

NFL

Questions abound for Super Bowl champions

By **ARNIE STAPLETON**
Associated Press

ENGLEWOOD, Colo. — The Super Bowl champs begin training camp Thursday with major questions on both sides of the ball, beginning with who will be the one throwing it.

General manager John Elway declared the Denver Broncos’ quarterback competition wide open.

Coach Gary Kubiak said he’ll split snaps between Mark Sanchez, Trevor Siemian and Paxton Lynch, beginning — but not set — in that order.

“Gary is very seasoned at that position, so I know he’s going to handle it the right way and we’ll find the right guy,” Elway said.

There are also unknowns on defense such as when star cornerback Aqib Talib and pass-rusher DeMarcus Ware will be cleared to practice.

Both are starting out on the non-football injury list, Ware after aggravating a bad back in the offseason and Talib after suffering a gunshot wound to his right leg.

While acknowledging it’s hard to top a Super Bowl triumph, Elway said he expects his offense to be better this year no matter who wins the quarterback job. He insisted his standards don’t dip just because he doesn’t have an elite passer for the first time in four years.

“Our job is to be competitive and try to win a championship year in and year out,” Elway said.



Denver Broncos outside linebacker Von Miller responds to a question during news conference before the team’s opening of training camp Wednesday, July 27, 2016 in Englewood, Colo.

AP Photo/David Zalubowski

Kubiak has said “we should know a lot more in about a week” about who has the inside track to the job, but he declined to say how deep into camp he’s willing to hold open the audition.

The winner gets to direct an offense that Elway reconstructed this offseason following Denver’s 24-10 win over Carolina in Super Bowl 50 and the departures of Peyton Manning to retirement and Brock Osweiler to free agency.

The Broncos have just four offensive starters from the Super Bowl returning to their same position: center Matt Paradis, running back C.J. Anderson and wide

receivers Emmanuel Sanders and Demaryius Thomas.

“I think we can be better offensively,” Elway said, citing the return to health of some players and better familiarity in Year 2 under Kubiak, who no longer has to operate a hybrid offense to accommodate Manning.

“As much as we like to say that we did the right things offensively (last season), we HUNG ON offensively,” Elway said.

Led by linebackers Von Miller and Brandon Marshall, both of whom signed big contracts this summer, the defense returns all but two starters. Elway said he trusts

the Broncos have the depth to seamlessly replace Malik Jackson and Danny Trevathan, who followed Osweiler out of Denver in free agency.

Kubiak said Talib should be back in action “real soon.” But even if he is, possible NFL punishment and legal ramifications hang over the star cornerback who was shot in his right leg in Dallas on June 5. Police are investigating whether Talib accidentally shot himself.

“When I heard the news, I was just thankful that he was OK,” Elway said.

The GM met face-to-face with Miller on Wednesday for the first

BRIEFLY

Pendleton youth football camp

The Pendleton Buckaroos are holding their annual youth football camp in early August and registration is now open.

The camp, which will run Aug. 8-11 from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at the Pendleton High School field, is open to any kids entering the third through eighth grades and costs \$50 per camper. The camp features a free camp t-shirt, flag football games, Punt, Pass, Kick, and Run competitions as well as a total of six hours of instruction by Buckaroo players and coaches.

Registration forms can be picked up at Dean’s Athletic, PendletonYouthFootball.com, or you can arrive at 5 p.m. and register the day of the camp. Forms and payment must be returned to Deans Athletic, Pendleton High School office.

NFL

Jets, Ryan Fitzpatrick finally agree to 1-year deal

By **DENNIS WASZAK JR.**
Associated Press

NEW YORK — The New York Jets and quarterback Ryan Fitzpatrick agreed to terms on a one-year deal Wednesday night. The deal, worth \$12 million guaranteed and could increase to \$15 million in incentives, ends months of speculation and uncertainty at the team’s most vital position.

Fitzpatrick set the franchise record with a career-high 31 touchdown passes last season while helping lead the Jets on a playoff push in Todd Bowles’ first season as coach.

The well-traveled 33-year-old veteran appeared to be a certainty to re-sign in the weeks leading to the start of free agency, but Fitzpatrick and the Jets became locked in a contract stalemate over financial terms.

A deal appeared to be a better possibility two weeks ago, when New York signed defensive end

Muhammad Wilkerson to a five-year contract extension. That deal created about \$5.7 million in salary cap space, giving the Jets some more room to work out a contract with Fitzpatrick.

With the Jets reporting to camp on Wednesday and their first practice scheduled for Thursday, both sides worked to hash out the long-expected deal.

Bowles and general manager Mike Maccagnan repeatedly said all offseason that they’d like to have Fitzpatrick back, with the coach saying the veteran would enter camp as the team’s starter if he re-signed.

Several players, including wide receivers Brandon Marshall and Eric Decker, also expressed their desire to be reunited with Fitzpatrick.

In March, the Jets made an offer of three years for \$24 million,



Fitzpatrick

including \$12 million guaranteed in the first year, but there were some questions about the guaranteed money in the last two years.

While waiting for Fitzpatrick, the Jets also explored other options, including bringing in Robert Griffin III, who later signed with Cleveland, and Brian Hoyer, who signed with Chicago.

Maccagnan also told reporters the Jets had contingency plans in case Fitzpatrick didn’t come back, and former starter Geno Smith and second-year quarterback Bryce Petty were believed to be among those options. New York also drafted former Penn State star Christian Hackenberg in the second round, but he is viewed more as a project for this season.

In the end, though, New York has the quarterback who nearly led them to the playoffs last season

back under center.

A strong market for Fitzpatrick never developed as age, previous performance and the fact he has never reached the playoffs in 11 NFL seasons all likely played roles.

With the first postseason spot of his career on the line in the regular-season finale at Buffalo, Fitzpatrick struggled while throwing interceptions on each of New York’s final three drives in a 22-17 loss. The Jets finished 10-6 and missed the playoffs, but Fitzpatrick established himself as a leader on and off the field in New York.

Barring injury or an unforeseen situation, it appears Fitzpatrick will be under center against Cincinnati in Week 1 on Sept. 11.

Fitzpatrick has thrown for 23,178 yards with 154 touchdowns and 116 interceptions in 11 NFL seasons. A seventh-round draft pick by St. Louis out of Harvard in 2005, he has also played for Cincinnati (2007-08), Buffalo (2009-12), Tennessee (2013) and Houston (2014).

MARINERS: Off day Thursday before 3-game series with Cubs on Friday

Continued from 1B

on the Pirates’ all-time list.

McCutchen, who also doubled, had gone 4 for 29 with eight strikeouts in his previous seven games, dropping the 2013 NL MVP’s batting average to .241.

“I felt something (good), that’s for sure,” McCutchen said. “I’m just going to stick with this and keep going. It was a good day for me as far as the feel goes, and had the results with it. Hopefully, it can propel me into these last couple of months of the season.”

McCutchen and Jung Ho Kang, who hit a three-run double to finish a four-run seventh inning, each had



AP Photo/Gene J. Puskar

Seattle Mariners’ Robinson Cano is hit by a pitch from Pittsburgh Pirates starting pitcher Gerrit Cole during the first inning of Wednesday’s game in Pittsburgh.

four RBIs to help the Pirates win for the sixth time in nine games. Jordy Mercer

also had three of the Pirates’ 14 hits and David Freese and Starling Marte added

two each as the top four in the order went a combined 10 for 17.

Kang greeted reliever Nathan Karns with his double that pushed the Pirates’ lead to 7-1.

Kang also earlier hit a sacrifice fly off James Paxton (3-5) to finish a three-run third inning that broke a scoreless tie.

Paxton gave up three runs and six hits in five innings, striking out six and walking one.

Drew Storen made his Mariners debut and was charged with four runs in a 1 1/3 innings a night after being acquired from the Toronto Blue Jays in a trade for fellow reliever Joaquin

Benoit.

Norichika Aoki hit a pair of doubles and scored the Mariners’ lone run in the sixth inning on Robinson Cano’s sacrifice fly. Seattle had won five of its previous seven games.

“Cole threw the ball really well,” Mariners manager Scott Servais said. “Tip your hat to him.”

TRAINER’S ROOM

Mariners: DH/OF Nelson Cruz was not in the lineup after fouling a ball off his left foot Tuesday night, though manager Scott Servais said he held the slugger out primarily because the designated hitter rule was not in effect in an NL park. ... RHP Taijuan

Walker (right foot tendinitis) pitched a three-inning simulated game Wednesday, the first time he had faced hitters since going on the disabled list July 6, and will likely make a minor league rehab start this weekend.

... RHP Nick Vincent (mid-back strain), on the DL since June 27, will throw off a mound for the first time Friday since being injured and is likely to go on a rehab assignment next week.

UP NEXT

Mariners: Open a three-game series against the Cubs at Chicago on Friday with RHP Hisashi Iwakuma (11-6, 3.96 ERA) facing veteran LHP Jon Lester (10-4, 3.09).

SCOREBOARD

Baseball

MLB				
AMERICAN LEAGUE				
East Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Baltimore	58	42	.580	—
Toronto	57	45	.559	2
Boston	55	44	.556	2½
New York	52	49	.515	6
Chicago	39	61	.390	19
Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Cleveland	57	42	.576	—
Detroit	54	48	.529	4½
Chicago	50	51	.495	8
Kansas City	49	51	.490	8½
Minnesota	37	63	.370	20½
West Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Texas	58	44	.569	—
Houston	55	46	.545	2½
Seattle	51	49	.510	6
Oakland	47	55	.461	11
Los Angeles	45	56	.446	12½
Wednesday’s Games				
Washington 4, Cleveland 1				
San Diego 8, Toronto 4				
Detroit 4, Boston 3				
Tampa Bay 3, L.A. Dodgers 1				
Colorado 3, Baltimore 1				
Pittsburgh 10, Seattle 1				
Oakland Cubs 8, Chicago White Sox 1				
Oakland 6, Texas 4				
Houston 4, N.Y. Yankees 1				
Kansas City 7, L.A. Angels 5				
Thursday’s Games				
Baltimore (Jennings 5-9) at Minnesota				
(Gibson 3-6), 4:10 p.m.				
Chicago White Sox (Sale 14-3) at Chicago				
Cubs (Lackey 7-7), 5:05 p.m.				
Kansas City (Ventura 6-8) at Texas				
(Hamels 11-2), 5:05 p.m.				
Boston (Price 9-7) at L.A. Angels (Weaver				

8-8), 7:05 p.m.

NATIONAL LEAGUE

East Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Washington	59	42	.584	—
Miami	55	46	.545	4
New York	53	47	.530	5½
Philadelphia	46	57	.447	14
Atlanta	35	66	.347	24
Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Chicago	60	40	.600	—
St. Louis	54	47	.535	6½
Pittsburgh	52	48	.520	8
Milwaukee	43	56	.434	16½
Cincinnati	40	61	.396	20½
West Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
San Francisco	59	42	.584	—
Los Angeles	57	45	.559	2½
Colorado	49	52	.485	10
San Diego	44	58	.431	15½
Arizona	42	59	.416	17
Wednesday’s Games				
Miami 11, Philadelphia 1				
Washington 4, Cleveland 1				
San Diego 8, Toronto 4				
Tampa Bay 3, L.A. Dodgers 1				
Cincinnati 2, San Francisco 1				
Colorado 3, Baltimore 1				
Pittsburgh 10, Seattle 1				
St. Louis 5, N.Y. Mets 4				
Chicago Cubs 8, Chicago White Sox 1				
Arizona 8, Milwaukee 1				
Atlanta 9, Minnesota 7				
Thursday’s Games				
Colorado (Anderson 3-3) at N.Y. Mets				
(deGrom 6-5), 10:10 a.m.				
Arizona (Play 5-9) at Milwaukee (Davies				
7-4), 11:10 a.m.				
Philadelphia (Nola 5-9) at Atlanta (Wisler				
4-10), 4:10 p.m.				
St. Louis (Wacha 5-7) at Miami (Fernandez				

12-4), 4:10 p.m.

Chicago White Sox (Sale 14-3) at Chicago
Cubs (Lackey 7-7), 5:05 p.m.

Washington (Roark 9-6) at San Francisco
(Cuetto 13-2), 7:15 p.m.

MLB

NORTHWEST LEAGUE

North Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Spokane (Rangers)21	19	525	—	
Everett (Mariners) 20	20	500	1	
Tri-City (Padres) 19	21	475	2	
Vancouver (Blue Jays) 16	24	400	5	

South Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Eugene (Cubs) 29	11	725	—	
Hillsboro (Diamondbacks)21	19	525	8	
Salem-Keizer (Giants) 18	22	450	11	
Boise (Rockies) 16	24	400	13	

Wednesday's Games

Everett 6, Vancouver 5

Spokane 7, Tri-City 5

Hillsboro 4, Boise 0

Eugene 4, Salem-Keizer 1

Thursday's Games

Tri-City at Spokane, 6:30 p.m.

Boise at Hillsboro, 7:05 p.m.

Salem-Keizer at Eugene, 7:05 p.m.

Vancouver at Everett, 7:05 p.m.

Soccer

MLS						
EASTERN CONFERENCE						
	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
NYC FC	9	7	6	33	35	39
New York	9	9	4	31	36	28
Philadelphia	8	7	6	30	35	33
Montreal	7	5	8	29	35	30
Toronto FC	7	7	6	27	25	23
New England	6	7	8	26	27	33
Oakland City	4	5	11	23	32	35
D.C. United	5	8	7	22	19	25

Columbus	3	7	10	19	26	32
Chicago	4	10	5	17	17	25
WESTERN CONFERENCE						
	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
FC Dallas	12	6	5	41	35	31
Colorado	10	2	8	38	23	14
Los Angeles	9	3	8	35	34	19
Sporting KC	9	10	4	31	27	25
Real Salt Lake	8	6	7	31	30	31
Vancouver	8	8	6	30	33	35
Portland	7	7	8	29	33	33
San Jose	6	6	8	26	22	23
Seattle	6	12	2	20	20	27
Houston	4	9	7	19	23	26
NOTE: Three points for victory, one point for tie.						
Saturday's Game						
Colorado at New York City FC, Noon						
Sunday's Games						
Portland at Sporting Kansas City, 11 a.m.						
Los Angeles at Seattle, 1 p.m.						
Vancouver at FC Dallas, 3 p.m.						
Montreal at D.C. United, 3:30 p.m.						
New York at Chicago, 4 p.m.						
Real Salt Lake at Philadelphia, 4 p.m.						
Columbus at Toronto FC, 4:30 p.m.						
New England at Orlando City, 4:30 p.m.						