

With Mike McCoy back at the helm, Broncos' offense features a bit of old and a lot of new

By Nicki Jhabvala

Denver Post

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It hasn't been pretty the past few days at Dove Valley, and Broncos offensive coordinator Mike McCoy is fine with that.

It shouldn't be pretty. Not now. Not after only three days of organized team activities. Not in the early phases of installing a new offense built by a new coaching staff. Errors should be made, and they have been and, well, that's all a good sign.

For now.

"There are plenty of mistakes we're making that we're cleaning up, but the good thing about that is we're coaching off that," he said Thursday. "It's never going to be perfect. Every game, there are plenty of mistakes you look at and say, regardless of the score, here are some plays we should have done better, here is how we could correct some things. Everyone is getting reps right now, so it's been a productive couple weeks on the field for the players."

With only two holdovers — receiver Demaryius Thomas and tight end Virgil Green — from his previous stint as Denver's coordinator (2009-12), McCoy is teaching a young and mostly unfamiliar crew his system.

But not all is foreign to the staff and the players.

"We got a couple new things," Thomas said of McCoy's offense. "But it's all the same stuff we had back in the day with different words."

McCoy is familiar with the Broncos and that defense he had to face twice a year as head coach of the Chargers. He knows many of the veterans, their strengths, their weaknesses, their tendencies.

But he doesn't know how they all fit in his scheme, one he admits is built on "thievery" from his experiences and that of his fellow coaches in previous coaching tenures. He's brought principles and lessons from his time at Carolina. Quarterbacks coach Bill Musgrave has concepts from Oakland and tight ends coach Geep Chryst has teachings from his time at both Carolina and San Francisco.

"We got to figure out what is our core going to be and I'm never going to say this is exactly what we're going to do," McCoy said. "As players and coaches, we're trying to figure what we do best right now. We're moving a lot of guys around to figure that out."

McCoy's system will have some holdovers from the one Gary Kubiak ran the last two years. Some terminology will remain. Some concepts will, too.

“It’s a new team. It’s a new staff,” McCoy said. “So things are going to change. That’s what happens when you make changes. There are some concepts that we’ve carried over that, when I first got here, I sat down with Klint (Kubiak, offensive assistant/quarterbacks coach) and talked to him about what they did the past couple of years, talked to the quarterbacks, too, about some things they really liked, and then we’re implementing all the new stuff. So there’s carryover.”

But many other things will be and have already been overhauled. And to those on the receiving end, they don’t mind a bit.

“It really didn’t matter to me, but you know I’m a receiver and I want to catch the ball,” Thomas said. “It was more run with Kubiak’s offense, so I’m excited about having the old offense back.”

The teachings, for now, however, are geared toward the whole offense. The focus is on the basics. When training camp opens, McCoy’s foundation will undergo further changes as the roster is pared and his quarterback’s strengths in the scheme become more apparent.

Trevor Siemian and Paxton Lynch are engaged in another battle for the starting quarterback job and, according to general manager John Elway and head coach Vance Joseph, there is no leader.

The two differ significantly in size and strengths, but so do the other two quarterbacks in the room.

“We’re always going to adjust to our personnel,” McCoy said. “As time goes on, we’ll figure out what each player does the best. Same thing with the preseason games — what do the young guys do, the new guys in the system or the new guys who just got here this year in Chad (Kelly) and Kyle (Sloter). What do they like? With whom they’re playing with, what’s the best thing for those 11 guys on the field? That’s one thing I really believe, that we have to adjust to our personnel and what our players do best.”

Until then, the goals are simple — for veterans, for rookies, for players McCoy knows and the many others he doesn’t.

“It’s the whole team getting to training camp with a good feel for what we want to do so we can play faster and have more success,” he said. “... Very pleased with where the team is at this point in time, but we have a long ways to go still.”

Mike McCoy says he's a better coach after stint with Chargers

By Eric Williams

ESPN

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Compiling a 27-37 record that led to his firing at the end of the 2016 season, Mike McCoy says he's improved at his craft after his four-year stint as the head coach of the Chargers.

McCoy, now the Denver Broncos offensive coordinator, talked with Nick Hardwick and Judson Richards of Xtra 1360 Fox Sports Radio.

"I know one thing: I'm a much better coach today than I was four years ago when I first came to San Diego," McCoy said. "There's a learning experience as a head coach. There's so many things that you learn, and I think that's really going to help me in my coaching experience moving forward. I was very fortunate to work with the offensive staff that we had here in San Diego the past four years.

"It's a game of thievery. You find ideas. You learn things from other people. You see other teams run certain things -- certain route adjustments on certain things -- and you kind put that in your library book and apply it accordingly when you can use it at some point in time."

McCoy has been reunited with some familiar staff members he's worked with in the past in offensive line coach Jeff Davidson, quarterbacks coach Bill Musgrave, running backs coach Eric Stutesville, receivers coach Tyke Tolbert and tight ends coach Geep Chryst. He's also enjoyed returning to the role of offensive coordinator.

"It is great to get back to doing all of that -- sitting down in the meetings, designing everything and putting everything together again," McCoy said.

McCoy is also serving as a sounding board for first-year head coach Vance Joseph. McCoy said current Chargers offensive coordinator Ken Whisenhunt filled a similar role in San Diego.

"There's a lot of things that he's asked me and I'm more than happy to help him," McCoy said. "I was very fortunate my first year to have Ken with me. And there were plenty of times were I walked down the hall and threw something at him and said, 'Hey, what do you think about this; what would you do or what have you done in this situation in the past?' So it's great to have someone like that on your staff."

McCoy said he's back in San Diego for Easter weekend to spend time with his family. McCoy bought a home while in San Diego, and he said his wife Kellie, daughter Liv and son Luke will stay in San Diego instead of moving back with him to Denver. McCoy's daughter Liv will be a senior in high school next year.

McCoy again thanked the Spanos family for the opportunity with the Chargers, and looks forward to the two meetings this season with his former team.

“That’s just the business,” McCoy said. “Any time you change teams, you’re going to face that other team, depending what division you’re in or what team you’re on. And it’s always fun to go back and play those guys, and look across the other side and see certain players.

“It’s a little different now, going from a head coach to a coordinator with the role I was in and the way I developed a relationship with everyone in the organization, but I’m looking forward to it. And they’re going to have a good football team this year.”

Mike McCoy: I can make Broncos' quarterbacks better

By Conor Orr

NFL.com

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The Broncos re-hiring of Mike McCoy as offensive coordinator might have been the best non-head coaching move by a new staff this offseason, in part because of McCoy's flexibility as a playcaller and Denver's uncertainty at the position.

In a recent interview, McCoy made it clear that both Trevor Siemian and Paxton Lynch would be served well in his system.

"I've worked with all kinds of quarterbacks," McCoy told ESPN.com. "I think we can make an offense that works for all our quarterbacks. I think I can make any of our quarterbacks better and adjust to what they do best."

The reality is that McCoy is coming off a bit of an awkward situation. He was let go by another team in the division after finishing in last place for the second season in a row. His fate was sealed when the Chargers became the first and only team to lose to the woeful Cleveland Browns at the end of the season. He told KUSA-TV in Denver last week that he'd still like to be a head coach at some point, but that he's solely focused on getting the Broncos' offense on track.

"Sure I'd love to," McCoy said. "But I'll say this: I am 100 percent committed to doing whatever we can from this day forward to having a great offense. And most importantly help our team win. That's my No. 1 focus.

"I am so excited to be here and that's why I made the decision to come here because of the opportunity to work with Vance Joseph, John Elway, Mr. Bowlen, the Denver Broncos organization and all our fans. I owe it to all those people to go out there and get this offense rolling and do whatever it takes to get back to the top."

I think McCoy is smart enough to know that accomplishing goal No. 1 -- making either Trevor Siemian or Paxton Lynch a quarterback capable of bringing this team to the playoffs -- will eventually lead to goal No. 2 -- becoming a head coach again. Just as McCoy's time in Denver, which saw him rotate from a collegiate-style Tim Tebow offense to a high-flying Peyton Manning system, led to his first foray into the coaching world, solving Denver's current quarterback conundrum could lead to a second.

McCoy: Returning To Broncos Was 'Easy Decision'

By Michael Spencer

CBS Denver

February 13, 2017

After four seasons as head coach in San Diego, Mike McCoy is trading in powder blue for navy and will be back on the sidelines at Mile High in 2017.

McCoy, who was fired by the Chargers after a 5-11 season, was the Broncos offensive coordinator from 2009-2012 and coached quarterbacks Tim Tebow, Kyle Orton and Peyton Manning during his first stint here.

"We won a lot of football games with a lot of different players," said McCoy reflecting on his time in Denver. "When you get the phone call to come back here, it was an easy decision to make."

High on McCoy's priority list will be fixing the offensive line and finding a starting quarterback. Trevor Siemian and Paxton Lynch will battle for the starting quarterback job throughout training camp.

"I'm excited to work with both of them," said McCoy. "The one key thing with these guys is the system we have, and the one that we'll install, they're going to love."

McCoy put a big emphasis on improving the offensive line as well.

"They can play better. They will play better," said McCoy. "Our offense will go as far as our offensive line will take them."

The Broncos ranked 27th in total offense in 2016, a far cry from their Top 5 ranking during McCoy's final season as offensive coordinator in 2012.

"We've got to improve as a football team, and as an offense," said McCoy.

Only time will tell if he can be the fix.

So ... what will the Denver Broncos' new offense look like under Mike McCoy?

By Nicki Jhabvala
Denver Post
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Mike McCoy's first weeks back at Broncos headquarters were spent mostly in a conference room and in front of a screen. Each morning McCoy and his fellow coaches sifted through what will be the Broncos' new and ever-evolving offense, adding and subtracting from playbooks he built in years past. Each afternoon, the coaches examined tape of their current players, of potential free-agent targets and of draft-eligible players.

"We're going to build our system over time," McCoy said. "That is what we are doing right now. We're working on putting the playbook together. We are as a staff going to change some things."

McCoy, the Broncos' offensive coordinator from 2009-12, has returned to that role with a new group of assistants and a new set of challenges as he attempts to rearrange and revamp the offense. Fixing the offensive line is near the top of the to-do list. Developing the two young quarterbacks, Trevor Siemian and Paxton Lynch, is up there too. Helping the offense score — earlier and more often — is among the highest priorities.

Vance Joseph made his first call as new Broncos head coach to McCoy, who was hired to build a system around his players, a philosophy he has taken with him from Carolina to Denver, San Diego and back to the Mile High City. Denver's offense needs an overhaul. McCoy has been tasked with carrying the load.

His plan is evolving. But the approach is familiar.

"I remember games where we would go no huddle the entire game and stay in 11 personnel (one running back, one tight end, three wide receivers) all the way through and let Peyton Manning do his no-huddle show and put up a bunch of points," said former tight end Joel Dreessen, who played for McCoy in Denver in 2012. "Then there were games where he run the heck out of the ball. We'd get in 22 personnel (two running backs, two tight ends, one wide receiver) and grind away the clock and he'd really manage the game.

"When he says he's going to play to the strengths of his players and attack each defense on a week-to-week basis, I really believe him."

The starting point

McCoy described his vision for the Broncos' new-and-improved offense as "flexible," one that changes with each opponent. Joseph called it "aggressive." New offensive line coach Jeff Davidson said it's "varied."

The power blocking up front that McCoy has used over the years will be implemented — along with zone-blocking principles that Gary Kubiak used the past two seasons. "The best of both worlds," as

Joseph said, has the potential to breathe new life into an offense that, collectively, has been stagnant for the better part of two years.

“Our offense will go as far as our offensive line will take them,” McCoy said. “Everyone always wants to look at a quarterback and say you have to have this quarterback. I’m not taking anything away from the quarterback position. It is critical to have that guy, but you have to have the five guys up front playing as one and doing everything right. They’ve got to protect their tails off so that quarterback can sit back in the pocket and do what he can do.”

Last season, Siemian and Lynch were sacked a total of 40 times and knocked down 101 times, the ninth- and seventh-most in the NFL, respectively. The offense as a whole averaged only 92.8 yards per game on the ground (27th), had a minus-54 scoring differential in the first quarter (31st) and posted the second-worst third-down conversion rate (34.2 percent) in the league.

The highlights of 2016 on offense were often lost in the persistent inefficiency, and blame was spread throughout. Coaching. Offensive line. Quarterbacks. The new coaching staff’s vow of creativity has been welcome, but applying it can come with strings.

“It’s definitely difficult,” said Dreessen, who had the added challenge of playing with Manning and his “code words for code words and signals for signals” at the line of scrimmage. “Obviously as a player, you like the repetition of the things you do best. You like to go out there and practice it every week and know what techniques and plays are going to be called on game day. But at the same time you have to be flexible and understand that you’re going to need to have different tools in your toolbox.”

That 2012 Broncos’ offense and the ones used in McCoy’s four-year tenure as the Chargers’ head coach may not be exact blueprints of his future system in Denver. But some details will be carried over, and McCoy’s history of molding an offense around his quarterbacks and his players’ strengths is lengthy.

The communicator

Talking is, in part, what led McCoy back to the Broncos, overseeing an offense still in search of an identity. In McCoy’s first days on the job, he jokingly told Joseph, ‘Hey, if I talk too much, just tell me.’ ”

Dreessen needs no disclaimer.

“He was a great communicator,” Dreessen said. “He was constantly reminding us, even to the point of, ‘All right, Coach, we got it.’ But that’s what you need, especially for young players.”

The “young players” in Denver almost always refers to Siemian and Lynch. Siemian surprised last summer when he won the starting job left vacant by Manning’s retirement in March and by Brock Osweiler’s defection to the Texans. Siemian’s familiarity with the playbook and comfort under center gave him an advantage he exploited over Lynch, a rookie from Memphis drafted in the first round and tabbed as the future of the franchise. And rightly so. General manager John Elway traded up to get Lynch at No. 26, and his mobility, frame and strong arm gave him a perceived athletic edge. The grasp of the playbook would come.

But now, with only 16 starts among them, Siemian and Lynch are starting over with new coaches amid persistent speculation about a third veteran possibly joining their quarterbacks room.

Although Joseph and McCoy have pledged their commitment to Siemian and Lynch, the future rests with their growth. By hiring quarterbacks coach Bill Musgrave, a former Bronco who turned down coordinator jobs to reunite with McCoy, Joseph ensured his quarterbacks have not one but two teachers on the sideline.

“I’m big into talking to the quarterbacks, installing from a week-to-week basis and looking at our plans and being open with these players and saying, ‘What do you really like? What are your favorites?’” McCoy said. “When we get into the game plans at the end of the week, I’m going to ask the quarterbacks, ‘What is your favorite plays in these situations? Your first- and second-down calls, what are your favorite plays?’ Just so they have a lot of confidence when they’re under center on game day.”

In the coming months, that talk will grow louder as McCoy’s playbook is formed and installed. Future changes are inevitable — to the roster and to the system — as McCoy and his crew review and re-view his plan.

“There’s going to be a lot to their offense and they’re going to really do what the players do best,” Dreessen said. “And they’re going to do what they need to do each week to get points and yards.”

ON THE OFFENSIVE

Broncos offensive coordinator Mike McCoy had the same role in Denver from 2009-12, working with quarterbacks of varying strengths and experience. While those seasons aren’t direct comparisons to the last two or to 2017, principles will be carried over. Here is a look at how the Broncos fared in both time frames:

	2009-12	2015-16
Points per game	22.8	21.5
Net total yards	351.2	339.3
First downs	20	18.9
Net yards passing	228.6	239.2
Net yards rushing (avg.)	122.6 (4.2)	100.1 (3.9)
Sacks per pass play	6	6.3
Third-down conversions	36.2 percent	34.8 percent

Mike McCoy's vision for Broncos? Flexibility, change and competition

By Nicki Jhabvala
Denver Post
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Mike McCoy understands you have questions and understands you want answers to them, but he can't provide them. Not yet. Not next week. Not next month.

But what Denver's new offensive coordinator can tell you is this: The Broncos will change. The quarterback competition that launched last March will reopen, with a clean slate and no set finish line. The system will be tweaked, and it will be tweaked again, week after week after week throughout the season.

After two years of playing second fiddle to the Broncos' elite defense, the offense is getting a face-lift.

"The past nine days in the office, we've been going over the playbook," McCoy said Tuesday in his introductory news conference at Broncos headquarters. "We're going to build an offense around our players. We're going to do what our players do best. It's going to change from week to week. We're going to do whatever we think we need to do to win and score as many points as we can on a weekly basis."

McCoy, previously the Broncos' offensive coordinator from 2009-12, is back in Denver and reunited with fellow former Bronco Bill Musgrave to revamp an offense that lagged the last two seasons. Their tasks are tall and evolving, with an emphasis on developing their two young quarterbacks, Trevor Siemian and Paxton Lynch.

Last year, Siemian surprised by handily winning the starting job left vacant by Peyton Manning and Brock Osweiler. Siemian started 14 games, had a trio of 300-yard passing games and a total of 3,401 yards, 18 touchdowns and 10 interceptions, with an 84.6 passer rating. He also took 31 sacks and suffered multiple injuries, his inexperience and the Broncos' porous offensive line taking a physical toll.

Last year, Lynch experienced a drastic shift from the spread offense at the University of Memphis to the zone-blocking, West Coast system under former head coach Gary Kubiak. The playbook was bigger and more complex. The game was faster. The terminology was different. Lynch's rookie season was one of learning, and the curve was steep.

This offseason will feature more of the same as the slate clears and Siemian and Lynch engage in another battle for the starting job. The addition of a third quarterback for depth and competition remains a possibility — everything remains a possibility for the Broncos — but the commitment is clear.

For now, new coach Vance Joseph is focused on his two young quarterbacks and their impending competition.

“Absolutely, that’s my vision and that’s what we’re going to go for,” Joseph said. He added: “They’re both smart guys, obviously different with different skill sets. But I’m comfortable with those kids. They’re good football players and we have to build around those guys.” McCoy added more of the same.

“I’m happy with the two guys we have,” he said. “That’s our No. 1 focus right now, is to get the two quarterbacks we have on our roster ready to play.”

In the coming weeks and months, the Broncos’ new staff will huddle together for evaluations — of draft prospects, of free-agent targets, of their current players to determine the roster’s strengths and weaknesses and to lay a foundation for change.

Some of those changes might resemble the scheme McCoy ran in his first stint in Denver and in his four years as head coach in San Diego. The offensive line, a group McCoy said holds the keys to Denver’s offensive improvement — “Our offense will go as far as our offensive line will take them,” he said — might toggle between power and zone blocking.

The repeated catchwords: “flexibility” and “player-friendly.”

“It’s our job in the next couple of months to figure out what each one of those guys do and take advantage of their strengths and minimize their weaknesses,” McCoy said, referring to the quarterbacks. “It’s going to change, but they’re going to start off on the same page in the playbook and we’ll figure that out as time goes and figure out what these two players do and what they like.”

The goal is to hit both spectrums, to provide both continuity and needed change; to provide comfort and enough discomfort to challenge and push Siemian and Lynch and those around them.

As a divisional rival last season while coaching the San Diego Chargers, McCoy had multiple chances to see Siemian in action. McCoy also had four years to build his own experiences as a head coach, a time he said made him a better coordinator and eager to get back to play-calling.

“I’ve got a burning desire to call plays, and I did not do that the last four years,” he said. “That was hard. ... But for four years, you kind of miss that, so I’m excited to get back into calling plays.”

The new game plan, while loosely formulated now, calls for changes all around, from the sideline to the trenches.

The unknowns about the 2017 Broncos will remain unanswered for a little longer, but in the coming weeks, the details will be penciled in — only to be erased and revised again.

Broncos name Mike McCoy offensive coordinator

By Andrew Mason
DenverBroncos.com
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After four seasons as head coach in San Diego, Mike McCoy is trading in powder blue for navy and will be back on the sidelines at Mile High in 2017.

Mike McCoy will return to the Broncos' coaching staff.

After four years as the then-San Diego Chargers' head coach, McCoy will become the Broncos' offensive coordinator under new Head Coach Vance Joseph.

"Mike is a hell of a play caller," Joseph said Thursday.

McCoy's task will be to build an aggressive scheme that has "swagger," as Joseph noted. But it must also maximize the talent at his disposal -- a collection that starts with just the seventh pair of receivers to post three consecutive seasons of 1,000 yards apiece, Demaryius Thomas and Emmanuel Sanders.

"I want a guy that fits the scheme to the players," Joseph said Thursday. "I want coordinators that put players first and schemes second. If it doesn't fit the players, let's not do it. My thought there is 'players first, scheme second.'"

McCoy is particularly qualified to fit that bill, given his history in a variety of schemes and points of emphasis, as well as his ability to adapt and make changes on the fly during the regular season.

"Mike is an experienced play-caller who can build a system around our players," Joseph said in a statement. "It was our goal to find an offensive coordinator who has flexibility with his scheme, and Mike has done that as both a head coach and coordinator. He's had a lot of success in this league with many different styles of offense, including here with the Broncos.

"Mike will bring energy and creativity to our offense, and we're excited to welcome him back to Denver."

The 44-year-old McCoy's first Broncos tenure began in 2009, when he joined Josh McDaniels' first Broncos staff after nine seasons with the Carolina Panthers in various roles involved with the passing game.

His Panthers years exposed him to three different offensive philosophies. He broke into the league in the West Coast scheme run under George Seifert in 2000-01. In 2002, John Fox retained him on the Panthers staff, and McCoy helped the offense transition to a scheme run under the "Air Coryell" principles and language taught by coordinator Dan Henning, who learned that scheme in Washington in the 1980s under former San Diego offensive coordinator Joe Gibbs, himself a future Hall of Famer.

In 2007, the Panthers had another offensive transition -- to the Patriots-based schemes favored by former New England assistant coach Jeff Davidson, who became Carolina's offensive coordinator. Davidson and Fox elevated McCoy from quarterbacks coach to passing-game coordinator. McCoy's work

in that scheme helped quarterback Jake Delhomme to a career-high 7.9 yards per attempt in 2008, and led to him earning the offensive coordinator job in Denver in 2009.

McCoy's history with Fox allowed him to survive the 2011 coaching change, and set the stage for some of his best work -- after a spate of early-season interceptions by Kyle Orton forced Tim Tebow into the lineup. Faced with having to construct an offense despite Tebow's inaccuracy, McCoy changed the scheme on the fly, turning an offense that relied on the pass into one that used the zone-read option as its bread-and-butter formation.

The result was an attack that ran the football 59.0 percent of the time after Tebow stepped into the lineup. It was audacious; no team has run the football on 59.0 percent of its snaps or more over a full season in the last dozen years. But it worked for the Broncos, as it played to its strengths -- and eventually was complemented by a vertical passing game that was limited, but effective enough to power a comeback win at Minnesota and a playoff win over Pittsburgh.

The on-the-fly overhaul guided by McCoy and then-quarterbacks coach Adam Gase helped turn the Broncos into a division champion that won the franchise's first playoff game in six years.

A year later, McCoy's challenge was different: to incorporate the concepts that worked for Peyton Manning and help translate them into the nomenclature the Broncos used at the time to ease the learning process for rest of the offense. That was also a success, as an offense that ranked 31st in passing in 2011 rocketed to fifth in 2012. Denver rocketed from 23rd to fourth in total offense and soared from 26th to third in offensive points, helping him land the Chargers' head-coaching job after the season.

In San Diego, McCoy's offenses had an average ranking of 11.5 in total yardage but were particularly proficient through the air, ranking fourth, 10th, fourth and eighth, respectively, in net passing yardage in the last four seasons. The offensive success came in spite of a litany of injuries over the years, particularly to their offensive line and receiving corps.

McCoy guided Philip Rivers to some of the best seasons of his career, including a career-high passer rating in 2013 (105.5) and a career-best-yardage tally in 2015 (4,792).

Broncos hire Mike McCoy to run offense, add Bill Musgrave to staff

By Jeff Legwold

ESPN

January 13, 2017

Newly hired Denver Broncos coach Vance Joseph has said he wants an offense with "swagger," and then Joseph showed a little swagger of his own to reel in the guys to help him with that task.

The Broncos announced Friday they've hired Mike McCoy, the former San Diego Chargers coach, as offensive coordinator.

The team also announced it has hired former Oakland Raiders offensive coordinator Bill Musgrave as the quarterbacks coach.

That means the Broncos have two coaches who called plays for NFL teams this past season to guide the team's offense and work with quarterbacks Trevor Siemian and Paxton Lynch. Siemian, who started 14 games this past season, just turned 25, and Lynch, who was the Broncos' first-round pick in April, just completed his rookie season.

Both coaches have plenty of Broncos ties. McCoy was Denver's offensive coordinator for four seasons, including quarterback Tim Tebow's run as the Broncos' starter in 2011 and Peyton Manning's first season with the team in 2012.

Musgrave was not retained by the Oakland Raiders despite the team's 12-4 finish and QB Derek Carr's breakout season. The coach is a native of Grand Junction, Colorado, and a former Broncos teammate of John Elway, Denver's executive vice president of football operations and general manager.

The two hires seem to fit the profile of what Joseph said he was looking for in an attempt to upgrade the offense. The Broncos were 27th overall in total offense (323.1 yards per game), 22nd in scoring, 27th in rushing and 31st in third-down efficiency.

"When you play offense that's attacking, it kind of makes you careful of your (defensive) calls," Joseph said Thursday. "When an offense is conservative, I loved it because I could be the attacker. But if an offense can be attacking, multiple personnel groups, multiple formations, that's what I want it to look like. I want to score points. I want offense with swagger, with tempo."

The root of the Broncos' struggles was in the offensive line. Denver surrendered 40 sacks this season and allowed the quarterbacks to take far too much punishment. Siemian had surgery on his left (nonthrowing) shoulder after the season.

Both McCoy and Musgrave will be charged with Siemian's and Lynch's development. Elway and former coach Gary Kubiak, who retired after the 2016 season, have both said they believe these two QBs can be starters in the NFL. And Joseph threw open the competition at quarterback this week with a simple "whoever's better, plays."

Both McCoy and Musgrave have called plays in offenses similar to the scheme the Broncos ran last season under Kubiak. As a result, the transition for Siemian and Lynch should be more efficient.

Regarding Siemian and Lynch, Joseph said: "[Siemian] had a fine year. I've watched the kid: He's smart, fast with the ball, he makes [few] errors with the football -- that's important. Obviously, Paxton's a big, strong guy with a big arm. It's two different guys. They're both young, they're both capable; it's going to be an open competition. That's going to make both guys better. Whoever's the best for our team, that's who is going to play."

Mike McCoy will return as Broncos offensive coordinator

By Mike Klis

USA Today

January 13, 2017

The Denver Broncos are finalizing contract negotiations with Mike McCoy to make him their offensive coordinator again, sources tell 9NEWS.

McCoy was the Broncos' offensive coordinator from 2009-12 before becoming the San Diego Chargers' head coach from 2013-16.

It made sense that Broncos general manager John Elway and new head coach Vance Joseph set up McCoy's interview Thursday and Bill Musgrave's visit for the same job Friday.

McCoy had been the Broncos' top choice to turn around their offense that was too often anemic in 2016. If he took the job Thursday, the Broncos didn't have to waste Musgrave's time with a trip in the next day.

The Broncos had to move quickly on Thursday because the Washington Redskins were interested in talking to McCoy after their 30-year-old offensive coordinator, Sean McVay, became the youngest head coach in NFL history when he took the job with the Los Angeles Rams.

For McCoy — who no doubt would like another crack as an NFL head coach, this time with a more stable organization than the Chargers — part of his decision may have been the quarterback duo of Trevor Siemian and Paxton Lynch with the Broncos or Kirk Cousins with Washington.

Lynch, a first-round rookie, is bigger, stronger and more athletic than Siemian, but those skills are also raw for the NFL level.

Cousins is a fifth-year quarterback and 2½-year starter who threw for 4,917 yards and 25 touchdowns this season.

Or the decision could have come down to money, the city of Denver with its occasional weather swings compared to our nation's capital, or more control of the offense here than in Washington where head coach Jay Gruden is an offensive coordinator at heart.

McVay has hired Wade Phillips as his defensive coordinator with the Rams.

Phillips had been the defensive coordinator of the terrific Denver defense the past two years. Phillips' defense was the primary reason why the Broncos won Super Bowl 50 to cap the 2015 season. But the team let his two-year contract elapse after this season with plans of replacing him by promoting either defensive backs coach Joe Woods or linebackers coach Reggie Herring to defensive coordinator.

Woods is considered the favorite.

The Broncos may have several defensive coaches who are loyal to Phillips, but they are not expected to leave as they all have one more year left on their contracts.

Siemian just had a pretty good season as a first-year starter for the Broncos, throwing for 3,401 yards and 18 touchdowns against 10 interceptions while posting an 8-6 record.

Lynch, a first-round rookie, is bigger, stronger and more athletic than Siemian, but those skills are also raw for the NFL level.

Cousins is a fifth-year quarterback and 2½-year starter who threw for 4,917 yards and 25 touchdowns this season.

Or the decision could have come down to money, the city of Denver with its occasional weather swings compared to our nation's capital, or more control of the offense here than in Washington where head coach Jay Gruden is an offensive coordinator at heart.

McVay has hired Wade Phillips as his defensive coordinator with the Rams.

Phillips had been the defensive coordinator of the terrific Denver defense the past two years. Phillips' defense was the primary reason why the Broncos won Super Bowl 50 to cap the 2015 season. But the team let his two-year contract elapse after this season with plans of replacing him by promoting either defensive backs coach Joe Woods or linebackers coach Reggie Herring to defensive coordinator.

Woods is considered the favorite.

The Broncos may have several defensive coaches who are loyal to Phillips, but they are not expected to leave as they all have one more year left on their contracts.

The Broncos' offense, however, is another matter. The West Coast-oriented offense coached by Gary Kubiak and Rick Dennison reached a 50-year low in December when the Broncos failed to score more than 10 points in three consecutive games, all losses.

It was the first time since 1966 the Broncos endured such a three-game scoring skid.

Had the Broncos gone with Musgrave, the team could have at least kept their old playbook. Musgrave, who was instrumental in furthering the development of quarterback Derek Carr the past two seasons as the Oakland Raiders' offensive coordinator, is steeped in the West Coast offense.

McCoy can coach any system — from the Tim Tebow read-option in 2011 to Josh McDaniels/Peyton Manning hybrid in 2012 — but it's the latter he figures to install with the Broncos.

McCoy left the Broncos in 2013 to take the Chargers' head job, and in his first season he improved the team from 7-9 to 9-7. They were 9-7 again in 2014, but in the past two years McCoy experienced rotten luck with injuries to key starters and the distraction of the franchise's impending move to Los Angeles.

The Chargers were 4-12 and 5-11 the past two years, but through it all, quarterback Philip Rivers consistently put up gaudy passing statistics. In his four years with McCoy, Rivers averaged 4,486 passing yards, 31 touchdowns and 16 interceptions.

With McCoy back as offensive coordinator, the focus will be on his coaching assistants. The Broncos are not expected to retain Dennison or tight ends coach Brian Pariani, who were long-time assistants for Kubiak, who retired on Jan. 2. The team and offensive line coach Clancy Barone mutually decided to part ways Thursday night.

The Broncos have received permission from Joseph's former Miami Dolphins team to interview assistant offensive line coach Jeremiah Washburn. Broncos running backs coach Eric Stutesville interviewed Tuesday for the New York Jets' offensive coordinator position.

Stutesville just finished his 20th season as an NFL running backs coach. While he served as the Broncos' interim head coach for the final four games in place of the fired McDaniels in 2010, he has never been a coordinator.

If Stutesville doesn't get the Jets' job, the Broncos would like him back as running backs coach.

San Diego Chargers Choose Mike McCoy as Head Coach

By Mike Allen

San Diego Business Journal

January 16, 2013

The San Diego Chargers hired Mike McCoy, the 40-year-old former offensive coordinator with the Denver Broncos, as their new head coach, making him the 15th head coach in the team's history.

"We interviewed five extremely qualified, highly sought after coaches," said Chargers President Dean Spanos. "It was a tough decision, but in the end all signs pointed to Mike."

Other candidates interviewed by Spanos, according to media reports, included Lovie Smith, former head coach of the Chicago Bears; Ken Whisenhunt, former head coach of the Arizona Cardinals; and Jay Gruden, an assistant coach with the Cincinnati Bengals.

McCoy, whose team's season ended Saturday when the Broncos were upset by the Baltimore Ravens, helped lead Denver to a 13-3 regular season finish, and 11 straight wins before the playoff loss.

Spanos said McCoy has all the qualities he was looking for in a coach and leader. "He has a very structured vision about how to build and run a football team...and he has shown he has one of the most innovative minds in football."

McCoy coached under Denver Head Coach John Fox, both in Denver and Carolina. "Mike understands offenses in this league. Beyond that, he's got a great football mind. His preparation and detail—his level of organization—is very strong," Fox said.

McCoy also interviewed with the Philadelphia Eagles, the Chicago Bears, and Arizona Cardinals before meeting with the Chargers, and deciding this was the right job, according to media reports.

The Chargers, coming off their third consecutive season of not reaching the playoffs, fired both General Manager A.J. Smith and Coach Norv Turner following the final game of the 2012 season in which they went 7-9.

Last week, the team hired Tom Telesco, 40, as its new GM. Telesco is the former vice president of football operations for the Indianapolis Colts and is the youngest GM in Chargers history.

He spent the last 15 seasons with the Colts, starting as an area scout in 1998, and moving up to his most recent job where he had a hand in building one of the more successful franchises in the National Football League.

He's not the real McCoy, he's the real deal

Brad Biggs
Chicago Tribune
January 3, 2013

ENGLEWOOD, Colo. — Phil Emery said the next coach of the Bears needs to be adaptable to win with the personnel available and Broncos offensive coordinator Mike McCoy has done that with disparate parts such as Peyton Manning and Tim Tebow.

A year after the Broncos reached the playoffs and upset the Steelers with Tebow at the helm, they cruised to the No. 1 seed in the AFC and a first-round bye. Emery will interview McCoy here on Sunday as he crisscrosses the country in search of the 14th coach in Bears history.

McCoy also is expected to interview with the Bills and Cardinals on Saturday and Eagles on Sunday in a busy two days. He was a finalist for the Dolphins job last year and some projected it was his before it went to Joe Philbin.

"Until you get that job, don't listen to anybody," McCoy said Thursday after Broncos practice. "Seriously. Everyone had me penciled in going to Miami last year and it was a done deal, 'Don't get on a flight, it's your job,' and this and that.

"It's a learning experience and every organization, every owner is different so they are looking for something different. You just have to be yourself. That is the No. 1 thing."

It will be a feeling out process for him as he learns about the teams.

"It's an open conversation," McCoy said. "It's not about just taking any job. That's not my goal. You have to make sure when you make the next step that it's the right one. I have plenty of questions to ask."

The Broncos finished fourth in the NFL in total offense (397.9 yards per game) and were second in scoring (30.1 points) as McCoy meshed quickly with Manning. It's really the third offense the Broncos have run in two seasons as the passing scheme for Kyle Orton was scrapped after five games in 2011 when Tebow was promoted. The Broncos were 20th in the league in rushing at the time the change was made and finished No. 1 with a franchise-record 2,632 yards on the ground.

Orton and wide receiver Brandon Lloyd, both former Bears, had career years in 2010 under McCoy. This year, McCoy has blended passing game concepts Manning brought from the Colts with running game material that is his own.

"It's really important to find the person who has the knowledge and feel to make things fit with the talent they have," Emery said Tuesday. "That's the mark of excellence that I'm looking for. Somebody who has adapted to the role or has the flexibility and the skill set to make the players that we have fit toward making a run for the championship."

McCoy, 40, has a brief history with Jay Cutler as Josh McDaniels hired him as offensive coordinator in 2009 before the quarterback was traded to the Bears. It's not believed the falling out Cutler had with McDaniels involved McCoy.

Manning, who pretty much worked with the same offensive coaches for nearly his entire run with the Colts, highly recommends McCoy.

"He is ready," Manning said. "He has paid his dues. Mike is a good leader."

Manning had an adjustment period and he gives credit to McCoy for what he calls the team's "hybrid" offense.

"I knew it was going to take some time with any coach because I had been in one system and really kind of had one coach for the majority of my career," Manning said. "He has been incredibly supportive and patient with me."

"We spent a lot of hours together, early mornings, late nights, trying to get our plan in place. There is no substitute for a work ethic and Mike certainly has that. The more time we spent together, there is certainly a bond there. He has been a really big resource for me."

The Bears are replacing coach Lovie Smith who was scheme-driven defensively. Emery says he is considering coaches from all backgrounds but so far more offensive names have surfaced and he's driven to improve Cutler and the offense.

Every coach talks about matching their plans with the strengths of their players and McCoy did it in 2011. After the Lions blew out the Broncos 45-10 in Week 5, coach John Fox ordered Tebow promoted and a read-option offense highlighted.

"That's our job to take advantage of your talent," McCoy said. "That is the No. 1 job I have here to make sure that we evaluate the guys properly during the offseason and training camp and find out what we do best as an offense. If someone goes down, someone comes up and we have to make adjustments as a coaching staff and as players?"

The Broncos had some material in their playbook for Tebow already, but it was a massive transformation in midseason. Tebow completed only 46.2 percent of his passes but the Broncos averaged more than 190 yards rushing per game with him starting.

"It's impressive because of how much work (McCoy) had to do," wide receiver Eric Decker said. "To be able to switch gears from more of a passing offense to a read-

option type run offense ... the biggest thing is he is very unselfish. He takes whatever coaches have to say, whatever players have to say. He's able to put his ego aside and make sure we have the best game plan."

Said left guard Zane Beadles: "He's a guy who really can mold something around the guys he has."

McCoy had a reputation of working well with players in Carolina too where he was a Panthers assistant for nine seasons from 2000 to 2008, slowly working his way up to passing game coordinator. When McCoy left for the Broncos in 2009, longtime Panthers quarterback Jake Delhomme made the departure easier for him. McCoy's daughter Olivia, 9 at the time, was nervous about a big move and Delhomme had a conversation with her that made the exit smoother for the family, McCoy told the Charlotte Observer. It's a sign of how he forges relationships with his players.

"As a head coach, the biggest thing is facilitating roles and responsibilities and again it goes with the ego thing, he would be able to let his coordinators do their jobs but oversee it," Decker said. "For my three years with him, he's very organized. He has a plan. He's always structured. He's a motivator. He's also just a good guy.

"Very personable and you can have a conversation with him, you can talk about things other than football so you build that relationship, you build that trust and want to play hard for him."

Olivia must be on board with the idea of a move. McCoy said his daughter and wife Kellie are in charge of how many suits he wears in the whirlwind weekend.

McCoy Emerges as Head Coaching Candidate

Stuart Zaas
DenverBroncos.com
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Offensive Coordinator Mike McCoy talks about being considered for NFL head coaching jobs this offseason.

ENGLEWOOD, Colo. – In his two seasons calling the plays as the Broncos' offensive coordinator, Mike McCoy has shown his ability to adapt to his team's strengths.

In 2011, the Broncos won the AFC West and advanced to the Divisional Round of the playoffs with the league's top-ranked rushing attack.

This season, it's a fifth-ranked passing offense that has spurred the team to score the second-most points in the league and repeat as AFC West Champs.

Thanks to that success, McCoy has drawn interest from some of the teams with a head coaching vacancy.

"It's an honor being considered for those jobs," McCoy said. "But it goes to show you the type of players we have here and the organization we have here. As coaches, we're all products of the players we have and the other guys we work with. It's an honor and we'll see what happens."

Quarterback Peyton Manning has spent plenty of time with McCoy this season and sees qualities in his current offensive coordinator that would make him a good head coach.

"I think he's ready," Manning said. "I think he's played his dues. Mike's a good leader. He's had some good coaches that have been mentors to him, different coaches that he's worked with in his years in the NFL that I think he's incorporated some of their leadership philosophies and his own philosophy and like I said, he's a strong leader. In my opinion, he deserves a shot at one of these head coaching jobs."

Manning credited McCoy with helping him turn in a record-setting season during his first campaign as a Bronco in 2012.

"Mike has been a great resource for me, he's been incredibly supportive and patient with me in kind of putting together this hybrid offense," Manning said. "I tell you, he's a worker. We spend a lot of hours together – early mornings, late nights – trying to get kind of our plan in place for what kind of offense we were going to be. There's no substitute for a work ethic and Mike certainly has that."

McCoy finished his fourth season as the Broncos' offensive coordinator in 2012, tying him as the second-longest tenured coach on the team's staff.

McCoy just completed his 13th regular season as an NFL coach, having held offensive assistant (2000), wide receivers coach (2001), quarterbacks/offensive assistant (2002), quarterbacks (2003-06), passing game coordinator/quarterbacks (1007-08), offensive coordinator/quarterbacks (2009) and offensive coordinator (2010-12) titles in his career with Carolina (2000-08) and Denver (2009-12).

"I think anytime with team success, your guys get opportunities," said Head Coach John Fox, who has coached nine seasons with McCoy, including seven in Carolina. "That's players, coaches, everybody. He's a heck of a coach. We've got a lot of very qualified coaches on this staff assistant-wise that will get opportunities but we're still focused on what we still have to do here with the Denver Broncos."

McCoy interviewed with the Miami Dolphins for their head coaching position last offseason, and said he gained a lot by going through the process a year ago.

"It's a learning experience and every owner, every organization's different," he said. "So they're looking for something different and you've just got to go in there and be yourself and when you walk out of that room with whoever's in there, just say, 'You know what? You did the best you can.'"

McCoy said he plans to meet with "a few" teams this weekend while the Broncos are off for their postseason bye week.

He has set up the meetings in a way that doesn't interfere with his or the team's preparation for Denver's Divisional Round matchup on Saturday, Jan. 21.

"Everyone has individual goals, as a coach and a player," McCoy said. "But it's team first here and we still have a lot left here. Hopefully, one day I will become a head coach but we still have a lot of football ahead of us here and we'll see what happens down the road."

While he'd like the chance at a head coaching job in the NFL, McCoy said regardless of how his interviews go, he appreciates what he called an "unbelievable job" that he currently holds as the offensive coordinator of the Denver Broncos.

"I love my job here," McCoy said. "I work for the best organization in the NFL. (Owner and CEO) Mr. (Pat) Bowlen's the best owner. (Executive Vice President of Football Operations) John Elway and (Head Coach) John Fox have given me the opportunity that I have here. My wife and I and the kids, we absolutely love Denver, so we'll see what happens. If it's meant to be it will be. If not, hey, we can stay here for a long time."

"John Fox and John Elway have done great things here and they're going to continue to do great things here," he added. "It's an honor and privilege to have a job for the Denver Broncos, so we'll see what happens."