Colin Kaepernick again didn’t stand during the national anthem. He wasn’t alone this time.
Source: Bryan Flaherty/The Washington Post/September 1, 2016

Colin Kaepernick didn’t take a seat for the national anthem Thursday night, but he wasn’t standing either. The San Francisco 49ers quarterback chose to kneel while the anthem played, and this time he wasn’t alone.

San Francisco safety Eric Reid, a fourth-year player out of LSU, also took a knee on the sideline in San Diego, joining Kaepernick in a show of support for the quarterback’s protest as the crowd booed ahead of the preseason finale between the 49ers and Chargers, a game won by San Francisco, 31-21.

It was the fourth time in four games Kaepernick did not stand during the anthem, although Thursday’s game was under a larger magnifying glass after comments he made following last Friday’s game that drew the ire of many and sparked a heated national debate. (He was not in uniform for the first two games.)

“I am not going to stand up to show pride in a flag for a country that oppresses black people and people of color,” Kaepernick told NFL Media after last Friday’s game against the Green Bay Packers. “To me, this is bigger than football and it would be selfish on my part to look the other way. There are bodies in the street and people getting paid leave and getting away with murder.”

It wasn’t just the two San Francisco players choosing not to stand this week. Seattle cornerback Jeremy Lane also remained sitting during the playing of the anthem in Oakland, although it has not been confirmed if his actions were in solidarity with Kaepernick or for other reasons.

In San Diego, Thursday’s game was “Military Night,” and it was noted that Kaepernick applauded when veterans were recognized in the stands and Lee Greenwood’s “God Bless the USA” played.

Kaepernick has said his criticism is not directed at members of the armed forces and has said he has “great respect for the men and women that have fought for this country.” Some veterans expressed their support of Kaepernick.
Kaepernick said last Sunday he would continue sitting during the playing of the anthem. “Yes, I'll continue to sit,” Kaepernick said then. “I’m going to continue to stand with the people that are being oppressed. To me this is something that has to change. When there’s significant change and I feel like that flag represents what it’s supposed to represent, this country is representing people the way that it’s supposed to, I'll stand.”

The 49ers haven’t directly addressed Kaepernick’s activism, but did release the following statement after last Friday’s game.

“The national anthem is and always will be a special part of the pre-game ceremony. It is an opportunity to honor our country and reflect on the great liberties we are afforded as its citizens,” the statement (via NFL.com) reads. “In respecting such American principles as freedom of religion and freedom of expression, we recognize the right of an individual to choose and participate, or not, in our celebration of the national anthem.”

Kaepernick started Thursday’s game.

After the game, he pledged to donate $1 million to charities that support racial equality. “I plan to take it a step further,” Kaepernick said, per CSN Bay Area’s Matt Maiocco. “I’m currently working with organizations to be involved and making sure I’m actively in these communities, as well as, donating the first million dollars I make this season to different organizations to help these communities and help these people.”

Police union: Officers may boycott 49ers over Colin Kaepernick
Source: Chicago Tribune/September 2, 2016

The union for police officers who work San Francisco home games says its members may boycott policing the stadium if the 49ers don't discipline Colin Kaepernick for refusing to stand during the national anthem and for his statements about law enforcement.

A letter from the Santa Clara Police Officers Association sent to the 49ers was obtained Friday by KNTV-TV, the NBC affiliate in San Jose.

It says that Kaepernick's protest has "threatened our harmonious working relationship" with the 49ers. About 70 officers from the Santa Clara Police Department patrol Levi's Stadium when the 49ers play there.

"If the 49ers organization fails to take action to stop this type of inappropriate behavior it could result in police officers choosing not to work at your facilities," the letter reads. "The board of directors of the Santa Clara Police Officer's Association has a duty to protect its members and work to make all of their working environments free of harassing behavior."

It also criticized what it called anti-police statements made by Kaepernick, calling them "insulting, inaccurate and completely unsupported by any facts."

It's the latest in the flurry of heated responses — both negative and positive — that Kaepernick has gotten since his silent protest became the talk of the NFL and much of the nation last week.
The quarterback has refused to stand for the anthem at the team's preseason games, most recently taking a knee a game in San Diego on Thursday night, to some boos from the crowd.

He has cited racial injustice and police brutality among the many reasons for his protest.

"The message is that we have a lot of issues in this country that we need to deal with," Kaepernick said after Thursday night's game.

Teammate Eric Reid joined him in the most recent protest and Seattle Seahawks cornerback Jeremy Lane showed his support for Kaepernick by sitting on the bench during the anthem in Oakland on Thursday.

Kaepernick has said he plans to continue into the regular season.

While negative reactions have been strong, Kaepernick also has been widely praised for his commitment to his stance. Veterans and military members tweeted their support for Kaepernick in recent days under the hashtag "VeteransForKaepernick."

The team reiterated Friday night that it stands behind Kaepernick and respects his right not to participate in celebrating the national anthem.

**Chip Kelly decides on Blaine Gabbert as 49ers' starting QB**

Source: Nick Wagoner/ESPN/September 3, 2016

On a day when the San Francisco 49ers joined the rest of the NFL in trimming their roster to 53 players, coach Chip Kelly also announced that Blaine Gabbert will be his starting quarterback.

In addition, Kelly made it clear that Colin Kaepernick will be No. 2 behind Gabbert and veteran Christian Ponder will be the team's third quarterback when the Niners open the season Sept. 12 against the Los Angeles Rams on Monday Night Football.

"Right now, I have met with our quarterbacks. Blaine is No. 1 and he'll start versus the Rams, and Kap is No. 2," Kelly said. "We'll only have two guys up [at quarterback] on game day."

It was always going to be an uphill climb for Kaepernick to win the job after he fell behind Gabbert in the spring because he was unable to practice as he recovered from thumb, knee and shoulder injuries. That allowed Gabbert to take the bulk of the snaps with the starters during organized team activities.

At the beginning of training camp, Kelly said there'd still be a competition between Gabbert and Kaepernick for the starting job. They split the first-team repetitions in the opening days of camp before right-shoulder tightness kept Kaepernick out of the first two preseason games and joint practices with the Denver Broncos and Houston Texans.

In preseason games, Gabbert led the 49ers to touchdowns on three of his eight possessions as he went 12-of-22 for 146 yards and a TD for a passer rating of 90.3. He also rushed for 33 yards on five carries. Kaepernick was 13-of-24 for 117 yards for a passer rating of 67.5 and led one
touchdown drive. He rushed for 56 yards on eight carries.

Ultimately, Gabbert's ability to stay healthy and get valuable reps in Kelly's offense gave him the edge.

"I think his grasp and command of what we're doing, I think he's a good fit for what we want to get accomplished," Kelly said. "I have a lot of confidence in what he can do with us offensively.

"I think Kap is still coming off of getting himself healthy, 100 percent go. He has been cleared to play, but he still knows he's got some work to do. He's not up to his playing weight that he was when he was successful here, and he'll continue to work on that. He missed a couple weeks there with the arm [soreness] and that set him back a little bit in terms of his ability to compete for it, but the timetable was the timetable and right now we feel like Blaine is the starter."

Despite some outside discussion about whether Kaepernick would stick on the roster, Kelly said the plan all along was for the team to keep three quarterbacks. Last week, he said Kaepernick was one of the two best quarterbacks on the roster, and Kaepernick followed that up with a solid performance in the preseason finale.

Kaepernick's recent decision to sit or kneel during the national anthem in protest of racial oppression did not play a factor in the decision to keep him or make him No. 2 on the depth chart, Kelly said.

Kaepernick has said his protest is not meant to denigrate police, military or the country, but rather serves as his way of bringing attention to what he sees are failings in the United States.

Asked whether he had concerns about Kaepernick potentially dividing the team, Kelly stuck by the answer he's given the other times he's been asked similar questions.

"When he's here at 4900 (Marie P. DeBartolo Way), he's all about football and all about work, and that's what I've seen since he's been here," Kelly said. "He continues to display that every day he's in this building.

"How he's handled himself and how he's been with us, I have no issues with Kap at all."

In keeping Ponder, the 49ers have three quarterbacks taken in the first 36 picks of the 2011 NFL draft. Ponder signed with the 49ers after Thad Lewis suffered a season-ending knee injury in the preseason opener Aug. 14.

When the Niners called, Ponder said he had been painting his house, among other household chores. But Ponder acclimated quickly and won a spot.

"I think you need to have three [quarterbacks] in this league with the injury rate of quarterbacks," Kelly said. "I have never been comfortable with keeping two. I think you need to have three, and I think Christian's performance, coming in on a short week against Denver and how he played there and the performance of how he played last Thursday night against San Diego, gave him the opportunity to earn the No. 3 spot."
T – What is the topic of these articles?

A – Who are the authors of the articles? (Hint: There are two.)

R – Who would want to read these articles? Why?

P – What is the purpose/point of the articles?

S – Summarize each article using 7 words.

Write a 1+ page reflection in your “AoW” section of your Writer’s Notebook one of the following prompts:

• What do you think about Kaepernick’s opinion and protest? Do you support him? Why or why not?

• What do you make of the police union’s stance on working 49ers games? Do you think they have a right to be offended or are they overreacting? Why?

• Do you think the decision to have Kaepernick as backup quarterback is because of his injuries/current performance or because of his viewpoint on not standing for the national anthem? Why?

AoW Article Rubric

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<th>Annotations</th>
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