the most prepared of all the TV [people] he meets in the production meetings before games. We understand we'll have to live with growing pains, but I'm willing to do that because I believe the upside with both of them is so great."

It all sounds good—the enlightened GM, the overly bright coach—but nothing will matter until one of them picks the right quarterback to help rebuild the Niners. Knowing each man the way I do, I expect they both know it.

### Ten Things I Think I Think

3. I think, as I wake up this morning, I am still mind-boggled at the 49ers taking the risk of the year and hiring John Lynch as GM. Hiring a coach, 37 years old, who's never been a head coach. Hiring a GM, 45, who's never worked in personnel. Well, Jed York wanted to buy a lottery ticket and shoot for the moon ... he's done that.

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### ***Jed York was fine with doing "something different"***

By Mike Florio, ProFootballTalk.com

There's a fine line between thinking outside the box and losing your damn mind. 49ers CEO Jed York thinks he's fallen on the right side of it.

"Nothing is guaranteed," York told Peter King of TheMMQB.com in the aftermath of the news that the team had hired broadcaster John Lynch to serve as the team's General Manager. "But so many opportunities are missed in the NFL because people don't want to do something different. We're OK with that, because I am confident in Kyle [Shanahan] and John. John has watched John Elway, and how he's built a team in Denver. As easy as it is to say he hasn't built a team yet — I get that — I talk to Kyle, and he says John is the most prepared of all the TV [people] he meets in the production meetings before games. We understand we'll have to live with growing pains, but I'm willing to do that because I believe the upside with both of them is so great."

First takeaway: So much for any discretion or finesse regarding the rule that prevents the 49ers from hiring Shanahan before his current employer completes the Super Bowl. If it wasn't already obvious (and it should have been), Shanahan will be the next coach of the 49ers.

That fact, along with the reality that the 49ers promised Shanahan final say over the roster in order to get the deal done, made Lynch a viable candidate. As previously mentioned in this space 10 days ago, the inability of the team to give final say to the G.M. could force the franchise to shift its focus to people not currently employed with other franchises, since candidates like George Paton of the Vikings or Terry McDonough of the Cardinals could have been blocked if the job didn't give them control of the roster.

"Folks who would aspire to fill that role may already be contacting Shanahan and/or the 49ers to express interest," we wrote — and that's exactly how it went down, based on the ESPN report that Lynch reached out to Shanahan.

So while it was a bold move, it also was a move born in large part of necessity. When candidates for the coaching job began to systematically bow out and Shanahan was able to squeeze favorable terms from the team (including what is expected to be a six-year, \$30 million deal and control over the roster), the 49ers had no choice but to go outside the box — the circumstances had yanked them there.

Whether it works remains to be seen. Talk of Lynch's preparation sounds a lot like the Matt Millen dynamic, who as legend has it had a habit of telling teams during production meetings what they needed to do to improve. The Lions thought it sounded good enough to give him the keys to the franchise.

Lynch doesn't have the keys to the franchise, but he's in position to affect it significantly, for better or worse, for the next several years. Whether he goes the way of Elway or Millen remains to be seen.

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### ***John Lynch wanted secrecy, got it***

By Mike Florio, ProFootballTalk.com

The 49ers have developed in recent years a reputation for leaks. When it comes to their new G.M., the 49ers managed to say nothing at all.

Per a league source, John Lynch first emerged as a serious candidate two weeks ago. He insisted on secrecy, and he got it.

It's unclear why he didn't want anyone to know he was under consideration for the job. With no one knowing he was a candidate, no one would have known that he hadn't gotten the job, if the 49ers had hired someone else.

Many are comparing Lynch to Broncos G.M. John Elway. Others are comparing Lynch to former Lions G.M. Matt Millen. There's potential merit to each argument. Lynch, a Hall of Fame caliber player, could have the brains, the work ethic, and the people skills to get things done the way that Elway has. Lynch also could be in over his head, the way Millen was, with the ability to talk a good game on TV and in production meetings having no correlation to his ability to run a team.

Either way, Lynch will get time to show what he can do, thanks to a reported six-year contract — the same length as the contract that Kyle Shanahan is expected to receive. Or he'll eventually get paid to not show what he can do, the same as multiple other former 49ers employees.

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### ***49ers announce John Lynch as General Manager***

By Josh Alper, ProFootballTalk.com

The 49ers' General Manager search came to a surprising end on Sunday night when the team hired John Lynch after no indication that the Hall of Fame finalist and FOX broadcaster was a candidate for the job.

The team confirmed the hiring after the reports of their choice emerged during the Pro Bowl. 49ers CEO Jed York told Cam Inman of the Bay Area News Group that the team was impressed by Lynch's "leadership and communication skills" and liked that he played for Bill Walsh in college. York also said he believes Lynch can build a "great staff," which will be important given his lack of experience as a personnel executive.

That lack of experience didn't stop Lynch from reportedly getting a six-year contract with the team. Adam Scheffer of ESPN reported that Kyle Shanahan is expected to get the same term as head coach and that Lynch took his first step toward the job by reaching out to Shanahan recently to let him know he was interested in making the move to the front office.



Lynch, who played for Kyle's father Mike Shanahan in Denver, met with York on Thursday, so the decision to make a long-term commitment appears to have materialized quickly for the 49ers.

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***Report: John Lynch will be 49ers' G.M.***

By Zac Jackson, ProFootballTalk.com

The 49ers are hiring former NFL safety John Lynch as their new General Manager, Jay Glazer of FOX Sports reported Sunday night.

Lynch, 45, has been working as a game analyst for FOX and has no front-office experience. He retired before the 2008 season following a 15-year career and could eventually be voted to the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

The 49ers are expected to hire Falcons offensive coordinator Kyle Shanahan as their new head coach after next week's Super Bowl. The team had a second interview with Shanahan this weekend and also interviewed G.M. candidates, but Lynch's name never surfaced as a candidate until it was reported that he will be hired.

Glazer tweeted that the 49ers wanted to emulate what the Broncos have done with former player John Elway as the face and leader of the franchise and "wanted to change the whole attitude of the organization."

After a long run in Tampa Bay, Lynch played his final four seasons with the Broncos. He retired after being released by the Patriots just before the 2008 season and began his broadcasting career during that season.

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***John Lynch on Kyle Shanahan: "I'd be hiring that guy in a second"***

By Darin Gantt, ProFootballTalk.com

Even before he was a candidate for the 49ers General Manager job, John Lynch wasn't afraid to praise Kyle Shanahan, saying he was the kind of coach he'd like to hire.

Setting aside the fact that Shanahan effectively hired Lynch, it's still worth going back through those words for some context to their relationship.

Via Matt Maiocco of CSNBayArea.com, Lynch was effusive about Shanahan's play-calling and attitude after a touchdown pass to Tevin Coleman in the second quarter of their Divisional Round win over the Seahawks. While calling the game for Fox, Lynch referred to the production meetings the broadcasters have with coaches the day before the game to gather background.

"You know, Kyle, I think he goes in these production, er, excuse me, interviews and maybe comes off a little confident, a little arrogant," Lynch said. "I don't care. I want an arrogant coach. I want a confident coach. I'd be hiring that guy in a second."

Of course, it's the other way around, but the team's new pairing got six-year contracts to try to turn things around. The link between Lynch playing for Shanahan's father in Denver appeared to be the key, with Lynch reaching out to Shanahan recently, and insisting his involvement in the process be kept secret.

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***San Francisco 49ers name John Lynch general manager***

By Conor Orr, NFL.com

The San Francisco 49ers stunned the football world Sunday night by naming Hall of Fame finalist John Lynch as their new general manager following weeks of secret courtship.

Lynch's deal with the 49ers will be for six years -- the same contract length the 49ers are planning to give Kyle Shanahan when they officially make him their head coach, sources informed of the situation told NFL Network Insider Ian Rapoport.

Fox Sports first reported Lynch's hiring.

The finalists were believed to be Vikings assistant George Paton and Terry McDonough, the Cardinals' vice president of player personnel. Rapoport said the 49ers identified Lynch as a candidate "weeks ago."

The 45-year-old, who last played in 2008, has never held a job in an NFL front office.

The move seems on par with the surprising decision the Broncos made in 2011 to make John Elway their general manager, although Elway did spend a few years in charge of an Arena Football League team before taking the job. Lynch has been an analyst for Fox Sports since 2008.

One advantage Lynch would seem to have? As part of his job with Fox he is able to travel every week and spend his days in meetings with team personnel, executives and coaches as part of his broadcasting responsibilities. This would theoretically give him a complete picture of how some of the league's more successful operations work.

That doesn't mean the job will come without hurdles.

Former Lions president and CEO Matt Millen made a similar transition after years in the television game, but he never saw his team win more than seven games in a season during his stint from 2001-08. He was dismissed in 2008 amid the only 0-16 season in NFL history.

The 49ers obviously hope their fortunes are different. Lynch made nine Pro Bowls and received two first-team All-Pro nods during his time in the NFL. He won Super Bowl XXXVII with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers and was named the Bart Starr and "Whizzer" White Man of the Year award winner back in 2006. He is in both the Broncos' and Buccaneers' ring of honor.

Lynch played for Mike Shanahan between 2004 and 2007 while with the Broncos. Shanahan's son, Kyle, is expected to be named the next head coach of the 49ers following the Super Bowl.

With general manager roles taking on so many forms of late, it would not be surprising to see Lynch stock the cupboard with more experienced personnel men and women, as well as some long-time scouts. Still, the move is shocking for many reasons. Does it put Kyle Shanahan in the best possible position to succeed? At least in the initial days and weeks after the official announcement, Lynch's presence in the Bay Area will present more questions than answers.

The fact that San Francisco kept this a secret for so long might have been the most surprising aspect of Lynch's hiring. The amount of homework that went into vetting Lynch and interviewing him had to be staggering, especially given the dire personnel situation the team finds itself in. The 49ers fired former general manager Trent Baalke back on Jan. 2 alongside head coach Chip Kelly.

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### ***York on Lynch hire: Confident in something different***

By Kevin Patra, NFL.com

The San Francisco 49ers are attempting to take a different path to turn around their crumbling franchise.

After announcing former 15-year NFL safety, and FOX analyst John Lynch would become the next GM, CEO Jed York discussed the seemingly left-field candidate that will presumably pair with next coach Kyle Shanahan -- expected to get hired after the Super Bowl.

"Nothing is guaranteed," York told The MMQB's Peter King. "But so many opportunities are missed in the NFL because people don't want to do something different. We're okay with that, because I am confident in Kyle and John. John has watched John Elway, and how he's built a team in Denver. As easy as it is to say he hasn't built a team yet -- I get that -- I talk to Kyle, and he says John is the most prepared of all the TV [people] he meets in the production meetings before games. We understand we'll have to live with growing pains, but I'm willing to do that because I believe the upside with both of them is so great."

York mentioned the Elway comparison, yet the Broncos' GM did have some tangential front office experience as CEO of the Colorado Crush -- scoff at it if you will, but Elway himself has said that time with the Arena Football League helped prepare him for his future job with the Broncos. Lynch enters the job having never worked in a front office.

The easier comparison for most fans will be Matt Millen. The FOX analyst was given the keys to the Lions and immediately plowed Mr. Ford's truck into the Detroit river.

The Lions went 31-81 with Millen as President and GM, from 2001 until he was fired in September 2008. Millen himself told William Clay Ford Sr. at the time "I'm not qualified," for the position. In his NFL Films "A Football Life" biography, the former linebacker lamented not sticking with his gut and instead was influenced into making draft choices that turned into busts -- taking Mike Williams over DeMarcus Ware stuck out.

The most obvious difference that could help Lynch avoid repeating Millen's ill-fated jump from TV booth to front office: Kyle Shanahan.

The presumptive coach -- expected to get a similar six-year deal -- will provide stability that Millen (who shuffled through four head coaches) never earned. Presumably, the partnership between Lynch and Shanahan will give the coach a lot of power in terms of personnel moves and the 53-man roster.

Good Morning Football's Peter Schrager noted Monday morning that Lynch could keep an experienced personnel man as an aid. Two potential names: Tom Gamble (already in San Francisco) and Mark Dominik (who worked with Lynch in Tampa).

The other key for Lynch to not repeat Millen's flop: finding a quarterback. Neither Colin Kaepernick nor Blaine Gabbert is the answer. Finding the future under center will be job numero uno when the team heads full-steam into the offseason. The success or failure of that quest will ultimately determine Lynch's career trajectory.

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### ***49ers make surprise hire of John Lynch as general manager***

By Josh Dubow, Associated Press

SANTA CLARA, Calif. (AP) — The San Francisco 49ers made a surprise hire to fill their general manager void Sunday, hiring former NFL safety and Fox television analyst John Lynch to replace Trent Baalke.

Lynch comes into the job with no front-office experience, having gone straight from the playing field to the broadcast booth. But after a lengthy search that included interviews with nine other publicly identified candidates, team CEO Jed York settled on Lynch.

ESPN first reported the deal, saying Lynch had gotten a six-year contract.

After playing for former Niners coach Bill Walsh in college at Stanford, Lynch went on to have a stellar 15-year career with Tampa Bay and Denver that included three All-Pro selections and one Super Bowl title with the Buccaneers. He's a finalist this year for the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

Since retiring in 2008, Lynch has been an analyst at Fox.

Now he will be tasked to rebuild a once-proud franchise that has fallen from NFC champions in 2012 to a 2-14 record this past season that matched the worst in franchise history. That led to the firing of Baalke and coach Chip Kelly as York set to overhaul the operation after the struggles the past few years.

The 49ers made three straight trips to the NFC title game from 2011-13 under coach Jim Harbaugh, but got rid of him after an 8-8 season in 2014, in part because of a rift with Baalke. Jim Tomsula lasted one year as coach and then Kelly was also fired after one season, leading to this current search.

York said he was open to hiring either the coach or general manager first. He said the primary goal in the search is finding a coach and general manager who can work well together.

All signs point to Atlanta offensive coordinator Kyle Shanahan getting the head coach job. He had a second interview with York this weekend and is the only remaining candidate. He can't sign a contract with San Francisco until after the Falcons play the Super Bowl next Sunday against New England.

Lynch played for Shanahan's father, Mike, for four seasons in Denver.

York also gave second interviews this weekend to the two other general manager candidates: Minnesota assistant GM George Paton and Arizona vice president of player personnel Terry McDonough.

But after meeting with them and Shanahan, York decided to go with Lynch for the job. Lynch played the final four years of his career in Denver, where Shanahan's father, Mike, was head coach.

Lynch will need to rebuild a depleted roster that has few building blocks and holes at nearly every position. The biggest void is at quarterback where Colin Kaepernick and Blaine Gabbert both struggled this past season and can leave as free agents in March.

San Francisco has the No. 2 overall draft pick and plenty of salary cap room to make additions.