

TRANSCRIPTIONS



**Head Coach Kyle Shanahan
Press Conference – October 3, 2019
San Francisco 49ers**

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Opening comments:

“For practice today; [DL Dee] Ford, [T Joe] Staley and [CB Ahkello] Witherspoon will be out. And as you guys know, we moved [WR Jalen] Hurd and [WR Jason] Verrett to IR.”

What was Verrett’s situation?

“You guys all know his history and how tough he’s had it coming back. He had an injury in training camp, a different one, that didn’t allow him to work for the last couple weeks of training camp. We’ve been trying to ease him back in these last three weeks. After the Pittsburgh game his knee just flared up over the week and coming back from Bye doctors’ advice was that he needed to rest it a lot longer. And so, we’re trying to do the best thing for him because he’s not ready to go so we’re trying to get him on IR.”

In terms of Hurd, does he just have to rest or how does he get better?

“It’s the same thing. It’s not the same thing as that, but it’s the same thing that he’s just got to rest. Anytime you have a stress fracture in your back, that was the hard thing with it. There are guys that have come back in three weeks and there are guys who it takes 10 weeks and there’s just as good of a chance to come back in three weeks as there is 10 weeks. We took that chance. It hasn’t been healing the way we wanted it to. The pain is still there, so we’ve got to give him at least another month. That’s the reason why we’ve got to put him on IR.”

Are both of those guys candidates for short-term IR or are those spots ticketed for-?

“No, both of them are candidates, definitely.”

Obviously, you and general manager John Lynch acknowledged when you signed Verrett that it was a gamble based on his history. Do you think this is a gamble that hasn’t worked out?

“It definitely hasn’t so far. We definitely like the player and the person we gambled on. He’s done everything he can to get back. The most unfortunate thing for him was, when you have that much football off because of some pretty serious injuries and then you get a pretty bad ankle sprain in your fourth or fifth day of practice, he missed all of it again and then he’s trying to come back from his normal stuff, which he had the chance to, but he had a little bit of a setback from it and that just put him behind the eight ball too much.

It's a guy that we all have seen his talent and if you've been around the guy, you definitely believe in the guy. He just didn't get the time he needed, especially with that setback in training camp and his knee reacting the way it did versus Pittsburgh."

Where's Ford? I know the hope was with the Bye Week things will clear up. Is it not quite clear up there?

"I mean, it's definitely improving, but we're not going to put him out there today and we'll see day-to-day with that. Really hoping to have him Monday night, but he'll be questionable all week."

Is it something with him that he could miss a practice or two each week throughout the season?

"Yeah, it definitely is something. We hope that goes away. The stuff that we've done for him and stuff we've got to ease him back into it, which we are doing. Hopefully he'll get out there, possibly tomorrow, more likely on Friday, or whatever day we're on because we have a Monday night game I do not know what day it is."

How about RB Tevin Coleman?

"Tevin's good to go. He'll be out there practicing today. We'll take a look at practice."

Is there any hesitation about putting him in this game knowing that you guys have the Rams so close on a short week?

"There always is, definitely. That's why the three days of evaluation will be big with him and the three other guys. If Tevin's 100-percent and good to do, he's a guy we would never keep out, but it's also going to be a short week getting ready for the Rams too so we take all of that into account."

You have a lot of guys that you are carrying that were not on IR but were not available. Was it built up that you had to get some guys to IR to get healthy bodies just to make sure you can practice fully?

"Not totally. I knew kind of in the middle of training camp that, especially offensively, we were kind of waiting until Week 4. We knew we had to get through some tough times waiting for [WR] Trent [Taylor] and Jalen and they just didn't recover the way it did. We waited this out, we got to it and it hasn't gotten better so we do have to move on for now. They have the chance to return. Hopefully that will work out, but that's why we made the move today bringing in [WR] Jordan Matthews."

What do you see from the Browns offense?

"They've got a lot of good players. They've got a good scheme. They mix it up a ton with a lot of the stuff they do. With all the RPOs and things like that, they've got a lot of receivers and backs who you get the ball in their hands and they can take it the distance. It's a challenge."

Will you have to use some specialty coverages to help CB Emmanuel Moseley against Cleveland Browns WR Odell Beckham Jr. or do you trust him to execute your base defense?

“Yeah we trust him a lot. I’m excited to see E-Man play. He’s done a good job every time he’s got in there. I know he’ll be up for the challenge this week going against one of the better receivers in the league in Odell and one of the better receivers in the league in [Cleveland Browns WR] Jarvis [Landry]. It obviously will be a challenge for him. It will be a challenge for [CB Richard Sherman] Sherm also. It’s a challenge for everyone in this league so we’ll see.”

What’s DB Jimmie Ward’s status and do you have to factor in the idea of possibly making two changes in the secondary this week after the secondary mostly played well or was that decision with Ward independent at what’s going on at cornerback?

“Jimmie’s always the wild card because Jimmie can help us at really every single position except for maybe D-Line, but I’m sure he’d find a way to do that. He’s healthier now than he has been. He’s been healthy, but his cast has gotten smaller so it’s a lot easier for him to go this week. He’s got the possibility to play at any spot. We’ll see how practice goes and where we want to put him.”

In terms of defending Cleveland Browns DE Myles Garrett and Cleveland Browns DE Olivier Vernon, you have T Justin Skule there. How much more do you have to scheme different plays instead of having T Joe Staley there in terms of how you’re designing?

“I mean, it’s in your mind on every play. When you’re talking about the type of rushers you’re mentioning, it doesn’t matter. They are going to get guys no matter who it is if you become one dimensional or give them too many opportunities. So, you’ve got to help out anybody in this situation, but especially a rookie in his second game. It’ll be more of a challenge. Everyone will be watching, but he’s a guy who as I’ve said doesn’t change at all. He won’t be out there doing it on his own.”

I’m assuming you saw and examined Garrett in the 2017 Draft. Is what you’re seeing now kind of what you expected?

“Yes. Yeah, he’s a special player just from a talent standpoint and he’s getting better at football every single day. I watched him a lot in college, watched him a little bit last year and then watched him a ton over the last week. He’s exactly what I think everyone thought he was going to be.”

What distinguishes himself from the others?

“Just to have that size and fluidity and how he can move with his hips and arms. I think he’d be very good at any sport he’d want to play. When you have the athletic ability to play basketball, but you have the physicality to play football, it’s guys who are just tough guys to block.”

Going back to Justin, I’m sure you heard that Joe invited him back to his house to help him study and whatnot. What does that say about Joe just from a leadership standpoint helping young guys fill in for him while he’s out?

“Joe’s been great. Joe loves football. He’s one of the guys, everyone enjoys him. But. Joe also really enjoys football. It kills him that he’s not in, but he tries every way in all the

meetings, being out there at practice, bringing Skule over to try and help him out, he's extremely involved because he enjoys it and it's important to him to help."

We will probably make a lot about this game being a statement game, but just being on the national stage with the chance to be 4-0 for the first time in a really long time, is that something you even address with the team at all leading up to it?

"No, I don't. I feel like there's one game left in the season and I know that's very cliché talk, but that's very important that you get your mind to that. That's something that, if you don't, you usually get humbled very fast. All our eyes are on Cleveland. We know we're going against a very good team. It's always more fun to play on Monday night because you know everyone is watching and guys get excited for that. That's where it is different, but you also have got to tell them besides that it doesn't mean anything. If you start making stuff up because of the day it's on and everything, you're not going to do the stuff that you have to do to win. It's stuff that you don't want to talk about, but you need to address human nature and make sure guys know and recognize when they're going in that direction and try to bring them back in."

There was a report that you are going to re-sign Jordan Matthews, is that accurate?

"Yes."

Will he be in today at practice?

"Yeah, he'll be at practice."

Is that due to issues with the other slot receivers, Hurd and Taylor?

"Yeah, it's that we only have five receivers on our roster right now. We IRed two, we had seven and we've been going with five, but we've been waiting for those two. Now that both of those are on IR, to me you always want at least six, you'd like to always have six receivers up because you'll usually take five in a gameday. Jordan was a guy who was extremely close to making our team and we knew if those guys didn't come back he'd be the next man up."

Last week you said you weren't pleased with the way the team came off the Bye Week last year so you gave a couple extra practices. Do you like the effect that those have had?

"Yeah, I did. No matter what your mindset is, if you take a week off from shooting free throws and you're an NBA player, you're not going to be able to come back and shoot free throws very well. It's the same in our sport. It's good that we got in just a few more. It wasn't hard practices or anything, but just throwing the ball, coming out of the huddle, things like that. And I think our guys are a lot more mature with it too. It's earlier in the year which is easier, but you can always tell the vibe when they come back for that Monday practice. Usually it takes a couple practices to get them going again and our guys weren't like that. They were loud right away and moving right away and it's been a good two days of it and we'll get one more today."

How did QB Jimmy Garoppolo use that extra time, whether it was preparing one-on-one with you or film work?

“He didn’t do much with me one on one. We needed a break from each other. I’m just joking. It’s a long season. I know he had plans to go home and see his parents and he ended up staying here and he was up at the office a lot, relaxing and evaluating what he’s done so far.”

What jumps out to you on film when you look at their receivers, OBJ and Jarvis?

“They’re two of the better receivers in the NFL. They have different styles, but the result’s the same in terms of being at the top of their game. I mean, Odell’s a freak in the way he can move and his hands and people do not get how tough and good of a football player Odell is, also. He’s physical and competes his tail off in the run game and the pass game. Jarvis, I think everyone knows how physical Jarvis is. He’s a man out there and he gets after guys and has hands as good as anyone’s and can make plays after the catch. They’re two of my favorites.”

You like watching them on film?

“Yeah, they’re fun to watch, but not this week.”

The run game has been going pretty well. How much of that, obviously Staley’s not there, but the offensive line’s pretty much intact from last year, the same guys and key blockers like FB Kyle Juszczyk and TE George Kittle are still there. How much do you attribute that to continuity and everyone really understanding what’s going on?

“A lot. I mean, all the stuff we do isn’t the easiest, we move around a lot and it’s hard to always get guys targeted and it puts a lot of stress on our players. But, we’ve got the right type of players. They don’t mind the stress, because they work at it all week. Today’s a lot more stressful for them because you put in a bunch of stuff and it gets a little bit easier each day, but by the time Sunday comes, you need guys who are physical and get after it, but you’ve got to also have guys who work at it. Our O-Line, our tight ends, our fullback, our running backs, they work at it as hard as anyone. Our quarterback, just getting us in the right run checks, and our receivers. Our receivers, I think, block as well as anyone in the league and it takes all 11.”

How important is Cleveland Browns RB Nick Chubb to that offense and how good has he been so far?

“He’s been great. Chubb, you give that guy space and he’s gone. I think he showed that last week. He’s a load to tackle and I think that’s why people sleep on him a little bit and you think he’s not going to be able to run away from you. If you take the wrong angle, he’s as good as anyone in this league by taking a five-yarder to 80.”