

Broncos' Brandon Marshall received honorary Nuggets jersey after Paul Millsap pitch

By Nicki Jhabvala

Denver Post

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Broncos linebacker Brandon Marshall has another No. 54 jersey to add to his collection.

As a thank you for helping the Nuggets recruit free-agent forward Paul Millsap last week, the team gave Marshall an honorary jersey, complete with his number and name on the back.

Marshall joined Nuggets president of basketball operations Tim Connelly and guard Gary Harris in an hours-long pitch to Millsap in Atlanta last week. A day later, Millsap agreed to a three-year, \$90 million contract, giving the Nuggets a four-time all-star to pair with their young center Nikola Jokic.

"I can sell water to a well," Marshall jokingly tweeted Sunday night. "Congrats big homie! Paul Millsap let's do it big for the city one time."

Marshall told Denver7 that he was eager to help out another local sports franchise and bring back a player coveted in the NBA's frenzied free agency. Millsap spent more than a decade in Denver as a youth, and played quarterback in middle school here, before his mother and his siblings moved to Louisiana.

Demaryius Thomas hopes starting QB resolved 'before San Francisco'

By Mike Klis

9 News

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Carrying the Great Broncos Quarterback Competition into training camp is fine by star receiver Demaryius Thomas.

So long as it doesn't go too far into training camp.

During a break from his annual youth football camp Friday morning at Mullen High School, Thomas did state a preference on when he'd like the starting quarterback battle between Trevor Siemian and Paxton Lynch to be decided.

"About a week-and-a-half into training camp," said Thomas, who is coming off five consecutive Pro Bowls thanks to five consecutive seasons of recording at least 90 catches and 1,000 yards. "Before we go to San Francisco."

The Broncos' trip to San Francisco includes two full practices against the 49ers, and then preseason game No. 2 on Aug. 19 at Levi's Stadium in Santa Clara, Calif.

It's possible Broncos head coach Vance Joseph may pick his starting quarterback following preseason game No. 1 at Chicago on Aug. 10. But it may be fairer to wait until after the week in San Francisco.

The first-string offense is only expected to play one, maybe two series against the Bears in the first preseason game. Only one quarterback will get a chance to play with the first string in that game.

The 49ers' game would give both Siemian and Lynch a chance to play with the first team, fair and square. Joseph is expected to choose his starter prior to the Broncos' third preseason game, Aug. 26 against the Green Bay Packers. The third preseason game has always been used as a final dress rehearsal for the regular-season opener, which in the Broncos' case is Sept. 11 against the Los Angeles Chargers.

So, which quarterback does Thomas believe is the leader going into camp?

"Trevor's been speaking up more than Paxton," he said.

A poorly phrased question. Let's try again. Not who is the better leader. Who has the lead?

"They both had their ups and downs days," Thomas said. "I remember Trevor had been pretty cool the whole time. Everybody has their days. And then the first couple weeks we see Paxton ... the last couple of weeks he was just out there lighting it up. It was like, 'Ooh, where did that come from?' It's going to be good competition. I'm excited about it."

At Mullen High School, Thomas' "ProCamp" is one of five or six youth camps he puts on each summer.

“This is one of the best things I do besides playing on Sunday, Monday and Thursday,” he said.

Thomas added there would be a camp of another kind he will attend before the Broncos convene for good on July 26. Siemian, Lynch, Thomas, Emmanuel Sanders, and other receivers, tight ends and running backs will convene in Los Angeles for a private, pre-camp session in about a week or so.

The private passing session among teammates was started by Peyton Manning in 2012 at Duke University, and continued with Mark Sanchez in Los Angeles last year.

After helping to bring Paul Millsap to Denver, Demaryius Thomas predicts Nuggets playoff berth

By Aric DiLalla
DenverBroncos.com
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Count Demaryius Thomas as yet another member of the Denver Broncos who helped recruit former Atlanta Hawks power forward Paul Millsap to Denver.

The Broncos receiver said Friday he spoke with Millsap, who played in a city with which Thomas is quite familiar. Thomas grew up near Atlanta and played college football at Georgia Tech.

So yes, Thomas knows a little bit about the transition from the Peach State to the Mile High City.

"I got a phone call from [Nuggets director of pro personnel Jared Jeffries], who told me to show up to get Paul Millsap, and I took the call and it happened," said Thomas on Friday at his youth football camp.

"That day, Paul Millsap was here, and that was it."

Linebacker Brandon Marshall and wide receiver Isaiah McKenzie also assisted with the pitch.

Millsap, who signed with the Nuggets on Monday, couldn't ignore the Broncos' full-court press. And as Thomas — one of Denver's best offensive weapons in any sport — put it, the decision wasn't so tough.

"Everybody knows Denver's one of the best cities to play sports in," Thomas said. "Especially [for] a football player. And as football players, we like to watch basketball. So to get a person like Paul Millsap — the caliber of player he is — it's amazing."

With Millsap, Nikola Jokic and Jamal Murray all on the Nuggets' roster, the team seems to have enough firepower to get back to the postseason. That opening-round playoff series wouldn't happen until next April, but Thomas is already marking his calendar.

"I'm calling it: We will make the playoffs."

Demaryius Thomas has time frame in mind for QB decision

By Aric DiLalla
DenverBroncos.com
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Make no mistake about it, Demaryius Thomas knows exactly when he wants the Broncos' quarterback competition to wrap up.

"About a week and a half into training camp," said Thomas on Friday at his youth football camp at Mullen High School. "Before we go to San Francisco."

That timetable would give Paxton Lynch and Trevor Siemian nearly two full weeks of practice and a preseason game against the Bears to battle things out. The Broncos will spend time in Santa Clara practicing with the 49ers before their preseason contest on Aug. 19.

The added repetitions with the starter after that decision could make a "big difference," Thomas said.

Head Coach Vance Joseph said during offseason programming he would wait to make a decision until there is a clear winner between Siemian and Lynch.

"He's going to make the right decision," Thomas said. "We trust in Coach, and he's going to make the right decision for the team."

And while Thomas has an ideal time frame for the choice, it doesn't sound like he envies Joseph's decision. Because while Thomas heard Siemian speak up more than Lynch in the offseason, Lynch made a late run that surprised the five-time Pro Bowl wide receiver.

"They both had their up and down days," Thomas said. "I remember Trevor's been pretty cool the whole time, but everybody has bad days. ... The last couple of weeks, [Lynch] was just lighting it up. It was like, 'Whoa, where'd that come from?'"

"It's going to be a good competition. I'm excited about it."

Before the real work begins in late July, Thomas will join Siemian, Lynch and other offensive skill players for a few days of training in Los Angeles. The group will definitely include Emmanuel Sanders and Bennie Fowler III, but the other wide receivers were also invited, as were the tight ends and running backs.

"Everybody should be there, so we'll see how it goes," Thomas said. "It should be good. We'll do like two or three days."

With a competition this important, Thomas can't start working with his quarterbacks soon enough.

Demaryius Thomas on Broncos' QB competition: Paxton Lynch is 'lighting it up'

By Sean Wagner-McGough

CBS Sports

July 8, 2017

The Broncos have a quarterback problem.

Though they boast one of the league's best defenses, the Broncos aren't a lock for the playoffs due to their lack of a starting-caliber quarterback. There's Trevor Siemian, who surprisingly wound up as the team's starter last year. In 14 starts, Siemian threw 18 touchdowns and 10 interceptions, and posted an 84.6 passer rating. And then there's Paxton Lynch, the Broncos' first-round pick a year ago who saw limited action (two starts) and struggled when he did play (79.2 passer rating). One of those two quarterbacks will wind up as the Broncos' starter in 2017 as they try to rebound from a playoff-less season.

On Friday, Broncos star receiver Demaryius Thomas weighed in on the competition. In the process, he offered some high praise for Lynch.

"Trevor's been speaking up more than Paxton," Thomas said. "Paxton's still young and Trevor played a lot more last year. They both had their ups and down days. Trevor's been pretty cool the whole time. Everybody has their days. The first couple weeks, you see Paxton, people are talking about it, but then then last couple of weeks where he was just out there lighting it up. It was like 'Woah, where did that come from?'"

If there's one quarterback to get excited about, it's Lynch. He's the one with actual upside.

Without being overly critical of Siemian -- he already exceeded all expectations by winning the starting job last summer -- he's likely not the long-term solution at quarterback in Denver. He already got his chance and he put forth a fairly below-average performance. That's not entirely on him (his offensive line play wasn't great), but we've seen what Siemian can do over the course of 14 games and it wasn't good enough for the Broncos, a team that should have Super Bowl aspirations, but went 9-7 instead.

There's no guarantee that Lynch will be better, of course, but he does at least feature some upside. That's why the Broncos made him the 26th overall pick a year ago. He didn't really show anything positive in his three games last season -- completing 59.0 percent of his passes, averaging 6.0 yards per attempt, and throwing two touchdowns and one interception -- but Lynch was always considered more of a developmental, raw prospect who needed time before he was ready to step in.

Here's the good news for the Broncos: They only need marginally better quarterback play to be in the running for a playoff spot and given how badly their quarterbacks have been the past two seasons, that's a pretty manageable request. Just be better than terrible!

But the Broncos do need Lynch to be ready now. If he's not good enough to beat out Siemian, who should really be a backup in the league, then well, let's just say that's not the best sign for his long-term prospects.

Anyway, Thomas won't be making the final decision on the quarterback competition, but he did reveal when he hopes a victor will be announced.

@MikeKlis

Demaryius Thomas said he'd like QB competition decided "about a week and a half into camp. Before we go to San Francisco." #9sports

The Broncos play the 49ers in a Week 2 preseason game on Aug. 19.

Demaryius Thomas weighs in on Broncos' QB battle

By Kevin Patra

NFL.com

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When training camps open at the end of July, the battle for jobs will heat up.

One of the most interesting battles this offseason will be the quarterback duel in Denver, where incumbent Trevor Siemian will take on 2016 first-round pick Paxton Lynch.

It's a competition that could stretch deep into training camp and the preseason. But if receiver Demaryius Thomas has his way, the situation will sort itself out rather quickly.

Thomas said Friday at his football camp in Denver that he'd like the quarterback competition decided "about a week and a half into camp. Before we go to San Francisco," per Mike Klis of KUSA-TV.

The Broncos will practice with the 49ers ahead of their second preseason game on Saturday, August 19. Thomas' timetable is an escalated expectation for two quarterbacks who have both reportedly had their moments in offseason workouts.

Thomas glowed about both QBs, specifically noting Lynch's improvement throughout workouts.

"Trevor's been speaking up more than Paxton," Thomas said. "You know, Paxton's still young, and Trevor played a lot more last year. They both had their up and down days. I remember, Trevor's been pretty cool the whole time, everybody has their days. Then the first couple weeks, you see Paxton -- people were talking about it -- but then the last couple of weeks where he was just out there lighting it up. It was like, 'Ooh, where did that come from?' It's going to be good competition. I'm excited about it."

Thomas added that the Broncos receivers, quarterbacks, tight ends and running backs would hold a private passing camp in Los Angeles in about a week, per Klis. Presumably, Thomas hopes the work will help propel the QB battle into camp.

The receiver's desires on a quarterback battle won't force Vance Joseph and the coaching staff to decide before one shines over the other -- odds are greater that the coaches would use the practices versus the 49ers to help inform their decision afterward. But you can understand why Thomas might want to know sooner rather than later who will be throwing him passes when the season kicks off.

NFL player, Rochester native Quentin Gause visits patients Friday

By Matt Molloy

WHAM

July 8, 2017

Patients at the Golisano Brain Rehab Center welcomed a special guest Friday: Denver Broncos player and Rochester native Quentin Gause.

Gause played in Philadelphia before moving to Denver, but Rochester is home.

"Giving back to other people, and to be able to show up and put a smile on the kids' faces is super important to me," said Gause.

He said his father taught him early on in life about the importance of giving back to his community.

"I want to make sure I keep coming back and use this platform I have to give back to other people," he said.

His impact shows.

Griffin Snyder is a Bills fan, but the Broncos are his second-favorite team - so he was happy to meet Gause.

"It feels good just to meet him, and it's inspirational," said Snyder.

Snyder is a patient at the Golisano Restorative Neurology and Rehab Center. He suffered a stroke after having a tumor removed.

"I came here for rehab and worked with people on walking, even speech therapy, because I lost some of my speech," he said.

He was one of a handful of patients who got to meet the NFL player Friday, an experience he was happy about.

"It's amazing," he said. "It's amazing just to meet him!"

Gause hopes to encourage others to follow his lead.

"There are tons of kids here that have ability, academically or athletically," said Gause, "and I want to be able to encourage those kids to go out and do great things, and then come back to their town and give back."

Gause will return to Denver later this month for training camp.

Chad Kelly has Irrelevant Weekend in Newport Beach

By Christopher Trela
Newport Beach Indy
July 8, 2017

It was a whirlwind weekend of fun in the sun as 2017 Mr. Irrelevant Chad Kelly, the last man selected in this year's NFL draft, was feted, toasted and roasted as part of the Irrelevant Week festivities that took place June 29-July 1.

Launched in 1976 by NFL alumnus Paul Salata, Irrelevant Week (or in this case, weekend) is the annual celebration recognized by the National Football League that honors the last player to be picked in the NFL Draft.

"We established Irrelevant Week to drive home an important message – that it's not a negative to be picked last in the NFL Draft; rather, it's an honor to be drafted at all," said Salata. "The last draft pick's demonstration of perseverance is lesson that resonates not only with NFL players and fans, but also with people everywhere."

This year's Mr. Irrelevant, Chad Kelly, was selected No. 253 overall by the Denver Broncos in the final round of the 2017 draft. Kelly's name is familiar to many football insiders, and more than a few fans. His uncle is former Buffalo Bills quarterback Jim Kelly, who had an 11-year career in the NFL, led the Bills to four consecutive Super Bowls in the 1990s, and eight postseason appearances total, earning him a spot in the Hall of Fame.

The annual Irrelevant Week celebration included an Arrival Party welcoming Kelly to town, followed by the annual Lowsman Banquet, a Friday evening gala that gives past and present sports stars and celebrities a chance to roast and toast the newest member of this exclusive club.

The celebration included a silent auction and the awarding of the Lowsman Trophy. The Lowsman Trophy is a parody of the Heisman Trophy, which is awarded to the outstanding American college football player of the year. The Lowsman Trophy itself mimics the Heisman, but depicts a football player fumbling a football.

On Saturday, Kelly attended a Balboa Peninsula Bronco Beach Bash featuring families of Serving People in Need and KidWorks. Kelly tried his hand at surfing, posed for photos, and played volleyball with the kids.

The final Irrelevant Week event was the Roundup at the Resort at Balboa Bay Resort, where Kelly was showered with gifts and did some line dancing. He signed autographs for fans and posed for photos before he bolted back to Denver to earn a spot on the Broncos' roster.

Throughout the weekend, Kelly proved to be friendly, good-natured, personable and incredibly fit, all traits that will serve him well in his quest to make the Broncos roster.

For more information, visit irrelevantweek.com.

Broncos QB battle: Paxton Lynch in it to win it as Mike McCoy's choice

By Vinnie Iyer
SportingNews.com
July 8, 2017

The much-anticipated sequel to the Broncos' quarterback battle is headed toward a much happier ending for Paxton Lynch. Although Trevor Siemian holds the starting job he earned last season going into this year's training camp, it's tenuous at best.

Lynch's time eventually would come, and that time looks like Week 1 of 2017.

Last year, Lynch was an overwhelmed rookie first-round pick, while Siemian, even as a second-year seventh-rounder, had a huge advantage with an extra year in the same offense.

With coach Gary Kubiak retired and his offensive coordinator Rick Dennison now in Buffalo, it was no accident that Mike McCoy returned to Denver to replace Dennison under new coach Vance Joseph. McCoy's hiring came with an underlying mission: Get Lynch ready to be effective on the field.

Joseph didn't waste time declaring the competition wide open. Siemian has done well to fight through offseason left shoulder surgery (non-throwing) to get regular on-field work. Not surprisingly, he has impressed the new staff with the attributes that stood in the old regime — football intelligence, quick release and accuracy. For the most part, he was a good decision-maker.

It was also easy to see, however, that Siemian had limitations, physically and athletically. Those are things Lynch, with a big frame, big arm and terrific mobility, does have. Siemian has leaned on his experience and efficiency to maintain his lead with first-team reps through OTAs and minicamp. But Lynch's upside has manifested in more than a few flashes.

The fact that the Broncos are waiting well into preseason game action to decide Siemian vs. Lynch is a good sign for the latter. Lynch is pushing toward putting enough substance with his style, and he doesn't need to be fully polished in order to jump to No. 1.

McCoy and Joseph have seen steady progress from Lynch, and at some point, he can match Siemian's current floor on the way to finding his ceiling. Lynch was trying to be too much like Siemian last year, and he couldn't compare or compete. This year, he's in position to let it loose with his throwing and running, with the mental aspect being less of an obstacle.

That's the difference between the Kubiak-Dennison precision passing system and McCoy. The new coordinator is better at adjusting his offense to the talents of his QB and thinking outside the box. He's much more comfortable with freewheeling, which fits Lynch to a tee.

Consider when McCoy was with the Broncos last, from 2009-12, he had successful seasons working with Kyle Orton, Tim Tebow and Peyton Manning. In terms of pure physical talent and youth, Lynch provides him with the best blend of QB skills yet.

Siemian had plenty positives in 2016, considering the fact that the offensive line and running game gave him limited support. But the bottom line is the Broncos weren't a very good passing (or overall) offense, and they saw the Raiders and Chiefs make the playoffs ahead of them because both division rivals were better on that side of the ball. The Broncos need a lot more from their QB, and only Lynch can give them a significant leap in production.

The Broncos' top wide receivers, Demaryius Thomas and Emmanuel Sanders, have both gushed about a change in Lynch. Sanders told reporters he sees a more relaxed QB. Lynch has impressed Thomas more with his lasers in practice.

Jamaal Charles, Adrian Peterson in Top 4 yards per carry — for now

By Michael David Smith
Pro Football Talk
July 8, 2017

The list of NFL running backs with more than 1,000 career carries who have averaged more than 4.85 yards a carry is a short one: It consists of two all-time greats, Jim Brown and Barry Sanders, and two active players who are at risk of falling off the list, Jamaal Charles and Adrian Peterson.

At the moment, this is the yards per carry leaderboard in NFL history, minimum 1,000 rushing attempts:

5.45: Jamaal Charles.
5.22: Jim Brown.
4.99: Barry Sanders.
4.86: Adrian Peterson.

Brown and Sanders retired with such high averages in part because they retired on top: Brown walked away after his age-29 season and Sanders quit after his age-30 season. Running backs who don't stick around for their inevitable decline in their 30s end up with higher career averages.

Charles and Peterson are not planning to do the same. Both were limited by knee injuries last year, both saw their original teams get rid of them this offseason, and both decided to sign with new teams and keep going.

That means they're putting their places on the career yards-per-carry list in jeopardy. If Charles were to finish this season with 200 carries for 700 yards, it would drop his career average to 5.19 yards per carry, and he'd fall behind Brown on the all-time yards per carry list. If Peterson carries 200 times for 700 yards, his career average will drop to 4.75, behind Lenny Moore, Robert Smith and Joe Perry.

If Charles and Peterson were to stick around for two more such seasons, they'd run the risk of sliding even further down the yards-per-carry leaderboard. That wouldn't detract from the great careers they've already had, but it would make their career stats look a little less impressive.

Demaryius Thomas: Paxton Lynch was lighting it up at end of spring

By Josh Alper
Pro Football Talk
July 8, 2017

After the Broncos offseason program came to an end, a report from Denver said that quarterback Paxton Lynch's "switch was flipped" in the final weeks of their workouts and one of the team's top receivers agrees with that assessment.

Wide receiver Demaryius Thomas was asked at his youth football camp on Friday about Lynch's competition with Trevor Siemian for the team's starting job and said that Lynch made his strongest argument as the team was wrapping up their work this spring.

"Trevor's speaking up more than Paxton," Thomas said, via Mike Klis of KUSA. "Paxton's still young and Trevor played a lot more last year. They both had their up and down days. Trevor's been pretty cool the whole time, everybody has their days. The first couple weeks, you see Paxton ... people are talking about it, but the last couple of weeks where he was just out there lighting it up. It was like 'Whoa, where did that come from?'"

Lynch said in June that he feels he got better "progressively" as his reps increased over the course of the offseason and more of the same when the team gets to camp later this month could make it hard for the Broncos to keep their 2016 first-round pick on the bench any longer.

Brandon Marshall gets Nuggets jersey after recruiting Paul Millsap

By Charean Williams

Pro Football Talk

July 8, 2017

Broncos linebacker Brandon Marshall received an honorary jersey from the Denver Nuggets after assisting the NBA team in recruiting free agent forward Paul Millsap.

“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,” Marshall told Troy Renck of Denver7. “And I definitely want every team in Colorado to improve and be great.”

Marshall, Nuggets guard Gary Harris, and Connelly met with Millsap, who grew up a Broncos fan, in Atlanta last week. Millsap signed a three-year, \$90 million deal with the Nuggets the next day.

“I can sell water to a well,” Marshall tweeted Sunday night after Millsap agreed to terms. “Congrats big homie! Paul Millsap let’s do it big for the city one time.”

The Nuggets sent Marshall a No. 54 jersey with his name on the back as a thank you.