

Jhabvala: Broncos' Vance Joseph on brink of history, with eye for familiarity

By Nicki Jhabvala
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On Monday night Vance Joseph and Anthony Lynn will stand on opposite sidelines to take their place in history as the first two African-American head coaches to debut with their NFL team in the same game.

But 20 years ago they were neighbors, in the Aurora neighborhood of Piney Creek.

"In 1997, our houses were back-to-back," Joseph said. "I could see his backyard from my backyard. It was pretty cool. Good man."

Then, Joseph was a camp body, vying for a spot on the Broncos' roster as a quarterback-turned-cornerback. The former Colorado backup to Kordell Stewart and Darian Hagan signed with the Jets as a college free agent in 1995 after moving to the defensive side of the ball and hoped to make a career out of it.

Lynn, of course, was already on the roster and in his second stint as a Bronco, with whom he would pick up a pair of Super Bowl rings as a running back and special-teamer before moving to the coaching side as a special-teams assistant.

On Monday, their paths will cross again when the Broncos host the Chargers in a moment that seems long overdue.

"It's obviously a special thing on a big picture," Joseph said. "Hopefully in four and five years, it won't even be an issue. It would just be two coaches going at it and may the best team win. But, it is special at the moment."

Since Joseph arrived in January, he's insisted the focus be football. Not him. Not his moment.

He's created a wave of change based on familiarity, common in the NFL and especially so with the Broncos, whose hires and personnel changes are often based on past connections.

Among Joseph's first moves as a head coach was welcoming back Mike McCoy as offensive coordinator and former Bronco Bill Musgrave as quarterbacks coach. He was instrumental in keeping a spot for former coach Gary Kubiak, now a senior personnel advisor. He elevated Joe Woods, a long-time friend in the business, to defensive coordinator and has quickly made his mark in the locker room and the playbook.

Mottos collected over his 18 years of coaching are pasted throughout the team's Dove Valley training facility. "Championship Habits," the Broncos' unofficial slogan for the season, hangs outside the locker room. And "Truth," in big, bold lettering, decorates the entire back wall of the team's main meeting room.

“Most jobs that are taken by a first-time head coach or most jobs that are open, it’s a rebuild,” Joseph said on his first day as head coach. “This job is not broken. It’s a reboot. It’s my job to find the small tweaks to make this team a winning team again.”

General manager John Elway introduced Joseph last January as a coach who “fit the culture” of the Broncos. Code for, “He wants to win, and he wants to win now.”

“Vance checks that box. He has that,” Elway said.

In Joseph, the Broncos have gained a coach insistent on being transparent and honest. They’ve gained a leader unafraid to make the tough choices only eight months into his tenure. And they’ve added a former quarterback who has a love for the defense.

In many ways, Joseph is quite similar to Elway. He’s brought change and a bit of history to a team founded on familiarity.

And despite being the new guy and the first-year head coach, he’s got a locker room of vocal players to buy in.

“Oh I love him. Great coach,” receiver Demaryius Thomas said. “A players’ coach. It’s something he’s new to, but he’s doing a great job so far.”

The skinny: Another year, another quarterback battle won. Siemian, a seventh-rounder out of Northwestern, has seemingly toppled every obstacle placed in front of him the last two seasons, handily defeating veteran Mark Sanchez and then first-round draft pick Paxton Lynch for the starting job in consecutive offseasons. And he’s done so with different head coaches, different playbooks and a nod of approval from his teammates, who voted him captain in 2016 and again in 2017. He enters year two as a starter with greater comfort with the pro speed and the system, and a clean bill of health.

The background: In January, Siemian underwent surgery to repair his left shoulder. He suffered a serious sprain early last season and played with pain (and behind a porous offensive line) for most of the season. The procedure was said to be mostly a cosmetic fix, to get rid of the protruding bone and to alleviate any discomfort when lifting weights. But it seemed unlikely he could have returned 100 percent without it. With added strength and what the Broncos hope is an improved offensive line, Siemian is poised for improvement.

His take: “Just that first game there’s a lot of anticipation,” Siemian said. “You have a lot of time obviously to think about it, go over the gameplan and all of those things. Definitely more comfortable I think this year going into year two. First year I felt good about everything but at the same time you’re still holding on to the seat of your pants a little bit. I like where I’m at, I like where we’re at and I feel really good about it.”

Their take: “I love Trevor and I think Trevor has all the talent you need to do this,” said former Broncos quarterback Jake Plummer. “But now he’s got Brock (Osweiler) behind him. Before it was Paxton and everybody was, ‘We want Paxton!’ and it was like with me with Jay Cutler. ‘We want Jay! Jay would have completed that!’ How do you know? It’s different, and everybody leads differently and players react differently to certain players. Right now I think Trevor has a lot in front of him. I think he’s going to have a great season.”

Numbers to Know

16-1: The Broncos have won 16 of their past 17 home openers and are 29-4 in home openers since 1984, when Pat Bowlen purchased the team. Their .879 winning percentage in that span is tops in the NFL.

1.5: Sacks needed by outside linebacker Von Miller to tie Barney Chavous (75) for third place on the Broncos' all-time list.

1: Win needed by Trevor Siemian to become the sixth Broncos quarterback to win his first two Week 1 starts.

.578: Combined 2016 win percentage of Broncos' opponents this season. Denver has the toughest strength of schedule in the NFL.

10-1: Record of Broncos head coaches when making their head-coaching debut in Week 1, as Vance Joseph is doing Monday night.

26: Consecutive seasons the Broncos will have appeared on Monday Night Football after this year's opener. The streak began in 1992 and is the longest active streak in the NFL and second-longest in league history. The Broncos are 31-37-1 all-time in games played on Monday Night Football, and 23-11-1 at home.

Source: The Denver Broncos

Depth on defensive line could be tested in Broncos opener vs. Chargers

By Nick Kosmider
Denver Post
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The Broncos could enter the regular season a bit thin on defensive line. Though Derek Wolfe has returned from an ankle injury, Jared Crick is day-to-day after suffering back spasms in camp and Zach Kerr has been nursing a knee bruise. Both were absent from practice Friday.

Defensive coordinator Joe Woods said the team will continue to monitor both players as they evaluate options on the defensive line ahead of Monday night's season opener against the Los Angeles Chargers.

"It's a part of the evaluation process for the next couple days," Woods said. "We might have to make some moves, so we'll see."

If Crick and Kerr are unable to play Monday, Adam Gotsis, who returned to practice this week after suffering a minor shoulder sprain in the preseason finale against Arizona on Aug. 31, would likely move into a starting spot alongside Wolfe and nose tackle Domata Peko. That would leave Shelby Harris and Kyle Peko, who recently returned to practice after missing two months with a foot injury, as the only healthy reserve defensive linemen on the roster.

Marshall: Back to old self. Brandon Marshall didn't feel quite like himself on the football field last season.

The sixth-year linebacker made that revelation Friday, three days before the Broncos were set to kickoff their season against the Chargers on Monday Night Football.

"I just feel like I'm my old self again," said Marshall, who was inactive the final four games of the 2016 season due to a hamstring injury and finished with 52 tackles. "I feel — I know it's kind of weird to say — but I feel like last year, I didn't have any instincts. It was so weird. I've never had that in my whole football career. I feel like my instincts are back. I'm ready to go. I'm excited. I just feel like a new me. I'm going to make some plays this year."

RB Charles ready. The Broncos didn't need to see much of Jamaal Charles in the preseason to know the veteran running back warranted a spot on the 53-man roster.

In his only game action, against Green Bay on Aug. 26, Charles had 42 yards on six touches (four rushes, two catches), displaying some of the big-play ability that made him a star for much of the last decade in Kansas City.

Offensive coordinator Mike McCoy said the Broncos will be deliberate in how they use Charles in the regular season.

"It's a great system for him to be in the way we've rotated players," McCoy said. "Since back in the day with (former Broncos coach John) Fox in 2002, we've always played everybody. He'll have a number of

plays he'll play and certain things will be designed for him. I'm just going to listen to him on game day and during the week on how he's feeling and just make sure he feels great when we kickoff on Monday night."

Footnotes. The Broncos are encouraging all their fans attending Monday night's opener to wear orange. ... Woods said the Broncos will monitor outside linebacker Shaquil Barrett closely Monday as he makes his return from a hip injury that kept him out most of training camp. "It's just one of those situations where he needs to let us know if he needs a break," Woods said.

The Broncos have yet to solidify a No. 3 option in the passing game. Do they need to?

By Nick Kosmider
Denver Post
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Bennie Fowler doesn't have to ponder the question long. The answer spills out instinctively. His favorite part of playing in a Mike McCoy offense? That's an easy one.

"A lot of passing," said Fowler, the Broncos' third-year receiver from Michigan State. "A lot of three-receiver sets. Everybody gets the chance to move inside and out. There's a lot of diversity in this offense."

In all but two of his seasons as an offensive coordinator or head coach since 2009, McCoy's teams have finished in the top 15 in passes attempted, including four top-10 marks. Trevor Siemian, who may have eclipsed the 4,000-yard passing mark last season had injuries not kept him out of two games, is expected to air the ball out even more than he did in 2016.

But as the Broncos prepare to open their season against McCoy's old team, the Los Angeles Chargers, on Monday night at Sports Authority Field at Mile High, it's still fair to question who the Broncos can rely upon to catch passes outside of the Pro Bowl tandem of Demaryius Thomas and Emmanuel Sanders.

"In our scheme, we're going to play a ton of guys," McCoy said. "We're going to play everybody. If you've got a uniform on game day, there's a good chance you're going to get in there at some point in time. We have a talented roster and, speaking offensively at the skill positions, my job is to take advantage of the talent we have in those guys and keep everybody fresh."

The Broncos' third-leading receiver last season was running back Devontae Booker, who caught 31 passes as a rookie.

Among wide receivers on the Broncos roster, other than Thomas and Sanders, none have caught more than 16 passes in a season. That was the number Fowler caught in 2015. Jordan Taylor's career-high in receptions is also 16 (2016), which matches the total number of grabs for Cody Latimer in his three seasons with the Broncos. The other wide receiver on the roster is rookie Isaiah McKenzie, whose next catch in the NFL will be his first.

The preseason did little to reveal a pecking order at receiver. Latimer caught seven passes for 54 yards in the first exhibition against Chicago, then missed the rest of the preseason with a knee injury. Fowler, listed on the depth chart as Denver's No. 3 wide receiver, caught only three passes in 93 plays across three games.

Taylor may have been Siemian's most dependable target in the preseason, snaring a touchdown pass in San Francisco and adding a deep grab against Green Bay.

“Me and Trev have put in a lot of work over these past two and a half years, and I think it’s starting to pay off,” Taylor said. “Just being on the same page is critical. I know that I’m a valid option every play. You never know, 13 (Siemian) might throw it your way.”

The uncertainty of production extends to tight end, where Virgil Green’s 22 receptions last season led the group. Can he, A.J. Derby and Jeff Heurman provide a consistent outlet for Siemian?

“You’re going to be surprised with the tight ends making plays,” Thomas insisted.

Of course, none of the Broncos’ pass-catchers are being asked to replicate the production of Thomas and Sanders, who combined for 169 of Denver’s 339 receptions last season (49.8 percent) and 2,115 of its 3,914 receiving yards (54 percent). The duo believes it can be even more effective with more one-on-one matchups created by McCoy.

Ultimately, filling in the gaps will likely be an all-hands-on-deck effort once again. And McCoy plans to put all those hands to work.

“We all want to go out there and we all want to make plays,” Green said. “The way this system is built, we’re going to share the wealth a little bit.”

How to watch every Denver Broncos game live online using streaming services

By Tamara Chuang
 Denver Post
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It's a good year to watch Denver Broncos games online as more of the channels broadcasting the games on TV expand their online reach.

While many people who have cut the cord have switched to TV antennas to view local networks, 2017 appears to be the first football season in which every Broncos game is available online.

There are still some caveats — Verizon has the exclusive contract to stream to mobile phones — but here are your options for watching games online if you've cut the cord:

Day	Time (MT)	Playing	Online	Offline
Sept. 11	8:20 p.m.	Chargers	Sling Orange, Hulu, DirecTV Now, YouTube TV	ESPN
Sept. 17	2:25 p.m.	Cowboys	DirecTV Now, Hulu, YouTube TV	Fox
Sept. 24	11 a.m.	at Bills	CBS app, Hulu, PS Vue, Fubo, YouTube TV, DirecTV Now	CBS
Oct. 1	2:25 p.m.	Raiders	CBS app, Hulu, PS Vue, Fubo, YouTube TV, DirecTV Now	CBS
Oct. 15	6:30 p.m.	Giants	YouTube TV	NBC
Oct. 22	2:25 p.m.	at Chargers	CBS app, Hulu, PS Vue, Fubo, YouTube TV, DirecTV Now	CBS
Oct. 30	6:30 p.m.	at Chiefs	Sling Orange, Hulu, DirecTV Now, YouTube TV	ESPN
Nov. 5	11 a.m.	at Eagles	CBS app, Hulu, PS Vue, Fubo, YouTube TV, DirecTV Now	CBS
Nov. 12	6:30 p.m.	Patriots	YouTube TV	NBC
Nov. 19	2:25 p.m.	Bengals	CBS app, Hulu, PS Vue, Fubo, YouTube TV, DirecTV Now	CBS
Nov. 26	2:25 p.m.	at Raiders	CBS app, Hulu, PS Vue, Fubo, YouTube TV, DirecTV Now	CBS
Dec. 3	11 a.m.	at Dolphins	CBS app, Hulu, PS Vue, Fubo, YouTube TV, DirecTV Now	CBS
Dec. 10	2:05 p.m.	Jets	CBS app, Hulu, PS Vue, Fubo, YouTube TV, DirecTV Now	CBS
Dec. 14	6:25 p.m.	at Colts	Amazon, Sling Blue, YouTube TV	NBC
Dec. 24	11 a.m.	at Redskins	CBS app, Hulu, PS Vue, Fubo, YouTube TV, DirecTV Now	CBS
Dec. 31	2:25 p.m.	Chiefs	CBS app, Hulu, PS Vue, Fubo, YouTube TV, DirecTV Now	CBS

The Players

YouTube TV: Recently launched in Denver, the Google-owned video company says it is the only service in Denver offering all four local networks live: that's ABC, CBS, Fox and NBC. With ESPN also in its lineup, that means YouTube TV is the one-stop service for Denver Broncos fans. The \$35 plan also offers ESPN. YouTube TV is currently only accessible with Chromecast devices and Apple TV. tv.youtube.com

CBS All Access: Available to most mobile devices, the CBS app offers live streaming of exactly what's airing on the local CBS channel. In Denver, that's KCNC. But no NFL games will stream on mobile phones — Verizon Wireless has that contract (see below). The Broncos games, however, will still stream on compatible tablets, video game consoles, Roku players and other set-top boxes that are CBS-app friendly. Price: \$5.99 a month cbs.com/all-access

Sling TV: In Denver, subscribers don't have access to live streams of local networks, though Sling customers in other parts of the country do (check your ZIP code). But three Broncos games will be viewable by local Sling customers. The Sept. 11 and Oct. 30 games on ESPN are available on the \$20 Sling Orange plan, while the Dec. 14 game against the Indianapolis Colts is on the NFL Network, which is part of the \$25 Sling Blue plan. You can also use Sling's Game Finder to check for available NFL and college football games. sling.com/gamefinder

DirectTV Now: Offers Fox, ABC and CBS to Denver subscribers (check your ZIP code), so local subscribers can watch the Sept. 17 game against the Dallas Cowboys. The cheapest plan, which includes the three networks plus ESPN, is \$35 a month. directvnow.com

Hulu with Live TV: In Denver, Hulu offers live streams of CBS, Fox and ESPN, and the company confirmed that all Broncos games that air on the local CBS and Fox networks can be watched by Denver subscribers. While the live service is available on many devices, it's not yet ready for the popular Roku's. Hulu's live service is \$39.99. hulu.com/live-tv

Amazon Prime: Bought the rights to stream 10 NFL Thursday Night Football games online. One happens to be the Broncos: Dec. 14 against the Colts. Prime costs \$99 a year. amazon.com

PS Vue: PlayStation Vue is Sony's streaming service. In Denver, subscribers can get CBS, ABC, Fox and ESPN as part of the basic Access plan at \$39.99 a month. playstation.com/en-us/network/vue

FubuTV: The sports-centric streaming service has the rights to stream games on CBS. Prices start at \$34.99. fubo.tv

NFL Network/Verizon: For viewing games on mobile phones, Verizon Wireless still has the exclusive contract for these Thursday night games. This stream is only available to Verizon customers, so we didn't include it above. Only one Broncos game is on a Thursday night, that's the Dec. 14 against the Colts. verizonwireless.com/nfl/nfl-mobile

Note: The list was confirmed to The Denver Post by each streaming service or network. If you spot any missing information, please let me know at tchuang@denverpost.com.

Broncos may make adjustment after Crick misses practice

By Mike Klis

9 News

September 9, 2017

It appears there's a chance the Denver Broncos will have to go down their depth chart to find another defensive end after starter Jared Crick missed practice Friday because of his back injury.

Crick, a 15-game starter for the Broncos last season, was carted off the practice field August 14 when a disc issue caused his back to give out. After sitting out three weeks, Crick returned for three practices this week, then didn't participate during the team's workout Friday – just three days before the regular season opener against the Los Angeles Chargers.

For now, the Broncos are saying Crick is day-to-day with his back injury. The team is hoping Crick responds to treatment in the next day or two so he can play against the Chargers.

But with another defensive lineman, Zach Kerr, not expected to play against the Chargers because of a knee injury, and defensive tackle Kyle Peko just getting back into football shape after sitting out two months with a foot injury, the Broncos are thin up front with running back Melvin Gordon approaching.

“Right now, we have to make a decision,” said defensive coordinator Joe Woods. “It’s part of the evaluation process for the next couple days. We may have to make some moves. We’ll see.”

As for defensive linemen on their current roster, look for Shelby Harris and Adam Gotsis to get significant playing time against the Chargers alongside healthy starters Derek Wolfe and Domata Peko.

Broncos Mailbag: Here's one last rant about the Slotter-Brock switch

By Mike Klis
9 News
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Before carrying on with the 2017 season, it was necessary for the Broncos mailbag to clean out an abundance of letters carrying comments, inquiries and complaints regarding general manager John Elway's decision to waive preseason rookie star Kyle Slotter and sign beleaguered veteran Brock Osweiler to become the Broncos' backup quarterback, at least until Paxton Lynch gets healthy.

I will let all the letter writers have their piece, and then answer:

I am shocked, disappointed, saddened and stunned that John Elway would bring back Brock (I do not wish him any bad luck) to a great organization built on team concept.

I have watched Brock since his beginning stint in Denver who had more than ample time to study and develop under one of the greatest (Peyton Manning) and he never got it.

It appears John does not understand that the mental ability is just as important as the physical ability. They have a great QB in Trevor and if they would give him just a little help on the front line (which still has a long way to go) they would be fine.

It is also evident that Paxton has a similar problem thinking one can rely on physical ability. As you know, the game has changed and the great ones like Rodgers, Brees, Manning, Wilson and Brady have the mental ability to make correct decisions.

I hope I am 100 percent wrong and have to eat my words but the spots on a leopard do not change of wash off.

--"Woody Miller", Bonita Springs, Fla. via Parker, Co.

P.S.— The Broncos would be wise to hire you as an advisor because you get it. Whether it is give Von the money or what doesn't work. I am not blowing smoke. You cut to the chase.

.....
Hello- Please explain to me why SLOTER was cut. He played awesome! And don't like Brock.

--Mary Kinney
.....

Hello Mr. Klis. I am sure that you have received many an e-mail from fans about the events regarding the different players who did/did not make the 53-man roster. The big story being the quarterback "drama".

Getting to the point, I am in a state of complete confusion about the organization's decision to cut Kyle Slotter, keep Paxton Lynch, and pursue Brock Osweiler. I am not an expert in the sport, nor do I

have an inside knowledge of how an NFL team works off the field and in the executive offices. What I do have is common sense, and common sense tells me that what is going on as far as the decision-making goes for who will be the quarterbacks for the team this season makes no sense at all.

Kyle Sloter outperformed Paxton Lynch in most, if not all the pre-season games, working particularly hard in the last one.

The fans like him, his teammates like him. It is a shame Paxton got injured, but in a key position as QB, it can happen and can be avoided when the QB knows the in's and out's of his role on the O-line.

In regards to the organization's pursuit of Brock Osweiler ... Osweiler, a veteran QB? Are you serious? Also, remember he walked out on the Broncos because HE didn't get what HE wanted. So now, Paxton is hurt, and the Broncos got little results back on their first-round pick and now, so they won't have "egg on their face", bring in "veteran QB Brock" who has shown no solid playing since he left the Broncos.

Thanks for listening, and Go Broncos!

--Kenneth Roman, Las Vegas, NV

I think Brock is going to create a huge distraction. Players are not going to want to play with him because of the way he left the Broncos.

Thanks, you do a great job on 9news.

--John Figal

Not sure why they would bring back someone who couldn't wait to leave here? My main question is what happens when Lynch does return?

--Stanley Martinez

In my last twitter to you (#mountain girl -my wife's) I predicted Sloter would score 21 pts. He got 30. His throwing motion is a picture of art, making him so dam accurate. At last we have an exciting QB. Siemian is only a manager & Lynch has too much Tebow in him.

Sloter at least is equal to Siemian with one big difference: With Siemian, the game is very close. With Sloter we have a comfortable lead. Joseph will exile Sloter to the practice squad in exchange for a vet QB. We will never see Sloter again this year.

A Sad Fan

Ed Hayes

To **Woody, Mary, Kenneth, John, and Ed**: Stanley I would have mixed in a letter that was happy about Osweiler's return and Slotter's departure. But there weren't any.

As someone who observes with little emotional attachment to the Broncos (I wish well for good people, nice guys, but cannot, and don't, root for their teams) I will say that like most of Denver's fans, I would have kept Slotter. And I was surprised Elway brought back Osweiler, although I did understand the move.

The Slotter out/Brock back move is all about Paxton Lynch. It wasn't just his shoulder injury that is expected to force him to miss the first four games. It was that the preseason revealed he's not ready to attack NFL defenses. He needs more time.

The starting quarterback, Trevor Siemian, is good if not yet great with question marks about his durability.

With apologies to Slotter's Army, I believe Osweiler is more capable of stepping in and winning a couple games in 2017. Slotter may be better than Osweiler in 2018 or '19. But this year? Osweiler is more advanced.

Had Lynch shown during the preseason he is close to becoming a starting quarterback, I think the Broncos would have tried to get by with Slotter as the backup for a couple games, and rushed Lynch's healing process.

Now, Lynch can take his time. Get fully healthy and then come back.

As for predicting what will happen when Lynch is healthy, all I know for sure is the events of the first month will probably make the answer obvious. If the Broncos are 3-1 and Siemian is playing great, there is one decision. If they are 3-1 despite Siemian's play, maybe the decision changes. If they are 1-3, it may not make any difference.

My guess now without knowing what will happen in the first four weeks is Osweiler sticks around for the full season.

And Woody, much as I agree with you the Broncos should seek my counsel, I enjoy my job at 9NEWS that tasks me with observing, analyzing and critiquing the team. It's been my experience, however, that the last person a team's brass wants advice from is a critic.

John, you would be surprised by the Bronco players' reaction to Osweiler's return. They like him. Players do not begrudge anyone for taking \$37 million over two years fully guaranteed. Players often believe loyalty is usually a one-way street in the NFL. Take it while you can. And Osweiler is a likeable guy, whose contribution in the second half of the 2015 regular season. remember, helped put rings on the fingers of the 20 players who are still around from the 53-man roster that year.

And Ed, we received your letter before Slotter signed a \$30,000 a week practice squad salary with the Minnesota Vikings. Your thoughts were impressively prescient.

I like Slotter because he has the poise to see the field and make accurate throws. He got his degree in finance, which means he's strong in math. I have a theory that good math students are better at computing play under pressure than those who aren't good in math. Derek Jeter got A's in math. Said it

was easily his best subject. (Just because the Broncos don't want my advice doesn't mean I can't give it, anyway).

Sloter has got a chance. The Broncos did try to bring him back. They just got outbid by the Vikings, who also had one less quarterback blocking him.

I do understand why the Broncos' brass believes Osweiler gives them a better chance in 2017.

Do the players who get picked for the practice squad get to use that time towards a pension? I know the pension goal is four years or more. Does, say, 2 seasons on practice squad count towards those four years?

--Al Frost

P.S. Does it look like Chad Kelly will have a real chance to make either the Broncos or another NFL team? I know he has had off the field issues; just wondering if time heals wounds.

Al: Players on the practice squad receive no pension, health insurance, 401K or any other type of post-career benefit. They are covered medically if they get hurt playing football. And they get a \$7,200 a week salary this year, or \$122,400 over a full, 17-week season. But no bennies.

One caveat: If a player later picks up a credited season, he does retroactively receive benefits for his practice-squad season. For instance, Broncos center Matt Paradis spent his entire first season on the practice squad. No benefits.

But he then had two years on the active roster as the Broncos' starting center. So, Paradis now has three years' worth of benefit credits. This year will mark three on the active roster, four years of benefits.

Training Center. (Photo: Isaiah J. Downing, Isaiah J. Downing)

As for Chad Kelly, yes, he will have a chance to become the Broncos' starting quarterback, but not this year. He's got a chance to break in as a backup quarterback next year and compete for a starting job in 2019 – if he gets healthy and stays that way.

His off-field issues are from a former life. He got a fresh start as he crossed over to the NFL with the Broncos. Only if he gets in trouble again will those past issues pile on.

Very regular watcher of 9 News. Enjoy your "Notebook!" With a couple of games on ESPN, what local TV channel will carry the games?

--Steve Miles

Steve: The two Broncos games on ESPN – Monday night against the Los Angeles Chargers, and Monday, Oct. 30 against the mighty Kansas City Chiefs – will also be televised on Channel 20. Because we at 9News/KUSA/Channel 20/KTVD understand Bronco viewers are not restricted to cable subscribers alone.

Mike - Are you allowed to share your thoughts on how you think the Broncos will do? Several of us have been talking this morning and we're thinking 8-8, 9-7. Can't quite come up with reasons to get that 10th win. What do you think?

--Dennis DeJulio, Aurora

Dennis—Sure, I can share. Let's begin by stating no team with Von Miller, Aqib Talib, Chris Harris Jr. and Derek Wolfe can finish worse than 7-9. Providing they all stay healthy. But it's almost impossible to have those types of defensive players and finish 6-10.

The defense should still be among the top 10 in the league in 2017. It's not the Super Bowl 50 defense. You can't lose DeMarcus Ware, Malik Jackson, T.J. Ward, Danny Trevathan and Sylvester Williams – in that order – and come close to the dominance of that Super Bowl 50 team.

But it's still a 10- to 12-win defense.

The offense will be better. The best offseason addition was guard Ron Leary. Then Jamaal Charles and Garrett Bolles. I haven't seen enough of Menelik Watson, but he must be an upgrade at right tackle.

The key is Siemian and first-year head coach Vance Joseph's ability to reinstall a team-before-self attitude among his players. If Siemian improves on last season, the Broncos should be fine. If he doesn't take a leap as hoped, the Broncos may miss the playoffs for a second consecutive year.

I'm going with 10-6, and a first-round playoff win as a realistic high side. I hate to predict a low side. There are so many strong personalities inside the locker room that if the season gets sideways, it may be difficult to keep everyone together.

Broncos to unveil new offense against coordinator Mike McCoy's old team

By Jeff Legwold

ESPN

September 9, 2017

Mike McCoy won't say it, not a word, won't even reveal if he's thinking it.

He won't offer, like many coaches who have been fired in a league in which that is such a common outcome, that he would like to show his former team he's got the coaching goods and can handle his business.

With McCoy in his second stint as the team's offensive coordinator, the Denver Broncos will open the season against the Los Angeles Chargers on Monday night. The Chargers hired McCoy to be their head coach in 2013 -- and fired him four seasons later, in 2016.

McCoy takes an even-keel, close-to-the-vest approach to most questions in the public domain. And this week was no different.

"I've got all the respect in the world for everyone in the organization," McCoy said. "I can't thank the Spanos family [enough] for everything, the opportunity they gave me back in 2013 to lead the organization."

A few moments later, McCoy added: "I've got a lot of respect for all those players. You've got a lot of great people, not just players, but the way every coach, every player, through some tough times, fought their tails off every day. There were no excuses. Unfortunately, we just didn't win enough games."

McCoy was one of Vance Joseph's first hires this past January as Joseph assembled his staff with the Broncos. President of football operations/general manager John Elway has heartily endorsed McCoy's return to the team because of its potential benefits to quarterback Trevor Siemian and the offense in general.

McCoy was hired as Josh McDaniels' offensive coordinator in 2009 and was retained in 2011 when John Fox was hired to replace McDaniels, who had been fired with four games remaining in the 2010 season. McCoy stayed with the Broncos until after the 2012 season -- Peyton Manning's first with team -- when he was hired by the Chargers.

But injuries, the franchise's prospective move to Los Angeles and consistent struggles to close out close games resulted in McCoy's firing after the Chargers went 27-37 in his tenure. The Broncos have just two players left on offense from McCoy's previous time in Denver: wide receiver Demaryius Thomas and tight end Virgil Green.

And Thomas, for one, believes no matter what has been said this week, McCoy wouldn't be sad if the Broncos offense made a case for him.

"Absolutely," Thomas said with a smile. "If you were the head coach for the Chargers and you got fired, you play them on Monday night, what would you want to do? I'd try to put 100 up if I could. I don't know if that's possible, but I'd try."

Monday's game will be the first real look at how much McCoy's latest version of the playbook resembles the one he and the Broncos staff put together for Manning in 2012. The Broncos were more than a little vanilla, as expected, in the preseason, but McCoy was given some specific orders from Joseph before the offseason program began.

Joseph wanted the Broncos to run the ball better (they were 27th in the league last season), protect the quarterback better (Siemien had shoulder surgery in the offseason from the punishment he took) and score more consistently. The Broncos were 22nd in scoring, one of 11 teams that did not average at least 21 points a game.

"[McCoy is] smart, he's super-duper smart," running back C.J. Anderson said. "Definitely put us in the right position to be successful and to make plays. That's something that we haven't had over here in a while. We're definitely excited about that. If I had to pick one thing from him, it would definitely be being smart and having that swag and sass about it."

Broncos have plan in place for Brock Osweiler if Trevor Siemian goes down

By Jeff Legwold

ESPN

September 9, 2017

If all goes as planned the Denver Broncos will not have to play Brock Osweiler at quarterback in Monday night's regular-season opener, but as their practice week draws to a close they believe he's ready for any emergency scenario. Osweiler, who was signed to a one-year deal Saturday, hasn't been asked to digest the entire playbook in recent days, but the Broncos have a framework in place for him if he has to spell Trevor Siemian for any reason against the Los Angeles Chargers.

"He's done a nice job in a short amount of time," Broncos offensive coordinator Mike McCoy said.

"As far as Brock, if he had to play, we have a package for Brock," Broncos coach Vance Joseph said. "There are certain things that he likes in Mike's system that we'll run with Brock if he has to go into a game to play."

Siemian won the starting job for the second consecutive season in a training-camp battle. Siemian and Osweiler also spent the 2015 season together with the Broncos, in Siemian's rookie year. They were the backups to Peyton Manning before Osweiler signed with the Houston Texans in March 2016.

Osweiler started seven games for the Broncos in 2015 in place of an injured Manning, and Siemian was the No. 2 quarterback for those games. But Osweiler's roots in the current offense date to 2012 -- his rookie year -- when McCoy was in the last season of his first coaching stint with the Broncos. McCoy was hired to be the Chargers' coach in 2013.

"[Osweiler has] done a good job of picking everything up," McCoy said. "He's complained a little to me about some words that I've changed, 'Hey, I left, we had to change something.' ... That's the game, we change, but he's a smart player, a talented player, I know all about him from when we drafted him and worked him out."

Osweiler will serve as the Broncos' No. 2 at least until Paxton Lynch recovers from a right shoulder injury he suffered in the Aug. 26 preseason game against the Green Bay Packers. Lynch had been wearing a sling since the injury but was not wearing one Friday as he watched practice.

Joseph has said he will decide who will be the No. 2 behind Siemian once Lynch has been medically cleared to return -- Lynch was expected to miss at least four games. Osweiler and Siemian have been early arrivals this week to study the game plan and give Siemian a chance to help Osweiler through the playbook McCoy put in during the offseason.

"There are a lot of new things, but there's some similarities," Osweiler said earlier this week. "I think we'll be able to put together a package come Monday night if something unfortunately was to happen to Trevor where I could step into the game and feel very comfortable." "You love the way he comes out here and just works," McCoy said. "He was schooled the right way early on in his career. He's a pro."

Broncos defensive line depth in question for season opener

By Jeff Legwold

ESPN

September 9, 2017

Denver Broncos defensive end Jared Crick, who missed much of the preseason with back troubles, was held out of Friday's practice and that could impact the Broncos' depth for Monday night's opener.

Crick had practiced on a limited basis Thursday. Crick and defensive end Derek Wolfe (ankle) each played in just one preseason game after they suffered their injuries on back-to-back practice days in mid-August.

Broncos coach Vance Joseph had said earlier in the week that he hoped both Crick and Wolfe would continue to make progress and be ready to play in Monday night's game against the Los Angeles Chargers. Wolfe, too, had practiced on a limited basis Thursday and then practiced fully Friday.

"Wolfe was out there the last couple days," said defensive coordinator Joe Woods after Friday's practice. "We slowly worked him back in terms of getting him reps. He was nine-on-seven (drills) with full pads. He handled it well. He came out of it. He feels great. Crick right now is day-to-day. We're going to continue to evaluate him throughout the week."

If Crick cannot play against the Chargers, the Broncos would have just five healthy defensive linemen on the roster available for the game -- Wolfe, Domata Peko, Adam Gotsis, Shelby Harris and Kyle Peko. Zach Kerr is not expected to play against the Chargers because of a knee injury and Gotsis has missed some practice time with a shoulder injury.

Gotsis and Kyle Peko were limited in Thursday and Friday's practices. The Broncos will practice on Saturday afternoon and release their final injury report of the week following the workout.

Rules, habits, passion keeping NFL quarterbacks around

By Arnie Stapleton
Associated Press
September 9, 2017

Tom Brady didn't get things started on a strong note for the growing group of graybeard quarterbacks when the Chiefs spoiled the Patriots' latest Super Bowl celebration with a big comeback of their own Thursday night in the NFL opener.

Few doubt Brady will bounce back from that stunning 42-27 loss with another stellar season, however.

At 40, Brady says he's more efficient in his training than when he was in his 20s.

"I think it's a lot easier for me now than it's ever been," he said. "I feel like my routine's better than it's ever been. When you're younger you don't know what to do, and after 17 years, going on my 18th year I know what to do. I know how to prepare."

Brady is the elder statesman of starting QBs, seven of whom are 35 or older for the first time ever.

Brady is joined by Drew Brees (38), Josh McCown (38), Carson Palmer (37), Eli Manning (36), Ben Roethlisberger (35) and Philip Rivers (35) in the club of QBs who have circled the sun 35 times or more.

Quarterbacks are delaying retirement while making more money, eating better, working out year-round and benefiting from rule changes that have resulted in fewer hits and less wear and tear on their bodies. Bolstering veterans' value is the paucity of QBs running the pro-style system in college.

"It starts with better conditioning and nutrition," said Hall of Famer and ex-general manager Bill Polian. "As a people we're living longer and being more productive."

The spate of rule changes over the last two decades that fed the offensive explosion is bearing fruit now that quarterbacks are elongating their peak performance years and prolonging their careers.

"Back in the day, those quarterbacks, you could just come down on their shoulders, you could do all those types of things," said coach-turned-broadcaster Rex Ryan. "And you know I think the league has nipped that and taken away some of those unnecessary shots that guys have taken and that probably shortened careers quite a bit."

Rivers is preparing to face the Denver Broncos on Monday night for the 24th time as he begins his 14th NFL season.

"First, I'm very thankful. I feel like I've been blessed to be healthy enough to continue to go out there each and every year as long as I have," Rivers said. "I think certainly the rules set up to help you a little bit, no question as far as where that target area is, it's not as vast as it used to be as far as the hits you used to take."

"And I'm still excited about doing it. I'm still fired up to come in here and prepare for the Broncos and prepare for a season, to go to training camp and all those things."

That's what drives all QBs, that internal fire, whatever its fuel.

"The seven that we could name, they all love it and have a great passion for it," Rivers said. "Not that the guys in the past didn't. I don't mean that. But, shoot, some guys are ready to be done at 35, 36, and some just enjoy it so much they don't want to put it down."

On the other end are the greenhorn quarterbacks coming out of college and having to adjust on the fly to the pro style schemes after operating in the spread going back to high school, or even Pop Warner.

Broncos general manager John Elway moved up in the draft last year to select Paxton Lynch out of Memphis. But he's been beaten out two summers in a row by 2015 seventh-rounder Trevor Siemian, a heady Northwestern grad who benefited from his year under Peyton Manning's tutelage and made a quicker transition from the spread.

"There's always been a dearth of quarterbacks," Polian said. "And we survived the wishbone era, which couldn't have been more disparate compared to what was done in the NFL. So, we'll survive the spread — and at least they're throwing the ball, so they develop stronger arms and, ostensibly, a little bit better accuracy than wishbone guys did."

Elements of the spread dot the NFL landscape, but as a whole, it's unsustainable against the bigger, stronger, faster defenders in the pros.

"I think there's always some of it that comes in anytime you're involved in the passing game," said Polian. "Whether or not the play-calling via cards would make any sense, I have no opinion on. The no-huddle predated the spread, so that's not an issue. But the one thing I'm sure of is that there are no old running quarterbacks in the National Football League.

"So, the idea of the read-option, once a guy sustains his first injury, i.e. RG3," Polian added about Robert Griffin III, "that sort of goes by the board. I don't think that's coming into professional football as a steady diet anytime soon."

The ones that do adjust and can thrive have an ever-increasing lifetime expectancy in the NFL. Just ask them.

Garett Bolles, Menelik Watson ready for AFC West's pass-rush 'monsters'

By Andrew Mason
DenverBroncos.com
September 9, 2017

For offensive tackles Menelik Watson and Garett Bolles, a battle against Chargers edge rushers Joey Bosa and Melvin Ingram on Monday night is just the beginning.

The challenge posed by AFC West pass rushers is so steep that what Watson and Bolles will face this year is like a hike through the Himalayas.

Bosa and Ingram in Los Angeles. Dee Ford and Justin Houston in Kansas City. Khalil Mack and Bruce Irvin in Oakland. And of course, there's the pair that Watson and Bolles saw in practice: Von Miller and Shane Ray, with Shaquil Barrett filling in for Ray for the first six games of the regular season.

As Watson sees it, the AFC West has the best collection of edge rushers in the NFL.

"Hands down, and I'll say that openly," he said. "Every single team has two monsters off the edge, and you need to account for those guys. You need to know where those guys are at all times."

The numbers back up Watson's assertion. The AFC West is the only division in the NFL that returns seven edge defenders -- 3-4 outside linebackers or 4-3 defensive ends -- who posted at least seven sacks last year.

That group of seven doesn't even include Houston, who had four sacks in five games last year and added a pair of sacks Thursday night in the Chiefs' season-opening win at New England.

That's why the Broncos invested a first-round pick in Bolles and signed Watson within the first 30 hours of the start of free agency. Both are athletic tackles with quick feet honed from backgrounds in other sports (basketball for Watson, lacrosse for Bolles) who possess plenty of untapped upside.

With three division rivals that possess a pair of athletic speed rushers, the Broncos needed to develop a proper counter to what they will deal with now and for the foreseeable future in division play.

"Obviously, having two speed rushers is always an issue because you can't help both tackles all the time. You can help one, but you can't help two," Head Coach Vance Joseph said.

"In our division alone, every team has two. Obviously, acquiring tackles for us was important. But, we have to block speed rushers six times this year. Two on each team, so that's six times this year. That's critical for us."

It's also critical that Bolles and Watson steeled themselves for the weekly challenge that looms by going against Miller in one-on-one drills each day.

"Ingram's a great player, he's a veteran, very similar to Von, but Von's the best of the best and I got to see him in practice," Bolles said. "Bosa is a heck of a football player. Both of them, I'm excited to go against them cause they're going to make me better.

"... But I feel like I'm ready. I've been going against Von and Shane Ray in OTAs then we have Shaq back, so I have the best defense in the whole National Football League right here in my locker [room] at this great facility. I'm going to be ready because I go against them every day."

And it's key to not think about the name or the reputation of the player on the other side of the line of scrimmage. Instead, the focus has to be on the matchup and the preparation for an opponent's scheme and tactics.

"Football is like boxing. Every offensive lineman has a fight, and the plan is to win way more than you lose," Watson said.

"You just want to be prepared. You pay attention to scheme more than players, because a guy is going to do what he does, he's going to play the way he plays, but the scheme is probably the most important thing you've got to pay attention to, because when you know where you're going to be, it makes the game a lot easier."

Even when you're facing a pack of monsters.

Broncos Injury Report: Jamaal Charles, Aqib Talib back after rest day

By Andrew Mason
DenverBroncos.com
September 9, 2017

Running back Jamaal Charles and cornerback Aqib Talib returned to practice after receiving rest days Thursday, but defensive end Jared Crick was held out of work as the Broncos donned full pads for their Friday practice.

Crick saw on-field work Monday, Wednesday and Thursday. He was listed as having limited work during Thursday's session on the official injury report.

"Crick right now, he's day-to-day, so we're going to have to continue to evaluate him throughout the week," Defensive Coordinator Joe Woods said.

Defensive end Derek Wolfe practiced for a third consecutive day.

"We kind of slowly worked him back in terms of getting him reps," Woods said. "He was in 9-on-7 today with full pads. He handled it well; he came out of it and feels great."

Defensive end Zach Kerr (knee bruise), quarterback Paxton Lynch (sprained right shoulder) and running back Devontae Booker (fractured wrist) did not practice.

Fan info for Monday night's game: Wear orange, enjoy Judah & the Lion

By Staff

DenverBroncos.com

September 9, 2017

The Denver Broncos encourage all fans to wear orange during Monday night's game, presented by Bud Light, against the Los Angeles Chargers at Sports Authority Field at Mile High (8:20 p.m. MDT kickoff). The community partner of the game is Project PAVE.

As part of the festivities, Bud Light will be providing rally towels to all fans aged 21-and-up.

Nashville based band Judah & the Lion will be performing live during Monday's halftime show. The independent recording artists will also headline the iHeart Radio Broncos Block Party on Sunday, Sept. 24, at Sports Authority Field at Mile High.

Project PAVE

Project PAVE, founded in 1986, works to empower youth and end the cycle of relationship violence through innovative intervention and prevention education programming. True Man, Project PAVE's healthy masculinity character development curriculum, has been a part of the Broncos Futures Football program for middle school students since 2015.

For more information on Denver Broncos Community programs and partnerships, please visit www.DenverBroncos.com/Community.

There are several other gameday elements detailed in the timeline below:

Pregame

2 p.m. — Parking Lot C opens for early tailgating

3 p.m. — All parking lots open

To minimize inconveniences and traffic delays, fans arriving after 4 p.m. without a parking permit should avoid all roads in and around the immediate stadium area. Fans are advised to proceed directly to off-site parking lots such as the Pepsi Center and the Auraria Campus. For more information on alternative game day parking options, please visit www.sportsauthorityfieldatmilehigh.com/stadium-information/parking-transportation.

2:30-7 p.m. — Mile High Monument open

A structure built to honor the rich history of Mile High Stadium, the 3,000-square foot monument is approximately 1/8 the size of the original Mile High Stadium and offers fans a look into the history and greatest moments at the venue, which served as the Broncos home stadium from 1960-2000.

4:20-7:20 p.m. — Noble Energy Sports Legends Mall open

Features special bar service from Bud Light Build a Bar. Denver chef Troy Guard will serve as the celebrity chef. The owner of more than 10 Denver-area restaurants, Guard is the long-time Denver Broncos chef representative at the annual Taste of the NFL event and will act as the lead chef for Taste of the Broncos on Monday, Sept. 18. Former Broncos running back Reuben Droughns will be in attendance. Miles Lee Band will provide entertainment.

4:30 p.m. — Mile High Mountain Village opens (access through Gate 4)

All-You-Can Eat Tailgate with 2-for-1 beer, prizes, visits from Miles the Mascot, alumni and cheerleaders. It is \$20 a game pre-order prior to game day and \$25 the day of the game. Entry to Mountain Village is only valid with a gameday ticket. Sales will end at 6:00 p.m., but the tailgate will remain open until 6:30 p.m. Gate 4 of Mountain Village will be open to fans as a free option.

5:30 p.m. — Premium gates open

6:30 p.m. — All stadium gates open

Pregame (in-stadium)

7:55 p.m. — Pre-game entertainment begins, including:

Stampede Drumline

Denver Broncos Cheerleaders

Thunderstorm

Parade of Colors

Team introductions

National anthem

Kayla Hruby, Broomfield High School Senior, will perform the National Anthem. In addition, Challenger, a live bald eagle will fly from the upper level to the field during the Anthem. The flag holders during the Anthem will be composed of first-responders, both active and retired.

8:20 p.m. — Kickoff

Halftime — Judah & the Lion

Alternative band Judah and the Lion from will perform during the halftime show. The live performance will also feature the U.S. Army drill team.

Broncos TV programming rundown

By Staff

DenverBroncos.com

September 9, 2017

Wednesday

6:30 p.m. "Broncos Huddle" (KUSA/9NEWS)

10:30 p.m. "Broncos Huddle" re-airst (KTVD/Ch. 20)

Thursday

4 p.m. Telemundo Denver (KDEN) will air "Cabalgando con Los Broncos" on their newscast

10 p.m. Telemundo Denver (KDEN) will re-air "Cabalgando con Los Broncos" on their late newscast

Friday

8:30 a.m. Broncos-themed morning show segment (KDVR/FOX31 and KWGN/Ch.2)

9:30 p.m. "The Broncos Zone with Coach Joseph" (KDVR/FOX 31)

Saturday

7:30 p.m. "The Broncos Zone with Coach Joseph" re-airst (KWGN/Ch.2)

9:30 p.m. "Broncos Sideline Stories with Jim Saccomano" (KTVD/Ch. 20)

Sunday

9 a.m. "Broncos Gameday Live" (KUSA/9NEWS)

9:30 a.m. "Broncos Sideline Stories with Jim Saccomano" re-airst on Gameday Live (KUSA/9NEWS)

10 p.m. "Tiempo Extra con Los Broncos" (Extra Time with the Broncos) airts on Telemundo Denver (KDEN)

10:35 p.m. "Broncos Tonight" (KUSA/9NEWS)

Talking Football With Beth Mowins, the First Woman in 30 Years to Broadcast an NFL Game

By Richard Deitsch

MMQB

September 9, 2017

Beth Mowins knows there will be viewers who think her Monday Night Football game-calling assignment on September 11 is a stunt or political correctness run amok from ESPN. But she has no interest in exerting any energy over those who do not believe she should be calling an NFL game.

“I learned a long time ago that you don’t ask why you did or why you didn’t get a job, you simply say thank you very much and work your tail off to keep it. Or you work your tail off to get the next one,” Mowins said. “I am most focused on doing a respectful job and earning the respect of my peers and my family. I understand I will not please everybody and I always try the best I can not to listen to negative people with negative attitudes. Life is too short for that.”

As part of an MMQB assignment last month in Cleveland on fledgling NFL broadcasters participating in practice games to prepare for the regular season, I shadowed Mowins and Rex Ryan in Cleveland as they called a Browns-Giants exhibition game. During that assignment, Mowins and I sat down for 40-minute conversation on a variety of topics including the significance of being the first woman to call a regular-season NFL game since 1987. She will call the Chargers at Broncos as part of the opening week Monday Night Football doubleheader.

RICHARD DEITSCH: You have been interviewed many times about your sports broadcasting career and at one point many of those questions focused on being one of the only women calling college football. You now face even more questions that are gender-based given that this NFL assignment. How have you processed the increased scrutiny?

BETH MOWINS: I have come to understand the significance of it and really to understand of the importance of it, in terms of there are more and more young woman who want to get into this business. They recognize me more often. They will come up and ask questions and want to talk to me about things. I love that stuff. I think that is great. From a professional standpoint, whenever I am asked about those things, I will often try to steer the answer back to this: I consider myself a play-by-play announcer first and foremost. I am much more interested in the craft of the job as opposed to anything gender. That to me is secondary to the role and craft and skill of the job.

RD: How do you react to some fans who say they simply want a male voice calling a football game because the voice is more familiar or deeper?

BM: I encourage them to try to make it into the second quarter or second half, and if by that point you don’t have an appreciation for what we are doing, then that is on you and not me. I am not going to change anything I do for people like that.

RD: You have called games in multiple sports including the NFL but this is Monday Night Football, the biggest stage you will have done as a broadcaster. How anxious, if at all, will you be?

BM: I would certainly hope I'm somewhat anxious, because as an announcer or former player that is the indicator that this is important and means something. I will be excited more than anything. It's also already different simply because of the buildup, whether it is doing practice games or interviews with me like this.

RD: You are now 50 years old?

BM: (Laughs). Thank you.

RD: Ha. We are all getting older. The reason I bring age up is I am curious how you would have processed this opportunity if Monday Night Football and the CBS NFL games came when you were 30 years old?

BM: I have a much better appreciation for the pitfalls that some of these athletes come across when they're 20 or 25 and all of this attention comes their way. I have a much better appreciation of how it can be difficult to deal with this stuff, and how it's possible to trip up on things from time to time. I don't know honestly how I would have done in that situation other than as an older person getting this opportunity, I do have a better understanding of how to handle the time management and pressure management of it all a lot better.

RD: Your two to three CBS NFL assignments have not gotten as much attention because the ESPN game is first, but those are very significant. You are the first woman to call NFL games on CBS, one of the longtime rights-holders of the league. It also gives you the real possibility of calling games beyond this year because they do multiple games each week, right?

BM: I think we will see how it goes this year and take it from there. The good part of all this is that there is so much here and now that I am not going to spend a whole lot of time on the future. Rex and I are both very competitive people, and we want to do well on this. He understands the significance of it. As far as the CBS work goes, Jay Feely is the same way.

RD: How did the CBS assignment come about?

BM: It's one game right now and the possibility of two or three more later in the year. They started talking to my agent in the winter. I credit both CBS and ESPN for whatever it took to make this happen.

RD: How did the CBS assignment come about?

BM: It's one game right now and the possibility of two or three more later in the year. They started talking to my agent in the winter. I credit both CBS and ESPN for whatever it took to make this happen.

RD: What has Mendoza told you about handling this kind of attention?

BM: Something I tried to stress with her when she was first starting out—and now she is making a point to remind me—it is all about the preparation. I think the challenge is to process as much as you can and then sift through it, to be prepared for anything that comes along over the course of a broadcast. So when you're sitting at the game, you're comfortable, confident, and you don't miss those moments of jocular and to have some fun with the people in the booth.

RD: Has anyone from the NFL's league office reached out to you about the Monday Night Football game?

BM: No.

RD: Do you expect someone, whether Roger Goodell or someone else high up in the league office, to contact you given the historic nature of the game?

BM: I'm not sure. I guess we will see. Maybe it happens, but either way I have always considered it a sign of respect that if they don't need to do that, it is because they appreciate your getting ready to do a good job.

RD: The Raiders have always been an organization that thinks outside the box and outside norms, and they told me that was part of their thinking when they hired you to do their preseason games in 2015. Would you like to stay with them long-term as a preseason broadcaster?

BM: That whole crew—and it starts with owner Mark Davis at the top—they have done things differently, and they have great perspective on leadership. I have been thrilled to be a part of that organization, and I hope I can stay with them long-term. A lot of different [NFL broadcasters] work on preseason games for teams and then do other stuff. That would be something I would love to do for perpetuity.

RD: The Raiders are a legit Super Bowl contender this year. You see them as much as anyone nationally given your preseason job. What do you anticipate this year?

BM: I'll reissue [Raiders preseason analyst] Matt Millen's statement: I think they will go as far as the defense takes them. The offense will be as good as anyone's in the league if they stay healthy. There may be a time or two they might have to outscore an opponent, but the preseason was about figuring out their situation at linebacker and defensive tackle. If they can get better pressure on the quarterback, that will go a long way to helping their secondary. Once they get Gareon Conley on the field, I think they have some good guys back there. It is going to be on the defense to prove they are improved.

RD: Was there any point in your professional career where you thought about leaving the profession?

BM: I never had a backup plan, and probably that helped. I never wanted to do anything else professionally. Probably if there were times where there was something else, maybe I would have considered that. But I feel like I have also been fortunate where whenever there was a lean season, something else came up the next season that allowed me to continue to do it.

RD: How much sexism exists in the sports media, in your opinion? This is specific to the opportunities women get in the business.

BM: I have always thought it has been significant for men who are making decisions in the business to have a daughter. They realize they want her to have every opportunity that their son might have. I think that has been huge in this industry, once they start seeing young women in these roles. It will always be out there, but once it gets to a personal level or a decision where you are dealing with one woman who is doing that job well and has earned that opportunity, I think that is different than the broader sexism

on gender. Should a woman have an opportunity is a lot different than should that woman have an opportunity.

RD: What, if any, personal experiences do you have when it comes to sexism— either institutionalized or overt?

BM: When you hear stories from other woman, I realize I have been pretty fortunate. I have never really had an issue in my face, so to speak, or anyone saying anything to me gender-related. I have always had great male role models and bosses and mentors who have kept all critiques to the job. It has always been about how you are doing it, as opposed to anything gender-specific.

RD: Are sideline reporter positions a good opportunity for women, or do they reinforce that women are not getting other positions on a sports broadcast?

BM: I have always maintained that it is the hardest job in television. I have talked a lot of other people in the business who agree with that. If that is what your dream is, if that is what your passion is, then good. My dream was something that not a lot of other women were doing. If sideline reporting is what you want to do, go after it with gusto. If that is where you are steered toward, never say no to an opportunity for no particular reason. But make sure once you are doing that, don't be afraid to say, "Yes, I'll do this, but can you give me a shot as an analyst or sit me in the studio and show you what I can do there."

RD: How do you approach social media as it relates to your job?

BM: I generally will use Twitter as a research tool, to follow reporters and other people in the business. One of the things Mike Tirico has told me is to be above the fray in terms of people who are taking pot shots at you.

RD: You have been a discussion point at times on social media given these assignments. You will likely trend on the day of the Monday night game. How do you approach feedback there? Do you want to avoid it, or is there value in researching online sentiment?

BM: I don't really pay attention to any of that stuff. I don't search myself or anything like that because I don't need to see a lot of the negativity that is out there. I have no time for negative people with negative attitudes. But they do show up on your timeline, and I do think it is valuable to find the few that want to have a conversation, or do have a question for you. I won't look at Twitter until after I have watched the tape of the game.

RD: Have you thought about how long you want to call sporting events?

BM: It's all I have ever known, so I would love to do this as long as they let me. You have seen men work late in life. Look at Vin Scully, Verne Lundquist, Brent Musburger, Keith Jackson, Al Michaels, Dick Enberg. I am hoping that opportunity is there and this is the beginning of a long process.

RD: Could you see yourself calling games into your 70s if healthy?

BM: That would be interesting to see how that plays out in a much more visual world. I would like to think I could. We will see if priorities change.

RD: Who have you heard from in sports that surprised you?

BM: I have a gotten nice emails and texts from people in the business I look up to. I got a really nice text from Al Michaels. Jim Nantz was doing a practice game with Tony Romo in Oakland and stopped by the booth to talk. He could not have been nicer. It was kind of cool to see Martina Navratilova have a nice tweet about me.

RD: Where is home base for you?

BM: San Diego now, and because of family. My two brothers lived out there at the time I moved, and my mother had just passed away. I was feeling like if I could be anywhere, I wanted to be with them. One brother has since moved back home to Syracuse, but the other brother is still out there with my sister-in-law and nephew. It's become home. I have been in San Diego since 2010.

RD: Who will you talk to on the day of the Denver game? Anyone's voice you want to hear before this big moment?

BM: I get a little emotional thinking about my family. I will call my Dad, I will call my brothers, I will call my boyfriend [a San Diego firefighter], my sister-in-law and nephews, just to hear their voices and say hello. My boyfriend and my brothers might even be here. I imagine I will exchange texts with Tirico and Sean and Doris, Holly, and Debbie too.

RD: Let's head back to when you were in the middle of a heavy women's college basketball schedule a couple of decades ago. You played the sport in college and love the sport obviously. But in the middle of those assignments, did you ever think that was going to be your ceiling, a rotation of doing women's sports? Or did you always think the NFL was a possibility?

BM: It was always out there, always something I thought could possibly happen. I think one of the reason I thought that is because you treat all of those other games as professionally you would any other game. When I was working those games, I always loved it that whoever your analyst was—say it was a guy that worked men's games or called the NBA—he would treat it like any other game. I learned valuable lessons early on that you have to treat all those games like they are special because it is special for someone. It is also helping you get better and better. I always thought the possibility of college football and the NFL was still out there for me.

NFL apologizes for tweet likening Chiefs' win to Mexico earthquake that killed 58

By Sean Wagner-McGough
CBS Sports
September 9, 2017

Shortly after the Chiefs routed the Patriots 42-27 to open up the NFL season on Thursday night, the NFL Mexico Twitter account correlated the win to an earthquake that devastated Mexico. On Friday, the NFL apologized for its tweet.

The original tweet is deleted, but here's a screenshot:



@davichoflag

Replying to @nflmx

¿Esté? Que no sean payasos!

Ahora se indignan de eso cuando insultan a más no poder esos estados afectados...

9:07 AM - Sep 8, 2017

4 Replies 24 Retweets 88 likes

The translation, via the Los Angeles Times: "Of those times Mexico City shakes with an (hashtag) earthquake because it can't believe the (at) Chiefs have won the (hashtag) Kickoff2017 game."

NFL Mexico apologized Friday morning, writing "NFL México se disculpa por el inaceptable tweet de ayer, que no representa los valores de la liga. Reiteramos nuestra solidaridad con México." According to the Los Angeles Times, that translates to: "NFL Mexico apologizes for yesterday's unacceptable tweet, which doesn't represent the values of the league. We reiterate our solidarity with Mexico."

@nflmx

NFL México se disculpa por el inaceptable tweet de ayer, que no representa los valores de la liga.

Reiteramos nuestra solidaridad con México

9:02 AM - Sep 8, 2017

539 Replies 692 Retweets 1,868 likes

According to CBS News, the earthquake has killed at least 58 people and toppled hundreds of buildings in Mexico's southern coast. The country's capital "escaped major damage," CBS News reported.

The Patriots and Raiders are scheduled to play their Week 11 game in Mexico City on Nov. 19. According to Mark Waller, the NFL's VP of international, the league is hoping Mexico becomes its next London.

"We have a tremendous fan base in Mexico," NFL commissioner Roger Goodell said in February. "Their passion for football is inspiring, and we look forward to another memorable game in Mexico City between two great teams next season."

Broncos Will Likely Face Ezekiel Elliott In Week 2

By Staff

CBS 4

September 9, 2017

After their Week 1 matchup on Monday night, the Denver Broncos will immediately begin game planning for Week 2, and those plans will now surely include defensive schemes for stopping Ezekiel Elliott.

The Dallas Cowboys travel to Denver for a 2:25 p.m. kickoff on Sept. 17, and there was speculation their dynamite second-year running back wouldn't be with them. That was due to a six-game suspension imposed by the NFL after an investigation into domestic violence accusations.

Ezekiel Elliott denies wrongdoing and hasn't been charged with any crimes.

But on Friday, Elliott was granted a preliminary injunction in U.S. District Court, and according to NFL.com he may not miss any games this season.

Broncos Ask Fans To Participate In Orange-Out Monday

By Staff

CBS 4

September 9, 2017

The Denver Broncos are encouraging fans to wear orange Monday.

In their last 17 home openers, the Broncos have a record of 16-1.



Denver Broncos ✓

@Broncos

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/ #BeatTheChargers

4:04 PM - Sep 7, 2017

26 724 1,865

They're hoping to continue that winning trend to open the 2017 season, and are hoping for support from Broncos Country.

As head coach Vance Joseph said, he expects the stadium to be electric.

“Obviously, Broncos Country, it’s a great fan base,” Joseph said. “I’ve played here in primetime games on Monday nights. It was so loud.”

Fans are also encouraged to use the #UnitedInOrange hashtag when posting on social media throughout the game.

Aqib Talib “honored” that Broncos teammates voted him captain

By Darin Gantt
Pro Football Talk
September 9, 2017

Aqib Talib’s no angel. But he is a captain.

The longtime Broncos cornerback said he was “honored” that his teammates chose him as a team captain, the first time in his 10 years in the NFL he’s earned that honor.

“It means a lot to me,” he said, via Nicki Jhabvala of the Denver Post. “Your teammates voted for you, so it’s good to see that they look at me as a leader and good to see that I’ve been doing my job in OTAs and training camp. I’m honored.”

No one can question his play on the field, as he has 33 career interceptions and nine returned for a touchdown. And he’s always been a vocal player.

“I think maybe my off-the-field stuff kind of prevented me from being a captain a lot of the time, but I think I always been captain material,” he said. “I’ve always been a good guy at practice, I’ve always been a great teammate and I’ve always been a leader.”

Talib has followed a long and interesting path toward captainship which involves multiple issues, most recently having to be separated from a teammate during a preseason game and avoiding league punishment for shooting himself in the leg.

Mike McCoy answering plenty of questions with Chargers coming to town

By Mike Florio
Pro Football Talk
September 9, 2017

Broncos offensive coordinator Mike McCoy returned to Denver this year after his stint as head coach of the Chargers. On Monday night, the Broncos host the Chargers to open the season. Which means that McCoy has had his brain picked plenty.

“I think I’ve answered plenty of questions, whether it’s the staff here or the players here for some tips,” McCoy told reporters on Friday. “It’s all about the players going out there and executing. We’re going to put plans in and we’re going to talk to them about everything, but it’s important that they use the information we give them to go out there and study on their own. It does help just talking about the preparation part of it, what type of players they have and what they like to do in certain situations as players. It’s all about the 11 guys in all three phases going out there and playing.”

He’s right, but the more those 11 guys know about the guys they’ll be facing, the better prepared they may be. McCoy generally is better prepared to serve in the job he once performed well enough to become a head coach, given the experience as a head coach. He was asked specifically what he learned from the experience.

“Well I’m gray,” McCoy said with a laugh. “I’ve aged a little bit — I’ve learned so much as a coach. I was very fortunate to work with some great coaches there and I spent so much time with the defensive staff in the meetings. Learning so much about scheme, technique and how we were going to try to take [Demaryius Thomas] out of the game and things like that. I learned those from being with [former Chargers defensive coordinator] John Pagano and the rest of the defensive staff. Being around some offensive coaches and being involved in the kicking game, I learned so much more about the game. It’s interesting now, every once in a while [head coach Vance Joseph] will walk in my office and say some things and I kind of just smile, ‘Hey, that’s your decision these days I don’t have to worry about that anymore.’ There’s a lot on his plate, but it was a great experience.”

McCoy is now hoping for an even better experience, ideally doing enough back in Denver to get another chance to coach somewhere else, soon.