

Jordan Norwood, former Broncos WR/PR, announces retirement from NFL

By Nicki Jhabvala

Denver Post

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In a lengthy social media post, former Broncos receiver and returner Jordan Norwood announced his retirement from the NFL after eight seasons.

Norwood, an undrafted player out Penn State, began his career on the Browns' practice squad, then bounced to Philadelphia, back to Cleveland, Tampa Bay and then to Denver. After missing two years of playing time to recover from injuries, Norwood spent the past two seasons — his last two — with the Broncos, winning a Super Bowl ring and setting a Super Bowl record with a 61-yard punt return.

Norwood's one-year contract expired at the end of last season. He walks away with 79 career receptions for 844 yards and two touchdowns, plus 35 punt returns run back for 290 yards.

In his letter to fans online, Norwood said he played organized football for 23 years but never had a passion for the sport. After a trying 2016 season that was noted more for his muffed punts and an infamous shove from cornerback Aqib Talib during a season-turning loss to the Chiefs, Norwood said he realized he "didn't have to keep acting like I loved the game of football."

"My pride had set myself up for ultimate humiliation and humbling. Both of which I needed," he wrote, of the November 2016 loss to Kansas City. "I made my way to the sideline, took a knee in prayer, starting and ending with thanking God as I always do.

"The rest of that game, was much of the same for me. I don't recall doing anything right and do recall us losing that very important conference game. The rest of that season kept moving forward, and I did what I would do whenever God finally got my attention that my agenda isn't His agenda — I leaned on my wife and family, I dove into the Word of God, I prayed, and I tried to get to know Jesus better."

Norwood said he doesn't harbor any "bitterness" toward the game; it gave him a platform and a place he calls home in Denver.

"All of that said," he wrote, "I am excited to be able to call myself an NFL alumnaus."

Mike McCoy has incorporated four years of lessons as coach of Chargers into Broncos' offensive rebuild

By Nick Kosmider
Denver Post
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Mike McCoy removed his bright orange Broncos visor after practice last week and rubbed the roots of his hair.

How has he changed since he left his post as Denver's offensive coordinator in 2012, only to return eight months ago after a four-year stint as the head coach of the Chargers?

"Well, I'm gray," the 45-year-old said. "I've aged a little bit."

Yes, occupying one of 32 head coaching positions in the NFL can color any scalp 50 shades of gray. McCoy knows this well. After pulling the strings of a prolific Peyton Manning-led offense in 2012 — creating the blueprint for the record-setting unit Denver would have a season later — McCoy was hired by the Chargers to find a way to slow Manning and the Broncos. But Denver was only beginning a run under the famous, if aging, quarterback that would end in four division titles, two Super Bowl appearances and one championship.

McCoy, his team constantly ravaged by injuries and, later in his tenure, on the verge of moving from San Diego to Los Angeles, couldn't break through the Broncos or any other power in the AFC. He was fired in early January after posting a 27-37 record in his four seasons with the Chargers, including a 5-11 mark in 2016, and one playoff win (2013).

The reunion, it turned out, wouldn't have to wait. McCoy will face his old team, including quarterback Philip Rivers, when the Broncos meet the Chargers in the teams' season opener Monday night at Sports Authority Field at Mile High.

"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 up 100 (points) if I could," said Broncos wide receiver Demaryius Thomas. "I don't know if that's possible, but I'd try."

But the prevailing emotion for McCoy as he prepared for the game, he insisted, was gratitude, not animosity. There is no revenge being written into the game plan.

"I give all the respect in the world for everyone in the (Chargers) organization," McCoy said. "I can't thank the Spanos family enough for everything and for the opportunity they gave me back in 2013 to lead their organization. I understand the importance of the game being a division game. It's our opener and it's our home opener, playing in front of our greats fans and everything. I have a lot of respect for all of those players. A lot of great people, not just players but the way every coach and every player, through some tough times, fought their tails off every day. There was no excuse as we just showed up to work every day, but unfortunately we didn't win enough games."

“We’re excited here and that’s the thing now. I’ve got a new home and we’re ready to go.”

The quips about his aging process speeding up aside, McCoy’s four years as a head coach helped shape his approach as he began his second stay in Denver. He recalled times when he sat in meeting rooms with then-Chargers defensive coordinator John Pagano, diving deep into conversations about schemes and techniques as they developed plans to try to slow the Broncos’ Thomas.

“I learned so much more about the game,” McCoy said.

A reinvigorated McCoy was eager to bring those lessons back to Denver, where he reunited with offensive assistants Eric Studesville and Tyke Tolbert, who had both been on the staff with McCoy throughout his first stint with the Broncos. They, with the input of new quarterbacks coach Bill Musgrave, offensive line coach Jeff Davidson and others, constructed a playbook that combined pages the Broncos mastered in 2012 with new elements McCoy pulled from his time with the Chargers. It’s a system designed to help the Broncos look more like the No. 2 scoring offense they were in 2012 than the 22nd-ranked outfit they were last season.

“I remember when Mike McCoy first got here. I said, ‘Let me see.’ I had my closed arms, like, what do you have to say?” wide receiver Emmanuel Sanders said while visiting The Denver Post last week. “Here he comes, the guy walks in and he says, ‘We’re going to be the number one offense! We’re going to be this! We’re going to be that!’ At first, I had been sitting back and I had my arms crossed, and then I was like, ‘Yeaaaah, let’s go. It’s time. We’re back.’ It’s all about the leader. Mike McCoy believes we’re going to be number one, and he preaches it every single day.”

After installing his plan in the spring and sharpening it during organized team activities in June, the offense began to hit its stride as the temperature rose during the second and third weeks of training camp. Trevor Siemian said that was the point when a light went on, allowing him to reach another level that helped him win the quarterback competition over Paxton Lynch. The Broncos kept things simple in the preseason, but knowing grins from offensive players in the week leading up to the regular season signaled an eagerness to unleash McCoy’s new product.

It’s an offense, running back C.J. Anderson said, built by the coordinator’s “swag and sass.”

“I think just being around him more, not just me but the whole offense, we’re just understanding how he’s thinking things through, what our jobs are and, as a quarterback, how you need to manage things,” Siemian said. “I have to continue to grow in that aspect and I think once we get going into some games, that’s when it will really come along.”

There are no soft openings in the NFL. Nobody on the Denver staff knows as well as McCoy the havoc that Chargers pass rushers Joey Bosa and Melvin Ingram can bring create off the edge. He’s watched Pro Bowl cornerback Jason Verrett turn the slightest mistake by a quarterback into a game-changing interception. He used to celebrate when defensive tackle Corey Liuget would single-handedly wreck a running play. A new offense, one that must reach its potential if the Broncos hope to return to the postseason, faces a stiff early test.

McCoy passed his knowledge of Chargers personnel to any coach or player who sought it last week. But if there was anything those four years in San Diego — and the gray hairs that came with them — taught him, it’s that there is only so much a coach can do.

“I’ve answered plenty of questions, whether it’s the staff here or the players here, for some tips,” McCoy said. “It’s all about the players going out there and executing.”

Chargers at Broncos: Who has the edge?

By Nick Kosmider

Denver Post

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Three things to watch Monday

New Broncos tackles. There will be a bright spotlight shining on new Broncos offensive tackles Garrett Bolles and Menelik Watson, two key figures in Denver's offseason offensive line rebuild. Their first test is limiting the havoc created by Chargers pass rushers Joey Bosa and Melvin Ingram, who combined for 18½ sacks last season. Keeping QB Trevor Siemian upright is at the top of the Broncos' agenda. This matchup should be a good indicator of just how well Denver is equipped to achieve that goal in 2017.

Start me up. The Broncos have lost only one home opener since 2011, but the start of games caused problems all last season. The Broncos were outscored by 54 points in first quarters, the second-worst mark in the NFL. The 55 points and seven touchdowns Denver yielded on opponents' first possessions were both tied for the second-highest in the league. It is important the Broncos set a better tone with quicker starts. That's a stiff test against the Chargers, whose 65 points on opening possessions last season were the second-most in the NFL.

New No Fly Zone. Aqib Talib made it clear. Just because Pro Bowl safety T.J. Ward, a key member of the Broncos' top-flight secondary, was released less than two weeks before the start of the season, the Broncos are still proudly waving their No Fly Zone banner. But make no mistake: the pressure is on for second-year safeties Justin Simmons and Will Parks to prove they are ready to fill some big shoes. Philip Rivers, with top target Keenan Allen healthy once again, has no shortage of weapons to test the Broncos' newly formed secondary.

Game plan

When the Broncos run

At the start of training camp, new Broncos right guard Ron Leary said his new team had the tools to be as strong on the offensive line as his old team, the Dallas Cowboys, was last season when it paved the way for the league's second-best rushing attack. General manager John Elway made improving the offensive line a priority in the offseason, and if Leary and Co. can indeed open up Texas-sized holes for a healthy C.J. Anderson, veteran Jamaal Charles, rookie De'Angelo Henderson and others, the Broncos have the potential to greatly improve a run game that ranked 27th in the NFL last season. Still, they have to prove it. The Chargers, who ranked 10th at only 97.9 rushing yards per game allowed in 2016, provide a good barometer. Edge: Chargers.

When the Chargers run

The number eats at Melvin Gordon. The Chargers RB finished with 997 yards rushing last season and missed the final three games because of injuries. He has his sights set on eclipsing the 1,000-yard mark and more during his third season, and that's what the Chargers will need from Gordon to maximize their offensive potential. The Broncos reconfigured their defensive line, centered around veteran nose tackle Domata Peko, with the goal of being more stout against the run. The first unit showed strong signs of improvement in that area during the preseason. Edge: Chargers

When the Broncos pass

In two games against the Chargers last season, Trevor Siemian completed 56.8 percent of his passes for an average of 253 yards with one touchdown, one interception and three sacks taken as the Broncos split the contests. With more tools in the backfield to alleviate some pressure, the Broncos are hopeful Siemian can connect on more big-hit plays with his top receivers, Demaryius Thomas and Emmanuel Sanders, on a more consistent basis than he did early last season. The Chargers' defense should be improved but still has some areas in the secondary that can be exploited if Siemian can find a strong rhythm early. Edge: Broncos

When the Chargers pass

The Broncos have produced the top passing defense in the NFL in each of the past two seasons, surrendering fewer than 200 yards per game in back-to-back years. Philip Rivers' career quarterback rating of 88.5 against the Broncos is his third-worst against any team he has played at least five times, and he has an 11-12 record against Denver. The Broncos are hopeful a more stout run defense will give the secondary greater opportunity to be aggressive in seeking takeaways. The key for Denver is providing enough team pressure on Rivers to prevent Von Miller from facing consistent double- and triple-teams. Edge: Broncos

Special teams

The Broncos struggled at times during the preseason. They are breaking in a new punt returner in rookie Isaiah McKenzie, and kick returner Cody Latimer missed most of the preseason. The trump card for Denver is Brandon McManus, one of the league's top kickers, who made all 10 of his field-goal attempts in the preseason. The Chargers have a first-year kicker in Younghoe Koo. He's become a viral sensation with his trick kicks on YouTube. But is he ready for a high-pressure kick into the roar of 75,000 screaming fans at Sports Authority Field at Mile High? Edge: Broncos

Broncos notes: Crick injury thins defensive line

By Mike Klis

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For openers, the Denver defense had a difficult time getting some its best guys to the starting line.

Shane Ray, the starting outside linebacker opposite Von Miller, has long been ruled out as he was placed on injured reserve (he is expected to return for game 7 at Kansas City). And now starting defensive end Jared Crick (back) and top backup defensive lineman Zach Kerr (knee) are out for the Broncos' season-opening game Monday night against Philip Rivers, Melvin Gordon and the Los Angeles Chargers.

Adam Gotsis and Shelby Harris, you're up. Gotsis figures to start in Crick's place at defensive end with Harris playing in passing situations.

"When you watch the San Fran game and the Green Bay game those guys played well," Broncos head coach Vance Joseph said about preseason games No. 2 and 3. "That's what I expect on Monday night, that's why they're here. Gotsis is a second-round pick. He's a guy with a bright future and Shelby Harris had a hell of a camp. What they did in preseason I expect them to do on Monday Night. That's why they're here."

With backup nosetackle Kyle Peko also just coming back from a broken foot injury, it wouldn't be a surprise if the Broncos called up rookie defensive tackle Tyrique Jarrett from the practice squad by 2 p.m. Sunday. (The Broncos later waived Peko on Saturday, clearing a roster spot. It wouldn't be a surprise if Jarrett and Peko switch places with Peko winding up on the practice squad).

Jarrett is a 335-pound, undrafted space eater from Pitt. Promoting Jarrett to the 53-man roster, though, would mean someone would have to get cut.

"That's always an issue when you bring someone up, you have to expose someone else to the outside teams in the league," Joseph said. "That's always a possibility."

The chronology of Crick's injury and recovery may not be as serious as it appears. He was carted off the field Aug. 14 with a back injury. After rehabbing for three weeks, he returned for three practices this week, but then was backed off Friday and Saturday.

"I think Jared is getting better, but he's not well enough to play a football game right now," Joseph said. "In our opinion, if we put him out there this week, which we could probably, it would hurt us moving down the road. As a group discussion, we thought resting him this week would help us down the road with Jared Crick."

McKenzie moves grandma from Irma danger

Broncos rookie returner/receiver Isaiah McKenzie grew up never knowing his mom or dad. He was raised in Miami by his grandmother.

“It was rough at times, not having a mother or father,” McKenzie said in an interview with 9News. “But it’s not like they came in my life and then left. They were never there. So, it wasn’t that hard to deal with. My grandmother always had my back. Me and my six other siblings – there were seven of us altogether and we lived in a one-bedroom apartment and she helped us the best way she could.”

Miami had been in Hurricane Irma’s path until it recently shifted to Tampa.

McKenzie didn’t wait. Joseph said his rookie flew his grandmother to Denver on Thursday.

New practice schedule

Joseph has brought a unique practice schedule to Denver in that he does his walkthrough two days before the game – Saturday in this week’s case – followed by a full-speed, if shorter than usual, practice the day before the game.

Recent Broncos head coaches Gary Kubiak and John Fox went the other way with the walkthrough the day before the game. Joseph said he picked up the schedule from Cincinnati head coach Marvin Lewis in 2015.

“The reason you do it is that you want two recovery days versus one,” Joseph said. “(For a typical Sunday game) we do more work on Wednesday and Thursday and take Friday as a mental practice and a recovery day for the players. It’s not a loss when you’re talking about football, because the offense got 85 reps today. That’s a practice and a half for us. Defensively, we got 65 reps. We’re not losing our game-plan knowledge, but we’re gaining in my opinion, a day of recovery for our players.

“It’s a long season so we want to make a point to start recovery now and not start it Week 10 in the middle of the season. That’s the point behind the schedule.”

Broncos Bits

McKenzie will be the Broncos’ punt returner Monday while Cody Latimer will handle kickoff returns. ...

With the late start Monday (8:20 p.m. kickoff, Channel 20), Joseph altered the pregame preparation so that one meal would be served at 1 p.m. at the team hotel and another at 5 p.m. at the stadium.

Mike McCoy bestows knowledge about his former team in preparation for Monday's game

By Mike Klis

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He was a Bronco, then a Charger and now a Bronco again.

Mike McCoy has been on both sides of this rivalry, a rivalry that's been a bit one-sided lately with Denver winning six of the last seven.

"I have a lot of respect for all of those players," said McCoy. "A lot of great people, not just players but the way every coach and every player through some tough times fought their tails off every day. There was no excuse as we just showed up to work every day, but unfortunately we didn't win enough games. We're excited here and that's the thing now. I've got a new home and we're ready to go."

The new Broncos offensive coordinator was fired as the Chargers head coach after a four-year stint in San Diego.

The Chargers now have a new head coach and a new home, but McCoy still knows his former team better than most and he's willing to share his secrets.

"I think I've answered plenty of questions, whether it's the staff here or the players here for some tips. 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."

Although the Chargers have made adjustments since McCoy's departure, his inside information has given the players something to study prior to Monday's game.

"He knows the personnel really well," said Broncos quarterback Trevor Siemian. "It's a new defensive scheme for him too, so that's a little different. But he knows the personnel really well and that's helped us out quite a bit."

Demaryius Thomas added, "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 up 100 if I could. I don't know if that's possible, but I'd try."

The Broncos and Chargers kick off at 8:20pm at Mile High. The game will air on Channel 20.

Von Miller ready to lead as he loses pass-rush partners

By Mike Klis

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Von Miller isn't starting the 2017 season with any individual goals.

Sure, he'd like to become NFL Defensive Player of the Year one of these seasons after twice finishing second, last year by one vote to Oakland's Khalil Mack.

But he didn't write it down because those types of honors happen through work, through performance, through a little bit of luck of not having another great defensive player have a career year.

"I had one goal in 2017," Miller said. "I wanted to be team captain."

Goal accomplished. Miller and cornerback Aqib Talib are the Broncos' two defensive captains this season following a vote of the players this week.

Miller, who is entering his seventh NFL season, and Talib, who is in his 10th year, are captains for the first time.

With captainship comes the responsibility of making the occasional speech. And there can be different settings for the big talks. There is the fired-up, on-field speech a few minutes prior to the game.

Brian Dawkins and Al Wilson were the best at those types of motivational speeches.

And there is the team-meeting speech. No one ever did it better than DeMarcus Ware the night before Super Bowl 50 in Santa Clara, California.

"What you like to hear my pregame speech?" Miller said. (Yes, we do.) "I'm all about vibes. I try to take advantage of vibes. The good thing about being paired up with Aqib Talib, he's going to speak his mind. This will be a great presidential camp. Miller and Talib together, Talib and Miller. It's just great. It's Fire and Ice. Talib is always going to tell it exactly how it is.

"Me, I like to message the situation and do whatever it takes. I always like to put sarcasm in any type of situation."

Speaking of pairings, Miller lost his outside linebacker complements. Ware retired and first-round talent Shane Ray will miss the first half of the season with a left wrist injury.

In their place is Shaq Barrett, who showed promise in 2015 but had just 1.5 sacks last year, and Kasim Edebali, who also slipped from an encouraging 2015 to 1 sack last season.

More than ever, opponents like the Los Angeles Chargers on Monday night figure to double-team, if not have a third player chip Miller on his way to the quarterback. All that attention means Miller could play his best ball and still wind up with, say, 8 sacks in 2017.

"I just try to be dominant," Miller said. "You can be dominant in other ways. It's not always about getting sacks. You can always make your presence felt."

"You know I've had games where I come out with two tackles and I've been the most dominant player in the game. Especially at my position, I've got a unique position where I can force others to make plays, and force the game plan to go somewhere else. As long as I'm doing that, I've got a talented defense that can take advantage of any opportunity, any mistake that an offense makes."

"If I getting double or triple teamed, Shaq is going to make plays. Derek Wolfe is going to make plays. We've got a young, D-tackle, Tyrique (Jarrett) he's going to make plays. Brandon (Marshall) and Todd Davis, all those guys. I haven't even mentioned the No Fly Zone. All those guys are going to make plays. I've just got to do my part to push the offensive hand and put these guys in great situations."

In many ways, Miller has always been a team leader. He slipped off the field in 2013, but even in difficult times he always propped up, and never was critical of, a teammate.

Like so many stars in the 21st century, Miller will talk about himself in the third person. But he is also one to unite and carry a theme of 'us' rather than 'me.'

"I do a lot of talking all the time," he said. "I feel like I have that connection with all my players in that locker room. When Brian Dawkins spoke, everybody listened. I talk all the time. So, I always have that connection with everybody all the time. When we go into a game everybody knows exactly where I stand, I know exactly where everybody else stands. A great leader always has that ability to stand up and have a speech to talk about this. But for me it will all be repetitive. It's the same thing me and 'Lib talked about at the lunch table. Or it'll be the same thing that me and Roby talked about inside the meeting room. Same thing that me and Connor McGovern talked about it with my foundation."

"I've always had those deep, intimate talks with each and every one of my players, so whenever that time comes we're already on the same page."

Chargers will get first look at Broncos' new offense

By Jeff Legwold

ESPN

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For just the third time since the AFL-NFL merger in 1970, the Denver Broncos will open the season against the Chargers.

And it gives the Broncos an immediate opportunity to repair one of the things that got away from them in last season's 9-7 finish -- their record in AFC West games. The Broncos were 2-4 in division games last season as they split with the Chargers and Raiders while losing both games against the Chiefs.

With all of that in mind, here are some things to watch for in Monday night's game at Sports Authority Field at Mile High:

New offense: Offensive coordinator Mike McCoy was fired as head coach of the Chargers just after the 2016 season concluded. McCoy didn't have to mope around the house long, as Broncos coach Vance Joseph quickly hired McCoy to remake the Broncos' offense -- "he was my first call," Joseph has said -- and Joseph has made it clear he wanted an offense that ran the ball better and "challenged defenses all over the field" in the passing game. The Chargers will offer the first test. The Broncos' inability to run the ball last season -- they rushed for 92.8 yards per game -- stunted their ability to keep drives going and kept the Broncos out of down-and-distance situations that would have given them the ability to stay away from pass-only options. C.J. Anderson and Jamaal Charles figure to get the most work until Devontae Booker is back from a wrist injury, with Charles on a pitch count of sorts.

Von Miller: Because outside linebackers Shane Ray (wrist) and Shaquil Barrett (hip) missed much of training camp because of injury, the Broncos were judicious about Miller's workload in those players' absences, both in practices and preseason games. So much so Miller played all of 11 plays -- all against Green Bay -- in the preseason. He did spend enough time on the field against the Packers to sack, with a filthy spin move, Aaron Rodgers. Miller has been dominant in practices, said he worked harder than ever before in his offseason workouts, and his teammates have voted him to be a captain for the first time in his career. He is poised for a monster season, and the Broncos have promised they have a plan to get him in more one-on-one situations in the pass rush than they were able to last year.

Trevor Siemian: For many, both inside and outside of the Rocky Mountain region, Siemian is THE question mark of the season. His teammates don't see it that way given he has taken on all comers with two different coaching staffs and with two different playbooks to win the Broncos' starting quarterback job in two consecutive seasons -- "Trev, he's just a great quarterback," Miller said. But Siemian has to be ready for the prime-time moment. The Broncos need wins in the division and wins at home if they're going to be the team they've said they are. The schedule is back-loaded -- seven of the last 11 games of the season are on the road -- so Siemian has to keep the offense moving and find some of that big-play flair that was missing at times in the preseason.

Still elite: The Broncos' defensive players have almost been offended in recent weeks that conventional wisdom around the league doesn't often put them among the NFL's elite groups. Their run defense -- they were 28th in the league -- was a significant problem last season even as they finished No. 1 against the pass and No. 4 overall. The Chargers, with Philip Rivers at quarterback and plenty of options in the

pattern for Rivers to throw to, probably will test the new face in the defense early -- safety Justin Simmons. Simmons replaces T.J. Ward, who was released just over a week ago, in the No Fly Zone. The Broncos also had no real answer for the Chargers' tight ends and running backs in the passing game last season, so their linebackers figure to get an early exam as well.

Miller prepares to face his favorite target in Rivers

By Arnie Stapleton
Associated Press
September 11, 2017

Von Miller has sacked Philip Rivers more than any other quarterback in the NFL. That's not why he's delighted to open the season Monday night when the Los Angeles Chargers visit the Denver Broncos.

"I like playing them all. I like sacking them all," said Miller, whose 73½ sacks since his rookie 2011 season rank second in the league.

"That's my job. It's not like I'm going against Alex Smith and I'm like, 'Man, I wish I was playing Philip Rivers this week.'"

Who could blame him if he did?

Of the 34 quarterbacks Miller has sacked in his career, Rivers is his biggest prize.

He's sacked him 13 times. Smith, by the way, ranks second on his list with eight, followed by Tom Brady with 7½.

Monday night marks Rivers' 24th game against the Broncos. Before Miller entered the league as the second overall draft pick in 2011, Rivers owned the Broncos. Since then, Miller has owned Rivers.

Rivers' stats pre-Miller: 8 wins, 3 losses, 184 for 283 (65 percent) for 2,624 yards, 18 TDs, 6 interceptions, 20 sacks.

Rivers' stats post-Miller: 3 wins, 9 losses, 248 for 423 (58 percent) for 2,680 yards, 18 TDs, 16 interceptions, 37 sacks.

Miller certainly has gotten Rivers' attention over the years.

"He'll be remembered as one of the best ever to play," Rivers said. "And I still find myself rewinding the tape, not only on the pass downs but on the run downs. That's what pushes him a notch above. He is unreal against the run. He plays on every down all he's got and it's impressive."

That's because Miller has grown accustomed to facing defenses designed specifically to keep him off the quarterback.

"In the National Football League, if a team doesn't want you to get a sack, that's top on their agenda, that's their primary goal — don't let Von get a sack, don't let him ruin the game — 90 percent of the time, it's not going to happen," Miller said.

"You have to find other ways to change the game. You have to find other ways to impact the game."

While Miller has openly talked about obliterating the NFL record with a 30-sack season, what he really aims for is disruption.

"I really just try to go out there and try to be a dominant football player. I try to affect the game any way that I can whether coverage, playing the run or rushing the passer," Miller said. "Whatever chances I can get to wreck the game, that's what I'm going to try to do."

After winning the Super Bowl 50 MVP award, Miller went on a world tour of talk shows and dance halls while mired in a contract stalemate with the Broncos that ended with his record-setting \$114.5 million deadline deal.

Then he went out and got 13½ sacks and for most of the season looked like a lock for his first NFL Defensive Player of the Year award.

But he was held without a sack over the final month of the season and Oakland's Khalil Mack edged him by a single vote.

"I didn't really have to feel bad for him," Shane Ray said. "Von pushes himself. He said OK, last year what I did wasn't good enough — as great as his season was last year.

"So, he's pushed himself all offseason to come back and be even better, so now you can't deny him. Be so good that they can't deny you."

Instead of jetting all over the globe, Miller went to work reshaping his body . He hosted a pass rushing summit for fellow elite edge rushers at Stanford over the summer, and he showed up at training camp with a renewed focus.

"He's always worked hard but there's a different intensity to the way he works now," Shaq Barrett said. "And he's trying to separate himself from the pack."

Barrett suspects he has Mack's one-vote victory to thank.

"I wouldn't know but if it was me personally, I would use that as fuel for the fire for sure," Barrett said.

Miller took on more of a leadership role following DeMarcus Ware's retirement.

He signed every single day for fans at training camp, stayed in shape by returning punts and even running behind the real punt returners for extra exercise, and he earned the first captainship of his seven-year NFL career.

"Every single game is a huge opportunity, a huge blessing and I love going out there and playing them all," Miller said.

"The player's the same, it doesn't matter about weather, location or any of that stuff. When the lights turn on Sundays or Mondays, I'm ready to go and I'm excited."

Mason's Mailbag: Season-opening expectations

By Andrew Mason
DenverBroncos.com
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I've heard that some coaches prefer being on the sideline versus the box upstairs. What are the pros and cons to each decision?

-- Jordan Brantley

The pros of being upstairs involve being able to see the plays better as they happen; you see the alignments and movements in real time. The cons are that you lose all face-to-face communication with players during games, with the exception of halftime.

Offensive Coordinator Mike McCoy opted to call plays from the sideline this year. On Aug. 8, he explained his reasoning:

"One year I was [upstairs in the coaches' booth] and I didn't like it. I prefer to be down on the field just to be involved in everything when the players come in.

"I like to interact with all of the players; you can look in their eyes sometimes if you're struggling as an offense or something, or you have someone like [former guard] Chris Kuper back in the day who's always coming saying, 'Hey, I flat-out whiffed, call it again' -- things like that. Really kind of let them know first-hand what the start of the series is going to be, possibly what we might do in the red area and really just interacting with the players the entire game."

Many are picking the Broncos to finish way down on the list. They don't like our quarterbacks. They are OK, I think, but we need great. What do you think?

-- Ricky Lebsack

Every team wants a great quarterback, but there are only so many to go around. You don't just go out to the quarterback orchard and pick one off the tree. Development is involved. The Broncos got Peyton Manning in free agency, but that's rare; you usually need to either a) have a lousy season and a high draft pick or b) hit on a draft pick from the mid-first round or later and be patient, living with bumps along the way. The Broncos are in the second category with Trevor Siemian -- remember, he has just 14 career starts! He is still in the process of growing, improving and developing.

You expect Siemian to be better in his second season. You expect him to be more comfortable in his role. You expect this offense to provide more options and quicker reads. He has established himself as a locker-room leader, evidenced by the fact that his teammates voted him as one of the two offensive captains. Maybe he's not yet "great," a term I throw around with caution, but why can't he be a good quarterback right now? If his rating is in the 90s, you're talking about a good quarterback in this scheme. If the running game is improved, the defense remains elite and the special teams do well, that should be an equation for a very successful season.

From what most people have not seen, as of yet, as a loyal fan, I believe that the Broncos are way underrated, I believe that the Broncos have a very good chance of winning the AFC West, what do you think?

-- Michael Pack

I think Week 1's results served as a reminder of the challenge the Broncos face in AFC West play; the Chiefs and Raiders both got quality road wins against the Patriots and Titans, respectively. That said, as I've mentioned several times on Orange and Blue 760, I think the AFC West will be a division where the four teams beat each other up, and it would not surprise me to see all four teams finish .500 or better. The quality from top to bottom is outstanding, easily the best in the AFC, and perhaps the entire NFL.

This remains a team with the weaponry and experience to cause problems for foes. But a good start is crucial. If the Broncos open with four wins in their first five games, you should feel good about their chances to contend and be standing in January, fighting into the winter's cold as they have five times this decade.

Why did Kyle Sloter get waived? If you look stat-wise, he was doing better than the other two quarterbacks.

-- Mr. Man Jay Shah

The evaluation and potential success of quarterbacks is not just about raw stats in preseason games, particularly late in the first three games or in the entire fourth game. If it was, Thad Lewis -- who had a 104.9 quarterback rating in his first two preseasons -- would be more than just a journeyman who has been on eight teams in the last eight seasons. You must weigh competition into that. Sloter's struggles against the No. 1 defense in the last week of the preseason during practice were more indicative of how things would have gone if he'd been thrown out there in the regular season, and given the unique nature of quarterback development, you have to be careful with players at that position. Sometimes, the worst thing you can do is throw a quarterback into action too soon; that does him a disservice.

Remember this with Sloter: Thirty-one other teams passed on adding him to their 53-man roster before he became practice-squad eligible. And as President of Football Operations/General Manager John Elway noted, there's a significant gap between play in the preseason and the regular season.

Everyone who came across Sloter will be rooting for his success down the line. But he wasn't going to be kept ahead of the quarterbacks the Broncos had, and with Paxton Lynch injured, he isn't a better backup option for now than Brock Osweiler, who has 21 regular-season and two postseason starts under his belt and a baseline knowledge of the scheme.

Woody Paige: Mapping out a winning, but ultimately disappointing, Broncos season

By Woody Paige
Colorado Springs Gazette
September 11, 2017

To get right to it, the Broncos will have a winning record this season.

The Broncos will get off to an inspiring 4-1 record.

The Broncos will get down after four consecutive losses.

The Broncos will get back to .500.

The Broncos will get stifled in their last two road games.

The Broncos will get a tie in the last game.

And the Broncos will not get in the playoffs.

Got it?

The consensus Las Vegas odds on the Broncos' victory total in 2017 is 8.5.

Don't bet on it.

Predictions on the Broncos' record are 4-10 (by a hater), 6-10, 7-9, 8-8, 9-7, 10-6, 11-5 and 12-4 (by a homer). The Broncos are being picked from first to worst in the tumultuous, boisterous AFC West.

The average of objective prognostications sets the record at a duplication of last season (9-7) despite the changes at head coach and all three coordinators, 14 new players on the active roster (and the return of a backup quarterback - the Wizard, or Lizard, of Os), a fresh offensive scheme and renewed determination to reach the postseason and the Super Bowl again.

The Chiefs just threw an adjustable wrench with large jaws into matters that matter with an astounding upset over the Patriots. The reaction in Colorado was "uh?" and "ugh!" K.C. and the Sunshine Band have beaten the Broncos three times in a row since that 2015 Thursday night marvel when Jamaal Charles fumbled. Whatever happened to him?

The Chiefs will figure prominently in the Broncos' kismet and karma once more.

Here's my 44th annual Broncos game-by-game extrapolation and explanation:

- **San Diego at Broncos (Monday night)** - Coordinator Mike McCoy absolutely will defeat the franchise that fired him. The Broncos won their first opening game at home (1962) over the Chargers. The Broncos are 36-6-1 in first games played in Denver. They'll win again 26-13.

- **Dallas at Broncos (Sept. 17)** - Ezekiel Elliott's presence alters this outcome. Broncos barely beaten 24-20.

- **Broncos at Orchard Park, N.Y. (Sept. 24)** - The Bills are playing at New Era Field. But it's the same old same old era for Buffalo. Niagara Falls, and Bills fall 27-13.

- **Oakland at Broncos (Oct. 1)** - Test time. Trevor & Team whacked the Raiders in the final game last season, and will do it again early this season 19-16.

- **Bye (Oct. 8)**

- **New York Giants at Broncos (Oct. 15)** - Broncos' second night game. Return of Manning. Eli, not Peyton. First visit by Giants since Thanksgiving night of 2009 when Josh McDaniels was caught swearing on national TV. Broncos won then 26-6, win now 21-20.

- **Broncos at Carson, Calif. (Oct. 22)** - Broncos' first game in the Los Angeles area since 1994 (Raiders). Won't be 35,000 Broncos fans. Soccer stadium capacity less than 30,000. A Rivers passes through it. Broncos bow 31-13.

- **Broncos at Kansas City, Mo. (Oct. 30)** - At least the Broncos aren't playing in Arrowhead Stadium in December. Doesn't matter. Rip Van Winkle awoke from a deep sleep. So has Alex Smith, who is throwing deep. Broncos stagger second straight week 30-24.

- **Broncos at Philadelphia (Nov. 5)** - The NFL computer didn't do the Broncos any favors with the league's most difficult schedule and stretches on the road at three different junctures. Broncos drop to 4-4 in a 20-16 defeat.

- **New England at Broncos (Nov. 12)** - Third night game. No Pity Pats here. Will Brock Osweiler be starting by this game? He did pop the Patriots in Denver in '15. Broncos fade in fourth 28-17.

- **Cincinnati at Broncos (Nov. 19)** - The Broncos end a four-game losing streak with 35-14 triumph.

- **Broncos Aa Oakland (Nov. 26)** - The Broncos suffer Carr trouble. Derek et al. roll 26-10.

- **New York Jets at Broncos (Dec. 10)** - Broncos complete New York sweep 34-0.

- **Broncos at Indianapolis (Dec. 14)** - Short week for Broncos for Thursday night game, and they come up short in 31-30 horse race.

- **Broncos at Washington (Dec. 24)** -- Sad Christmas for Broncos 13-7.

- **Kansas City at Broncos (Dec. 31)** - What a way to end the year and the season. Overtime shortened to 10 minutes in '17. Broncos miss field goal from 65 yards at the end. Tie. Half a loaf? No loaf.

The Broncos finish 8-7-1 (8.5), but are finished.

Forget about it.

David Ramsey: Denver Broncos itchy to trample Chargers, and skeptics

By David Ramsey
Colorado Springs Gazette
September 11, 2017

In sports, talking about what might happen is almost as much fun as talking about what actually happened.

It won't matter later, but the talking about the 2017 Broncos has been filled with doubt. The Broncos will, according to most experts, again miss the playoffs. The Broncos, according to a few experts, will stumble to a losing record.

This inspires a question:

Have the experts examined John Elway's record with the Broncos?

Elway has been associated with the Broncos for 22 seasons, 16 as quarterback and six as godfather/general manager. In those 22 seasons, the Broncos qualified for the playoffs 15 times (they finished 11-5 in 1985 and still missed the postseason) and stumbled to only two losing seasons (1990 and 1994).

I understand the skepticism about the Broncos. The running game (27th in the NFL last season) remains suspect. Trevor Siemian and Brock Osweiler are human question marks. Defensive genius/senior citizen Wade Phillips has taken up residence in Los Angeles, where he directs the Rams defense.

Still, Elway's history shouts that the experts are underestimating the Broncos. And, remember, the doubting can and should benefit the Broncos.

Last season, the Broncos lacked a certain something and stumbled to a 9-7 record in one of their most disappointing and baffling seasons. At times, the team looked mighty, but the snarling edge of 2015 was gone.

This season, inspired by doubters, the Broncos have more reason to be hungry and angry. The edge could return.

"It adds to the fire," linebacker Shaquil Barrett said with a laugh. "I love proving people wrong, so it's going to be a lot of fun."

For much of this decade, the Broncos have resided among the NFL's elite. They cruised to five straight AFC West Titles, and during Peyton Manning's four-season reign they utterly dominated the Raiders, Chiefs and Chargers. From 2011-2015, the Broncos rampaged to a 24-6 record in the AFC West.

Last season, the Broncos stumbled to a 2-4 record in the AFC West. The Manning magic was gone.

Many believe the magic will stay gone in 2017.

The Broncos could have ignored the doubters. They're making a better choice by embracing the scoffers.

"It's inspiration," receiver Bennie Fowler said. "It's motivation, and it's for all year. We're going to enjoy being the underdog and proving people wrong."

No writers and broadcasters will be sprinting on the field Monday night at Mile High to face the Chargers and strong-armed and ever-yakking Philip Rivers. The members of the media will be watching. No matter their view of the Broncos, these experts will be helpless to make their predictions come true.

The talking is over. The brain-rattling hitting is about to begin.

The Broncos ended last season with a magnificent 24-6 smackdown of the Raiders, utterly dominating the mangy visitors from California. After the game, the locker room was quiet. Everyone knew the victory carried with it a haunting question.

“Why haven’t we been playing like this all year?” superstar linebacker Von Miller asked.

Overblown expectations might have had something to do with it, Von.

Broncos Week 1 Injury Report: No Surprise Injuries For The Broncos As Season Starts

By Rick Brown

CBS 4

September 11, 2017

The Denver Broncos are relatively healthy as the team heads into the season opener against the Los Angeles Chargers. There are no surprise injuries, but the Broncos' defensive line may be a little thin. Three players listed on the Broncos' injury report play on the defensive line, so Denver may be facing some of the same issues with run defense that plagued this unit in 2016. The Chargers are only missing one player and look really healthy heading into Monday night's game.

Injuries Limit Depth To The Broncos' Defensive Line

The defensive line was identified as a weak link in last year's unit as the rush defense was among the worst in the league. John Elway and company spent a lot of money and time building up the defensive line. Draft picks were spent, a second round pick on DeMarcus Walker and free agent Domata Peko are being counted on to make a 28th-ranked rush defense better. What was once considered a real strength of the team during preseason is slowly being whittled away by injuries.

Now, the defensive line will be without Jared Crick and Zach Kerr as these two players are listed as out. Kyle Peko, backup nose tackle, is also listed as questionable and will most likely be a game-time decision. The two other players listed as out are running back DeVontae Booker and backup quarterback Paxton Lynch. Booker showed up to training camp with a broken wrist and should be ready to play in a few more weeks. Lynch injured his shoulder in the third preseason game and is expected back in about a month or more.

The Los Angeles Chargers Are Healthy And Ready For Monday Night Football

The Chargers may have been battling injuries for the past few years, but the team is looking good and healthy at the moment. While every team has to deal with injuries, it seems as though the Chargers are always without a star player for some portion of the season. Last year, Keenan Allen was lost in the first week to a knee injury. While the Chargers will be without Mike Williams, this year's seventh pick in the NFL draft, there are no other players listed as out for the Chargers. This looks to be an exciting game since both teams are healthy and hungry for a win to start off the season.

Denver Broncos' Injury Report

Questionable:

(NT) Kyle Peko (Foot) – Limited Participation in Practice

Out:

(RB) DeVontae Booker (Wrist) – Did Not Participate in Practice

(DE) Jared Crick (Back) – Did Not Participate in Practice

(DE) Zach Kerr (Knee) – Did Not Participate in Practice

(QB) Paxton Lynch (Shoulder) – Did Not Participate in Practice
Los Angeles Chargers' Injury Report

Questionable:

(DE) Jeremiah Attaochu (Hamstring) – Limited Participation in Practice

(WR) Dontrelle Inman (Groin) – Limited Participation in Practice

(TE) Sean McGrath (Knee) – Limited Participation in Practice

(SAF) Tre Boston (Calf) – Limited Participation in Practice

Out:

(WR) Mike Williams (Back) – Did Not Participate in Practice

Consider Alternative Ways To Get To The Broncos Game

By Joel Hillan

CBS 4

September 11, 2017

Heading to a Broncos home game is always exciting, until you realize you have to get there. Some people will dole out cash for a rideshare service, but you then you get stuck with surge pricing.

If you drive downtown for a game like Monday's Broncos-Chargers matchup at the Broncos' stadium, parking is nearly impossible to find and when you do it's incredibly expensive. Our partners at WaytoGo are hoping to help you find other ways of getting to a game. Those include carpools, mass transit or evening taking a bike.

sports authority field at mile high Consider Alternative Ways To Get To The Broncos Game

Sports Authority Field at Mile High (credit: CBS)

Doug Rex, Interim Executive Director of the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DrCOG) explains, "They do have bike racks scattered all around the stadium. I would suggest that is a tremendous option especially for someone within a five mile radius of the stadium."

CBS4 followed Ruth Korecki for a trip downtown using RTD Light Rail.

"I have no issue with parking because I just get on the light rail. Going to a Broncos game, obviously the traffic is very great and trying to find a place to park is almost next to impossible."

She says after the game is great, too.

"There's a lot of people who take the light rail, the line forms, you show your ticket and you jump on the light rail. It takes you directly to where you need to be and it's as easy as can be," Korecki said.

RTD also has BroncosRide buses to and from the game. Round trip will cost you just \$9.

NFL Obscures Anthem Protests With Enormous American Flags

By Nick Greene
Slate.com
September 11, 2017

When the national anthem played before today's NFL season opener at FedEx Field, Philadelphia Eagles safety Malcolm Jenkins raised his fist in quiet protest while teammates Chris Long and Rodney McLeod stood alongside him in solidarity. Viewers at home didn't see any of this, however, because Fox kept its cameras away.

@DanLevyThinks

Fox opted not to show any players protesting or demonstrating during the national anthem of the Eagles-Washington game.

11:00 AM - Sep 10, 2017

8 Replies 12 Retweets 17 likes

Jenkins' gesture was one of the few anthem protests during Sunday's early slate of games. In Cleveland, where Browns players knelt en masse during a preseason game, nobody took a knee. The Cleveland police union had thrown a tantrum in response to the Browns' protest, and threatened to protest the players' protest with a protest of their own. This M.C. Escher-esque demonstration against demonstrating didn't come to pass, however, as the players and the cops opted for a Kumbaya moment instead.

@dan_labbe

Browns players run out of tunnel, lock arms with police, military during national anthem

11:00 AM - Sep 10, 2017

Browns players run out of tunnel, lock arms with police, military during national anthem

Browns players and safety forces made a show of unity prior to the game on Sunday.

cleveland.com

2 Replies 22 Retweets 49 likes

In Houston, no players protested, the field was draped beneath an enormous flag, and a bald eagle named Challenger flew around the stadium during the anthem.

@Chron_MattYoung

Looks like no national anthem protests by either the Texans or Jaguars today. Saw no kneeling, sitting or fists raised.

11:00 AM - Sep 10, 2017

5 Replies 7 Retweets 26 likes

There was a humongous flag in Nashville, too, where the Raiders' Marshawn Lynch spent the anthem sitting on the bench.

@SportsCenter

Marshawn Lynch sat during the national anthem before today's game vs. the Titans. [Credit: AP Photo/Mark Zaleski]

11:29 AM - Sep 10, 2017

1,073 Replies 3,302 Retweets 9,468 likes

This is where we are a year after Colin Kaepernick took a knee during “The Star-Spangled Banner.” With Kaepernick’s political stance having made him a jobless pariah, a few of his peers have chosen to carry on his protest. The NFL’s broadcast partners are doing whatever they can to make sure you don’t know that players like Jenkins exist, while the league and its teams—which took money from the Department of Defense as recently as two years ago to enact choreographed patriotic displays—blanket their stadiums with the stars and stripes.

It’s worth noting that while Kaepernick may have started the movement, he was not the first player to protest the national anthem last regular season. That honor goes to Denver Broncos linebacker (and former Kaepernick teammate at the University of Nevada) Brandon Marshall, who took a knee during the NFL’s Thursday night opener in 2016. Marshall didn’t lose his job like Kaepernick did, but he did lose two endorsement deals. He also received some truly repugnant racist hate mail.

Protesting the anthem is not an easy thing to do. In the very best case, you subject yourself to tough questions, ones Jenkins answered in a thoughtful video for *Sports Illustrated*.

The players who make lavish overtures to Old Glory, meanwhile, are never asked about how the flag and the military are used to burnish the NFL’s image. It’s a shame, because if that were to happen, the resulting conversation would be pretty interesting, and it might even result in Pat Tillman’s memory being served appropriately for once.

It’s also a shame we can’t ask Francis Scott Key about all this, because he would probably be very confused. He didn’t write his lyrics as an anthem—he didn’t even write them as a song. What eventually became “The Star Spangled Banner” started out as a poem titled “The Defence of Fort M’Henry.” Key, a full-time lawyer and amateur poet, wrote its purple stanzas about the British Navy’s bombardment of an American fort during the War of 1812 (a war that was completely avoidable and needlessly destructive). Key’s brother-in-law put the poem to music, and the tune he selected for it was from a British drinking ditty. “The Star Spangled Banner” is an incredibly ironic tune, and it didn’t become the United States’ official anthem until 1931.

But we wouldn’t have to go back to the 1800s to confound people with our modern tales of anthem protests and the frenzied news cycles that follow. We could just talk to any NFL player circa 2008. That’s because, until 2009, it wasn’t standard for players to be on the field during the national anthem. They often stayed in the locker room, where they could do whatever they wanted until it was time to run out for kickoff.

If you want to be cynical, the league’s reverence for the anthem could be read as a branding decision, one made to align the NFL with patriotism. No matter how a player behaves during the anthem, he’s participating in a relatively new tradition, and one that, like the league itself, deserves our scrutiny. Players who kneel for “The Star Spangled Banner” will continue to get attention in 2017. So should those who stand for it.

Update, 4:55 p.m. ET: Seattle's Michael Bennett, who has said he's considering filing a civil rights suit after being detained by Las Vegas police last month, sat on the bench during the national anthem before this afternoon's game between the Seahawks and Packers. Justin Britt placed his arm around his teammate, while Michael's brother, the Packers' Martellus Bennett, raised his fist on the opposite sideline. The gestures from both Bennett brothers made the Fox broadcast.

@Snow

Michael Bennett sits for the national anthem while his brother Martellus stands with a fist in the air on the other sideline

2:32 PM - Sep 10, 2017

98 Replies 531 Retweets 914 likes

Broncos rule out two defensive linemen, cut another

By Josh Alper

Pro Football Talk

September 11, 2017

The Broncos are down to four healthy defensive linemen for Monday night's game against the Chargers.

The team's final injury report before their opener listed defensive ends Jared Crick and Zach Kerr as out for the game.

Crick hurt his back at a practice during training camp in August and was able to get in a limited practice to start the week, but his absence from the lineup is no surprise after he missed Friday and Saturday. Kerr missed practice all week with a knee injury.

In addition to ruling out Crick and Kerr, the Broncos also announced that they have waived defensive tackle Kyle Peko. They waived Peko during the cut to 53 players and then brought him back the next day.

Derek Wolfe, Domata Peko, Adam Gotsis and Shelby Harris now make up the defensive line options and the team has an open roster spot they can fill before Monday night's game kicks off.

NFL may file appeal in Ezekiel Elliott case as soon as Monday

By Mike Florio
Pro Football Talk
September 11, 2017

When a federal judge decided in 2015 to let Patriots quarterback Tom Brady play while his court challenge to a four-game suspension proceeded, the NFL did not pursue an immediate appeal. Two years later, with a federal judge deciding to let Cowboys running back Ezekiel Elliott play while his court challenge to a four-game suspension proceeds, the NFL may file an immediate appeal.

Per a source with knowledge of the situation, the league will decide as soon as Monday whether to pursue an appeal to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. The goal would be to overturn the ruling from Judge Amos L. Mazzant III blocking the suspension as soon as possible. That would mean, if the appeal is filed and if it succeeds quickly, Elliott's suspension could be reinstated by Week Two, when the Cowboys play the Broncos.

As a practical matter, that's unlikely. But, in theory, it could happen. If not by Week Two, the suspension could be reinstated by Week Three or Four.

So why the possible change in approach from Brady to Elliott? Because the NFL ultimately scored a major victory before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit in the Brady case, the league feels more strongly about its position in Elliott's case. Put simply, the league believes that the Brady precedent makes it much harder for Elliott to show a likelihood of ultimate success in the litigation, which is one of the key factors in determining whether an injunction should be issued that blocks a suspension.