

49ers Clips – March 5, 2017

Local Media

***49ers' Kyle Shanahan may find strength in Super Bowl 'heartbreak'***

By Eric Branch, San Francisco Chronicle

<http://www.sfchronicle.com/49ers/article/49ers-Kyle-Shanahan-may-find-strength-in-Super-10977573.php>

***49ers sign leading WR Kerley to three-year deal***

By Eric Branch, San Francisco Chronicle

<http://www.sfchronicle.com/49ers/article/49ers-sign-leading-WR-Kerley-to-three-year-deal-10977252.php>

***49ers retain WR Jeremy Kerley with three-year deal***

By Jerry McDonald, San Jose Mercury News

<http://www.mercurynews.com/2017/03/04/49ers-retain-wr-jeremy-kerley-with-three-year-deal/>

***49ers to sign WR Kerley to three-year extension***

By Matt Barrows, Sacramento Bee

<http://www.sacbee.com/sports/nfl/san-francisco-49ers/article136457188.html>

***49ERS' QUARTERBACK SEARCH HEATS UP AT NFL COMBINE***

By Matt Maiocco, CSNBayArea.com

<http://www.csnbayarea.com/49ers/49ers-quarterback-search-heats-nfl-combine>

***49ERS AGREE TO TERMS WITH JEREMY KERLEY ON THREE-YEAR DEAL***

By Matt Maiocco, CSNBayArea.com

<http://www.csnbayarea.com/49ers/49ers-agree-terms-jeremy-kerley-three-year-deal>

***Keeping Jeremy Kerley a sensible, low-cost move for 49ers***

By Nick Wagoner, ESPN.com

[http://www.espn.com/blog/san-francisco-49ers/post/\\_id/23830/keeping-jeremy-kerley-a-sensible-low-cost-move-for-49ers](http://www.espn.com/blog/san-francisco-49ers/post/_id/23830/keeping-jeremy-kerley-a-sensible-low-cost-move-for-49ers)

***49ers reach deal with wide receiver Jeremy Kerley***

By Darin Gantt, ProFootballTalk.com

<http://profootballtalk.nbcsports.com/2017/03/04/49ers-reach-deal-with-wide-receiver-jeremy-kerley/>

National Media

***Will Arizona Cardinals 1st-round pick 'redshirt' this year?***

By Kent Somers, The Arizona Republic

<http://www.azcentral.com/story/sports/nfl/cardinals/2017/03/04/cardinals-1st-round-pick-year-redshirt-too/98737984/>

***Brandon Marshall and Patriots have 'mutual interest,' report says***

By Connor Hughes, Newark Star-Ledger

[http://www.nj.com/jets/index.ssf/2017/03/brandon\\_marshall\\_patriots\\_have\\_mutual\\_interest\\_rep.html#inca\\_river\\_index](http://www.nj.com/jets/index.ssf/2017/03/brandon_marshall_patriots_have_mutual_interest_rep.html#inca_river_index)

***Jay Gruden first coach extended by Redskins owner Dan Snyder***

By John Keim, ESPN.com

[http://www.espn.com/nfl/story/\\_/id/18827226/washington-redskins-extend-head-coach-jay-gruden](http://www.espn.com/nfl/story/_/id/18827226/washington-redskins-extend-head-coach-jay-gruden)

***Jerry says no decision yet on Romo, but QB not going to Redskins***

By Clarence Hill, Fort Worth Star-Telegram

<http://www.star-telegram.com/sports/nfl/dallas-cowboys/cowboys-corner-blog/article136508483.html>

***Report: Raiders interested in tight end Martellus Bennett***

By Daniel Mano, Bay Area News Group

<http://www.eastbaytimes.com/2017/03/04/report-raiders-interested-in-tight-end-martellus-bennett/>

***Source: Jaguars shopping Sen'Derrick Marks, expected to release Davon House***

By Ryan O'Halloran, Florida Times-Union

<http://jacksonville.com/sports/jaguars/2017-03-04/source-jaguars-shopping-sen-derrick-marks-expected-release-davon-house>

## Local Clips – Full Version

### ***49ers' Kyle Shanahan may find strength in Super Bowl 'heartbreak'***

By Eric Branch, San Francisco Chronicle

Fifteen years after Kyle and Mandy Shanahan were bonded by her worst personal tragedy, they recently shared his lowest professional moment in a Houston hotel room.

Mandy was with Kyle and his parents, Mike and Peggy, after the Falcons squandered a 25-point lead in an overtime loss to the Patriots in Super Bowl LI. The meltdown immediately inspired national criticism of Kyle's decisions as offensive coordinator and, nearly two weeks after the game, Mandy spoke haltingly as she relived the fallout.

What is there to say when exultation is kicked aside for agony? Mandy tried to explain.

"Sorry, this is the hard part," she said, pausing a few moments. "We just sat in a dark room for an hour. You're speechless. (Kyle) was broken."

She continued. Kyle flew back to Atlanta with the team the next day and a similar scene played out when he greeted his children: Stella, 9, Carter, 7, and Lexi, 4.

"It was the first time that our kids have seen their dad crumble when he walked through the door," Mandy said. "That's hard to watch."

As those post-Super Bowl stories illustrate, Mandy has seen 49ers rookie head coach Kyle Shanahan through a different lens during his 13-year NFL career. To the public, Shanahan, 37, the NFL's second-youngest head coach, is known for precociousness and confidence, not vulnerability and sensitivity. Mandy knows better. Kyle was there for her long before they were married, when the results of a routine hospital visit would turn her family's world upside down.

At 28, Shanahan became the youngest offensive coordinator in NFL history in 2008. It began a run in which his offenses have ranked among the league's top 10 in six of his nine seasons. Last year, the Falcons scored the eighth-most points (540) in NFL history, and he was named the league's Assistant Coach of the Year.

Shanahan has a beautiful football mind. But there have been questions about whether his personality is suited for his new job, which requires more interpersonal skills than he needed as a game-planning guru.

Before he became the 49ers' general manager, John Lynch, in his final game as a Fox Sports analyst in January, said Shanahan could come across as "arrogant," although he went on to say it was a quality he wanted in a head coach: "I'd be hiring that guy in a second," he said. Falcons owner Arthur Blank said Shanahan focused on being a "better listener" in 2016, after his second season in Atlanta produced a stronger relationship with quarterback Matt Ryan, the NFL's MVP.

Asked about her husband's people skills, Mandy chuckles at the idea she's spent the past 11 years married to an X's-and-O's robot who has been programmed with extra swagger.

"You hear that he's hard to reach, or he's arrogant," she said. "Kyle's been one of the most sensitive people I've ever been around, in a good way. He's so in tune with people's emotions and how people feel. And that's what makes him such a gifted father and supporting husband."

Shanahan thinks he's been misread. He acknowledges he's exacting — and his demands of quarterbacks help explain his tensions with Donovan McNabb and Robert Griffin III in Washington. He's also direct in his appraisal of players, a few of whom have been offended by his candor. Finally, he believes his focus has been mistaken for ego.

“When I come into an office, I’m pretty locked in on my job,” Shanahan said. “I don’t just hang out there just to hang out. I do my work, and I get home to my family. I think that comes off to people that don’t know me like, ‘Man, that guy just walked by me and didn’t say, ‘Hi.’ Well, I promise I didn’t know that person just walked by me.”

For those surprised to learn of Shanahan’s sensitivity, Mandy can relate.

They went to Cherry Creek High in suburban Denver — Kyle was a year ahead in school — and they dated the summer after Mandy graduated. Their relationship didn’t last, partly because they attended different colleges, but they remained close friends.

However, they were drawn back together when Mandy was a junior at the University of Colorado and Kyle was at the University of Texas. Mandy’s mom, Nancy O’Donnell, a healthy and vibrant eighth-grade teacher, went in for an outpatient procedure to remove gall stones and left with a death sentence: Doctors found she had Stage 4 gall-bladder cancer.

Mandy thought she might careen out of control, but Kyle unexpectedly steadied her. After the diagnosis, Kyle wrote Mandy’s mom letters and often flew home on weekends for visits during which he took her for walks. He also became Mandy’s closest confidant. Nancy died at 57 on Jan. 31, 2002, less than three months after her diagnosis.

“He completely stunned me,” Mandy said. “Kyle, hands down, got me through that. After going through that with him, I couldn’t imagine being with anyone else. What was so alarming to me, being that young and going through something that devastating, I realized it’s not going to be the last sad thing that I go through.”

Shanahan wanted to support Mandy, her mom and her family. And, during the process, he was awed by her courage, strength and determination to save her mom in the face of impossible odds.

“There are very few times in life you get to see someone for who they genuinely are,” Shanahan said. “Mandy going through that — it was as bad as anything you could go through — it showed me who she was. There was no B.S. to her. I saw who she was. And that was the person I fell in love with.”

The experience altered Kyle’s career road map. He’d discovered another love besides football.

“I never planned on getting married at a young age,” Shanahan said. “But then I understood ‘OK, you don’t necessarily get to pick when you get married. You get married when you find the right person.’ And I found her. So I changed my plans.”

Shanahan has also embraced fatherhood. During the NFL season, Kyle and Mandy, who married in 2005, have forfeited their date night because Kyle has established a weekly, four-hour “driveway party” that begins each Friday afternoon. It’s the only extended block of time he has with his family during the season, and it’s spent riding bikes and shooting hoops with personalized music in the background. Kyle created 400-song playlists to mark the birth of each child, in addition to nieces and nephews who have termed him “Uncle Cool.”

“There’s really two things that are important to me,” Shanahan said. “And that’s my family, and that’s football. And that’s really all the things I think about.”

Shanahan has established the driveway bash, but he’s failed to start other traditions that would allow him to see his children more during the season.

“He will get home and he’ll be upset with me that I put the kids to bed,” Mandy said. “I’ll tell him, ‘Kyle, it’s 11 o’clock. She’s 4.’ And he’s like, ‘But I asked you to keep her up.’ I’ll explain: ‘I know. And it’s 11 o’clock. She’s 4.’”

Shanahan is flaky away from the office — he's adept at losing his wallet — but his gift for problem-solving can follow him home.

Lexi was recently upset when told her dad's new job meant they had to leave Georgia for California, her fourth state in her four years. But after Kyle beckoned her upstairs, Mandy found Lexi dumping some of the contents of her bedroom into a suitcase. Why? Kyle told her she could have a purple room, with a purple bed, in their California house.

"So Lexi's room is full of bags and suitcases now," Mandy said, laughing. "She's ready to roll."

Mandy terms Kyle a "goofball" at home. But Shanahan doesn't joke about football. Chris Simms, a quarterback at Texas, said teammates used to term Shanahan "Stressball," a nod to his desire to maximize his modest ability.

After two seasons at Duke, Shanahan, a wide receiver, transferred to Texas, and was a walk-on his first year. He had 14 catches for 127 yards in two seasons, while seeking training tips from the Longhorns' track-and-field coaches to improve his so-so speed.

"Kyle was always stressed about something," Simms said. "It was, 'I've got to get my workout in. I haven't done this wide receiver drill.' ... He was obsessive, just like he is now. That's the greatness of Kyle."

Simms and Shanahan bonded because of their similar backgrounds. Simms, the son of former NFL quarterback Phil Simms, and Shanahan majored in football long before college.

Kyle's professor was his father, Mike, who has the 13th-most wins (170) in NFL history and is one of six head coaches to win back-to-back Super Bowls. Shanahan was the offensive coordinator of the 1994 49ers, the last team in franchise history to win a Super Bowl. He left the Bay Area in 1995 to begin a 14-season run as the Broncos' head coach.

Kyle, who worked under his dad in Washington from 2010-13, grew up as the ball boy for the 49ers and Broncos. As a junior employee, of sorts, he learned from coaches and players on elite teams. He attended coaches' and draft meetings, caught passes from John Elway and learned route running from Pro Bowl wideouts such as John Taylor and Ed McCaffrey.

"Not meaning to toot our own horn," Simms said, "but I think compared to the normal college kid, we had a better idea of the bigger picture of football."

Shanahan's background helps explain his confidence. And his upbringing gave then-Texans head coach Gary Kubiak the confidence to hire him as a 26-year-old wide receivers coach in 2006. Two years later, Kubiak made Shanahan his offensive coordinator at a historically young age, even as Texans owner Bob McNair expressed concerns about his youth.

"From a football-knowledge standpoint," Kubiak said, "he was way ahead."

Kubiak had spent 15 seasons with Mike Shanahan as a quarterback and coach. During that time, Kyle babysat Kubiak's three sons — once hanging one from the doorknob by his underwear — and impressed Kubiak with his intellect and passion. Kubiak also liked that he wasn't a mini-Mike: He had ideas that veered from those of his father.

"He's always been his own person and had his own mind-set as far as, 'OK, I want to do this this way.' He was always strong in his beliefs," said Kubiak, who won a Super Bowl with the Broncos in 2015. "He's just very confident. And his dad was the same way. Show me a good football coach and they've got a swagger about them."

Shanahan might share a swagger with others, but what he does before games suggests he's uniquely obsessive.

It takes Mandy, clearly amused, several minutes to detail her husband's pre-kickoff routine, which always begins exactly four hours before kickoff and never deviates.

The process starts with a self-deprecating text to his wife. A typical message: "Things are about to get weird."

First, Shanahan must find a solitary place to examine his game plan, which can be challenging on the road. Shanahan has studied X's-and-O's in janitors' closets and shower stalls, while using a bench, box or Gatorade cooler as a desk. During his quiet time, he must have four red pens and just-the-right temperature coffee. Then, before he goes onto the field, he holds a good-luck charm his son, Carter, gives him during the week and looks at a picture of his three children. His grand finale? The yoga advocate stands on his head for 45 seconds in the locker room to clear his mind and reduce stress.

No wonder Mandy brightened during a recent tour of Levi's Stadium when she saw there was an office for the head coach.

"I was thinking, 'This is perfect,'" Mandy said. "No more janitor's closets. He really needs his space. And no one will have to see him stand on his head."

Before the Super Bowl, Shanahan gripped a plastic tiger Carter gave him, but the toy provided good luck for only about 2½ quarters. The rest of the game, which left her husband shattered, is still difficult to discuss for Mandy.

"Ultimately, that loss is going to make Kyle an even better coach," she said. "But it's still too new to try to pull anything out of it other than just heartbreak."

Indeed, she knows from experience that pain can, eventually, reveal its purpose.

Once, in the midst of enduring a far greater loss, she found a partner to experience happiness, and sad things, together.

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#### ***49ers sign leading WR Kerley to three-year deal***

By Eric Branch, San Francisco Chronicle

INDIANAPOLIS - Two days after general manager John Lynch indicated the 49ers would probably sign some of their players before the start of free agency, they did just that.

The 49ers agreed to terms with wide receiver Jeremy Kerley, a pending free agent, the team announced. Kerley will sign a three-year extension worth \$10.5 million, ESPN reported.

Kerley, 28, was one of the few bright spots during last year's 2-14 season. After wideout Bruce Ellington sustained a season-ending hamstring injury, Kerley was acquired in a trade with the Lions in late August and led the team with a career-high 64 catches, 667 yards and three touchdowns.

"As we evaluated the roster, his production on the field really impressed us and we believe he is a great fit for our scheme," general manager John Lynch said. "As we learned more and more about him, it became obvious his teammates have a great deal of respect for Jeremy as well."

From 2014-15, Kerley combined for just 54 catches and 561 yards with the Jets. His modest production explains why the 49ers were able to acquire him for guard Brandon Thomas, who spent the season on Detroit's practice squad.

The 49ers figure to make upgrading their wide receiver corps a priority this offseason. Torrey Smith, who was signed to a five-year, \$40 million deal in 2015, has just 53 catches during his two-season tenure. Other wideouts on the roster include Chris Harper, Aaron Burbridge, DeAndre Smelter and Eric Rogers. Quinton Patton and Rod Streater are scheduled to be free agents.

This week, head coach Kyle Shanahan was asked if any of the 49ers' receivers had stood out when he reviewed last year's film.

"No one in particular," Shanahan said. "I feel we've got a bunch of good players that we feel we can compete with and we know we've got to add some too. We're going to add as many as we can to help our roster and we also want to add some competition."

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***49ers retain WR Jeremy Kerley with three-year deal***

By Jerry McDonald, San Jose Mercury News

SANTA CLARA — Wide receiver Jeremy Kerley will be included in the 49ers plans, signing a three-year contract Saturday, the club announced.

Kerley, 27, is coming off a career-best season in which he caught a team-leading 64 passes for 667 yards and three touchdowns in Chip Kelly's offense.

The contract, according to ESPN's original report, is worth \$10.5 million.

From 2011 through 2015, Kerley played for the New York Jets after being a fifth-round draft pick out of Texas Christian.

Kerley was released by the Jets nearly a year ago and signed a one-year deal with the Detroit Lions, but was traded to the 49ers last August in exchange for guard Brandon Thomas.

In six NFL seasons, Kerley has 246 receptions for 2,892 yards and 12 touchdowns.

Kerley, Quinton Patton and Rod Streater were all scheduled for unrestricted free agency.

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***49ers to sign WR Kerley to three-year extension***

By Matt Barrows, Sacramento Bee

INDIANAPOLIS -- The 49ers' leading receiver from 2016 will get a chance to repeat that feat this season.

The team and Jeremy Kerley on Saturday agreed on a three-year contract, just five days before Kerley was scheduled to become a free agent. According to ESPN, the deal is worth \$10.5 million.

"As we evaluated the roster, his production on the field really impressed us and we believe he is a great fit for our scheme," general manager John Lynch said in a statement. "As we learned more and more about him, it became obvious his teammates have a great deal of respect for Jeremy as well. He is a true pro who is an asset to this team on offense, special teams and in the locker room."

Kerley, 28, was a late addition to the 49ers roster last season after the team acquired him in an Aug. 29 trade with the Detroit Lions for offensive lineman Brandon Thomas.

The late start, however, didn't seem to affect Kerley's rapport with quarterback Blaine Gabbert and later Colin Kaepernick. Working from the slot-receiver position, he finished with 64 receptions for 667 yards, both of which led the 49ers.

Kerley's yardage total, however, ranked 64th among NFL pass catchers while the 49ers finished last in the league in passing offense.

The 49ers are expected to add several receivers in the offseason. New coach Kyle Shanahan on Wednesday was lukewarm in his praise of the group he inherits.

"No one in particular," he said when asked who stands out. "I feel we've got a bunch of good players we feel we can compete with, and we know we need to add some, too. We're going to add as many as we can to help our roster."

That likely will start in free agency.

The 49ers have been linked to the Bears' Alshon Jeffrey, while Cleveland's Terrelle Pryor or Washington's Pierre Garcon -- who has a background with Shanahan -- also make sense.

The two top receivers in the draft, Clemson's Mike Williams and Western Michigan's Corey Davis, did not run at the combine but said they will do so at their pro days. Another receiver, Washington's John Ross, ran the fastest 40-yard dash ever recorded at the NFL Combine, one clocked at 4.22 seconds.

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#### **49ERS' QUARTERBACK SEARCH HEATS UP AT NFL COMBINE**

By Matt Maiocco, CSNBayArea.com

INDIANAPOLIS – The 49ers met Friday night with North Carolina quarterback Mitchell Trubisky as part of the organization's quest to eventually fill their depth chart.

The 49ers also had scheduled 15-minute formal interviews this week with Clemson's Deshaun Watson, Notre Dame's DeShone Kizer and Patrick Mahomes of Texas Tech.

The opinions of the quarterbacks appear to span all ranges, according to scouts and coaches at the NFL Scouting Combine. There was some buzz gaining momentum that Trubisky could be in serious consideration for the Cleveland Browns and 49ers with the top two picks in the draft.

One of the top concerns with Trubisky is his lack of experience. He was a starter for just one season. Yet, one NFC scout told CSNBayArea.com that he showed he can make all the throws and stand fearlessly in the pocket.

When it comes to throwing the ball, Trubisky had ample opportunity to show what he can do. Trubisky started 13 games – all in his final season – and completed 386 of 572 pass attempts for 4,762 yards with 41 touchdowns and 10 interceptions.

In comparison, Tom Brady completed 395 of 638 passes for 4,773 yards with 30 touchdowns and 17 interceptions in his four-year career at Michigan from 1996 to '99.

"They're not even really grilling me on that really, they're just trying to get to know me and pick my brain and see how well that I know football, and what kind of system I ran at North Carolina," Trubisky said. "I don't think that's a big concern from the teams that I've talked to so far. They could tell I know the game very well. They're impressed with my tape and I'm just trying to show them what kind of person I am and just stay confident and get ready for the rest of this process.

"I've studied the game. I'm a student of the game and I've seen a lot of defenses, and I think that's going to help me. And just my abilities, I feel like I'm in a really good spot right now to take my game to the next level, and I feel really confident."



General manager John Lynch said Thursday that Kizer “blew the doors off” of his interview with the 49ers the previous night. But his final season did not go as planned, with the Fighting Irish staggering to a 4-8 record.

Kizer completed just 58.7 percent of his pass attempts with 26 touchdowns and nine interceptions.

“I’m pretty comfortable in opening up and expressing who I am as a guy and how I plan on going about this process,” Kizer said. “They’ve had a lot of questions about last season and how a guy who has the size and has the arm strength goes and becomes 4-8. I responded in the way I thought was the honest truth. From what I understand, they (the 49ers) were pretty impressed with that.”

Watson is the most decorated of the quarterback prospects after playing on the big stage and leading Clemson to a win in the national championship game over Alabama.

Watson completed 67.4 percent of his passes throughout his three-year career. But while throwing 90 touchdown passes the past two seasons, Watson was also intercepted an alarming 30 times over that stretch.

“I understand that was going to come and it happens,” Watson said of interceptions. “It’s something that they obviously are going to poke holes. If I were in their shoes, I would poke holes, too.”

“I take full responsibility in all of that. Sometimes you just have bad luck. Sometimes the defense makes a good play. Sometimes I make a bad throw. One, two or three, maybe it was a bad decision, but it’s a learning lesson. I’ve learned from those mistakes and I’ve corrected those and [I’m] going to move on from it.”

“The biggest question that I’ve heard from different coaches was if I can change a protection, run the offense and recognize defensive coverages. Every team I went to asked me those questions. I handled it well, answered the questions and they were very impressed. They know that I’m not just some other quarterback that’s running a spread offense. That [I’m a] guy that can operate, make good decisions and recognize what the defense is doing and be successful doing it.”

After Colin Kaepernick officially opted out of his contract on Friday, the 49ers have no quarterback on the roster under contract for the upcoming season. While there’s a lot of work that needs to be done, it’s not completely a bad thing, Lynch said.

“That also is somewhat liberating in that you can create this thing in that position that is so critical in the way that you want it,” Lynch said.

While the quarterbacks took center stage at the combine, Ian Rapoport of the NFL Network reported of a potential three-way trade in which the 49ers could end up with Kirk Cousins. In such a scenario, Washington would acquire Tony Romo and Dallas would collect draft picks.

Pro Football Talk reported sources with direct knowledge of the situation “scoffed” at the idea, with one source describing the report as “conjecture.”

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#### **49ERS AGREE TO TERMS WITH JEREMY KERLEY ON THREE-YEAR DEAL**

By Matt Maiocco, CSNBayArea.com

The San Francisco 49ers have confirmed they have come to a contract agreement with wide receiver Jeremy Kerley.

The new contract is for three years and a reported \$10.5 million.

Matt Maiocco ✓ @MaioccoCSN

The #49ers confirm three-year contract agreement with WR Jeremy Kerley.

Kerley was set to become an unrestricted free agent on Thursday.

"We are very excited to be able to keep a player and teammate like Jeremy in red and gold," 49ers general manager John Lynch said in a statement. "As we evaluated the roster, his production on the field really impressed us and we believe he is a great fit for our scheme. As we learned more and more about him, it became obvious his teammates have a great deal of respect for Jeremy as well. He is a true pro who is an asset to this team on offense, special teams and in the locker room."

Kerley enjoyed one of his best seasons last year with the 49ers. His 64 catches were a career best and led all San Francisco receivers. Kerley's 667 receiving yards were the second most he's ever posted and tops on the team as well. He also caught three touchdowns -- good for second best on the team.

He also returned 21 punts for 158 yards as the team's primary punt returner.

Kerley was acquired by the 49ers in a trade with the Detroit Lions on August 29, 2016.

Kerley was originally selected in the fifth round (153rd overall) of the 2011 NFL Draft by the New York Jets. In five seasons with the Jets (2011-15), he played in 74 games (24 starts) and registered 182 receptions for 2,225 yards (12.2 average) and nine touchdowns. He led the Jets in total receptions and receiving yards during his time with the team. Kerley has also returned 134 punts for 1,250 yards and one touchdown during his career.

In 2015, he registered a career-high 411 punt return yards, which ranked second in the NFL (RB Darren Sproles, Phi. – 446). Kerley signed with the Lions on March 21, 2016 following his release from the Jets on March 9, 2016.

A 27-year-old native of Hutto, TX, Kerley appeared in 50 games (21 starts) at Texas Christian University. He finished his career with 120 receptions for 1,299 yards and 12 touchdowns as well as 63 rushing attempts for 306 yards and eight touchdowns. He also returned 94 punts for 1,299 yards (13.8 average) and two touchdowns, and 37 kickoff returns for 1,006 (27.2 average). As a senior in 2010, he earned First-Team All-Mountain West Conference honors as a returner and Second-Team honors as a wide receiver, in addition to being named MWC Special Teams Player of the Year.

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### ***Keeping Jeremy Kerley a sensible, low-cost move for 49ers***

By Nick Wagoner, ESPN.com

SANTA CLARA, Calif. -- The San Francisco 49ers and wide receiver Jeremy Kerley are quickly developing a tradition of completing transactions just before some important deadlines.

The Niners traded for Kerley in late August, just before the start of the regular season as a replacement for slot receiver Bruce Ellington, who suffered a season-ending hamstring injury. Kerley went on to become the team's most productive receiver in 2016.

On Saturday, less than a week before the start of free agency, the Niners and Kerley came to an agreement to keep him in San Francisco. The team confirmed that Kerley agreed to a three-year contract after ESPN's Adam Scheffer and Adam Caplan reported Kerley had a deal worth \$10.5 million.

Even with a new regime in place in coach Kyle Shanahan and general manager John Lynch, Kerley did enough to earn an extended stay in the Bay Area. It showed on the tape when he was evaluated.

"We are very excited to be able to keep a player and teammate like Jeremy in red and gold," Lynch said. "As we evaluated the roster, his production on the field really impressed us and we believe he is a great fit for our scheme. As we learned more and more about him, it became obvious his teammates have a great deal of respect for Jeremy as well. He is a true pro who is an asset to this team on offense, special teams and in the locker room."

Kerley initially arrived in San Francisco after a trade with the Detroit Lions on Aug. 29 of last year. Then-coach Chip Kelly promptly threw him into the mix as the slot receiver, and Kerley impressed with his ability to adapt quickly. He went on to post a career-high 64 receptions for 667 yards and three touchdowns while also serving as the primary punt returner.

With Kerley in the fold, the Niners can at least enter free agency with the knowledge that they have a capable slot receiver who can offer some production and veteran guidance to a young group. At what appears to be a modest price, keeping Kerley around is a logical move for a team that still must add some help at wideout, especially on the outside.

As it stands, the 49ers have Kerley, Torrey Smith, Ellington, Chris Harper, Aaron Burbridge, Eric Rogers and DeAndre Smelter under contract for 2017. Quinton Patton, who was a starter last year, and Rod Streater are scheduled for free agency.

At this week's scouting combine in Indianapolis, Shanahan made it clear that upgrading at receiver will be a priority this offseason.

"I feel we've got a bunch of good players that we feel we can compete with, and we know we've got to add some too," Shanahan said. "We're going to add as many as we can to help our roster, and we also want to add some competition."

Even after re-signing Kerley, the Niners look to have around \$90 million in salary cap space as they head toward free agency. All of which is to say that while the Niners have signed one receiver already this offseason, it's a safe bet he won't be the last.

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### ***49ers reach deal with wide receiver Jeremy Kerley***

By Darin Gantt, ProFootballTalk.com

The 49ers don't have any quarterbacks, but they have another guy for one to throw to.

According to Adam Caplan and Adam Schefter of ESPN, the 49ers have agreed to a three-year, \$10.5 million contract with wide receiver Jeremy Kerley, keeping him off the free agent market.

Kerley was moderately productive last year, catching 64 passes for 667 yards and three touchdowns. Of course, that may be proof that everything's relative, as they had one of the worst passing games in the NFL last season.

The 28-year-old Kerley spent his first five years with the Jets.