

Biggest takeaways from new head coach introductory press conferences

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Following Klint Kubiak’s reported hiring by the Las Vegas Raiders, all 10 open NFL head coaching positions have been filled.

As the new coaches are introduced to fans and media, here are four of the biggest takeaways from initial press conferences from this head coaching cycle.

Saleh switches up play calling approach

The lessons new Titans head coach Robert Saleh learned from his failed stint as New York Jets head coach are becoming clear from the start in Tennessee.

“I didn’t call plays in New York and I just kind of gave it all to the coordinators,” Saleh said in his press conference on Jan. 29.

The second-time head coach went 20-36 in his first head coaching stint with the New York Jets from 2021 to 2024. Current Atlanta Falcons Defensive Coordinator Jeff Ulbrich called plays for his entire tenure.

“I joke with [General Manager Mike Borgonzi], on game day when I didn’t call plays, I felt like I was just the time out and red flag guy,” Saleh said, adding that he had the greatest seat in the house for a fan.

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Following his ouster from the Jets, Saleh returned to San Francisco under HC Kyle Shanahan for a second run as 49ers DC. The 49ers were a middle of the pack defense by measure of yards allowed in 2025 but were without defensive linchpins Nick Bosa and Fred Warner for much of the season.

The Titans, who were bottom five in points allowed, bring in a well-respected play caller in Saleh who will help run the defense with help from the new DC, veteran Gus Bradley.

“To be able to call plays and maintain that connection, maintain that feel for what the players are going through, I think is very very important in my seat,” Saleh said.

Potential McCarthy-Rodgers reunion

One of the first questions asked to new Steelers Head Coach Mike McCarthy during his introductory press conference on Jan. 27 pertained to the status of future Hall of Fame quarterback Aaron Rodgers.

“Definitely, I mean I don’t see why you wouldn’t,” McCarthy said when asked if he wanted Rodgers to return in his personal best-case scenario.

While McCarthy has garnered a reputation for developing young QBs, the only such option on Pittsburgh’s current roster would be former sixth rounder Wil Howard.

McCarthy oversaw Rodgers’ development with the Green Bay Packers, winning a Superbowl and coaching Rodgers to two Most Valuable Player awards.

Players awards. The 13-year-partnership seemingly ended with McCarthy’s firing following the 2018 season, but the possibility of a reunion may have been one of the reasons McCarthy landed a third head coaching gig.

“I watched most of the Pittsburgh games on TV, and I thought he was a great asset for the team,” McCarthy said.

After throwing for 3322 yards and 24 touchdowns in 2025, Rodgers had interest in returning to the Steelers under former HC Mike Tomlin before his resignation, according to Ian Rapoport of NFL Network.

The team has reportedly given Rodgers a one-month deadline on making the decision to return, according to Jeff Hathorn of 93.7 The Fan. However, McCarthy understands Rodgers’ need for patience on deciding.

“When guys are up at that stage of their career, they need to step away and decompress,” McCarthy said. “I think that’s very important. The game is so emotional.”

DC dispute in Cleveland

Former Baltimore Ravens OC Todd Monken won out in the Browns HC search, leaving a sour taste in the mouth of incumbent DC and fellow finalist Jim Schwartz.

Schwartz reportedly wants out of his contract with the Browns, according to NFL Network’s Ian Rapoport. Monken was asked multiple questions regarding Schwartz’s status during his press introduction on Feb. 3., and while the first-time head coach said that he’s spoken to Schwartz, he did little to point

towards a return for Schwartz.

“I didn’t take the job because of Jim Schwartz,” Monken said. “I have a lot of respect for Jim Schwartz as I would hope he has for me. But I took it because of the players that are here, the ownership, [GM] Andrew Berry and the ability to build this roster from the ground up on the offensive side.”

Monken repeatedly emphasized the players, noting that the scheme will remain the same regardless of who is calling plays.

“When I was preparing for the Cleveland Browns, I wasn’t trying to chip Jim Schwartz,” Monken said. “I was chipping Myles Garrett.”

Current Browns defenders, such as superstar Garrett and five-time Probowler Denzel Ward, have called for Schwartz to be retained.

The Browns defense allowed the fourth-least yards in 2025, with Garrett breaking the single-season sack record.

Should Schwartz be allowed to explore other opportunities, options may be limited save for a demotion. The Raiders own the lone DC vacancy remaining.

Retroactive New York OC search indicator

John Harbaugh credited football figures ranging from his father, Jack, to Ravens ownership in his opening press conference on Jan. 20.

Amongst those names was Andy Reid, whom Harbaugh coached under with the Philadelphia Eagles from 1998 through 2007.

“Andy’s a man of few words, and his four

words to me were ‘change can be good,’” Harbaugh said.

While that comment signaled nothing more at the time than an appreciation of a former mentor who had previously walked a similar path, it stands out more following the hiring of former Chiefs Offensive Coordinator Matt Nagy as Giants OC on Tuesday.

Following his firing as Chicago Bears head coach, Nagy spent the four seasons with the Chiefs in his second stretch under Reid, serving three as OC.

The Chiefs let Nagy walk in favor of bringing back another old friend in Eric Bieniemy for his second run as OC. Despite the parting of ways, it seems Reid and Nagy remain on good terms.

“Matt and I have a great relationship,” Reid said in a press conference on Jan. 26 following Bieniemy’s hire. “Before the season even started here, I knew that he wanted an opportunity to have his own show.”

Nagy will receive that opportunity with the Giants, along with a chance to spearhead the development of second-year QB Jaxson Dart.

Considering the ties between Harbaugh and Reid, along with Reid’s campaigning for Nagy, it wouldn’t be a surprise if Reid was in Harbaugh’s ear about Nagy during the Giants’ OC search.

LATO'S LENS:

The best uniform combinations of the 2025 college football season

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Many people agree that college football is more than a game. It’s pageantry, it’s tradition, it’s everything for thousands of Americans. But when I think of college football, one of the first things that comes to mind is the swagger aspect — or, in Gen Z slang — “the drip.”

Someone once said, “look good, feel good, play good,” and that’s exactly what brands like Nike, Adidas and Under Armour have done this past season. Collectively, they’ve put together hundreds of different uniform combinations, painting the screens of viewers like Picasso every Saturday.

So this week, Lato’s Lens is taking a different route. Instead of being stats-centric, here are some of my favorite uniform combinations from the 2025 college football season (in no specific order, of course).

Ole Miss: Home Powder Blue-on-White with Blue Helmets

You can never go wrong with powder blue. We’ve seen it with the Philadelphia Phillies in their iconic jerseys dating back to 1972 — you just cannot quite go wrong with powder blue. Combine Nike powder blue jerseys, white pants, powder blue helmets and the script “Ole Miss” decal, and you have a look that’s almost too sharp and clean.

Oregon: Eggshell

Due to the school’s proximity to Nike’s headquarters in Eugene, Ore., the University of Oregon football team churns out a different uniform combination every week.

One of their best, in my opinion, came in their Week Five

matchup against Penn State, where they went on the road and took down the No. 3 Nitany Lions in overtime. The Ducks marched onto the field in grey jerseys covered with black speckles to replicate a duck eggshell. They were complemented by matte-black helmets with silver wing decals and black pants, creating the ultimate alternate uniform combination for a highly anticipated matchup.

Indiana: Home Crimson-on-White

It didn’t dawn on me that the Indiana Hoosiers had good-looking uniforms until their national championship matchup against Miami.

Though I’m not a huge fan of Adidas uniforms, their home crimson jerseys combined with white pants created a very clean silhouette. I also liked their matte-crimson helmets with two white stripes running down the middle, adding to the simple yet effective aesthetic.

LSU: Home White-on-Yellow

The LSU Tigers are a unique team. Instead of wearing a traditional home color for their games, they opt to wear only their classic white jerseys, yellow helmets and yellow pants for SEC home matchups in Death Valley. Not only is this another very simple silhouette, but it also makes it instantly recognizable to viewers: if you see their yellow helmets and white jerseys flying around on TV, you know LSU is playing on an SEC Saturday.

Florida: Home Blue-on-Orange

Though artists might not think it’s true, blue and orange complement each other incredibly well on a college football field — especially for the Flor-

ida Gators. Manufactured by Jordan, their home royal blue jerseys are among the best in college football. The team normally flips between blue, orange, and white pants, but I think their orange pants with a blue-white-blue triple stripe running down the side look the sharpest. Not to mention, the script ‘Gators’ decal on their helmets ties the vibrant look together.

Notre Dame: Home Navy Blue-on-Gold

Notre Dame is another example of a symbolic team wearing symbolic uniforms. Their gold helmets are unique, staying the same for each of their games with no decal whatsoever. Additionally, their Under Armour jerseys and pants mark the epitome of consistency, looking especially flashy when they wear their navy blues with golden pants in South Bend.

Army: 2025 Army-Navy Game Uniforms

The battle between the United States Military Academy and Naval Academy is one of, if not the, most historical football games in America. The matchup commemorates a tradition of service and rivalry, combining for over a century of tradition.

Each academy wears a different uniform for the game every year, each with special significance. This year, the Army commemorated its 250th anniversary with an all-white uniform combination with silver helmets. The backs of their jerseys read “United States Army” in a constitution-like font, with purple lining the outside of their numbers, signifying the sacrifice made by soldiers who have earned a Purple Heart. Not only do these uniforms carry much honor and signifi-

cance, but they also look fantastic.

Nebraska: Black-on-Black

Nobody looked better on Nov. 1 than the Nebraska Cornhuskers. Normally wearing their traditional red jerseys with white pants at home, they decided to change things up by

wearing black jerseys, black pants and white helmets in their Big Ten matchup against USC. Their jerseys and pants were lined with white stripes on the shoulders and pants, finishing the alternate uniform look.



Quinshon Judkins of the Ole Miss Rebels celebrates during his game. The football team’s uniform features a vibrant powder blue with blue helmets to match.
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