

TRANSCRIPTIONS



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Press Conference – October 16, 2019
San Francisco 49ers
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What jumps out to you about Washington's defense?

"They're an aggressive group, they fly around, very quick to the ball, D-Line is very impressive up front, some big buys that can push the pocket. So, it'll be a good test for us."

After the game on Sunday, TE George Kittle made it a point to bring back the five-interception day from training camp and say "Well maybe it's because Jimmy was throwing against our defense." Aside from the pass rush, in your experience, was the secondary making more complicated pass coverage schemes this year? Was it tougher to go against them for that?

"Nothing crazy complicated. It was just that everything was tight. There was no easy throws like in the past where you could have an easy one outside or something like that. Everything was contested, guys were in tight coverage, man-to-man, zone whatever it was, everyone was getting matched across the board. That, tied in with a good pass rush, it makes it tough on a quarterback."

With a 5-0 record, did you think that practice was behind you, that it wouldn't be brought up again?

"I thought so, yeah, but George always has a way of humbling you I guess."

How has your chemistry been with the offensive line? How has that grown?

"It's been really good, especially O-Line, it's one of those positions that you are going to mix and match groups with injuries or whatever it may be. Like I said last week, I thought the two rookies did a great job stepping in and filling their roles. Those guys are just battling up front. What they do in the run game and pass game is so impressive."

Head coach Kyle Shanahan alluded to a third-down play, the third, third-down play in the series and said that you kind of got it and everything kind of clicked. Do you remember that?

"Yeah, we converted it I'm pretty sure, right? To George? Yeah, things started rolling after that. We got into a pretty good rhythm. I think as an offense that's a big part of it. When the run game is working and you get to convert the third downs and keep the runs going, I think it makes it harder on the defense."

Generally, you get rid of the ball pretty quickly. How much of that is a credit to the game playing, what Kyle Shanahan does, and how easy is it for you to decide where you're going based on what you're seeing before the snap?

"Well, you try to have a picture pre-snap, but all good defenses in the NFL are going to disguise and rotate late. You just have to play the play, but our coaches do a great job at not only giving us good plays, but explaining it to the point where you know what you're looking for, you know what the read is and you can play fast that way."

Do you get a sense that your wide receivers are really embracing the role in the run game as blockers and there will be a time where you'll really have to go for them? Can that kind of be something that sets the stage for them excelling in the passing game too?

"Yeah. They're a smart group so they know if they block well in the run game it's going to set up the play passes and things like that down the field. When you have a group of receivers that are willing to do that and they are able to make the plays on the backend and in the play passes, that makes for a dangerous combination. You've got to tip your hat to them. It's not easy for a receiver to go into the box and we had some receivers on D-Ends at times. It was an impressive week for those guys."

Did WR Dante Pettis show you much? He had a drop in that game Monday night, but then he came back and you hit him on a couple pretty big plays? What has he shown you from that standpoint?

"Dante's going to show up when he gets his chances. He's been doing it in practice consistently throughout the whole season and it's starting to transfer over to the game. And so, that's always a good thing when you can go out there and do it on Sundays. Like I said before tough, he's a hard worker, he puts in the time and he's always going to be there for you."

I know the center-quarterback exchange, especially in this offense, is really important. Now that C/G Weston Richburg has five healthy games under his belt, how has that been for you?

"It's been awesome. Since day one Wes had a good communication, good relationship and everything. It makes it easy when you've got a guy who can control the pass, run, whatever it is, MIKE points, and just get you in the right play."

This will be your sixth straight start. You actually haven't done that yet in your career. Can you tell a difference just in terms of getting that longer stretch in terms of getting into a rhythm and finding yourself?

"Yeah. I mean, it's obviously a good thing. Things are trending in the right direction. I think as an offense you try to assess yourself week-to-week after the game, what you did good, what you did bad and try to improve those things going forward and not really have any weaknesses. So, that's what we're trying to do."

What do you find when you review yourself and look at the tape and you go over a little bit of a longer stretch of games? Are you seeing that, "Oh, hey I picked up on this that maybe I didn't in previous weeks?"

“Yeah, you try to. We only have about a day or so to digest that game and take what you can out of it. The Bye Week, we tried to assess ourselves a little bit, but we only had a couple of games under our belts at that point. Yeah, I mean, it’s that time of year. It’s cram as much as you can as fast as you can.”

George Kittle after the game the other day said yards after his catch are his favorite thing about the job. How much of an impact does that have on your offense and why do you think he’s so good at that?

“I think he’s good at it because of his mindset and his athletic ability, obviously. He just has the mindset of if one guy’s in front of him, he’s already looking at the next guy to make him miss and what he’s going to do in that situation. I think all of our guys, though, have the right mindset, too. They don’t want to run out of bounds, they want to get those extra couple of yards. As a tight end, he’s got to love that stuff. Just give him the ball in space and let him go be special.”

Given his blocking in the run game, do you think he’s the best all-around tight end?

“I do, yeah. He just does so much for our offense, like you said, in the run game, pass game, even if he’s a distraction on a play. He’s willing to do whatever you ask him to and for a guy of that talent to do that, it’s impressive.”

This will be your 16th start for you career, a full year finally at start, kind of. What does that mean to you?

“Not much. Things are moving in the right direction. I don’t know, I haven’t put much thought into that like you guys. It means things are going good, I guess.”

Is it a point of pride to look around and say, okay, we have inexperienced receivers, we have a bunch of undrafted running backs, we have two first-year guys at tackle and the offense is still efficient?

“Yeah. I mean, we never really try to give ourselves any excuse. We’re going to go out there, whoever we have, go line up and go produce. As an offense, it’s your job to go put points on the board, so that’s what we’re trying to do.”

OL Daniel Brunskill gave a ton of credit to the scout team for helping you prepare every week. How important are they when you have a different defense to face each week?

“Oh, it’s huge. Just the different looks they give us up front, secondary, disguises, all that stuff. Those guys don’t get enough credit for it. I did my fair share of scout team stuff with the Patriots, but it’s so important to get the good look in and know what you’re going into the game expecting.”

How much did DL Kevin Givens look like Los Angeles Rams DT Aaron Donald out there?

“He had a couple good ones. I mean, they put him in a blue jersey and he just, I mean, to imitate Aaron Donald, it’s tough, a tough act to follow, but he did a great job of it.”

Has Kyle Shanahan grown or evolved at all as a head coach since 2017 or is he the same exact guy he was when you got here?

"I think we're all growing, evolving, just as the years go on, as the team goes on, whatever it is. What Kyle does is he's so consistent day in and day out with his mindset. He's going to come in and work harder than anyone in the building and it trickles down to the coaches then to the players. When you have a guy at the head like that, it makes everything easier."

How have you grown and evolved?

"This year? Well, obviously with the knee, that getting healthier and healthier is always a good thing. Just I think playing that complementary football with the entire team, offense, defense, special teams, helping each other out. If one makes a big play, how do we answer after that and vice versa. When you've got things like that going, it's always good."

On George's biggest gain, the one where he ran over all those guys, I noticed you took a pretty big hit. Did you have to get rid of that early or was that supposed to be a deeper out but because the pressure was there you kind of adapted on the fly?

"Yeah, I threw it a little early. George felt the space though, so he snapped it off right at the right time. Got the ball to him and he took care of the rest. Yeah, the play passes are a little weird like that when you get pressured and stuff."

The Redskins are 1-5 and everyone expects you to win by 30 points. How do you guard against that permeating in the locker room?

"You know, they are still an NFL team. They've got good players on both sides of the ball, good coaches that are going to game plan for us and they're coming off their first win. Obviously, they have a little bit of juice with them and everything, so it will be a good test for us on Sunday though, a long trip out there and just have to go handle business out there."

Kyle said he was pleased but never satisfied with your decision making and execution. What do you think needs to happen to get him to a satisfaction level or is that even a marker that is attainable?

"It's attainable. It's a tough one, though. But, you've got to love that, having a coach that is going to push you like that, challenge you, and I think just executing down in and down out and being consistent finishing in the red zone, cutting down turnovers, all those things tied together I think will help push Kyle towards his satisfaction."

There was a clip from the game where Kittle actually screamed your name on the field. Did you hear him?

"Which play? Sometimes you actually hear that stuff. I might have, I don't know. Yeah, sometimes that stuff happens though and you just hear it. I don't know, it's just a reaction I guess."

How would you describe T Justin Skule and Brunskill's personalities? How they kind of fit in on the offensive line?

“They are both pretty quiet. They will talk when they are in the conversation or something like that. On the field they’re different though. It’s so cool, that dog that comes out in them. Screaming at people, in a good way, but it’s just that competitiveness comes out in them. You really don’t see that until you get in the huddle or on the field with them. It’s pretty cool.”

Do you sense any extra juice from Kyle Shanahan going into this week given his history with Washington?

“Kyle’s got juice every week. He really does. He comes in ready to roll Wednesday morning. He gets to team meeting and gets the team ready to roll.”

You mentioned your knee getting healthier as the year goes on. You had a couple key conversions on your legs with the touchdown, first down. Do you see that kind of becoming more of a part of your game as the season wears on?

“If it’s needed, I guess. It’s not something that we’re looking to major in or anything like that, but I think when the time is right and there’s an opportunity, you’ve got to pick your spots with that.”

You were asked about a couple linemen personalities. How would you describe Kittle’s personality? I’m guessing quiet is not part of that.

“Yeah, quiet doesn’t go with George very often, but he’s the same guy every day. He’s exactly what you guys see, that’s what he is in the locker room with us. High energy guy, he’s going to bring it every day and you’ve got to appreciate a guy like that.”