

# Roger Goodell, in town for fan forum, weighs in on Broncos' ownership

By Nicki Jhabvala

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NFL commissioner Roger Goodell said that the Denver Broncos are in compliance with ownership policies and that the league does not have a timetable for the team to select its representing owner among Pat Bowlen's seven children.

"They're actually being very well-run. Our membership is very happy with that and it's consistent with the way Pat wanted it done. Pat outlined that exactly the way it's operating. From our standpoint, no," Goodell said of a timetable. "But we want to make sure that the team is always in compliance."

In a fan forum hosted in the Broncos' indoor fieldhouse in Dove Valley on Thursday, Goodell addressed an array of local and league issues, including the status of the Broncos' ownership. Bowlen, who purchased majority stake in the team in 1984, is still the owner but the team has been placed in a trust run by three trustees — team president/CEO Joe Ellis, team counsel Rich Slivka and Denver attorney Mary Kelly.

The trust is essentially a vehicle to transfer controlling ownership of the team to Bowlen's seven children. The children will receive equal stake in the team but only one will be selected as representing owner. The decision is left to the trustees, who also have the authority to sell the team. Ellis, however, has stated repeatedly that that option is not on the table. The team will stay in the Bowlen family.

"I had the good fortune of working very closely with Pat Bowlen," Goodell said. "He was incredibly involved in league matters and I think I spoke to him almost every day. I got a real appreciation for what he contributed, but also gained a really good understanding of what was important to him and the Broncos and the way they did things was at the top of his list. He planned very carefully for the unfortunate circumstances that we're in."

The trust was established by Bowlen in the late 1990s. In 2014, he announced he would step down from his daily duties as owner because of the progression of Alzheimer's.

"He understood that he wanted the Broncos to have the best possible transition and he's established a system in Joe Ellis and the trust, who I think has done a terrific job to keep people like John Elway and others that are going to ensure that this team is still represented in this community the way Pat wanted it represented," Goodell continued. "They still work on winning and winning with class, and I think the ownership has done an excellent job, including Joe and others, of really being active in league matters. John is on the competition committee and making an enormous contribution there. Joe is on several of our committees, and I think that would make Pat proud."



# Terrell Davis to soon take his place among NFL's greatest greats

By Nicki Jhabvala

Denver Post

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Terrell Davis will never forget the moment his status as a Pro Football Hall of Famer became real — at a UPS store.

A package arrived in his name, and inside was a black bag with a familiar logo, so Davis quickly pulled out his phone and turned to the store worker.

“Dude, you gotta record this,” Davis told him.

Then Davis tore through the flat shipping box, pulled out the bag and pointed to the Haggard Clothing logo, so Mr. UPS Man could get a close-up with the carousel of greeting cards and shipping supplies in the background. A few frenzied zips later, Davis revealed the The Gold Jacket, still wrapped in plastic and awaiting its first fitting.

“I was like, ‘Man, this is special,’ ” Davis recalled. “That was a good moment.”

That moment was one of many great ones Davis has lived over the past six months, and the past 22 years since he became a Bronco. But it will probably pale in comparison to the one he'll experience Saturday evening in Canton, Ohio.

Fifteen years after retiring as a two-time Super Bowl champion and MVP, an NFL MVP, a member of the 2,000-yard club, and Denver's all-time leading rusher, Davis will take his place among football's greatest of greats and be enshrined into the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

“I think what's great about it is the story behind it,” Davis said. “It's not a typical first-round selection from a big school that's the all-time leading rusher. I was totally sort of opposite of all those things.”

“I'm glad he never took Japanese”

Davis' Hall of Fame career began in California, moved on to Georgia, launched in Japan and was headquartered in Colorado. But really, the vision was born at a small diner in Fort Lee, N.J., just over the George Washington Bridge.

It was 1994 and Neil Schwartz had lured Davis to New York hoping a city tour would help persuade the Georgia tailback, whom the Broncos had drafted in the sixth round, to sign him as his agent. The trip was capped at the Plaza Diner, where the two chatted from about 10 p.m. to 5 the next morning about life, about football, about Davis' trying senior season, about the future.

“Right before we left, I told him, ‘You're going to make it to the Hall of Fame one day, and I would love to present you,’” Schwartz said. “He looked at me like I was crazy.”

“For what it’s worth, he didn’t sign with me.”

But Davis eventually would — and for 23 years he’d remember Schwartz’s words.

On Saturday evening, Schwartz will present Davis to a crowd that will include, among many others, his former quarterback John Elway, his former coach Mike Shanahan and his best friend, former Broncos tight end Byron Chamberlain.

Chamberlain, a seventh-round pick in 1995, remembers when the two just hoped to make the practice squad. Davis screwed that up in Tokyo, where the Broncos faced the 49ers in the American Bowl. Davis wanted to quit the team that morning, believing he was wasting his time as training camp meat. But he couldn’t arrange an earlier flight, so he stuck it out.

“I’m glad he never took Japanese in college,” Chamberlain joked.

In the third quarter, with a stomach full of hot dogs, Davis made it clear he was never leaving. Tossed in on kickoff coverage, Davis pummeled 49ers kick returner Tyronne Drakeford so hard Drakeford flew back nearly three yards.

“When he stood out as much as he did in that game,” Shanahan said, “it didn’t take a genius to figure out he had just made our football team.”

But the moments that made Davis a Hall of Famer started in 1998 and carried on to ‘99, as the Broncos won two Super Bowls in large measure due to his feet.

“Back in those years, when they’re winning those Super Bowls and had those great football teams, he was the main reason why,” Elway said. “I’m thrilled that (the Hall) overcame the one thing that was keeping him out, and that was the length of career. Because while he was playing, there was nobody better.”

Certainly nobody was better in Super Bowl XXXII, a memory that will stick with Broncos fans and especially Shanahan. In the middle of the game, Davis ran to the sidelines and told his coach he couldn’t see. A migraine had set in and sapped his vision. So he trotted back on the field, blind as a bat, to stand behind the line of scrimmage and act as a decoy for a Green Bay Packers defense fully expecting Davis to run. We know how that ended: 157 rushing yards, a record three rushing touchdowns and a Super Bowl MVP award for Davis to go with the Broncos’ first world championship.

“It just showed you what type of guy he was at that time,” Shanahan said. “He couldn’t even see and he was going to go in the game anyhow to help his team win, especially in a big game like that. Those types of stories are pretty consistent with Terrell.”

“I’m going to wear it every day”

“Let me tell you about that day,” Chamberlain says. “Let me tell you about that final cut day.”

It was the summer of ‘95, and Chamberlain and Davis sat in a hotel room waiting to learn their NFL fate. Months earlier the two met for the first time at Denver International Airport. Weeks after that they

became training camp roommates in Greeley. But instantly they became the best of friends. The two had grown up blocks apart in southeast San Diego, shared many mutual friends but never crossed paths.

But on cut day, the two rookies separated and tethered to their phones, both awaiting the dreaded call to pack up their belongings, turn in their playbook and meet Shanahan for the formal farewell.

“So the entire day we’re calling each other’s rooms, every 45 minutes to an hour, to see if he’s still around or if I’m still around,” Chamberlain said. “He’s calling me, I’m calling him. Finally it got so nerve-racking I called him and he’s like, ‘Man, you’re scaring the heck out of me. We gotta quit calling each other.’”

In hindsight, perhaps that day was just preparation for a decade in the future.

In 2015, Chamberlain sat with Davis in an Arizona hotel room as waited for a call or a knock. Davis got a call, as one of the first cuts in the group of 15 Hall of Fame finalists.

In 2016, in San Francisco. Davis got another call after making it to the final 10.

In 2017, they did it once more in Houston.

“I had prepared myself sort of both ways,” Davis said. “But more so that it wouldn’t happen.”

For about than two hours, Chamberlain, Davis and the latter’s family and friends stayed cooped up in a hotel room snapping selfies, watching Davis’ two young children turn the bed into a trampoline and reflecting on their long journey.

“And we get the knock on the door, and I said, ‘You finally made it,’” Schwartz said. “He looked at me and said, ‘No, Neil. We made it.’”

Davis opened the door to see the 6-foot-9, 400-pound president of the Hall of Fame, David Baker, standing on the other side with a cameraman in tow. Davis dropped his head in tears. Schwartz threw his hands up in elation. Davis’ wife and children shouted in celebration.

For years, Davis said he didn’t need this moment to validate his career, and perhaps that’s true.

But he wanted it. Oh, he really wanted it.

On Saturday evening, it will be his as he stands on stage in that jacket from UPS to unveil the bronze bust that will stay in Canton. It’s the last stop on Davis’ career. The last chapter.

Davis’ story got its happy ending.

“I’m going to wear it every day,” Davis said. “I’m going to keep it on — that nice mustard-gold color. I’m going to do like they do with the Masters. They don’t take it off, so that’s what you’ll see. I’m going to have it on.”

# Kiszla: It makes no sense Colin Kaepernick can't find work in Denver or any other NFL city

By Mark Kiszla  
Denver Post  
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Maybe the debate in Broncos Country of "Trevor Siemian or Paxton Lynch?" is so hot because there's no real good choice. After watching these young quarterbacks struggle to find a rhythm or give coach Vance Joseph any solid reason to declare one of them the team's starter, are you telling me Colin Kaepernick couldn't come to Denver and compete for the job?

But there's a better chance you'll see 57-year-old John Elway taking snaps for the Broncos than Kaepernick in 2017.

Why?

Kaepernick is the Lord Voldemort of the NFL. He is the quarterback who must not be named ... as a potential starter or even a backup, anywhere in a league where there aren't enough competent signal-callers to go around.

So I asked commissioner Roger Goodell, who stopped by Broncos headquarters Thursday to hold a town hall with fans, if he believed the reason Kaepernick has been unable to get so much as a sniff of work in the NFL is punishment for his political activism.

"No," replied Goodell, swiftly shooting down my theory. "As far as teams are concerned, teams make a decision based on what's the best decision for them. ... And they make those decisions individually."

In other words, Goodell wasn't going to tackle the possibility Kaepernick is being blackballed. It wouldn't be prudent, and Goodell is handsomely paid to protect the NFL shield.

Doesn't that pretty much explain why nobody is willing to take a chance on Kaepernick? Rather than acknowledge he threw for 296 yards and rushed for 113 more in a game as recently as November, NFL teams would rather look right through those impressive numbers and hope Kaepernick disappears, because he put the league shield in an unfavorable light.

Yes, Kaepernick is flawed as a quarterback, and we have as proof his 28-30 career record at the professional level.

But it's also fair to mention that Kaepernick's has a lower career interception percentage (1.8) than Siemian (2.1), who's regarded as a savvy game manager. If the metric for a comparative analysis is quarterback rating, Kaepernick (88.9) also has Siemian (84.6) beat.

Kaepernick, however, evidently committed an unforgivable sin by listening to his conscience and kneeling as "The Star-Spangled Banner" played prior to San Francisco 49ers games a year ago. His peaceful protest of societal injustice against black Americans was a real turnoff to a segment of pro football viewers, according to a survey conducted by J.D. Power. Among fans who claimed they watched

less NFL on television in 2016, more than 25 percent listed the No. 1 reason for their dissatisfaction as the refusal of players such as Kaepernick and Denver linebacker Brandon Marshall to stand for the national anthem.

In fact, one of the 150 fans gathered in the Broncos' indoor practice facility for the chat with Goodell expressed his concern for declining TV ratings as a result of un-American stances by players, and he wanted to know if the league planned to do anything to address on-field protests. The tenor of the question was laced with the politics of confrontation oh-so common at the moment in the United States.

The response from Goodell surprised me. Rather than taking great pains to appease a disgruntled fan, Goodell took the opportunity to praise Marshall for advocating social change through his anthem protest.

"I believe our players should be active in their communities, because I believe they are leaders in the community. I think they have a voice and should express it. I think it's important to do it responsibly," Goodell said. "It's a great example with Brandon Marshall here, who went and worked with the police department and actually caused positive change in the community."

Marshall's anthem protest created a dialogue for positive change.

Goodell was gracious enough to stand up and praise Marshall. So why isn't one of the 32 teams in Goodell's league courageous enough to give Kaepernick a chance to play quarterback?

If Marshall is to be applauded, it makes no sense for Kaepernick to be exiled.

# Terrell Davis' top NFL moments

By Nicki Jhabvala  
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**April 23, 1995:** The Broncos selected Terrell Davis in the sixth round (No. 196) of the draft. "We just decided to take him at that time, because we had him ranked in the third round and we saw a couple runs he made at the Senior Bowl that really stood out," former Broncos coach Mike Shanahan said. "Gary Kubiak and Bobby Turner did a lot of research on him when he was in college at Georgia and the coaches really loved the guy."

**Aug. 6, 1995:** Terrell Davis solidified his place on the Broncos' roster when he leveled 49ers kick returner Tyrone Drakeford in the third quarter of the American Bowl in Tokyo. Davis attempted to leave Japan early and quit the team. "I had a weak moment where I thought that after practice, I'm out of here," Davis said. "I'm not going to wait to get back to Denver to get cut. I'm going to walk out of here. Thank God I didn't."

**Jan. 25, 1998:** Back in his hometown of San Diego, Davis played through Super Bowl XXXII with a migraine that sapped his vision. He rushed for 157 yards and a record three touchdowns as the Broncos defeated the Packers, 31-24, for the franchise's first Super Bowl title. Davis was named the game's MVP. "It showed you what type of guy he was at that time," Shanahan said.

**Dec. 27, 1998:** An otherwise meaningless game against the Seattle Seahawks to close the regular season became one for the books as Davis ran for 178 yards to reach 2,008 on the season. Mile High stadium erupted in "T-D" chants when, on his 29th carry, Davis ran for 15 yards to bring his season total to 2,008. "I've never heard them chant T.D. the way they did that night," said Davis' agent, Neil Schwartz. "It was crazy. It was just all about T.D. in that moment." Davis was named NFL MVP and offensive player of the year that season.

**Jan. 31, 1999:** Davis rushed for 102 yards in Super Bowl XXXIII against the Atlanta Falcons as the Broncos claimed their second title in as many seasons. John Elway was named Super Bowl MVP, but Davis turned in his seventh 100-yard performance out of eight playoff games. He averaged 142.5 yards in his career in the postseason.

**Oct. 3, 1999:** In a Week 4 game against the New York Jets, Davis collided with Broncos lineman Matt Lepsis while trying to make a tackle after an interception and was lost for the season with a knee injury. Davis was never the same after that injury. "I remember just all the hard work that he put into it and the energy of, 'Hey, I'm going to get this thing right and I'm going to be back to where I was,'" said Byron Chamberlain, former Broncos' tight end and friend of Davis. "Unfortunately for him and Bronco fans, it just never happened."

**Aug. 19, 2002:** Davis' career as a Bronco began in a preseason game against the 49ers and ended before a preseason game against the 49ers. Davis walked out of the tunnel for the last time Aug. 19 after announcing he would call it quits after seven seasons in the NFL. "Even though it was short it was a blessed career," Davis said.

**Sept. 23, 2007:** Davis, the Broncos' all-time leading rusher — 7,607 yards and 60 touchdowns on 1,655 carries — was inducted as the 21st member of the team's Ring of Fame.

**Feb. 4, 2017:** Davis gets the knock from Pro Football Hall of Fame president David Baker. Davis is one of seven members of the Hall's Class of 2017 and the fifth Bronco to head to Canton. "We opened the door and the camera was there and the big guy is there from the Pro Football Hall of Fame," Chamberlain said. "It was just pure elation."

# Broncos coach Vance Joseph on the latest in the starting quarterback competition

By Nick Kosmider

Denver Post

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Broncos coach Vance Joseph shot down the idea Thursday that he already has decided on a starting quarterback.

Asked by a reporter to respond to rumors that he has already made a decision between Trevor Siemian and Paxton Lynch, Joseph chuckled.

“No,” he said. “That did not happen. It’s an open competition still. No one has been told they’re the starter. We’re still evaluating these guys. Again, it’s been a grind of a week on both sides of the ball. We’re going to play our (preseason game at Chicago) next Thursday and go from there (as to) who is going to be the guy, but no one has been told.”

With the Broncos’ defense missing cornerback Aqib Talib, safety T.J. Ward, linebacker Todd Davis and nose tackle Domata Peko during a veteran rest day, Siemian and Lynch had productive stretches during Thursday’s practice.

“Them guys are out there competing, man,” Talib said of the quarterbacks. “They are going back and forth. It’s going to be a tough decision. I’m not part of the decision, so (general manager) John (Elway) and Coach Joseph and (offensive coordinator) Mike (McCoy), good luck.”

Siemian and Lynch are expected to take equal snaps with the first-team offense during the Broncos’ first scrimmage Saturday, which Joseph said will consist 36 to 40 total plays.

## Charles making strides

Jamaal Charles did Thursday what he’s often done well during his decorated career: he got lost.

Charles floated out of the backfield during an 11-on-11 session and darted up the sideline on a crisp wheel route. Paxton Lynch hit the veteran running back in stride for a big gain.

It was Charles’ second straight practice participating in full-team drills, and Joseph said he’s impressed with the strides being made by the 10-year veteran, who signed a one-year deal with the Broncos in May and is working his way back from multiple knee surgeries.

“With Jamaal getting more team reps and getting more 7-on-7 reps, you can see his playmaking ability,” Joseph said. “You could see it even today with the wheel route, as a receiver he’s going to be key for us. In my opinion, to use Jamaal in a certain role, that will help keep him healthy. If we can get 10 to 12 specialty plays per game for Jamaal — screens and wheel routes and outside runs — that’s going to make us a better football team.”

**Footnotes**

Running back Bernard Pierce (hamstring) missed practice. ... Linebackers Von Miller and Brandon Marshall, wide receiver Emmanuel Sanders and defensive end Derek Wolfe will all receive a rest day Friday.

# Quarterbacks find some rhythm as key veterans rest at Broncos camp

By Nick Kosmider  
Denver Post  
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With nearly a third of the vaunted Broncos starting defense off the field, the quarterbacks vying for the starting job had an opportunity to let it fly during Thursday's training camp practice.

Trevor Siemian and Paxton Lynch took advantage at times, leading at least four combined scoring drives that began near midfield.

Siemian began the first 11-on-11 session with the first team in impressive fashion. He completed all three of his passes, including a touchdown of roughly 15 yards to Emmanuel Sanders. Siemian also delivered a deep ball to Bennie Fowler on his third set of first-team, midfield series, a play that ended inside the 10-yard line.

Lynch began practice, the seventh of camp, by leading the second-team offense into the red zone, a drive highlighted by an on-target throw deep down the left sideline to rookie Carlos Henderson, who made several impressive catches during Thursday's practice. It was the team's fourth straight practice in full pads.

When Lynch took his turn guiding the first-team offense, he began the drive with a well-placed throw down the right sideline to running back Jamaal Charles, who snuck out of the backfield on a wheel route to make the catch.

Each of Lynch's first two drives ended in what would have been chip-shot field goals. Perhaps most importantly, neither quarterback threw an interception during full-team periods Thursday.

"It's training camp, so it's going to be some ups and downs with those guys," coach Vance Joseph said. "Everyone is still learning. Defensively, they're making plays. We have multiple pressures in, multiple coverages in. So it's the ups and downs of practice. It's a normal deal."

The longest throw of the day was made by third-team quarterback Kyle Slotter, who found the speedy Henderson down the left seam for about 40 yards. The third-round pick out of Louisiana Tech made one swift move to avoid a defensive back and then sprinted into the end zone.

"He's finally getting into NFL shape," Joseph said of Henderson. "He wasn't in great shape in the spring and early on in training camp. You can finally see the guy getting in great shape. He's figured out what to do, and that's always important for a rookie to do. But he can make plays."

Veterans Demaryius Thomas, Aqib Talib, T.J. Ward, Domata Peko, Virgil Green and Brandon McManus were held out of practice for scheduled rest. The Broncos will rest more veterans Friday.

"This is a tough week," Joseph said. "We've had pads on for the last (four practices). I'm just being smart with our veteran players who we know more about. We can rest those guys. We'll rest the other half

(Friday). We didn't want to do the entire group in one day — it would kind of affect both sides of the ball — so we split them into two groups.”

Joseph said all of the veterans will be available for Saturday's scrimmage.

Running back Bernard Pierce missed his fourth practice with a hamstring injury. Offensive guard Ron Leary and cornerback Marcus Rios, who have been nursing groin injuries, returned to practice Thursday.

# Rookie Isaiah McKenzie angling to become explosive weapon for Broncos

By Nick Kosmider  
Denver Post  
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Isaiah McKenzie shot his right arm into the air and peered toward the clouds as a football was fired out of a machine 50 yards in front of him.

The ball barreled through the air as McKenzie drifted under it. He shifted under the ball's shadow until it smacked his pads with a thud, then gripped the ball tightly between his arms and burst up the field.

Chris Gould, the Broncos assistant special teams coach, saw McKenzie fielding one punt after another following the team's practice Wednesday and offered a tweak. He showed McKenzie how to catch the ball directly in the center of his chest — as opposed to fielding it on one side of his body or the other — which would allow him to more quickly cut up the field.

So McKenzie adjusted and kept flinging his arm into the air, asking for another ball to be launched.

"All the coaches talk about the finer details," McKenzie said. "I'm starting to see that all the coaches like details. It's the small things that can make the big things happen."

McKenzie should know. The 5-foot-8, 173-pound rookie, a fifth-round pick out of Georgia, is the second-lightest player listed on the training camp roster behind Kalif Raymond (5-9, 160). Only fellow rookie De'Angelo Henderson, a 5-7 running back, is shorter than McKenzie. But McKenzie's chance to make the team rests on a big-play ability on special teams the Broncos have longed for the past few seasons.

In three seasons at Georgia, McKenzie returned five punts for touchdowns, a school record aided by the speed that allowed him to clock a 40-yard dash time at the NFL combine of 4.42 seconds.

Those numbers were appealing to the Broncos, who have had just one punt returned for a touchdown in the past three seasons and were 15th in average punt return yardage (8.5) last season.

Uncertainty exists at nearly every level of the Broncos' offense through nearly two weeks of training camp. At quarterback, offensive line, tight end, running back and wide receiver, battles wage on.

But one thing is certain: the unit would greatly benefit from improved starting field position in 2017. That makes McKenzie an intriguing player to watch.

"I'll tell you where it starts, it's with the confidence," special teams coach Brock Olivo said of McKenzie. "He wants the ball in his hands and he likes the fact that there is a (Kansas City wide receiver) Tyreek Hill in our division, a guy that he can strive to be as good as or better someday. I know he's thinking that in his head because he's very confident and I love that about him."

Hill, himself a fifth-round pick in the 2016 draft, was among the most electric players, let alone rookies, in the league last season. He scored a combined 12 touchdowns and had at least one score via reception (6), rush (3), punt return (2) and kick return (1).

Olivo sees some similarities in the two players.

“You see that, the quickness, the lateral movement, the burst, the toughness to stand in there,” Olivo said. “Again, we’ll see coming up in the first preseason game and throughout preseason just how much guts the kid has when gunners are running down in front of his face.”

McKenzie doesn’t want his contribution be limited to returning punts. Before he made his way in front of the punt machine Wednesday, McKenzie spent more than 20 minutes after practice running extra passing routes.

“Being small you have to play big,” McKenzie said. “I come out here with the mindset that I can do anything a 6-5 guy can do. I can do anything any other guy can do. With my speed, I may not be tall enough, but I know I can jump and catch the ball.”

# Top quotes and 3 Broncos players who stood out on Day 7 of training camp

By Nick Kosmider

Denver Post

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## QUOTABLES

Best lines from Broncos players and coaches:

**Aqib Talib**, CB, on secondary units on other teams referring to themselves as the No-Fly Zone: “We just laugh at it. They have no plays on tape. It’s cute. We get a good kick out of it.”

**Adam Gotsis**, DE, on the physicality of the Broncos’ offensive line: “We’re way more physical up front. These guys are taking pride in running the ball. That’s what we need and it’s good that you’ve got a great defense to go up against and compete with every day. I think these guys are really taking pride in that and I think you guys have seen how physical they’re being at the point of attack and how well they’re protecting the quarterback.”

**Bennie Fowler**, WR, on wearing full pads in four straight practices: “I like it. It makes it more game-like. It’s the grind; it’s camp. It makes you mentally tough, so I appreciate it.”

## NOTABLES

Players who stood out, for better or worse:

**Carlos Henderson**: The rookie wide receiver had his best practice of training camp. The third-round pick out of Louisiana Tech made two long catches down the left sideline and made a few other impressive grabs during 1-on-1 and 7-on-7 drills.

**Chris Harris**: With fellow No-Fly Zone teammates Aqib Talib and T.J. Ward resting, Harris picked up the slack for the secondary. He intercepted Paxton Lynch in the end zone during 7-on-7 drills and broke up another pass during a full-team series.

**Emmanuel Sanders**: He began the practice with two catches on the opening drive, including a touchdown grab from Trevor Siemian on which he made a whip-quick cut after catching the ball to elude a defensive back.

# Terrell Davis considers Gold Jacket versus bronze bust

By Mike Klis

9 News

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There are two material things – one a fabric, the other an alloy -- that represent forever elite. Terrell Davis may have to live a while before he can truly appreciate which means more.

Is the culmination of a great running back career with the Denver Broncos the Gold Jacket he will receive Friday or the bronze bust of his likeness he will be handed Saturday?

“That’s a tough one, man,” Davis told 9News Thursday prior to getting introduced at the Hall of Fame Game here. “I think the symbolism of the Gold Jacket is something people relate to more. That’s something you can wear around. It’s not kept in a holy place.

“But when you walk into that room with all those busts, you know that room is special. I don’t know what it feels like yet but I’m guessing that bust is where the immortality part of it sets in.

“And then you put it in perspective that in the room with all these greats, you’re like, Wow. And to think you’re in the same club.”

Greatness is achieved either by being great for a short time or good for a long time. Davis was great for a short time with a bonus: Those four brief but highly productive years included the best career postseason rushing performance in NFL history.

And so Davis was hanging out Thursday as the likes of Marcus Allen, Eric Dickerson, Jim Kelly, Tim Brown, Bruce Smith and Lawrence Taylor came up to give him welcome-to-fraternity handshakes and hugs.

“I’ve been catching up with a lot of guys at the hotel,” Davis said. “Yesterday I ran into Cris Carter and hung out with him. Everybody is giving me advice. They know what it feels like and they’re trying to make you feel comfortable. They tell me every step of the way it just gets better and better but they say you’re really not going to feel it until you get that Gold Jacket (Friday). That’s when it’s going to hit you like a ton of bricks.”

He will be the fifth Broncos to receive one, following John Elway (class of 2004), Gary Zimmerman (2008), Floyd Little (2010) and Shannon Sharpe (2011).

“I’m rested. I’m rested up,” Davis said. “I’ve just been with family. My family’s in town so I’ve just been hanging with them. This is the start of it.”

And then one by one, the Hall of Fame alumni came up to greet him.

“You see all these Hall of Famers here? I’m now one of them,” Davis said. “We’ve got Warren Moon, Jim Kelly, Morten Andersen – we’ve got Morten Andersen! And uncle Jerry (Jones)! It’s awesome. And little ol’ me in the middle of alllll these Hall of Famers.”

# Goodell meets with Broncos fans

By Aaron Matas

9 News

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It's an exciting time of year for the everyone and that includes the league's top dog.

"There's hope for every fan that their team is going to win the Super Bowl," NFL commissioner Roger Goodell said.

Goodell stopped by Broncos Training Camp on Thursday. He spent a few minutes after practice meeting with fans and fielding some questions. Of course the topic of head injuries came up.

"One thing that is clear among the medical community is that we have a lot more questions than we have valid answers to," Goodell said.

He pointed to the fact that the league is funding studies and continuing to research the long term effects of hits to the head.

"What we're learning in our sport is helping other sports," Goodell said. "I have 16-year-old twin girls who are playing sports. There's a debate about whether they wear a helmet in lacrosse. I bet you five years from now they'll look back on that and say 'they're all wearing helmets, how were they not wearing helmets'."

There is a new helmet coming out this year called the ZERO1 from VICIS that is supposedly the safest ever created. The league wants to innovate beyond equipment as well.

"We have talked about the size of the field. The CFL (Canadian Football League) has a larger field. It's wider and longer. It has a dramatic change on the game and I guess I'd start with, we think our game is the greatest game in the world," Goodell said.

He hinted at small changes as opposed to sweeping ones. The goal is to continue to make the game safer and more competitive. Goodell also spoke about the Broncos.

"I had the great fortune of working very closely with Pat Bowlen," Goodell said. "He was incredibly involved with league matters and I think I spoke to him almost everyday. I got a really good appreciation of what he contributed but I also got an understanding of what was important to him."

Goodell said Bowlen planned very carefully for the "unfortunate situation that we are in", referring to Pat's battle with Alzheimer's Disease. He's happy with the way things are working under Bowlen's trust and Joe Ellis.

"The Broncos are in compliance. They're actually really well run," Goodell said. "Our membership is very happy with that and it's consistent with what Pat wanted."

It's always nerve racking when the bosses boss is in town, but that's a solid review from the league commissioner.

# Meet the artist behind the Terrell Davis Hall of Fame bust

By Nick Hehemann, Brian Olson and John Kuhrt

9 News

August 4, 2017

It's hard to truly capture the career of a pro football Hall of Famer. All the amazing moments, broken records and legendary plays are practically a work of art. That's why only the most talented sculptors get to help immortalize the NFL's best.

Legendary Broncos Running Back Terrell Davis gets enshrined into the Hall of Fame on Saturday. There, he'll receive his very own "bronze bust" portrait, which will live forever in Canton with those of all the other all-time greats.

And, nestled within the Provo, Utah mountain range works a man named Ben Hammond, who is responsible for the masterpiece.

"It becomes a joy to pursue perfection as you try to create something iconic," Hammond said. "You want people to say, 'wow'."

Hammond is a sculptor who has made portrait busts for the pro football Hall of Fame since 2007. This year, he was in charge of making the bronzed resemblance of TD.

He recently met up with Davis in a Los Angeles hotel room for a Hall of Fame modeling session to make sure he got the portrait just right.

"What really sets it off is getting it right in the beginning," Hammond said. "If you don't get it right it's like putting lipstick on a pig. If it's not right, it's out of whack."

Getting to see the former running back in person not only helps with the accuracy of the portrait. It also helps the two get to know each other really well.

"We talked about his ancestry and DNA," Hammond said. "Every culture and race has a different bone structure."

Even Davis' family members had input on how the bust was coming together.

"Wives are always good with things like the mouth, lips and chin," Hammond said. "They are nervous about criticizing my work, but I want it so I can get it right. They know what he looks like more than I do."

After the initial meeting, Hammond went back to Utah to put on the finishing touches for the clay bust. Once that's done with, it's on to the foundry, where the bronzed bust will go through an evolution similar to Davis' magnificent football career.

"They will pour molten bronze into this cup (at the bottom of the clay bust), and it will be distributed through wax tubes, and then to the rest of the head," Hammond said. "Then the bronze will cool, and they'll break the outer shell off. Then you'll have an exact copy, in bronze, of Terrell's head."

TD's legacy is remarkable, from winning a super bowl MVP, to becoming a two-time world champion and eclipsing the 2,000 yard mark.

It's only fitting that his bronze bust is just as impressive.

# Carrie Underwood's new SNF intro will feature Von Miller

By Jon Heath

9 News

August 4, 2017

Country music singer Carrie Underwood will return to perform “Oh, Sunday Night” before Sunday Night Football games on NBC this fall.

Underwood will debut 2017’s version of the song when the Dallas Cowboys host the New York Giants on Sept. 7, the first Sunday Night Football contest of the season. Before that, NBC will air a “sneak preview” of this year’s intro when the Minnesota Vikings host the San Francisco 49ers in preseason play on Aug. 27.

And even before the “sneak preview” could come a teaser on Thursday evening when the Cowboys face the Arizona Cardinals in the Hall of Fame game, which kicks off the 2017 NFL preseason (airing on NBC!)

Denver Broncos linebacker Von Miller is among ten NFL players that will join Underwood in the SNF intro this year. In addition to Miller, the following players recorded the intro at Universal Studios Hollywood in June:

- Pittsburgh Steelers WR Antonio Brown
- Oakland Raiders QB Derek Carr
- New England Patriots LB Dont’a Hightower
- Kansas City Chiefs TE Travis Kelce
- Atlanta Falcons WR Julio Jones
- Oakland Raiders LB Khalil Mack
- Arizona Cardinals CB Patrick Peterson
- New York Giants DE Jason Pierre-Paul
- Dallas Cowboys QB Dak Prescott

# Aqib Talib relishes role as elder statesman of Broncos defense

By Jeff Legwold

ESPN

August 4, 2017

If anything, Aqib Talib knows people think of him a certain way.

Perhaps they've seen the video of him as he hung a gold chain around the neck of former Denver Broncos defensive coordinator Wade Phillips and announced "we be drippin'" as the two laughed together. Or his postgame promise in Tennessee to "beat his ass" after he was angered by a low hit by Tennessee Titans wide receiver Harry Douglas on teammate Chris Harris Jr.

Or perhaps it's some of the off-field issues Talib has had in his career, including missing the Broncos' trip to the White House a little over a year ago because he had suffered a gunshot wound to his leg. It's all there as Talib now finds himself to be something of an elder statesman on the Broncos' roster.

He's 31 and headed for his 10th NFL season. Nose tackle Domata Peko, at 32, is the only Broncos defensive player older than Talib, and Peko just arrived in March via free agency.

"I kind of like that oldest guy on D right now," Talib said. "That's true, can't hide from that, but I feel great. I think I'm better as a person and I'm better as a player. I didn't used to do the right things, but now I know, I take advantage of everything, all the resources they have here, to be better."

Talib's voice is distinctive, in pitch and in delivery, and it's easy to know when he has entered a conversation. He's opinionated, funny and a more-than-willing participant in any verbal jousting.

But somewhere in all of that is the football mentality usually reserved for those who played before the internet was a part of daily life. Former Broncos coach Gary Kubiak consistently said that was one of the most surprising things about Talib.

"I knew of Aqib from watching him play, from other coaches, so you knew that part of it," Kubiak said. "But what I didn't know is how he looked at the game, how he understands so much about what goes on and how hard he practices every day. It's a mindset he has. I didn't know that."

Talib says he feels he's like an old-school football guy.

"When I was 7 years old, I knew the whole Dallas Cowboys offensive line," Talib said. "I'm just a real fan, a real fan of the game and sometimes it comes out."

Talib was part of the Broncos' free agency binge of 2014; safety T.J. Ward, former Broncos outside linebacker DeMarcus Ware and wide receiver Emmanuel Sanders were the others signed that offseason. At that time, Talib was considered a gifted player who had found some trouble off the field but flashed dominant, elite play.

Since his arrival in Denver, he has made three of his four career Pro Bowl trips and won a Super Bowl ring. He also has shown a throwback approach to the game at times.

He has been overheard, on the practice field, giving long explanations to some of the younger Broncos about the importance of line play in the team's fortunes. Not interceptions, not glamour throws by the quarterback, but line play.

"Hey man, that wins games for you," Talib said. "You can show your experience in the game, your love in the game and you pay attention to those things. You look and those guys who have the tough O-lines, tough D-lines, running the ball, who played D later in the season, those are the guys winning the championships."

Broncos coach Vance Joseph, a longtime defensive backs coach as an NFL assistant, said Talib "has that attitude."

"He understands the game, knows the game, plays with instinct and knowledge," Joseph said. "And what [Kubiak] said is right, he practices as hard as any player I've been around. All those guys in our secondary, they come prepared every day to push everybody around them."

Talib has yet to play 16 games in a season and was dealing with a back injury as 2016 drew to a close. But he said he has been far more aware of how he goes about his job than he was as a young player.

And that, as he heads into the fourth year of the six-year deal he signed with the Broncos, allows him to keep fighting the career clock, something about which he never used to worry.

"When I first got in the league I was just happy to have a lot of money, to do whatever I wanted to do," Talib said. "I wasn't getting a lot of sleep, I used to get hurt late in the season because all I did was stay out late, fried food and all that.

"That ain't going to work for a long time; you have to come to that thinking, man. I definitely feel like this team can win a lot of games and I want to play with these guys and win a lot of games for as long as possible."

# Scrimmage is next benchmark for Broncos' quarterbacks

By Jeff Legwold

ESPN

August 4, 2017

When Vance Joseph was asked Thursday if a decision had been made in the Denver Broncos' quarterback competition and if the quarterbacks themselves had been told of the decision, the Broncos' coach didn't nod his head or shrug his shoulders and didn't look confused.

Instead, he just laughed. And then he put that thought to rest.

"No, that has not happened at all," Joseph said. " ... No one has been told they're the starter, [we're] still evaluating these guys."

It has been a popular narrative on the airwaves in and around Denver in recent days that the Broncos had already made their decision at quarterback between Trevor Siemian and Paxton Lynch. The Broncos have split the work with the starting offense evenly between the two and Joseph has consistently said he wants to see Siemian and Lynch in more game-like conditions, like the preseason games and the joint practices with the San Francisco 49ers, before a decision gets made.

The Broncos' preseason opener is next Thursday night in Chicago.

"Again, it's been a grind every week on both sides of the ball," Joseph said after Thursday's practice. "We're going to play our game next Thursday and we'll go from there on who's going to be the guy. Nobody has been told yet."

Each quarterback has had some moments when he looks like the starter, but for the most part the offense remains behind the defense in terms of overall play. But the offense is also installing a new playbook while the defense is in its third season with the foundation of the playbook.

Joseph said the quarterbacks haven't made more mistakes than other players, it's just everybody believes they know the quarterbacks' mistakes when they see them.

"It's training camp, so you're going to see some ups and downs with those guys. Everyone is still learning. Defensively, they're making plays. We have multiple coverages in. We have multiple pressures in. It's the ups and downs of practice. It's a normal deal. But again, with the quarterbacks -- his mistakes are big ones. When a corner makes one or a linebacker makes one, nobody really recognizes that on that scale."

Siemian and Lynch will get a chance to show what they can do Saturday when Joseph has scheduled a scrimmage. Joseph said the first-, second- and third-team offenses will get about 12 plays each against the first-, second- and third-team defenses respectively.

He said Siemian and Lynch will each get about six plays with the first-team offense.

"When you say scrimmage, it should tweak a player to say 'OK, my best is needed,'" Joseph said. "That's why you say scrimmage."

Joseph said the first- and second-team offensive lines have played well enough that he believed the quarterbacks would be able to show what they can do with both lines.

"We have two pretty good groups ... Our two lines are pretty good right now," Joseph said. "So, I feel pretty good about those guys playing with 1s and 2s."

# Broncos' defense keeps the heat on Broncos' quarterbacks

By Jeff Legwold

ESPN

August 4, 2017

Every day, every practice, every throw is part of the Denver Broncos' competition at quarterback between Trevor Siemian and Paxton Lynch. Here's a closer look at their day:

## Trevor Siemian

Siemian opened with the starters Thursday and had some of his best moments in terms of accuracy and overall rhythm in the offense in the first smattering of practice periods. He tapered off some by the end of the workout. But, overall, he continues to rebound more quickly from mistakes than Lynch does in practice, including Thursday when Siemian made a quality throw to wide receiver Marlon Brown right after he had tossed an interception in a drill.

**Wow moment:** Siemian had a well-timed throw to tight end Jeff Heurman as Heurman crossed through the middle of the field in team drills. Siemian also had a quality toss to Emmanuel Sanders up the left sideline early on in practice.

**Whoa moment:** Siemian was intercepted in 7-on-7 when he elected to try to jam the ball into coverage. And whether it's trying to find a comfort level in a new offense or not, Siemian still hasn't shown the big-play flair he did last summer.

## Paxton Lynch

Lynch opened with the second team Thursday and, as has been his way thus far in camp, he continued to flash his arm strength on one play and then flash his troubles with accuracy in the middle of the field. After practice, coach Vance Joseph said the Broncos need to see "more plays being made back-to-back-to-back" by Lynch.

**Wow moment:** Lynch found rookie Carlos Henderson for a big play up the left sideline in team drills and later in practice made a quality adjustment against the rush to get the ball to running back C.J. Anderson on the right side.

**Whoa moment:** Lynch had another pass batted down in drills -- that's five in two days -- and he tried to power a ball past cornerback Chris Harris Jr. and wasn't successful as Harris snatched the ball before it reached the intended target.

# First to 30 sacks? What it will take to shatter pass-rushing record

By Bill Barnwell

ESPN

August 4, 2017

Khalil Mack and Von Miller may play for bitter rivals in the AFC West, but they have one thing in common: a goal. Both Mack and Miller suggested this week that they're trying to become the first player in NFL history to rack up 30 sacks in a season.

It's a monumental feat -- the league record is currently the 22.5 sacks racked up by Michael Strahan in 2001. Justin Houston came within a half-sack of the record in 2014, while J.J. Watt is the only player in league history to rack up 20-plus sacks multiple times.

The two dominant edge rushers both think it's possible, and they know a lot more about getting after quarterbacks than I do. What does the evidence tell us, though? Will we see somebody produce a 30-sack campaign in the near future? And who has the best shot of pulling it off?

## The atmosphere

The conditions would have to be perfect for anyone to even get close to 30 sacks. To establish a possibility for a 30-sack campaign, our ideal pass-rusher would need the following:

**He'll have to stay healthy for a 16-game season.** It's hard enough to get to 30 sacks in 16 games; it isn't going to happen in 15. If the league expands to an 18-game schedule in the future, 30 sacks becomes far more plausible. Our guy will also have to stay on the field for as many downs as possible.

**He has to face a ton of pass attempts.** You can't sack the quarterback when he's handing the ball off to somebody else. With the move toward a pass-first offense and faster tempos, the game is making this easier than ever. The past four seasons have been the four most pass-happy campaigns in NFL history. Successful teams are more likely to face huge passing totals by virtue of their opponents trying to catch up, so we're probably looking for someone on a playoff contender.

**He has to play in an era in which sacks are relatively easy to get.** Unfortunately, this isn't that era. While passing is up, the sack rate on those passes is down dramatically from years past. Only 5.8 percent of pass plays turned into sacks last season, the lowest yearly rate for which the league has official data.

**He needs to be the best pass-rusher on his team by a considerable margin.** As pleasant as it seems to have a second great pass-rusher taking some of the offense's attention away, it's going to be difficult to get to 30 sacks when there's another defender with a real shot at beating you to the quarterback. Of the 11 seasons in which a player racked up 20 or more sacks since it became an official statistic, just two came with another defender on the same team producing 10 or more sacks. It's gotta be a one-man show.

**He needs a ton of hits.** The fundamental building block of sacks are quarterback knockdowns, which are recorded separately by the league. Players with a disproportionately high ratio of sacks to hits fall back

to earth the following season, while those pass-rushers who rack up a ton of hits without sacks improve the following campaign.

**He needs to get lucky.** The typical star pass-rusher -- a defender with 20 or more hits in a given season -- will turn 45 percent of his hits into sacks. The guys with 30 hits or more since 2006 (the point at which the NFL started reliably recording hit data) turned 40 percent of their hits into sacks, suggesting that the sack rate will continue to fall as players rack up more hits.

One defender looms as the most plausible option by a significant margin: Watt, who is the only edge rusher over the past decade to post the sort of numbers needed to sniff this record.

With 11 years of data, Watt has four seasons with 40 hits or more and two seasons with 50 or more knockdowns. No one else has even one 40-hit season to their name. He also managed to turn nearly 50 percent of his hits into sacks during the 2012 season, when his 43 hits produced 20.5 sacks (47.7 percent). As good as Mack and Miller have been, if Watt returns to the form we saw before last year's back surgery that caused him to miss 13 games, he's our guy.

### **The perfect case**

Watt is the right player, but he's not in the right world to pull off a 30-sack season. The Texans won the AFC South, but they weren't dominant enough or playing at a fast enough pace to see a lot of passes last season; the 553 pass plays their defense faced in 2016 were the second fewest in the league. Whitney Mercilus and Jadeveon Clowney are effective pass-rushers who will push Watt for sacks, and as Watt recovers from back surgery, the Texans might not want to push him to play virtually every defensive snap.

So, let's create the ideal situation and estimate Watt's chances. The Falcons faced a league-high 689 pass plays last season, so let's work with that number. He can't suit up for every snap, but during the 2014 season, Watt was on the field for 93.3 percent of Houston's defensive plays. So let's say he gets 643 chances to sack the quarterback.

Watt's best sack rate as a pro is actually from his breakout 2012 season, when he took down opposing passers 3.6 percent of the time. At that rate, his typical season would produce 23.1 sacks, which would be the NFL record. Using the binomial distribution, we can find that the chances of Watt racking up 30 or more sacks in a single season under ideal conditions are 9.3 percent. Not impossible.

Of course, that's a season in which everything goes right. We're assuming that teams would even be willing to throw that much against a player as disruptive as Watt, or that his performance wouldn't slip given a remarkably high usage rate. Given Watt's production rates and Houston's actual pass attempt totals, the best chance he has had at a 30-sack campaign was in 2012, and that topped out at 2.7 percent.

Mack hasn't come close to sniffing 30 sacks -- he racked up 15 sacks on 602 pass plays for a 2.5 percent sack rate in 2015, his best campaign. That generates a 30-sack probability of 0.04 percent. Miller's 18.5-sack season in 2013 was good for a sack rate of 3.3 percent, in line with Watt's second-best campaign. Facing 563 pass plays, the Broncos star had just a 0.8 percent shot at racking up 30 takedowns.

### **The leap**

It's going to be really tough to jump from 22.5 sacks to 30, even under the best conditions. It would also be virtually unprecedented in terms of how far it would move the goalposts. Records usually trickle slowly upward, with the new mark beating the old record by a few yards here or a touchdown there. They don't leap forward very often.

Thirty sacks wouldn't just set a new record; it would obliterate the old one by 33 percent. As good as Watt is, it might take somebody we've never seen before to come out of nowhere and totally change our perceptions of what a player is capable of doing at his position. Players did this in the 1940s and '50s as the game was evolving rapidly, but in the modern era, even once-in-a-generation stars like Jim Brown haven't been able to move the needle as quickly as a pass-rusher would need to in order to go from 22.5 sacks to 30.

There is one exception, though. One post-merger player dramatically improved on the previously established record set for a prominent counting statistic. Entering the 1984 season, Y.A. Tittle held the NFL record for most passing touchdowns in a single season with 36, a figure he'd posted during the 1963 campaign. (George Blanda had also thrown for 36 touchdowns two years earlier in the AFL.)

In his first full season as a starting quarterback, though, Dan Marino blew that record to smithereens. The Hall of Famer racked up 48 passing touchdowns during a stunning season in 1984, eclipsing the previous record by ... 33.3 percent. It's incredibly unlikely that another player will do that and rewrite the record books for sacks, but it's not impossible, either.

# NFL commissioner: Kaepernick isn't being blackballed

By Arnie Stapleton  
Associated Press  
August 4, 2017

NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell says teams aren't blackballing [Colin Kaepernick](#) for kneeling during the national anthem last year.

"No, teams make decisions (based) on what's in the best interest of their team ... and they make those decisions individually," Goodell said Thursday following his appearance at a forum with about 200 fans at the Denver Broncos' indoor practice facility.

Kaepernick, who opted out of his contract with the 49ers on March 3, has drawn interest from Seattle and Baltimore but remains unemployed a year after throwing for 16 touchdowns and four interceptions in 11 games. Several teams have signed lesser backups without giving Kaepernick a call.

Goodell demurred when asked if he thought Kaepernick should be in the league based strictly on his talent.

"There are other people who make those evaluations and that's a decision that those teams all make individually," Goodell said. "It's not one that I would make as a commissioner."

Kaepernick drew significant backlash last year after kneeling during the national anthem and saying he could not show pride in a flag of a country that he believes oppresses blacks and other minorities.

During the forum, one fan suggested Kaepernick's prolonged protest was the reason for the decline in the NFL's television ratings last year.

Goodell responded by saying TV ratings are down across sports and entertainment because of changing viewership patterns and methods. He also said he encourages players to be "active in their communities because I think they are leaders in their communities, I think they have a voice and they should express it. And I think it's important for them to do it responsibly."

Goodell used Broncos linebacker Brandon Marshall as a good example.

Marshall, who was a teammate of Kaepernick's at Nevada, knelt for seven games then ended his protest after Denver police changed their use-of-force policy.

On other topics, Goodell said:

—Just like the public's view of gambling has evolved, so, too, has its view of marijuana to fight pain but the issue is a medical one.

"We've just proposed to our union in the last month or so that we'll put some research money behind that to see how we can implement that if there really is these kind of advancements and it can address pain management in an effective and safe fashion," Goodell said.

—He doesn't believe the restrictions on padded practices during training camp and the regular season have eroded the overall quality of play.

"No, I don't. You know you look at these guys," he said, pointing to Von Miller and Emmanuel Sanders seated beside him. "It used to be decades ago that we used to have six preseason games. Training camp was 10 or 12 weeks, double sessions every day. These guys take care of themselves every day. They're never out of shape and I think that comes with their professional approach to the game.

"And from my standpoint, the rules have been very healthy. Coaches like to coach, right? But every team has the same rules. Every team has the same restrictions, the same limitations and they have learned to coach them quicker, they've learned to coach them more efficiently."

—He doubts the government will get involved and try to regulate football like it does boxing after a recent study showed that more than 100 former NFL players had chronic traumatic encephalopathy . The brain disease can cause memory loss, depression, violent mood swings and other cognitive and behavioral issues in those exposed to repetitive head trauma.

"We need a lot more research and I think we have led the way on that," Goodell said. "We've led not only on research but we've led on rule changes to our game. We've led on awareness to the injuries. We've led on how we can make new equipment that will make our game safer for our players."

He mentioned the NFL's funding of research and development for a new helmet, the VICIS Zero1, that's coming out this year which will better protect players from concussions.

"So I think because of that leadership, because we've taken the responsibility to manage the game, manage the health and safety of our players, that is going to be seen as, 'Hey, they're doing the right things. ...'" Goodell said.

# Broncos' Joseph sees scrimmage as key step in QB evaluation

By Troy Renck  
KMGH  
August 4, 2017

Even fake games can create real impressions.

Vance Joseph dismissed idea he has decided on a starting quarterback, pointing to Saturday's scrimmage as the next key step in the evaluation. Trevor Siemian played well Thursday, exhibiting sharpness lacking in some of the previous seven days. Paxton Lynch showed flashes, but made mistakes. For those keeping score at home -- you know who you are -- my tablet reads: Siemian 3 wins, Lynch 2, and two draws. The lack of separation places more emphasis on the scrimmage and, perhaps most importantly, the first two preseason games at Chicago, a week from today, and at San Francisco.

"It's training camp," Joseph said. "There are going to be ups and downs. Nobody has been told they're the starter."

The quarterbacks experienced less of a mixed bag Thursday, making better decisions with the ball. Neither quarterback threw an interception during team period. Siemian connected on a touchdown pass, while Lynch did not.

Joseph offered a glimpse into his decision-making process when discussing both quarterbacks Thursday.

"I think Trevor has been solid. He hasn't done a lot of huge error stuff I should say. He's been Trevor," Joseph said of Siemian, who went 8-6 last season as a first-year starter. "He's been consistent."

Joseph told me Siemian need not change his who he is. The external narrative developing is that he needs to be more outgoing, bold.

"It's not based on his personality. He's making the reads and and the ball goes there. I never talked to him about his personality," Joseph said. "He is playing the position, calling the plays, making the reads and (knowing) where the ball should go and that's where it goes."

Lynch continues to display striking athleticism. He has a big arm, and gains yards with his feet. Consistency, however, has been elusive over the first week of camp. Joseph stressed he has no problem with Lynch pulling the ball down and taking off, even in 7-on-7 drills.

"We want Paxton to have as many natural reps as possible, so when he takes off and runs I like it," Joseph said. "I don't want him to sit back there and make a bad decision. His deal right now is to put good plays together back-to-back. That's what we want from Paxton right now. You can see his playmaking ability. He can scramble. We want more plays being made back-to-back."

The plan for Saturday's scrimmage calls for Siemian and Lynch to split 24 total reps between the first and second-teams. Thus six plays apiece with starters and six plays each with the twos.

At a fan forum Thursday, president of football operations John Elway said Joseph will make the choice on the quarterback. Elway, however, believes the offensive line, in particular, has improved which will help the offense regardless of who is under center.

"The thing I have been happy with about camp is our offensive line play. It's gotten a lot better and a lot more physical," Elway said. "If you compete up front it's going to make it a lot easier for those guys. And we still have a lot of time left. Until we get into games we don't know what kind of steps we've made and what we have.

# Terrell Davis' persistence, impact carried him to the Hall of Fame

By Jeffri Chadiha

NFL.com

August 4, 2017

It's probably fitting that Terrell Davis is going into the Pro Football Hall of Fame in this manner. He nearly gave up on football during his rookie season because his chances of making the Denver Broncos were literally remote. Injuries also plagued Davis so much that he wound up playing just seven NFL seasons. So waiting 11 years to be elected to the Hall feels like the appropriate ending to his fairy-tale story, especially because perseverance always defined his professional career.

If numbers were the only means of determining how great Davis was, then he likely wouldn't be preparing an induction speech today. His 7,607 career rushing yards don't even place him among the top 50 runners in league history. That narrative changes when you talk about the players who excelled at making the biggest plays at the most crucial of moments. Davis went from being a no-name longshot to being both a league and Super Bowl MVP, all because he had a knack for elevating his game when the stakes were highest.

Davis isn't being immortalized because he was prolific. It's happening because he was clutch.

"My regular season stats were good, but I don't know if I'd be here if that's all I had going for me," Davis said. "I needed everything I could muster to get to this point, because I'm a unique case. I think a huge part of this is what I did in the postseason, and that's something that I'm proudest of. When the lights came on, I performed."

What makes Davis unique is that he did so much in such a short amount of time. He is one of just six players to ever rush for more than 1,000 career yards in the postseason. He joins John Riggins as the only other player to gain at least 100 yards in his first four playoff games, and Davis also earned MVP honors in Super Bowl XXXII (as he ran for 157 yards and a Super Bowl-record three rushing touchdowns while briefly battling a migraine). Oh yeah, Davis followed that season by rushing for 2,008 yards in 1998, a performance that helped lead the Broncos to a second consecutive Super Bowl victory.

Those numbers only partly tell the story of Davis. It wasn't just what he did but the way he produced that stirs the memory. He was the perfect fit in Denver's running attack because he ran decisively, with a certainty of his destination and a faith in the men around him doing their jobs. Davis darted when others danced, capitalizing on every block around him and often times leaving frustrated defenders grasping at air in his wake.

Davis likely ran with such conviction because his career started with an undeniable sense of urgency. He came to Denver as a sixth-round pick out of Georgia in 1995, a player who ran for just 1,269 yards in his final two years of college and who had a reputation for being injury-prone. Davis also didn't do much to impress the Broncos during his first few months with the team as a rookie. His disillusionment at his lack of opportunities hit such a low that he contemplated quitting when the team traveled to Tokyo for a preseason game with the San Francisco 49ers.

Davis didn't merely alter his career by sticking it out. He opened plenty of eyes by cracking 49ers return man Tyronne Drakeford on a second-half kickoff tackle that has become legendary within the Broncos organization. That play served as the first striking example of why Davis is now heading to the Hall. When all seemed lost -- and he had plenty of reasons to give up -- he seized the moment and showed the world what ultimately made him special.

Even when Davis was piling up impressive numbers (the 56 touchdowns he scored in his first four seasons are more than any modern-era running back currently in the Hall amassed during that same time frame) along with continual honors (he was named first-team All-Pro three times and league MVP in 1998), Davis never forgot the importance of being a great teammate.

"What drove me every year was knowing we had something special in Denver and wanting to get to that big game in February," Davis said. "If you look at the big games I had in the year I ran for 2,000 yards, I didn't care about the numbers. I left some games in the third quarter or at halftime. The people who know me knew I didn't care about anything but winning."

Davis still feels a strong sense of pride in being part of a Broncos team that boasted plenty of greatness on its roster. Three of his former teammates already have busts in Canton -- offensive tackle Gary Zimmerman, tight end Shannon Sharpe and quarterback John Elway -- and Davis is lobbying for center Tom Nalen and wide receiver Rod Smith to join the party. Davis also is entering the Hall with a class that includes some other men who had special circumstances surrounding their playing days. Kenny Easley's career was cut short by a severe kidney disease that forced him into retirement after seven years, while Kurt Warner spent half of his 12 NFL seasons either splitting time or plagued by injuries.

Davis can relate, because health problems cursed him as well. He played in just four games in 1999 after tearing the ACL and MCL in his right knee and appeared in only 13 games the following two seasons before retiring in 2002.

"Just think about this class," Davis said. "Kenny Easley only played for seven years, so his situation is unique. Kurt has a unique story of his own. It just goes to show you that maybe voters being caught up on how long a guy played is becoming a thing of the past. It's really about the kind of impact you had while you were out there."

That ultimately will be how Davis is best remembered. He admits that there were plenty of days when he questioned if the voters would appreciate him enough to select him into the Hall. Davis was first eligible for induction in 2007, and it took him seven seasons just to reach the finalist stage. When he received that call in 2014, he literally had to pull his car over to the side of the road because the excitement had overwhelmed him.

Davis was even more emotional when he finally made the cut in February. When David Baker, the executive director of the Pro Football Hall of Fame, delivered the good news on the evening before Super Bowl LI, Davis wept before hugging both Baker and his family. There have been numerous other men who've waited years to receive such an honor. Few have traveled a path as extraordinary -- or filled with as many road blocks -- as the one that led Davis here.

So Davis goes into the Hall the same way he became a star in the NFL, with an unyielding faith and a flare for the dramatic. He won't have the most jaw-dropping highlights, and his numbers surely won't

blow people's minds. What Davis will have, however, is the knowledge that he shined brightest when the spotlight found him. That quality alone was enough to make him one of the best to ever play the game.

# Are Von Miller, Khalil Mack in race for 30 sacks?

By Connor Orr

NFL.com

August 4, 2017

The race is on for 30 sacks.

Raiders quarterback Derek Carr's prediction (for the second year in a row) that Khalil Mack would register 30 sacks in a season seems to have touched off a legitimate discussion about the number between the two NFL players most capable of reaching that outrageous milestone.

Both Mack and Broncos pass rusher Von Miller talked about not only breaking Michael Strahan's record of 22.5 sacks in a season, but beating it by 7.5 sacks.

"I think it is doable," Miller said Wednesday, via ESPN.com.

And Mack?

"That's the number I shoot for, but I didn't want [Carr] to tell everybody else," Mack told ESPN.com. "But at the same time, D.C., he knows how hard we work, what kind of work we put in, and he knows what I want.

"Realistically, we just want to get the record at least. At least."

Miller seems to have it all worked out, game-by-game.

"You've got to come out, you've got to get 10 in that first month," Miller said. "You've got to get 10 in that first month, which is doable. You get two and a half, two and a half the next game and two and a half the next game after that. Then you might miss one game, and then you get two and a half, then you've got 10 in five games right there. Then if you go three, two, three, it's definitely doable."

For reference, Miller topped out at 18.5 sacks back in 2012. Mack's largest single-season number was 15.

While this is fun to talk about, it's akin to a baseball player smashing Barry Bonds' ridiculous single-season home run record. I'm being careful not to take anything away from Strahan's accomplishments, but NFL quarterbacks get rid of the football faster and are blanketed by more sophisticated protection schemes than they were back in 2002.

However, one could also argue that the offensive line talent has declined since Strahan's era and that the Giants defensive end faced more consistent talent across the board.

Either way, it would take one of the most creative efforts in the history of defensive coordinating to make this happen. It would also take an unusually healthy season for an every-down player.

That all being said, if anyone is going to do it, the safe money is on either Miller or Mack. Miller almost single-handedly destroyed the league's best offense en route to a Super Bowl MVP award in 2015. Mack will soon be paid like the best defensive player in the league. Could either of them go down in NFL history as unquestionably the greatest?

# Broncos Training Camp Day 7 Takeaways: Getting set for the Saturday practice

By Andrew Mason  
Denverbroncos.com  
August 4, 2017

Head Coach Vance Joseph explains why he's calling it a "scrimmage" ... and also talks about how Carlos Henderson has stepped up his game in recent days.

There's a reason why Head Coach Vance Joseph keeps throwing around the word "scrimmage" to describe Saturday's work: He wants to separate it from the rest of the practices to extract something more from his players.

"When you say 'scrimmage,' it should tweak a player to say, 'My best is needed,'" he said. "So that's why you say 'scrimmage' for these guys, so you can get their best."

Think of it, perhaps, as a mid-term examination. The practice comes at a rough midpoint of the summer practice work, with games and joint practices with the 49ers set to break up the routine over the weeks that follow. Joseph said that it also offers a chance to reset and reassess things, just as he did on the off day Tuesday.

"That's going to be a big deal for our roster, as far as who's doing things the right way, who's making plays, who's making less errors, absolutely that's going to be a big part of what we're doing," he said.

## 1. HOW THE "SCRIMMAGE" WILL WORK

When Saturday comes, Joseph plans to devote approximately 36 to 40 plays to the scrimmage portion of the practice, with roughly 12 plays for the first, second and third teams. The No. 1 offense will face the first-team defense, the No. 2 defense will face the second-team defense, and so on.

Quarterbacks Trevor Siemian and Paxton Lynch will split first- and second-team repetitions, Joseph said. "That's the plan, to kind of give those guys six and six [repetitions] with both groups," Joseph said. "You want both of those guys to play with the ones and the twos."

Joseph also wanted to cycle through his veterans' off days now so that he could be at full strength for Saturday's practice. "Everyone's up for the scrimmage on Saturday," he said after concluding a Thursday practice that saw WR Demaryius Thomas, NT Domata Peko, CB Aqib Talib, TE Virgil Green and S T.J. Ward receive a rest day. Another handful of key veterans will get Friday's session off.

## 2. JOSEPH: THERE HAS BEEN NO DECISION MADE AT QB

Joseph quickly shot down a question about "a narrative" that he had already told Lynch and Siemian his decision as to who would be the starter in Week 1 against the Los Angeles Chargers.

"No. That has not happened, guys," he said. "It is an open competition, still. No one has been told they are the starter. We are still evaluating these guys. Again, it's been a grind of a week on both sides of the ball.

"We're going to play our game next Thursday and go from there as to who's going to be the guy. But no one has been told that."

### **3. WALKER GETS COMFORTABLE ON THE EDGE**

DeMarcus Walker's transition to seeing work as a stand-up outside linebacker has only begun, but he showed his potential on the first play the second-team defense had in the initial team period of practice when he burst off the edge and blew up a Lynch handoff to Jamaal Charles for what would have been a 2-yard loss under game conditions.

Walker's quickness and ability to read plays as they developed helped him post 37 tackles for loss in his last two seasons at Florida State. In his first few days working from the edge, he has shown signs that those attributes will be as evident on the outside as they were on the inside.

"He's got to continue to work and kind of figure out how to stand up and play in space. That's the biggest issue going from defensive end to outside linebacker," Joseph said.

Joseph said that when the Broncos drafted Walker in April, they saw him handling a hybrid role, so an array of responsibilities that includes inside and outside alignments all around the front seven of the Broncos' 3-4 has not been out of the question from the beginning.

"We drafted him with that vision: kind of as a defensive end/inside third-down rusher, maybe standing up from time to time," Joseph said. "Obviously it happened faster than we thought, but that was our vision when we drafted DeMarcus."

Even with edge responsibilities, Joseph said the Broncos do not want him to drop weight from his 280-pound frame. "We don't want him so small to where we can't put him inside in sub [packages]," Joseph said. "We want him to get leaner, but as far as smaller, no."

### **4. CARLOS HENDERSON IS HITTING FULL SPEED**

Wide receiver Carlos Henderson had two of his biggest plays of training camp so far on Thursday. On the first, he broke back outside to adjust to a Paxton Lynch pass in flight, getting separation from Brendan Langley for a reception that pushed the offense into field-goal range during a move-the-ball period.

Later in practice, he broke open past coverage up the left sideline. No. 3 quarterback Kyle Sloter found him, and Henderson grabbed the pass and strode the final 20 yards into the end zone for a touchdown.

The skittish play of Henderson's first few days has been replaced by confidence and at least one big play from each practice since Sunday.

"He's finally getting in NFL shape," Joseph said. "He wasn't in great shape in the spring and early on in training camp, but you can finally see the guy getting in great shape. He's figured out what to do."

# Broncos Training Camp Quick Hits: Day 7

By Andrew Mason  
Denverbroncos.com  
August 4, 2017

Demaryius Thomas was one of the players who got a veterans' day off, but plenty of others were in action for a spirited practice on a cloudy day.

Wearing a T-shirt, Demaryius Thomas helped his fellow wide receivers through their individual drills. TE Virgil Green, LB Todd Davis and NT Domata Peko took mental repetitions, as did half of the starting "No-Fly Zone" -- safety T.J. Ward and CB Aqib Talib.

Thursday was the first veterans' off day of training camp, and given the physical nature of the previous four practices, it was well-deserved.

"It was a tough week," Head Coach Vance Joseph said. "We've had pads on for the last three days. I'm just being smart with our veteran players who we know more about."

Emmanuel Sanders, Derek Wolfe, Von Miller, Brandon Marshall will have their rest day tomorrow.

"We didn't want to do the entire group in one day," Joseph said.

... Trevor Siemian was up first with the No. 1 offense and got off to a good start, overcoming some early pressure from Von Miller around the left flank to find Jeff Heuerman for a completion deep up the right sideline. He then found Emmanuel Sanders for a pair of receptions, the second of which saw Sanders elude Lorenzo Doss to cross the goal line for a score.

"He's been solid. He's been Trevor," Joseph said. "He's been consistent."

... Paxton Lynch's first move-the-ball drive with the No. 2 offense started with promise. After losing yardage on a first-down handoff, he scrambled out of trouble on second down, then hit Carlos Henderson up the left sideline on third down to move the offense into scoring range. In a duel of third-round picks, Henderson made an outstanding adjustment for the football to separate from Brendan Langley to make the grab.

But the offense stalled from there; Jamaal Charles was stuffed on first down and two incompletions followed, including one where Lynch had Steven Scheu at the goal line a step past Zaire Anderson, but the pass hit Anderson in the back.

... Charles found the going rough early, but he got into space during the second team period and picked up plenty of yardage on a wheel route from Lynch up the right sideline.

"Today with the wheel route you can see he's going to be key for us," Joseph said.

Lynch found plenty of success firing to his running backs. He later hit C.J. Anderson in the right flat on a swing pass, and once Anderson got past the first defender, he galloped up the right sideline for a long gain that might have been a touchdown in game conditions.

... Among the more active defenders Wednesday were Marshall, who broke up a pass, OLB Vontarius Dora, who generated pressure rushing from the inside, and OLB/DE DeMarcus Walker, who had a pressure and also a tackle of Charles for a 2-yard loss.

... Rookie RB De'Angelo Henderson had some solid runs and continues to show good cutback ability, but what also jumps out is his willingness to drive into the hole. During one play late in practice, he swept to the left after taking a pitch from Lynch, lowered his shoulder and tucked the ball up under his arm, driving through the hole while maximizing ball security.

... During a seven-on-seven red-zone period, Lynch kept the ball and did not throw it, something that is often considered a no-no in that particular practice scenario. But that didn't bother Joseph.

"I don't want him to sit back there and force the ball and make a bad decision," Joseph said. "Him running in seven-on-seven doesn't bother me."

"His deal right now is to put good plays together back-to-back-to-back. And that's what we want from Paxton right now. You can see his playmaking ability. He can throw the ball [down] the field. He can scramble with it. But we want more plays being made back-to-back-to-back. Put a string of plays together."

Lynch hit Heuerman for one touchdown pass in the period and nearly had another, but the third-year tight end couldn't quite corral the pass as he tried to make the grab while falling backwards.

... That same red-zone period also saw Siemian fire two touchdown passes with the No. 2 offense; he hit Scheu and Marlon Brown for scores. But rookie Dymonte' Thomas also intercepted Siemian in the back of the end zone during that period.

... WR Isaiah McKenzie showed off his quickness during a punt-return period, but he also had a dropped pass during a team period that offered Joseph a reminder of what the fifth-round pick needs to show as he develops.

"Consistency," Joseph said. "He had a big drop today on third down. But just being consistent. For young guys, this week is tough, because ... this is the dog days of camp. It kind of jumps on those guys. So they've got to push through this week. It's a tough week for all of us. But if they can get through to Saturday, it's going to become normal again for all of those guys."

#### **PARTICIPATION REPORT:**

... RG Ron Leary is being eased back into work after missing time because of a groin injury. He was limited to individual periods Thursday, with Connor McGovern and Billy Turner handling first-team snaps in his place.

... DE Adam Gotsis saw his workload increase as he continues to complete his recovery from knee surgery in June. "He's looked better," Joseph said.

... C Matt Paradis saw a handful of team-period repetitions for a second consecutive day.

... Garrett Bolles and Donald Stephenson continued to split first-team repetitions at left tackle.

... CB Marcus Rios returned from a groin injury that sidelined him for two days this week.

... RB Bernard Pierce remained out because of a pulled hamstring.

**WEATHER REPORT:** A cold front brought gray skies and chillier temperatures to UCHealth Training Center. The temperature remained in the 60s, rising from 64°F to 69°F as the sun struggled to break through the clouds for most of the two-hour practice.

# Goodell: Pres./CEO Joe Ellis, trust has done "terrific job" managing ownership

By Aric DiLalla  
Denverbroncos.com  
August 4, 2017

Commissioner Roger Goodell recognized Bowlen's foresight in arranging a trust.

During Commissioner Roger Goodell's town hall meeting in Denver, he praised President/CEO Joe Ellis and the trust set up by Owner Pat Bowlen for the way in which they've managed the Broncos' ownership.

"The Broncos are in compliance. They're actually being very well run, and our membership is very happy with that," Goodell said to the local media in attendance. "It's consistent with the way Pat wanted it done. Pat had outlined that exactly the way it's operating."

At a panel discussion with nearly 150 Broncos fans, Goodell recognized Bowlen's foresight in arranging a trust.

"He's established a system with Joe Ellis and the trust that I think has done a terrific job," Goodell said.

In Goodell's time with the league, he spent years interacting with Bowlen, who held a number of instrumental roles with the league in addition to his day-to-day work with the Broncos.

Bowlen served on nine league committees, including as chairman of the television committee and co-chair of the management council executive (labor) committee.

"I had the good fortune of working very closely with Pat Bowlen," Goodell said. "He was incredibly involved with league matters, and I think I spoke to him almost every day. I got a real appreciation of what he contributed, but also I had a really good understanding of what was important to him. And the Broncos and the way they did things was really obviously at the top of his list.

"They keep the real key people, like [President of Football Operations/GM] John [Elway] and the others that are going to ensure that this team still represents this community the way Pat wanted it to be represented," Elway said. "They still work on winning – winning with class.

"I think the ownership has done an excellent job, including Joe and others, of really being active in league matters. John is on our competition committee. He's making an enormous contribution there. Joe's on several of our committees, and I think that would make Pat proud."

# Commissioner Roger Goodell weighs in on Denver's potential to host NFL draft

By Aric DiLalla  
Denverbroncos.com  
August 4, 2017

Plenty of teams are interested in bringing the draft to their city.

After 57 consecutive years in New York, the NFL draft shifted to the Windy City in 2015.

A repeat performance in 2016 gave way to a Philadelphia-based draft in 2017, and as the popularity of the event grows, there's no sign the travel will stop anytime soon.

Cities are lining up to host the draft, which drew more than 250,000 people to Philadelphia's Museum of Art over the course of three days.

This rampant success begs an obvious question: When is the NFL's premier offseason event headed to Denver?

After Commissioner Roger Goodell's town hall meeting in Denver on Thursday, he took aim at the topic.

"One of the great things is that there's been so much interest in hosting it," Goodell said. "I think that we had 14 cities that were in Philadelphia, obviously looking at the event, figuring out how they would do it. And it's gotten more competitive, because I think people see the value of hosting that.

"This is a great community with a lot of passion, and I think they'd be great hosts. I can't imagine we won't be here someday. The hard part for us now is being able to try to get everywhere they want us. But that's a good problem to have."

Patrick Smyth, the Broncos' Executive Vice President of Public and Community Relations, addressed the Broncos' stance on hosting the draft in a May interview with the Denver Post.

"While we don't have a formal bid submitted at this time, we remain extremely interested in helping to bring a future NFL draft to Denver," Smyth said. "With the dates of the upcoming drafts, there are still some logistical challenges we need to work through with Visit Denver and the city."

The hopes of hosting a Super Bowl seem considerably more remote.

"The competitiveness of hosting the Super Bowl is even more competitive," Goodell said. "The requirements, the infrastructure that's required – not just from the facility standpoint, but from hotel rooms and all the other events that take place – there's a lot that has to be done.

"There are probably certain communities that couldn't do that. I don't think this is necessarily one of them, but that's what the bid process is for: to show us how you would address those issues."

MetLife Stadium in East Rutherford, New Jersey, remains the only true, cold-weather, open-air stadium to host the Super Bowl. Goodell said Thursday there remains an “ongoing debate” regarding whether the game should be held in “a perfect climate with conditions that are perfect.”

“We had a great experience in New York. There is an ongoing debate about whether you want the Super Bowl to be done in a perfect climate with conditions that are perfect. And that’s probably an ongoing debate, and people have different views. That’s why the ownership votes on this, and they’ll vote ... to make that decision.”

The Super Bowl locations through 2022 were previously announced; Minneapolis, Atlanta, Miami, Tampa and Los Angeles will all host the event over the next five seasons.

The Broncos may not need to wait quite as long to show off the Mile High City on draft day.

# Roger Goodell recalls first meeting with Von Miller

By Aric DiLalla  
Denverbroncos.com  
August 4, 2017

He also talked about the potential of a team based in London and Brandon Marshall's activism.

Commissioner Roger Goodell isn't so different from the average NFL fan.

When the calendar turns to August, he relishes the same thing as every fan base from the Broncos to the Browns.

"I think it I'd say it in one word: hope," Goodell said. "There's hope for every fan that their team is going to win the Super Bowl."

That early-season mentality is just one of the topics Goodell and a revolving panel covered Thursday at a town hall meeting with nearly 100 Broncos fans. After he began the event with President of Football Operations/General Manager John Elway and former Broncos great Steve Atwater, he and Dave Logan welcomed Emmanuel Sanders and Von Miller.

The conversation was wide-ranging and touched on subjects including high school development programs, the evolution of the game, safety concerns and dealing with the public spotlight.

The following were just a few of the subjects that piqued our interest:

## 1. Goodell's first impressions of Von

When Miller was asked about being the face of the franchise, he said that while he understood the importance of his role, he tries not to put too much pressure on himself.

"I try to stick to the same formula that's gotten me to this point now," Miller said.

He was quick to deflect credit and said he learned from role models like DeMarcus Ware, Peyton Manning and Champ Bailey.

But as the Super Bowl 50 MVP wrapped up his answer, the commissioner cut in.

"If I could just add something, one of the great privileges for me is being part the draft. We have probably 25 or so guys come in every year [who are] the first-round draft choices, and I have the chance to meet with them. So I'll never forget [this]. It's usually pretty close to all 25 at one time. And guys stand out. Certain guys stand out.

"This guy stood out from Day 1 as a leader. And you could see that, and it was a very positive thing. So while we're all a product of our mentoring and people who teach us how to do things, he has something that's just inspiring and something that's at the core of his character. You saw that almost immediately."

## **2. Broncos abroad?**

For the second consecutive year, the NFL will hold four regular-season games in London. They'll also put on a game between the Raiders and Patriots in Mexico City.

Though the Broncos haven't played overseas since 2010, there's always a chance Denver could head across the pond as early as 2018. And eventually, an NFL team could move to a city like London, which would require the Broncos to travel there at least every eight seasons under the current format.

If there's a hold-up to a franchise settling in London, it's not the fan support, Goodell said.

"Every time we play a game over there, the fans want more," Goodell said. "It's really quite extraordinary, because they've learned the game. They have a passion for the game and they understand the game. I like to tease. Some of the early games, the officials would throw a flag, and they'd start cheering. They didn't really understand the game. Now ... when you're over there and watching a game, they respond the same way they do here in the States. They understand the game, and they want more of it. We're selling those games out. We put the tickets on sale and they're almost immediately gone.

"I think there's no question about the passion over there. The real question for us is: Can we do it and make sure we maintain the integrity and the competitiveness of the game? Can these guys still play at the same level if they have to play in London and travel back to the States on a regular basis, or a team's going over there? Can the teams prepare properly with that kind of travel? If you've got to fill a couple of roster spots, you've got to get people over from the States.

"You don't want to put any team at a competitive disadvantage. [That's] the bottom line. And we haven't convinced ourselves of that, to be honest with you. I don't believe fan passion or fan support is in doubt over there."

## **3. Brandon Marshall's activism**

When asked whether he believed players kneeling during the national anthem contributed to declining ratings, Goodell first pointed out the NFL's viewing remains a success even as the sports and entertainment industries adapt to a changing TV landscape.

He then went on to support the players' right to voice their opinions, and that may ring particularly familiar to Denver fans. Linebacker Brandon Marshall kneeled for several games last season and visited with Denver's police chief before standing for the anthem again.

"I believe our players should be active in their communities, because I believe they are leaders in their communities," Goodell said. "I think they have a voice and they should express it. And I think it's important for them to do it responsibly. These guys understand that. Everyone does that in a way that they think is going to address the issues that they think are important, but our guys came in the community.

“I think there’s a great example with Brandon Marshall here, who went and worked with the police department and actually caused a positive change in the community. That was by creating a dialogue and creating a chance. I really admire our guys. Brandon’s not the only one.

“Across the league, teams did that. Players did that. I think they created that dialogue and that discussion that has led to really positive change. I admire them and encourage them to do that the right way.”

# David Ramsey: Terrell Davis ran to Hall of Fame in 4 spectacular seasons

By David Ramsey  
Colorado Springs Gazette  
August 4, 2017

Terrell Davis is the ultimate what-if in Denver Broncos history.

His Saturday induction into the Pro Football Hall of Fame removes some of the sting from the sad 1999 afternoon when he shredded his knee, traveling from glittering superstar to hobbled has-been in a violent instant.

Remember, the induction removes some of the sting, not all of it.

Davis collected 6,413 regular-season yards and 61 touchdowns, plus 1,140 playoff yards and 12 touchdowns, in a staggering four-season run from 1995-98. He carried the Broncos to consecutive Super Bowl titles. He possessed a rare combination of vision, desire, power and speed.

His future wasn't limitless. It was only close to limitless.

On Oct. 3, 1999, a sad day, his future collapsed, along with the Broncos. Quarterback Brian Griese floated a pass into the hands of Jets safety Victor Green, and Davis took up the chase. At the sideline, Davis collided with Green and Bronco teammate Matt Lepsis. The trio went down in a heap. Green and Lepsis quickly got to their feet.

Davis stayed down after suffering a torn anterior cruciate ligament and medial collateral ligament in his right knee. He was never even close to the same.

When Davis fell, he was 26 and thousands upon thousands of yards seemed on the horizon. LaDainian Tomlinson, who joins Davis as a 2017 HOF inductee, gained 6,323 after he turned 27. Emmitt Smith, the NFL's all-time leading rusher, gained 9,399 after 27.

Davis, his knee shredded, gained only 983 after 27, and every one of those yards was a testament to his will.

For a far-too-brief time, Davis ranked among the NFL's all-time uplifting stories. He came from nowhere, a sixth-round pick who looked on his way to, at best, an NFL life of special teams and a couple of dozen carries a season. He had never quite become a college star, largely because of an acrimonious relationship with Georgia coach Ray Goff.

He instantly became a star with the Broncos, becoming the lowest-round pick to ever rush for 1,000 yards as a rookie.

The Davis game that sticks in my mind came early in the 1998 season. The Broncos were mighty, one of the top two or three teams of the Super Bowl era. On Sept. 13, the Cowboys' defense sought to slow down Davis.

Let's just say the Cowboys failed. Davis scored 63- and 59-yard touchdowns, and that was just the first quarter. He finished with 191 yards on only 23 carries. He was dominating, entertaining and inspiring. So much seemed ahead.

Less than 13 months later, he tumbled to the turf against the Jets and never truly stood up again.

But that's the sad part. On Saturday night in Canton, Ohio, Davis will be honored for his astonishing four seasons. He was a comet who did not enjoy the blessing of an enduring career. Corey Dillon, who is not in the hall, rushed for 3,634 more yards than Davis, but Dillon was never the NFL's best running back.

For a two spectacular seasons, Davis was the best. That's why he's being honored.

The Broncos had long been on the edge of NFL supremacy, but John Elway lacked the required sidekick. With Davis, the Broncos twice ruled the NFL.

"He changed things," Elway said of Davis.

He sure did.

# Head Games: The Moral Calculus of Football and CTE

By Charles Pierce  
Sports Illustrated  
August 4, 2017

The University Of Massachusetts Medical Center sits high on a hill on the Worcester side of Lake Quinsigamond, not far from the high school at which my father was the assistant principal, and even closer to the state park where he first taught me to swim. He'd grown up swimming at a pond near where he lived and, during World War II, the Navy taught him even more strongly, how to swim for his life. (To this day, I remember some of what he taught me. If your ship is sunk, and you're underwater, before you surface, wave your hand in the water right above your head, disbursing whatever's up there, so you don't come up in the middle of a patch of burning oil.) He was a great swimmer, until he couldn't remember how to do it anymore. Later, he forgot how to play golf, feed himself, speak, and, ultimately, be the person he was in the world. He had Alzheimer's Disease. Ultimately, all four of his siblings did, too.

At the UMass Medical Center, there is a white filing cabinet with long metal drawers. In one of those drawers are the slides containing what is left of my father's brain. Under a microscope, you can see the "plaques and tangles" that are characteristic of the disease that killed him. They are black, deadly things, as though someone had put out cigarettes in my father's hippocampus. Later, I wrote a book about the whole thing—my father, our family, and the disease that hangs over us like grapes in a poisoned arbor. There are two things I learned from my experience and through my research. One is that I do not want to get Alzheimer's Disease, or anything like it. The second is only a fool or a madman would volunteer to get Alzheimer's Disease, or anything like it.

In an article in last week's Journal of the American Medical Association, the team at the Boston University's School of Medicine which has been doggedly researching the effect that playing American football has on the human brain produced its extensive study under the authorship of Dr. Ann McKee, who has been ringing the fire bell on this issue since 2009. The team studied 111 brains donated by former NFL players. Of these, 110 showed damage characteristic of chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE), which seems to work on the brain the same way that Alzheimer's does. (Accumulation of a protein called tau is seen in brains affected by both diseases.) The person with CTE is not the same person he was without it. An individual disappears into the disease. Someone else emerges—angry, frightened, impulsive, lost in a deep and infernal fog.

There were 202 brains studied by the team at BU and CTE showed up in 87% of them. The argument, for all practical purposes, seems to be over.

Since the results were published, John Urschel of the Baltimore Ravens announced his retirement. He is 26 years old. Urschel is an interesting case because he also is a certified mathematics genius who has published nine working papers and is presently working toward his Ph.D at MIT in some space-alien field of mathematics that I believe would break my brain if I tried to understand it. I've never met Urschel, but he happens to be engaged to one of my best friends in the business, so, when he announced his retirement, I was surprised how happy I was for the both of them. The paradigm of how we follow football is changing right under the NFL's feet.

Writing in *The Players Tribune* last year, Urschel eloquently explained how he could still play the game and put his mind at such a terrible risk.

*I play because I love the game. I love hitting people. There's a rush you get when you go out on the field, lay everything on the line and physically dominate the player across from you. This is a feeling I'm (for lack of a better word) addicted to, and I'm hard-pressed to find anywhere else. My teammates, friends and family can attest to this: When I go too long without physical contact I'm not a pleasant person to be around. This is why, every offseason, I train in kickboxing and wrestling in addition to my lifting, running and position-specific drill work. I've fallen in love with the sport of football and the physical contact associated with it. Simply put, right now, not playing football isn't an option for me.*

That's what the old paradigm of how we follow football used to sound—the joy of having people who loved the work of hitting people, the ecstatic celebration of vicarious violence. Too bad about all those knees and shoulders and elbows, but, hey, the price they pay, right? Going to a luncheon with Hall of Famers at any Super Bowl always looked like those black-and-white films of reunions at Gettysburg. It was uncomfortable, but tolerable, and you could always convince yourself that these guys “gave 100%” to keep you entertained. There was a moral calculus that at least came out somewhere close to even. That's not the case any more.

The more you play American football, the more damage you do to your mind. No position is safe; there even were a punter and a placekicker in the study. If you watch football, if you enjoy American football, then what we know now has got to change your personal moral calculus.

In December of 1953, the American tobacco industry was in deep trouble. Research into the deleterious health effects of cigarette smoking was beginning to pile up ominously all over the country. So the industry did what American industries do—it hired Hill and Knowlton, a power in the advertising industry even then, to spin itself out of trouble. H&K earned every nickel it made from this particular client. Its strategy included buying its own scientists to cast doubt on the mounting evidence. As medical historian Allan Brandt put it in his magisterial study, *The Cigarette Century*, “[This] strategy for ending the ‘hysteria’ was to insist that there were ‘two sides’ ... This strategy would ultimately become the cornerstone of a large range of efforts to distort scientific process in the second half of the 20th century.”

“Hysteria” has been a weaponized word, useful when large industries don't want to face up to the damage they may be doing. We saw it used with cigarettes. We've seen it used in regards to the public health crisis currently facing football at every level.

If there is going to be chronic denialism on this issue, it may not come from the NFL, although some of it surely will. It's going to come from the people in the game, the fans of the game, and many members of football's kept national press, who are unwilling or unable to change their moral calculus and who become aggravated when somebody suggests that they should. For example, in 2015, Jim Harbaugh, the coach at the University of Michigan, suggested that American football was “... the last bastion of hope in America for toughness in men, in males.” (So much, one supposes, for the SEALs.) Coach Bruce Arians of the Arizona Cardinals expressed concern that America's mothers were refusing to let their sons play football because of the head injury issue. (Mama, don't let your babies grow up to be safeties.) Danny Kanell, then of ESPN, called attention via Twitter to the peril he perceived from the folks he called “concussion alarmists.” (Kanell also managed to work “the liberal media” into his tweet, thereby winning that week's game of wingnut rhetorical bingo.) In support of Kanell, Jason Whitlock of Fox

Sports bellowed his contempt for what he called “the media-driven concussion hysteria.” Hill and Knowlton would have been proud of that one.

To be fair, Whitlock later in the same piece admits that football is “barbaric,” which is better than other Football Under Attack pieces I’ve read. Let us be clear: I am not suggesting that we ban the game. That kind of thing never works in America and, generally, the attempts to do it end very badly for society at large. But I do find myself wondering if the shift in the moral calculus is profound enough to shake the purchase that American football has on the culture in so many different places—from high schools in Texas to the gambling floors in Las Vegas. And I think of John Urschel again, and I’m happy he was strong enough to give up something he loves in order to pursue something else that he loves. And I think of my father, who could swim for hours, when he was still who he was born to be.

# Roger Goodell: Marijuana is a “medical issue” that needs further research

By Charean Williams

Pro Football Talk

August 4, 2017

Three months ago, NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell called marijuana addictive and unhealthy for players long term. His stance seems to be softening.

On the heels of news that the NFL has offered to collaborate with the NFLPA to study the potential benefits of marijuana in managing pain for the league’s players, Goodell on Thursday called marijuana “a medical issue” that merits further research.

“If pain management is something that medical marijuana can address responsibly, that’s something that our medical community is evaluating,” Goodell said at a forum at the Broncos’ Dove Valley headquarters, via Nicki Jhabvala of the Denver Post. “We just proposed to our union in the last month or so that we put some research money behind that to see how we could implement that . . . if they can address pain management in an effective and safe fashion. That’s something that I assume will get a lot of discussion, but hopefully it involves a lot of research and medical opinions that can help us make the best decisions.”

The league currently bans marijuana in its collectively bargained substance-abuse policy and has taken a strong stance against its use by players. However, in a recent letter to the NFLPA, the NFL offered to work with the players in cannabis research.

According to The Washington Post, the NFL’s letter to the union outlined multiple areas for potential research, including pain management for both acute and chronic conditions.

# NFL chief medical officer: “Really important” to look at marijuana for pain

By Darin Gantt  
Pro Football Talk  
August 4, 2017

The NFL’s new chief medical officer admits that the league needs to take a serious look at how marijuana could potentially be used as a pain-management tool for players, and acknowledged that last week’s CTE study from Boston University was an important piece of research and that there was a link between repetitive head trauma and the degenerative brain disease.

And while both those might sound like common-sense opinions, they’re not the same as the words that have always come from league officials on these topics.

During an interview with Mark Maske of the Washington Post, Dr. Allen Sills, a neurosurgeon from Vanderbilt University who was hired by the league in March, made a number of points that sounded downright progressive from previous league stances.

On marijuana, he said it was “really important” for the league and the NFLPA to find out how safe and effective marijuana could be.

“I think we have a lot more to learn about that,” Sills said. “Certainly the research about marijuana and really more particularly cannabinoid compounds as they may relate to the treatment of both acute and chronic pain, that is an area of research that we need a lot more information on and we need to further develop.

“I think that’s part of what we hope to accomplish together working together with the Players Association. I think this is really important because I like to talk about that our approach to caring for players is really holistic. We want to talk about health and safety issues that affect the whole player experience. And certainly pain management is a big part of that.”

That’s a departure from previous NFL remarks, though commissioner Roger Goodell has gone from saying marijuana was “addictive and unhealthy” to something that deserved more study. But Sills pointed to what some believe is a national opioid crisis, and suggested that the problem was much larger than football alone.

He also said last week’s study from Boston University — which found CTE in 110 of the 111 brains donated from former NFL players — was a solid step forward for the league’s efforts, and that it was “very clear that there are long-term health risks associated with repetitive head injuries.”

“I think this is another important contribution from the Boston University group,” Sills said. “They’ve obviously been a leader in this space and helping to define and describe the pathology of CTE. And I think it’s another important piece of this puzzle that we’re trying to put together. I think that I like to describe CTE [as] it really is a puzzle where we’re trying to assimilate pieces to better understand it, because there’s so much we don’t understand with regard to causation and incidence and who’s exactly

at risk, and what are the risk factors and what things might we modify and certainly treatment. So we have a lot left to learn. But this is obviously another key piece as we move forward.”

The NFL hasn't always been on the same page, with Cowboys owner Jerry Jones said it was “absurd” to connect football and CTE because “medicine is evolving,” while league executive Jeff Miller had acknowledged to congress the link existed.

But Sills is talking like a doctor, and in the case of two of the league's most important issues, that's probably as solid a step as players could hope for.

# CBS4 Broncos Notebook: 8/3

By Staff

CBS 4

August 4, 2017

Vance Joseph said today was a scheduled rest day for some of the veterans (Talib, Thomas, Ward, Davis, etc) and that another group of veterans (Harris, Sanders, Marshall, Wolfe, etc) will get tomorrow off. Joseph said he split up the group because he didn't want them all to be off the same day.

Saturday will be a scrimmage style practice for the Broncos. Joseph said when you put a "scrimmage" on the schedule it forces guys to be at their best. Joseph says it will be about 36-40 plays with roughly 12 plays for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd teams, and that Lynch/Siemian will go 6 and 6 each with the 1's and 2's.

Joseph adamantly shot down rumors that a QB decision has already been made.

Joseph said rookie Carlos Henderson has improved the last few days, as he's getting in better shape and adjusting to the NFL. Joseph also said DeMarcus Walker is making progress as they continue to work him with the outside linebacker group.

Jamaal Charles took a few reps during team drills today, but Joseph said they will continue to play it safe with him.

A cool morning, and a crowded fan hill for day 7 of Broncos Camp.

The team is once again in full pads. The QBs have had their worst days during the full pads practices, although the Broncos have run the ball well recently.

Looks like a rest day for some players. Demaryius Thomas, Aqib Talib, T.J. Ward, Todd Davis, Virgil Green and Domata Peko all not practicing today.

Ronald Leary is practicing today after a couple of days off.

NFL commissioner Roger Goodell is here and will hold a fan forum later today.

# Broncos Brandon Marshall Upset At Tom Brady's 'Arrogant Diss' That Isn't Really An 'Arrogant Diss'

By Matthew Geagan

CBS Boston

August 4, 2017

As much of the world heaps birthday wishes onto Tom Brady on his 40th birthday, one of his opponents is still miffed over something the quarterback said on the field nearly two years ago.

Denver Broncos linebacker Brandon Marshall has a bone to pick with Brady over the quarterback pointing out an on-field mismatch in the 2016 AFC Championship game in Denver. Or as The Denver Post's Mark Kiszla called in his headline, an "arrogant diss."

What exactly did Brady say that has Marshall so upset? He told his running back to get open.

"Tom Brady ..." Marshall recalled. "He looked at (running back) James White and said: 'You've got 54. Get open.'"

Marshall didn't need to check his jersey. He's No. 54. Brady shouted the Patriots were coming after him.

"Before the play," said Marshall, still mystified how Brady could have such open contempt of his pass-coverage skills. "He didn't read the defense. He just said: 'You've got 54. Get open.'"

Tom Brady, king of trash talk on the Patriots, singling out a mismatch and telling his running back to get open is insulting? Is this The Onion?

It's not. But Marshall's beef gets better.

"I took it as a challenge. I was offended, at first. ... He said it so loud, like he wanted me to hear," Marshall said.

From the shotgun, Brady took the snap and immediately looked for White on an option route. He threw. Marshall refused to be beaten. The pass fell incomplete.

Before leaving the field, however, Marshall recalled, "I looked at Brady and I looked at James White, like 'All right. That's how you feel about me?'"

There was no harm to the Broncos on the play. But it left a permanent scar on Marshall's pride.

"I'll never forget that," Marshall said. "I'm going to say something to Brady at some point."

So what exactly happened? Football. A quarterback saw his fast and shifty running back would be covered by a linebacker, which 10 times out of 10 is a matchup in favor of the running back. He pointed it out. He did it loud enough so the linebacker heard it, another one of Brady's mind games that he plays with opposing defenses pretty much every Sunday.

Marshall can use whatever he wants as motivation. The Patriots are kings of taking the littlest of statements and using them as a mile of bulletin board material. But to call the quarterback singling out a

mismatch on the field an “arrogant diss” is pretty silly. Brady has said plenty of worse things on the field. Those simple words to White, in earshot of Marshall, are anything but an “arrogant diss.”

If you’re wondering why Marshall didn’t bring this up last season, it’s because he was injured when the Broncos played the Patriots at Gillette Stadium. So whatever he wanted to say to No. 12 has been festering for 18 long months. He’ll finally get his chance to say something on November 12 when the Patriots head to Denver.

But when the defending champs head to the Mile-High City, Marshall should probably worry more about letting his play do the talking