

Broncos coach Vance Joseph says Chad Kelly 'looks great'

By Jon Heath
Broncos Wire
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Chad Kelly, the Broncos' final selection in the 2017 NFL draft, spent his entire rookie season on the team's non-football injury list as he recovered from a torn ACL and wrist surgery.

Kelly has been spending time at the team's facility over the last few weeks and he's getting healthy and preparing for the 2018 offseason.

"He's in great shape," Broncos coach Vance Joseph said at the league's owners meeting on Tuesday. "He looks great. He's lean. Hopefully he comes back healthy, is ready to go and he can compete."

While Kelly did not suit up for any games last season, Joseph believes the quarterback's rookie season helped his development.

"I think it [was] huge for him to be around those guys for an entire year," Joseph said. "Just to take in the football stuff. He was there every single day.

"I was really proud of him, how he's worked and how engaged he's been as far as learning how to play the position. Obviously, if his physical tools are there and they're right, he's going to compete."

Denver may have more faith in Kelly than many fans realize. Given that Case Keenum's contract is only a two-year deal, it's not outlandish to think Kelly could get a shot to win the team's starting job down the road.

In two years at Ole Miss, Kelly threw for 6,800 yards and 50 touchdowns. He will be 24 years old this season.

Denver Broncos: Chad Kelly is going to have to prove himself

By Sayre Bedinger

Fansided

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There's been a ton of talk about the Denver Broncos' quarterback already this offseason, but one name that has been getting brought up more and more lately is Chad Kelly.

The last pick of the 2017 NFL Draft spent the entire year getting healthy after a variety of injuries at the back end of his collegiate career at Ole Miss.

The Jets have now jumped up ahead of the Broncos in the 2018 NFL Draft, solidifying themselves a spot in the top three selections and raising questions about the Broncos' ability to get a signal caller with their top five pick.

Many are now wondering whether or not Kelly can be the answer for the Broncos, or why they wouldn't just simply develop him instead of a top five pick.

Though I have been one of the biggest advocates of Kelly up to this point, there's no point in really speculating whether or not he can be an eventual answer at the position for the Broncos until we see him perform on the field.

Whether that's in practice or in exhibition games, we have not yet seen Kelly against fellow NFL players at full speed. That's just a reality.

As good as I thought Kelly was in college and as clutch as he was in some big games, we have no evidence yet that he can do it at the professional level. The key for anyone who has high hopes for Kelly is to exercise patience and let him prove himself when given a chance to do so in a practice setting, at the very least.

Kelly, to me, has all the tools to be a good quarterback in the NFL, but we have to see them all in action.

At the very least, I feel like Kelly is going to be able to push some of the other quarterbacks in Denver now that he's fully healthy. I think it's pretty obvious that he loves the game of football, and I love the fact that he's now got a chip on his shoulder after nearly going undrafted last year.

He's got something to prove, and last time that was the case, he did some really nice things at Ole Miss.

I will be excited to see Kelly perform, but until we see him throw a pass in practice, there's no reason or justification for anointing him the next quarterback of the Denver Broncos.

Emerging from dormancy, Chad Kelly finally in Broncos QB mix

By Tim Graham
Buffalo News
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Chad Kelly has been in the NFL for 10 months.

And for 10 months his NFL dreams have been paused.

At this time a year ago, when the top names of his draft class descended on Indianapolis and the NFL scouting combine, Kelly was encumbered by a laundry bag of red flags.

The NFL had rescinded his combine invitation because of a new misbehavior policy — since terminated — that punished Kelly less than the teams that had questions of him. He was three months removed from reconstructive knee surgery. At his Ole Miss pro day in April, he would rupture tendons in his throwing wrist.

"It freaking crushes your dreams," Kelly said Tuesday night. "It was a sad time."

The Denver Broncos ended Kelly's draft free fall, catching him with the final selection, 253rd overall.

The SEC's top quarterback over the 2015 to 2016 seasons would be a long-range project, no chance to compete for playing time, shelved for the entire season while he healed and learned the NFL from behind the Broncos curtain.

"Getting drafted by a great organization picked me up," Kelly said Tuesday from Colorado, "but going through the year and not being able to help on the field, I don't want to say you doubt yourself, but I felt, 'Man, I just want to go out there and do something about this!'"

"But you've got to be patient. It was a year that tested my patience really hard, but seeing an NFL season like I have, it lights a fire in your stomach. I wake up every day and just want to be the best there is."

Kelly has been throwing without issues. His uncle, Buffalo Bills icon Jim Kelly, posted an Instagram video of Chad throwing last week in New Jersey. Chad was working out with free agent Matt Simms, whose father, New York Giants legend Phil Simms, stopped by to say hello.

This week in Indianapolis, clubs will evaluate the next infusion of prospects. The Broncos, uncertain at quarterback and plotting how to use the fifth overall draft pick, will be among the most interested in passers such as Josh Rosen, Sam Darnold, Josh Allen and Baker Mayfield.

Kelly is ahead of them when it comes to pro experience, traveling to all Denver's road games despite being inactive, absorbing a playbook, breaking down film with veteran coaches and QBs, learning what it means to be a full-time football player.

But by Kelly's personal definition, he isn't really in the NFL.

"It hasn't hit me yet," the St. Joe's grad said, "and I don't think it'll hit me until I step on that field for the first time and play an actual game.

"Being in that locker room and seeing those guys put on that jersey and come together and get hyped up and ready to go play another NFL team was really neat, and I can't wait to have that feeling and contribute with my best friends, my teammates I'm going into battle with every day."

Kelly would seem a safe bet to remain with Denver if he stays healthy and doesn't give skeptics reason to recall his silly missteps at Clemson or while visiting Western New York.

As a seventh-round draft choice, he's an inexpensive lottery ticket for president of football operations/general manager John Elway.

"There's only 32 starting quarterbacks in the NFL," Kelly said. "You've got to be thankful for your opportunity.

"You can dwell on being hurt, but the opportunity to scan your ID card in the parking lot and walk into work and see great players and great people and guys that want to do that every single day with you is what it's all about."

The other quarterbacks on Denver's roster have been unremarkable. In the two years since Peyton Manning won the Super Bowl and retired, the Broncos went 14-18 and ranked in the bottom half of the league in points and yards.

Second-year coach Vance Joseph overhauled his staff after last season, hiring offensive coordinator Bill Musgrave and quarterbacks coach Mike Sullivan. Elway's old backup and veteran NFL head coach Gary Kubiak remains on staff as an advisor.

With whom will they work?

Trevor Siemian has one year left on his rookie contract. He has won the starting job out of training camp the past two years, but underwent left shoulder surgery for the second straight offseason.

The Broncos traded first- and third-round draft choices to move up four slots and take Paxton Lynch 26th overall two years ago. Lynch has started four games.

At a combine news conference Wednesday, Joseph didn't elaborate on Denver's quarterback plans aside from saying Kelly, Siemian and Lynch all are in the derby.

"You can't control the outside stuff," Kelly said of the Broncos depth chart. "You just come to work every day, wanting to learn, wanting to get better, whether it's in the weight room, the classroom or out in the field.

"You've got to just focus on what you can control and how you can make yourself better that day."

Chad Kelly makes for an interesting Mr. Irrelevant

By Steve Virgen

LA Times

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Forget what you've heard about Chad Kelly. Don't pay attention to the quarterback's past. It's unfortunate, but irrelevant when it comes to his future, he believes. The latter description is coincidentally his new moniker, as he is Mr. Irrelevant XLII.

He might also be thought of as Mr. Controversy or Mr. Comeback QB

Just don't bring up his past.

"Unfortunate events happened, but you can't control things that happen in the past," Kelly told me during a phone interview after being selected by the Denver Broncos at pick No. 253, the dead-last pick in the 2017 NFL Draft. "You gotta keep going toward the future. I'm a different person, completely different than I was a couple of years ago. I'm ready to work. I'm ready to lead. I'm going to work extremely hard."

There are reasons Kelly's draft stock tumbled and fell to the final round of the draft.

He has the notoriety of being the nephew and godson of Hall of Fame quarterback Jim Kelly, but Chad Kelly also has the talent. He assuredly showed that in 2015.

However he also showed Bad Chad before that.

Don't bring it up, but Chad Kelly went through a roller-coaster-type of a college career. In 2014, Clemson dismissed him from the team after multiple confrontations with coaches. After a year in junior college football, he committed to play for Ole Miss.

But he got into some real big trouble then, when he allegedly threatened to fire an assault rifle at a Buffalo bar after fighting with bouncers and being escorted from the club, the Buffalo News reported.

He threatened to "spray this place."

And so after the Broncos picked him on Saturday, there was an awkward moment when the NFL Network referred to Kelly as a fearless gunslinger.

He did go on to have a huge year in 2015 for the Rebels with wins over Alabama, Auburn and LSU. He threw for 4,042 yards, and 31 touchdown passes. He also rushed for 500 yards and 10 TDs on his way to first-team All-Southeastern Conference honors.

Some analysts on Twitter referred to Kelly as the biggest name to ever wear the Mr. Irrelevant title.

Kelly made headlines again in 2016, when he ran out onto the field during a high school football game, as he was there during an Ole Miss bye week to watch his brother play. A video shows a brawl on the

field that included his brother, so giving Kelly the benefit of the doubt he was protecting his brother. But it still looked like Bad Chad.

Alas, Kelly suffered a torn right ACL and lateral meniscus in November. But the question marks of his past were the cause of Kelly's tumble in the draft.

An ESPN camera showed him slumped over on his couch, appeared to have fallen asleep during the draft.

"I didn't fall asleep," Kelly said. "I was just on the couch with my mom. I was anxious. It had been a long waiting game. My name finally got called. I'm so excited."

Kelly's eyes are now wide open when he thinks about the future and landing with the Denver Broncos.

His uncle certainly believes in him.

Jim Kelly sent a text to Rich Eisen of the NFL Network that read: "I will tell you one thing for sure, [Chad] is going to prove a lot of teams wrong. I can't wait to see it happen. His work ethic is unmatched, he's a team leader and his teammates all loved him. He will be back stronger than ever."

Chad Kelly was aware of the text and is eager for his future with the Broncos, he said.

"I want to have the last laugh," Chad Kelly said. "I want to just work extremely hard and prove everyone wrong."

Amid his preparation for the NFL, Chad Kelly will be the center of attention during Irrelevant Week in Newport Beach. The 42nd edition of Irrelevant Week is sure to be memorable, at the very least: interesting.