

# Broncos' Brandon Marshall provides assist as Nuggets land Paul Millsap

By Troy Renck

KMGH

July 4, 2017

Brandon Marshall is no stranger to assists. As an NFL linebacker, he often joins in on tackles with teammates. However last weekend he provided help in a way never imagined.

A confluence of factors came together for Marshall to play a role in the Denver Nuggets landing four-time All-Star forward Paul Millsap. In an exclusive interview, Marshall told Denver7 how it came together.

"Me and (Nuggets president) Tim Connelly are pretty good friends and I thought it was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to help recruit an NBA free agent," said Marshall, who also spends part of his offseason in Atlanta. "And I definitely want every team in Colorado to improve and be great."

Marshall told Denver7 he and Nuggets guard Gary Harris met with Millsap. Turns out Millsap had ties to Denver and grew up a Broncos fan. Marshall walked away from the discussion believing Nuggets "had a good chance."

Less than 24 hours later, the Nuggets pounced, making arguably their most significant free addition since Antonio McDyess. An NBA source confirmed Millsap agreed to a three-year, \$90-million deal with the final season a team option. Millsap makes the Nuggets relevant, leaving them in position to reach the playoffs for the first time since 2013.

With guard Jimmy Butler going to Minnesota and Paul George headed to Oklahoma City, the Nuggets needed a bold stroke to keep pace. Connelly didn't hide his frustration the night of the NBA draft, disappointed as trades fizzled out. The Nuggets had their eyes on Millsap since last season. He averaged 18.1 points and 7.7 rebounds a year ago. As recently as 2016 he finished fifth in the league in blocks. For the Nuggets to take a step forward they must improve their interior defense.

Millsap, 32, will help and also could accelerate the development of budding 22-year-old star Nikola Jokic. The Nuggets are looking to energize the fan base after missing out on several stars the past two seasons. Millsap provides hope they have turned the corner.

"All love. It's great," Marshall said. "This could make them a playoff team this year."

# Sacco Sez: It's never too early to start planning

By Jim Saccomano  
DenverBroncos.com  
July 4, 2017

Both the National Football League and the NCAA have begun preparations for one of our biggest celebrations ever.

The NFL will celebrate its 100th year of play in the 2019 season, and in that same year, the NCAA will celebrate the 150th year of American football.

Recently, the NFL named my dear friend Pete Abitante to the post of Vice President of Special Projects, and one of Pete's biggest tasks is to have a vital role in the planning for the 2019 celebration.

"With all the great success and popularity of the NFL, virtually unmatched by other pro sports leagues," Abitante said, "we will be working very hard as a team to ensure that our 100th anniversary of play is recognized and celebrated from top to bottom in all aspects of our game.

"This is a daunting task, which is why discussions are already underway on the many ways we can pay tribute to our game by involving past and current players, coaches and administrators, our network and business partners, and the greatest fans in the history of sport in America."

The Pro Football Hall of Fame will be celebrating just as heavily and will stretch their festivities over a two-year period.

"The Hall has two opportunities to celebrate the game, as 2019 is the 100th season of play, which will involve big celebrations at all levels, but the other opportunity comes with the fact that 2020 [marks] 100 years from the actual birth of the NFL in Canton on Sept. 17," Hall of Fame Executive Director Joe Horrigan said.

Many of the original organizing meetings for the NFL were held in Canton, which will lead the Hall of Fame to be "Canton-centric" in its 2020 celebration, Horrigan said.

"[The Hall] will have many special events that we hope will include legends of the game, past and present," said Horrigan of the two-year celebration.

The Hall of Fame Village is slated to open by that time, and the new addition will serve as an integral part of all festivities in Canton.

Abitante's role will be to include the cities of the 32 franchises in a year-long celebration of America's greatest spectator sport, Sunday afternoon tradition and prime time tradition.

Not to be out done, the National Football Foundation and College Football Hall of Fame announced they will convene their first planning meeting for the 250th anniversary of college football on Aug. 1, in Irving, Texas, home of the NFF and College Hall of Fame.

"No one could have imagined that since that first football game was played on Nov. 6, 1869, that college football would grow to become one of America's greatest traditions," said Larry Smith, Pac-12 Commissioner and head of the planning celebration committee.

So as pro football collectively takes a break and celebrates the Fourth of July before training camps begin later this month, the folks who will be those in meeting rooms are working hard behind the scenes with thoughts, ideas, concepts and numerous planning sessions.

Every day in football is exciting, but while fans are enjoying the 2017 season they also can look forward to huge celebrations of the game we all love in 2019.

On both the NFL and college levels of football, it is never too early to think ahead.

# Mason's Mailbag: Looking ahead to camp

By Andrew Mason  
DenverBroncos.com  
July 4, 2017

**Is Chad Kelly as good as Uncle Jim, and if so when could he be the starter?**

**-- Mike Cox**

Jim Kelly is a Pro Football Hall of Famer, a five-time Pro Bowler and he is also the only quarterback to start in four consecutive Super Bowls. It's not fair to compare a rookie to him, even though they're related. Let Chad Kelly develop at his own pace and keep the focus on what he can do, and let's avoid the comparisons with his uncle.

**Thanks for all the information you provide to us in Broncos Country! We are planning a first-time trip to see training camp this season on a Saturday. Can you please give us some insight as to which date would be better to attend? Are there any differences in practice from the beginning of camp to the end, when the team will have already played a preseason game?**

**-- Lucas Gallegos**

The contact and intensity of practice generally increases on the third day of training camp, when shoulder pads typically go on for the first time. This year, that will happen on Saturday, July 29. The practice on the following Saturday (Aug. 5) sometimes sees more intensity that most because it comes just before a Sunday off-day.

So if you visit camp on either of those Saturdays, you should get a good show — and likely more intense than the practice on the other Saturday of camp, Aug. 12, when the Broncos will be fewer than 48 hours removed from their preseason opener.

**Why would we have Paxton Lynch start? There's no risk in starting Trevor Siemian. The team loves him and if he plays good keep him playing, if he doesn't turn it to Lynch. Doesn't anyone realize how important experience is, you can't replace it and it usually takes about five years to really figure something out.**

**-- Phillip Marshall**

You would have him start because he emerges as the best quarterback on the roster in training camp and the preseason, if that proves to be the case. It's as simple as that. Whether you're talking about a quarterback, outside linebacker or any other position on the roster, you do the entire team a disservice by not playing the best player at the position.

Experience matters, but it's not the be-all, end-all. If it was, Kurt Warner and Tom Brady wouldn't have been Super Bowl MVPs in their first seasons as starters, just to cite a pair of the many examples of young quarterbacks who have overcome a lack of experience to find success.

**You've been discussing the Ring Of Fame lately, and I wanted to ask why Steve Watson has not been honored yet. Do you see the sure-handed No. 81 making it to the ROF?**

**-- Glenn Hauser**

I don't see that happening. Although Watson had an outstanding career, he's a victim of how standards have changed for players at his position; he's dropped to sixth among Broncos wide receivers (and eighth among all positions) in receptions and fifth among wide receivers (sixth among all positions) in receiving yardage. He also went to just one Pro Bowl, which generally hasn't been enough to push a player over the goal line for Ring of Fame inclusion. Simon Fletcher, who had no Pro Bowl selections, is an exception, but he also established a major franchise record (sacks) that has stood for nearly 22 years since his last game.

**Earlier in the offseason, there were many critics saying without DeMarcus Ware's leadership, the Broncos would fall off a cliff. What are your thoughts?**

**-- Branson Smith**

There are plenty of potential leaders on the defensive side — most of whom witnessed Ware's leadership first-hand. One potential leader who wasn't a teammate of Ware's has been a captain for the last nine seasons: nose tackle Domata Peko, with the Bengals.

Submit a question for the next Mailbag!

# Here's what Chad Kelly's Hall of Fame uncle told him about making the Broncos' roster

By Ryan Wilson

CBS Sports

July 4, 2017

Last summer, Chad Kelly was considered one of the top college quarterbacks ahead of the 2016 season. But injuries and off-field issues saw him slip down draft boards in a decidedly weak draft. Consequently, Kelly didn't hear his name called until the 253rd and final pick of the 2017 NFL Draft by the Denver Broncos.

And now comes the difficult part: Making the roster and, eventually, making an impact. But unlike previous Mr Irrelevants, Kelly's bloodlines could serve him well -- his uncle is Hall of Fame quarterback Jim Kelly, who in 1983 was a member of one of the greatest draft classes of all time.

So what was Jim Kelly's advice to his nephew? It was pretty simple, really.

"Shut your mouth, work extremely hard and be the first one in there, last one to leave," Chad Kelly repeated during a recent appearance on NFL Network, via PFT.

Kelly, who had offseason wrist surgery, is behind Trevor Siemian and Paxton Lynch on the depth chart, but says he will be ready should his opportunity come.

"You definitely are behind the curve not going through OTAs and minicamp but if my name is called I have to be prepared," he said. "If I have to hold field goals or get the defense going in practice every day I'll do it."

Kelly also has the support of first-year coach Vance Joseph, who in late April went so far as to call Kelly "my favorite quarterback in the draft," though he acknowledged Kelly arrives in Denver with some baggage.

"He's made some childish mistakes in the past, but he's learned from that," Joseph said. "I'm comfortable with it."

There's also Broncos general manager John Elway, another Hall of Famer and member of that '83 quarterback draft class.

"I called his uncle, and he said, 'He's a good kid,'" Elway said after the Broncos drafted Chad Kelly. "I said, 'OK, that's all I need.' I trust Jim with that. Obviously, there's been some history there, but we felt comfortable. Chad understands what he's been through and is ready to take this step and realizes the step that he's taken is different than when he was in college. We're full of confidence that Chad's going to be able to come up here and understand the situation he's in."

And while Mr. Irrelevant comes with some perks -- including a parade -- being the last pick in the draft didn't sit well with Kelly, who feels like he has a lot to prove.

"It [hurt], but that's a memory that I'll have for the rest of my life, that sick feeling in my stomach, knowing I'm going to make all these 31 teams pay for it," Kelly said on CBS Sports Radio's Reiter than You days after he was drafted. "I felt as if I should have went higher, but it's not up to me. I just wanted a chance. With that being said, I'm going to go out there every day with a chip on my shoulder and prove myself."

# Agent's Take: Why quarterback salaries aren't as high as they should be

By Joel Corry  
CBS Sports  
July 4, 2017

Quarterback is the most important position on a football field, possibly in any team sport, because of the increasing emphasis on the passing game in today's NFL. Sustained success is almost impossible without good quarterback play, although there are exceptions. The Broncos won Super Bowl 50 with a shaky Peyton Manning because of their dominating defense.

There are more NFL teams than there are quality quarterbacks. Even rarer are passers who can consistently win games with their arms. This scarcity puts QBs in an extremely advantageous position when negotiating contracts.

Despite favorable circumstances, the top of the market has remained fairly stagnant since Aaron Rodgers became the NFL's highest paid player in April 2013 with a five year, \$110 million extension. It took nearly three years for Ravens quarterback Joe Flacco to surpass Rodgers as the highest paid player by less than one percent in average yearly salary at \$22,133,333 per year. In less than half this time, Derek Carr has become the NFL's first \$25 million per year player with his five-year, \$125.025 million contract extension from the Raiders. Overall, the top of the quarterback market has gone up 13.6 percent from when Rodgers signed four years ago.

However, high end quarterback contracts have failed to keep up with the growth in the salary cap and franchise tags. The salary cap was \$123 million at Rodgers' signing. It has grown to \$167 million this year, a 35.77 percent increase. The franchise tag, which is an accepted measure for high-end salaries at the respective positions, has increased even more. The quarterback non-exclusive franchise tag was \$14.896 million in 2013. The current \$21.268 million non-exclusive number is almost 43 percent greater. Adjusting Rodgers' existing contract into the current salary cap environment and to reflect franchise tag growth puts him at approximately \$29.85 million and almost \$31.5 million per year respectively.

There are a variety of factors responsible for high-end quarterback market lagging behind these measures.

## The Tom Brady approach

Tom Brady became the highest paid player (by average yearly salary) in 2010 with a four-year, \$72 million extension. Since then, he has taken a unique approach to contract dealings by consistently giving the Patriots hometown discounts instead of driving the market.

Brady's 2013 offseason renegotiation that freed up substantial cap room for the Patriots over the next two seasons was substantially below his market value. He received \$33 million, which was fully guaranteed, in the first two years of the renegotiated deal instead of the \$30 million he was scheduled to make in the remaining two years of his old contract signed in 2010. The final three years of Brady's pact (2015 through 2017) for \$24 million were guaranteed for injury at signing. These years also became guaranteed for skill (without an offset) by him being on New England's roster for the final game of the

2014 regular season. Right before those playoffs started, Brady gave up the skill guarantee in the three years. In exchange, \$1 million was added to each of his remaining base salaries.

Brady signed a two-year extension in March 2016 for \$41 million running through the 2019 season when he is 42. Prior to the extension, Brady was making \$9 million and \$10 million in 2016 and 2017, the last two years of the 2013 renegotiation. He received a \$28 million signing bonus while lowering his 2016 and 2017 base salaries each to \$1 million, which is \$11 million more than he was scheduled to make over this time before the contract adjustment. Brady's 2016 salary was fully guaranteed. His 2017 salary guaranteed for injury became fully guaranteed this past March 11, which was the third day of the current league year.

Brady is underpaid by practically every measure. His new pact can be viewed as a four-year, \$60 million deal. Another way to look at it is to focus on the new money Brady will receive through his contract maneuvers compared to what he would have gotten had he played out his 2010 contract, which was set to expire after the 2014 season. There is \$71 million of new money over five new contract years for an average of \$14.2 million per year.

The NFLPA probably hasn't been happy with Brady's willingness to undercut the market with his contracts but would never express a negative opinion publicly about the dealings of such a prominent player. The approach has paid dividends for Brady in allowing the Patriots to assemble a more talented roster than they would have otherwise, which has resulted in two more Super Bowl rings since starting the process.

Brady hasn't started a trend among upper echelon quarterbacks by taking a discount. Eli Manning, Philip Rivers and Ben Roethlisberger signed lucrative extensions in 2015 as 33- and 34-year-olds heading into contract years.

### **Unwillingness to fully exploit contract leverage**

Other quarterbacks besides Brady haven't taken advantage of leverage. It just isn't to the same degree as Brady.

Carr acknowledged in the press conference after his extension that he left some money on the table so it would be easier for the Raiders to retain other key players, such as offensive guard Gabe Jackson and reigning NFL Defensive Player of the Year Khalil Mack. He only minimally raised the bar with a 1.77 percent increase in average yearly salary over the five-year, \$122.97 million extension averaging \$24.594 million per year Andrew Luck signed with the Colts last June.

Carr fell short of Luck in a couple of key contract metrics. Although Carr's \$70.2 million of guarantees is the second most in an NFL contract, they are almost 25 percent less than Luck's \$87 million. It's only \$200,000 more than Broncos outside linebacker Von Miller received last July in becoming the highest paid non-quarterback. Carr's \$40 million fully guaranteed at signing doesn't even put him in the NFL's top five among quarterbacks in this metric.

The Broncos got Peyton Manning at a discounted rate because of how he handled negotiations after the Colts released him in 2012. A dozen teams reportedly inquired about Manning once he became available. He narrowed his choices down to four and picked his destination before negotiating a contract instead of letting Tom Condon, his agent, leverage the considerable interest, which reportedly included

a \$25 million per year offer from the Titans, into a blockbuster deal. Instead, he still briefly set the salary bar with his five-year, \$96 million deal.

A more conventional approach to free agency by Manning would have helped Drew Brees, another Condon client, even if he didn't reach the \$25 million per year mark. Presumably, Manning eclipses the \$20 million per year Brees got from the Saints as a franchise player a few months after he joined the Broncos. Manning's enhanced deal likely would have become the salary floor for Brees' contract. NFL teams are fortunate high-caliber quarterbacks routinely sign extensions instead of playing out contracts. These types of quarterbacks would never hit the open market because of franchise tags. Nevertheless, Cam Newton and Russell Wilson are excellent examples of the benefits teams receive with early deals.

Newton and Wilson joined the ranks of the highest paid players with respective extensions from the Panthers and Seahawks averaging \$20.76 million (including \$60 million in guarantees) and \$21.9 million per year (with \$61.542 million in guarantees) during the 2015 offseason. Wilson showed dramatic improvement as a pocket passer while carrying Seattle's offense for stretches of the 2015 season. He had an unprecedented five-game run from Week 11 to Week 15 where he threw 19 touchdown passes without an interception while completing 74.3 percent of his passes for a 143.6 rating. Newton won league MVP honors while leading the Panthers to a Super Bowl berth with the NFL's best regular season record at 15-1.

An exclusive franchise tag for \$25.94 million would have been necessary for both Newton and Wilson in 2016 without the extensions in place. The exclusive tag and their career years would have given them leverage for long-term deals averaging more than \$25 million per year with over \$75 million in guarantees. Luck could have leveraged their deals into a more lucrative contract than he actually signed, which in turn would have helped Carr.

### **The power of the franchise tag**

The franchise tag is a powerful management tool that prevents players from receiving fair market value and generally depresses salaries. It is essentially a high-salaried, one-year "prove it" deal where players incur the risk of serious injury and poor performance again after already playing out their contracts when an agreement on a long-term deal can't be reached.

High-quality quarterbacks rarely receive franchise tags. The exclusive designation is primarily given when a franchise tag becomes a necessity so an offer sheet can't be solicited from other teams. A long-term deal is usually reached before playing under a franchise tag is a realistic possibility. Kirk Cousins is the only quarterback designated a franchise player in the last ten years that didn't sign a long-term deal. After playing the 2016 season on a \$19.953 million non-exclusive franchise tag, Cousins was designated by the Redskins as a franchise player for a second straight year at \$23,943 million, a CBA-mandated 20 percent increase over the previous year's amount. An exclusive tag was used this time.

Brees is a perfect illustration of the franchise tag's impact on salaries. When tagged in 2012, Brees was coming off the most prolific season of any quarterback in NFL history. In addition to shattering Dan Marino's single season yardage record in 2011 with 5,476 passing yards, Brees set marks for completion percentage (71.2 percent), completions (468), 300 yard games (13) and consecutive 300 yard games (seven).

Brees became the NFL's first \$20 million with a five-year, \$100 million contract. The deal only came after acrimonious negotiations led to Brees filing and winning a grievance against the Saints clarifying whether franchise tags applied across teams or were specific to teams.

Just imagine the type of contract a healthy, 33-year-old Brees could have gotten on the open market without the existence of franchise tags considering the Titans were reportedly willing to give a 36-year-old Manning, who missed the 2011 season because of multiple neck surgeries, \$25 million per year. This Brees contract would have paved the way for Rodgers to take the quarterback market to unprecedented heights.

Brees recognized the power of the franchise tag before given one by the Saints. He was a named plaintiff in an antitrust lawsuit against the NFL during the 2011 lockout. As a part of the lawsuit settlement talks, he wanted an exemption from the franchise tag for the rest of his career but eventually relented.

### **The rookie wage scale effect**

The 2011 CBA drastically reduced salaries for early first-round picks by implementing a rookie wage scale. The impact its creation has had on the top of the quarterback market shouldn't be overlooked.

The new system put an end to the practice of unproven commodities being paid near the top of their positional markets thanks to the inclusion of easily achievable salary escalators and incentives in their contracts. Additional money could also be earned with extraordinary achievements (All-Pro or Pro Bowl selections, ranking high in the NFL in a particular statistical category, NFL or Super Bowl MVP, etc.). 2010 first overall pick Sam Bradford's six-year contract worth a maximum of \$86 million set a record with \$50 million guaranteed. A year later, Newton signed a fully guaranteed four-year, \$22,025,498 deal, which included a \$14,518,544 signing bonus, as 2011's top pick. Newton's six-year contract would have likely had a base value of \$86 million with a maximum of \$95 million with \$55M guaranteed if the system had remained the same. Luck's six-year deal as the No. 1 pick in 2012 probably would have had a base value in the \$95 million neighborhood where close to \$60 million was guaranteed. The maximum value could have approached \$105 million.

The latter years of these contracts typically become unmanageable for teams when draft picks were highly productive because of astronomical cap numbers from earning close to the maximum value. Some teams would compound the problem by restructuring rookie contracts for immediate cap relief, which would raise the cap numbers in remaining years.

This practice led to immense leverage for the player where the extremely large cap numbers forced a team to re-set a positional market on an extension with a player-friendly structure or let him become an unrestricted free agent once his rookie contract expired because use of a franchise tag was impractical. For example, the Lions made wide receiver Calvin Johnson, the second overall pick in 2007 NFL Draft, the richest non-quarterback on a seven-year, \$113.45 million extension in 2012 with \$53.25 million being fully guaranteed at signing. It would have been virtually impossible for the Lions to franchise Johnson at over \$25 million when his rookie contract expired after the season and lowering his 2012 salary cap number, which was slightly over \$21 million, was a necessity.

The Panthers might have been facing a similar predicament with Newton. It's conceivable that his franchise tag when his contract expired after the 2016 season would have easily exceeded the exclusive

quarterback number of \$25.98 million since his figure probably would have been based off 120 percent of his 2016 cap number. Newton's timing for an extension would not have come at a better time following his MVP and Super Bowl appearance. He likely would have been in a position to raise the salary bar for quarterbacks with an extension until Luck eclipsed it the following year, which would have been this offseason.

### **The litmus test for quarterback salaries**

Quality quarterbacks almost never become unrestricted free agents. Cousins could be one next offseason if he plays under another franchise tag. The Redskins designating Cousins as a franchise player for a third and final time in 2018 at almost \$34.5 million seems implausible. Another option would be using a transition tag for \$28.73 million instead, which would only provide a right to match an offer sheet.

There has been speculation that Cousins could get \$30 million per year on the open market given the shortage of good quarterbacks. Cousins signing in free agency would likely be a game changer for quarterback salaries even if he falls short of the mark. It would be the beginning of a dramatic shift at the top of quarterback market. Cousins' contract would be the starting point for the new deal Rodgers is expected to sign with the Packers in 2018 when there are two years left on his current deal. The Falcons will likely extend reigning NFL MVP Matt Ryan next year as well since he will be in a contract year.

# After Toby's tragic death, meet new Loveland Bernese mountain dog

By Allison Sylte

9 News

July 4, 2017

If you're like many of us in the office, you still haven't gotten over the unexpected passing of Toby the Bernese mountain dog.

He was the unofficial mascot of Loveland Ski Area, and his owner, Dustin Schaefer, loved sharing photos of him for every occasion showcasing everything Colorado's mountains had to offer.

Toby even got to meet Von Miller thanks to an adorable homage to the Denver Broncos linebacker!

While Toby's spirit—and memory—lives on, Dustin has a new addition to his family: Parker, who is 11-months-old and already knows how to work a bandana.

Parker is already counting down the days until snowmaking—and he'll be making appearances at various events just like Toby did, Schaefer said.

It's nice to meet you, Parker!

# How Marcus Robertson landed the best position-coach job in the NFL

By Zac Stevens

BSN Denver

July 4, 2017

Not every day does a job this good become available. Outside of a promotion to a coordinator or head coaching position, the Broncos had one of the best, if not the best, coaching vacancies in all of the NFL this offseason.

Not only is Denver's defensive backfield stacked with talent — six combined Pro Bowl's in the past two seasons between Chris Harris Jr., T.J. Ward, Darian Stewart and Aqib Talib — they produce on the field, leading the league in pass defense the past two seasons.

However, the promotion of former defensive backs coach Joe Woods to defensive coordinator left the "No Fly Zone" without a commander. While the job couldn't have been a more appealing vacancy, Vance Joseph and company had to find the right personality, not necessarily coach, to pair with the already high-flying group.

Less than five hours after Woods was promoted, the Broncos already had their guy: former Oakland Raiders defensive back coach Marcus Robertson. While Robertson's 26 years in the NFL — including two All-Pro years during his 12-year playing career to go along with 10 years of coaching experience — were vital to him landing the job in Denver, what may have been just as important was his understanding of how to coach elite players.

"In Charles Woodson's case, it was a thrill coaching a guy like that," Robertson said as he talked about coaching the nine-time Pro Bowler in 2014 and 2015 in Oakland. "The key thing with him was that he was coachable. He wanted to learn, even for a guy who had already been a perennial All-Pro, a Defensive Player of the Year, stuff like that."

When Robertson was promoted to the defensive backs coach of the Raiders in 2015, after Woods left for the same job in Denver, Woodson was already an eight-time Pro Bowl player, and most likely, already on his way to the Hall of Fame. Despite not making the Pro Bowl since 2011, though, Robertson was able to find one more Pro Bowl season out of Woodson in 2015.

"What I appreciated with him was that he allowed me to coach him," Robertson said. "What I did is I just told him what I wanted him to do. I taught him what I wanted him to do, and then when he went out on the field and saw that it worked, he believed in me. Now I can tell him something, he'll believe me."

With 11 combined Pro Bowl's spread throughout Denver's secondary, Robertson sees himself entering a similar situation as he had with Woodson.

"One thing I can say about these guys [in Denver] is they do it right," he said. "It's important to them, and there is a lot of communication on the football field, and they got pride in themselves. When they hit the field, they want to go out there and show it. So I'm excited to be a part of it."

Along with the successful experience with Woodson, Robertson's understanding of the game as a former player has been, and will be, crucial to his success as a coach. As a former safety himself, not only does Robertson understand how to connect with the players, he understands what they truly want.

"I kind of learned the game obviously from a lot of my playing experiences and things like that," he said. "So for me, as a defensive backs coach, I used to never like to put my players in a situation where I myself was uncomfortable. I think when you think about that, I'm always trying to put them in situations to make plays on balls and put them in situations to succeed on the course of the down."

While it seems that Denver may have hired just the right guy for the job, Robertson knows he landed a sweet gig as well. When asked if coaching the Broncos' secondary is the best-case scenario as a defensive backs coach, he simply responded, "no doubt."

"I mean, I think about not only the back end [secondary], I think about the front seven, the guys on the edges," he said. "I'm extremely excited, and all I want to do is try to come in here and add some value to a secondary that's already outstanding...I'm excited to be here. I'm excited to work with this group of guys. To me, the sky is the limit."

With three defensive back coaches on the roster, including the head coach and defensive coordinator, the "No Fly Zone" could be set to reach even higher in 2017.

# Mitchell Trubisky sought advice from Peyton Manning, Andrew Luck, Ben Roethlisberger

By Curtis Crabtree

Pro Football Talk

July 4, 2017

In the lead up to the draft in April, new Chicago Bears quarterback Mitchell Trubisky reached out for advice from a handful of experienced NFL quarterbacks.

In an interview with Daniel Kaplan on ESPN 1000 in Chicago, Trubisky said he spoke with Peyton Manning, Andrew Luck and Ben Roethlisberger to get some tips and advice during the draft process and beyond.

While Trubisky said he relied on Manning and Luck for guidance to help him make a decision on whether to stay in the draft or return to North Carolina, it was advice from Roethlisberger that made the biggest impression.

“One of the best pieces of advice I got was from Ben Roethlisberger,” Trubisky said, via Jeff Dickerson of ESPN.com. “We have the same agent so I was able to throw with him when I was preparing for the draft. He said, ‘You just have to go in there and be yourself. You have to be confident in your abilities and what you bring to the table. And your career is going to go how you want it to go.

“It sounds cliché, but I think that really resonated with me because you have to take charge of your future, your plan, and what you want to bring to an organization. You have to go in there, be confident, shape things the way you want them to go and have a voice and then people will follow. That was huge for me.”

Whether Trubisky will ever be able to reach the accomplishments of Manning, Roethlisberger or Luck is yet to be seen. The Bears traded up to select Trubisky with the No. 2 overall pick because they have faith he will be able to have success in the future. For now, Mike Glennon remains the Bears present.