

49ers’ Saleh leads list of coordinators for NFL contenders

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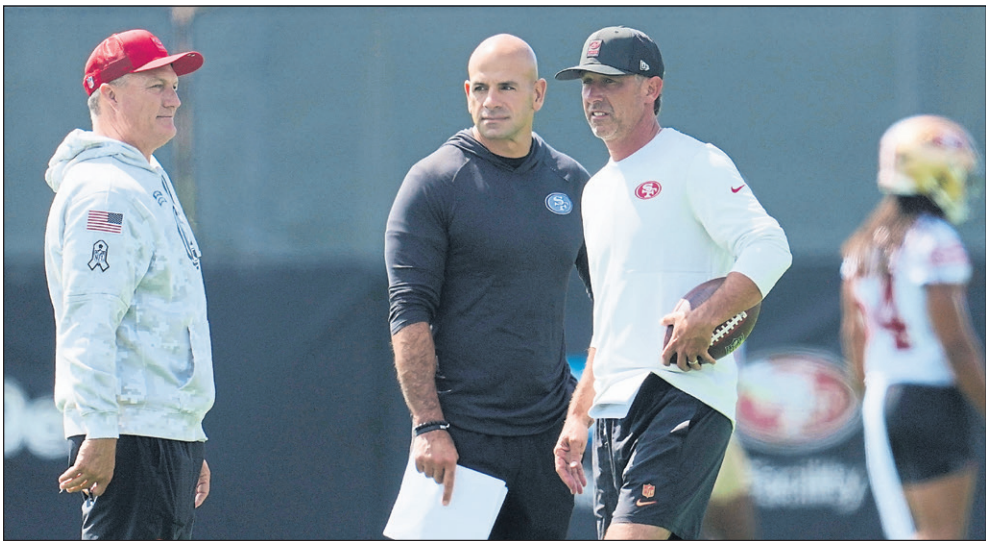
SANTA CLARA, Calif. — The San Francisco 49ers went back to a familiar face when coach Kyle Shanahan looked to revive a defensive unit that had gone from dominant to mediocre in recent years.

The Niners brought back Robert Saleh for a second stint as coordinator in hopes that he could once again build back the defense in similar fashion to what he did in 2019 when San Francisco’s stingy defense helped carry the team to the Super Bowl.

“His commanding presence in defensive meetings is what we needed,” star defensive end Nick Bosa said. The 49ers aren’t the only contender that made a change at play-caller on offense or defense headed into 2025. How all of those work out will go a long way to determining which teams are playing deep into January.

Some teams were forced to make changes they didn’t want to with Detroit needing to replace both coordinators after Ben Johnson and Aaron Glenn got head coaching jobs and Super Bowl champion Philadelphia needing to replace offensive coordinator Kellen Moore after he became Saints head coach.

Tampa Bay is in a similar boat for a second straight season after losing an offensive coordinator to a head coaching job with Liam Coen leaving for Jacksonville one year after Dave Canales left



AP Photo/Jeff Chiu

San Francisco 49ers general manager John Lynch, left, talks with defensive coordinator Robert Saleh, middle, and head coach Kyle Shanahan during practice at the team’s NFL football training camp on July 23 in Santa Clara, Calif.

for Carolina. Other teams such as Houston, Cincinnati and Seattle made changes in hopes of finding a spark.

Here’s a look at some of the key new coordinators around the NFL:

49ERS DC ROBERT SALEH

The 49ers ranked 29th in the league in scoring defense last season, allowing 25.6 points per game, and were tied for the seventh-fewest takeaways with 17 as the unit looked nothing like the dominant ones under Saleh and DeMeco Ryans from 2019-22.

That led to Shanahan making another change at coordinator, bringing back Saleh after he was fired as head coach of the New York Jets to replace the fired Nick

Sorensen.

During Saleh’s last two full seasons with the Jets in 2022-23, New York ranked first in yards passing allowed per game (178.9) and yards per play allowed (4.7), and second in total defense (301.7 yards per game).

The Niners are hoping similar results will get them back to the postseason after a 6-11 record in 2024.

LIONS OC JOHN MORTON AND DC KELVIN SHEPPARD

Detroit became the third team in the past 15 seasons to lose both coordinators to NFL head coaching jobs in the same offseason with it also happening to Philadelphia following the 2022 season and Cincinnati after 2013. Both those teams went

back to the playoffs the following season, losing in the wild-card round.

The Lions have their sights set higher after making it to the NFC title game in 2023 and losing in the divisional round as the top seed last season. Whether that happens will depend heavily on if Morton can keep the offense in the top five in scoring for a fourth straight season after Johnson helped make it one of the most dynamic in the league with his trick plays and schemes.

Morton has only one year of play-calling experience in the NFL in 2017 with the Jets, finishing in the bottom 10 in scoring with an offense that lacked the playmakers he has in Detroit. Sheppard should be helped by getting star pass rusher Aidan

Hutchinson back healthy after he missed the final 12 games last season with a broken leg.

EAGLES OC KEVIN PATULLO

QB Jalen Hurts will have a fourth play-caller in as many years with Patullo getting promoted from passing game coordinator following Moore’s departure.

The offense improved under Moore in 2024 after stagnating the previous season when Brian Johnson replaced Shane Steichen as OC. Patullo has plenty of talent with one of the top offensive lines, record-setting running back Saquon Barkley and two talented wideouts in A.J. Brown and DeVonta Smith to support Hurts.

BUCCANEERS OC JOSH GRIZZARD

Tampa Bay’s offense got even better last season when Coen replaced Canales with both the running game and screen passing showing major improvement.

Grizzard will try to build on that as he moves from passing game coordinator to OC. He was heavily involved with the third down offense last season when the Bucs led the NFL by converting 50.9%.

TEXANS OC NICK CALEY

Coach DeMeco Ryans made a change after last season even though Houston made it back to the divisional round. That came in spite of

the offense taking a big step back thanks in large part to shoddy line play that hindered the growth of QB C.J. Stroud. Caley comes over after spending the past two seasons on Sean McVay’s staff with the Rams and is being counted on to bring some of Los Angeles’ successful wrinkles to Houston to help make Stroud’s job at quarterback easier. He will need to do it with an overhauled offensive line that lost stalwart Laremy Tunsil in the offseason.

BENGALS DC AL GOLDEN

The Bengals went to the college ranks to hire Golden away from Notre Dame to replace Lou Anarumo. Cincinnati reached the Super Bowl with Anarumo leading the defense in the 2021 season but regressed the past few years and were ranked in the bottom 10 in most categories last season.

Golden spent the 2020-21 seasons as linebackers coach for the Bengals and brings a man-heavy scheme to the NFL.

SEAHAWKS OC KLINT KUBIAK

Seattle hired Kubiak to replace Ryan Grubb in hopes that his scheme heavy on zone blocking and play-action passing can help the Seahawks offensive line. Kubiak was OC in New Orleans last season when the Saints got off to a fast start before injuries led to a downfall.

Falcons rookie Walker returns from minor injury, hopes to play in preseason opener against Lions

BY CHARLES ODUM
ASSOCIATED PRESS

FLOWERY BRANCH, Ga. — After missing much of the first week of training camp with a minor hamstring injury, Atlanta Falcons first-round pick Jalon Walker returned to practice on Monday.

Walker said he hopes to play in Friday night’s first preseason game against the Detroit Lions.

“I feel good,” Walker said. “I’m feeling so happy to be back out here. Happy for the week. It’s a big week of this first preseason game and excited to get things going.”

The Falcons selected Walker from Georgia with the No. 15 overall pick in the draft. Walker won the 2024 Butkus Award as the nation’s best linebacker and has the potential to play a hybrid role in the NFL as a linebacker and edge rusher.

For now, the Falcons want Walker to focus on edge rusher but plan to utilize his versatility. Coach Raheem Morris said Monday the opportunities at linebacker will come “pretty quickly, you know, as soon as he gets more comfortable out there moving around.”

Morris said Walker (6-2, 245) is “already starting to pick some of those things up, cross training on some of those things already. He’s very smart, very sharp, very detailed guy. So nothing you worry about from that stand-



AP Photo/Mike Stewart

Atlanta Falcons linebacker Jalon Walker (11) works out during practice at NFL football minicamp on June 11 in Flowery Branch, Ga.

point. But I just want to give him a chance to be comfortable doing something first, see that happen, come to life.”

Morris said the Falcons were careful to protect Walker from aggravating the injury last week even though the rookie was impatient to join his teammates. The caution continued on Monday as Walker’s exposure to practice was limited.

After drafting Walker, the Falcons traded with the Los Angeles Rams to add Tennessee edge rusher James Pearce Jr. at No. 26.

Penix, Cousins to sit out preseason opener

Morris said starting quarterback Michael Penix Jr. and backup Kirk Cousins will not play in the preseason opener against Detroit. Easton Stick and Emory Jones will share the snaps.

Penix said he might be considered for preseason games if not for his starts in the final three games of his 2024 rookie season.

“He feels confident in what I can do on game day,” said Penix of Morris. “So he didn’t feel like I needed to play this week. I’m going to be ready Week 1.”

Morris said other decisions will be made following the team’s scrimmage on Wednesday.

Bills GM Beane has no timeline on contract standoff with Cook; RB skips 2nd day of practice

BY JOHN WAWROW
ASSOCIATED PRESS

PITTSFORD, N.Y. — Buffalo Bills general manager Brandon Beane told The Associated Press on Monday he isn’t sure how long the contract standoff with James Cook will last after the running back declined to participate in practice for a second straight day.

Cook wore a white hat, red Bills pullover and blue shorts upon briefly entering the practice field, before ducking into a portable bathroom about 12 minutes before practice was scheduled to start. He then left the field, exiting through the trainer’s tent and did not re-appear during the two-hour session.

This marks the second day Cook has not participated in practice in the fourth-year player’s next step in escalating his bid to extend the final year of his contract. On Sunday, Cook worked out on a stationary bike before watching prac-



AP Photo/Adrian Kraus

Buffalo Bills running back James Cook (4) walks on the field during practice at the team’s NFL football training camp on July 23 in Pittsford, N.Y.

tice from the sideline while wearing a white sweatshirt.

A second-round pick in the 2022 draft, Cook was the NFL’s co-leader with 16 touchdowns rushing in his second full season as a starter.

Cook risks being fined by the team for declining to practice. The Bills are off Tuesday before closing camp in suburban Rochester with practices Wednes-

day and Thursday, followed by opening their preseason schedule by hosting the New York Giants on Saturday.

On Sunday, Cook repeatedly used the word “business” when asked about his decision to not practice, in speaking to a small group of reporters.


Cook’s agent has not returned messages seeking comment.

Earlier Monday, Beane appeared on WGR-Radio and said the team wasn’t aware of Cook’s decision to not practice Sunday until shortly before the session began. Beane also reiterated the two sides have been in constant contact in a bid to bridge the gap.

“I’d love to see Jimbo out there today. I don’t know that answer at this point this morning, whether that will happen or not,” Beane said.

“But hopefully we’ll get him back out there soon,” he added. “This is my ninth season here, and we’ve never had a player miss due to a contract or anything like that, so that’s disappointing for me. It’s not something we want.”

The 25-year-old Cook made no secret this offseason of his desire for a new contract that would pay him in the range of \$15 million a year in what would make him among the league’s highest-paid players at his position.



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**Construction of a Building Renovation
for the Daviess County Public Library Facility
2020 Frederica St.
Owensboro, Kentucky 42301**

Sealed bids will be received at Hafer, 101 E Second St., Suite 101, Owensboro, Kentucky 42303 until **2:00 P.M.**, Local Time, on August 14, 2025. Bids received after such hours will be returned unopened. Bids received shall be publicly opened and read aloud at **3:00 pm on August 14, 2025** at the Daviess County Public Library Facility 2020 Frederica St. Owensboro, Kentucky 42301. All interested citizens are invited to attend.

Bids will be received on the construction of a renovation of the existing facility located at 2020 Frederica St. Owensboro, Kentucky 42301.

Should bidder withdraw their bid within 60 days after opening without written consent of the Owner or fail to execute a satisfactory contract within 10 days after notice of acceptance, the Owner may declare the bid deposit forfeited as liquidated damages. Contractor can view and see the plans and specifications on file at the following locations:

**OFFICE OF THE ARCHITECT
HAFER
101 E Second St., Suite 101
Owensboro, Kentucky 42303**

Copies of the Plans and Specifications may be obtained from MACO – Evansville Blue, 600 Court Street, Evansville, Indiana 47708 (812) 464-8108 or by accessing website <http://www.hafer-planroom.com/> using your company's active account information. If your company is not currently registered, you may do so by clicking "Register for an account". Registered account holders may download digital files for a nominal fee.

Bidders may purchase up to three printed sets of bidding documents by paying a refundable deposit of \$100.00 per set ordered. Deposit checks shall be made payable to "Hafer".

a. Amount of the deposit for up to three sets of bidding documents may be refunded in full when the Plans and Specifications have been returned to MACO – Evansville Blue within ten (10) days after time set for receiving bids and in good re-usable condition. If the Plans and Specifications are returned after this ten (10) day period or in unusable condition, the deposit will be forfeited.

b. One (1) set of bidding documents consists of one (1) Project Manual and one (1) Complete Set of Drawings.

The work to be performed and the bid to be submitted shall include a complete project cost for all work required including labor, materials, permits, licenses, insurance, and so forth incidental to the construction of the new building.

Each bid must be enclosed in a sealed envelope bearing the title of the Project and the name and address of Bidder. All bids must be submitted on the bid forms as identified in the Contract Documents and Specifications.

Project is Tax-Exempt. Owner's Identification Number will be given to successful bidder.

Each bid shall be accompanied by a certified check or acceptable bidder's bond made payable to the Owner, in a sum of not less than five percent (5%) of the total amount of the highest aggregate bid, which check or bond will be held by the Owner as evidence that the bidder will, if awarded the contract, enter into the same with the Owner upon notification from them to do so within ten (10) days of said notification.

Approved performance and payment bonds guaranteeing faithful and proper performance of the work and materials, to be executed by an acceptable surety company, will be required of the Contractor at the time of contract execution. The bonds will be in the amount of 100% of the Contract Price and must be in full force and effect throughout the term of the Construction Contract plus a period of twelve (12) months from the date of substantial completion.

The Owner reserves the right to reject any bid, or all bids, or to accept any bid or bids, or to make such combination of bids as may seem desirable, and to waive any and all informalities in bidding. Any bid may be withdrawn prior to the above scheduled time for the opening of bids or authorized postponement thereof. Any bid received after the time and date specified shall not be considered. No bid may be withdrawn after the scheduled closing time for receipt of bids for at least sixty (60) days.

A conditional or qualified bid will not be accepted.

Award will be made to the low, responsive, responsible bidder. The low, responsive, responsible bidder must not be debarred, suspended, or otherwise be excluded from or ineligible for participation in federally assisted programs under Executive Order 12549.

All applicable laws, ordinances, and the rules and regulations of all authorities having jurisdiction over construction of the project shall apply to the project throughout.

The Owner may make such investigations as deemed necessary to determine the ability of the Bidder to perform the work and the Bidder shall furnish to the Owner all such information and data for this purpose as the Owner may request. The Owner reserves the right to reject any bid if the evidence submitted by, or investigation of, such Bidder fails to satisfy the Owner that such Bidder is properly qualified to carry out the obligations of the Agreement and to complete the work contemplated therein. The Owner reserves the right to reject any and all bids.

Each Bidder is responsible for inspecting the Project site(s) and for reading and being thoroughly familiar with the Contract Documents and Specifications. The failure or omission of any Bidder to do any of the foregoing shall in no way relieve any Bidder from any obligation with respect to its Bid.

Daviess County Public Library