



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Assistant Head Coach/Special Teams Coordinator Rich Bisaccia

Q: Is there any difference between Daniel Carlson now and a year ago?

Bisaccia: "I think he's stronger and I think he knows himself a little bit better than he did when we first got him last year. He's done a lot of work on himself. I think he's stronger. I think, mentally, he knows himself a little bit better."

Q: Do you have to monitor how many kicks he gets?

Bisaccia: "We've always done that, so he's going to kick every other day. There shouldn't be a situation, there could be possibly one in training camp, that he goes two days in a row, but right now he's going every other day. Usually it's not more than 15-17 graded snaps in the set before the team set. Usually a team set is around five or six."

Q: Are you alternating punters?

Bisaccia: "It was [A.J.] Cole's day today. A.J.'s day today. Tomorrow we will have a nine-play punt script. It will be Johnny's [Townsend] day tomorrow, so we are trying to get both those guys two days each before we get to our next day off."

Q: What have you seen from Cole that has him out there and do you think he has a chance to be in a real competition?

Bisaccia: "Well, he has a tremendous leg. He has a natural hang to him, kind of even on his bad ball he can kind of get away with it. He's a high-hit guy on his contact on the ball and he's really improved his holding as he's come along. And he can kickoff, so it gives us a little bit of an advantage that way with having the ability to have two guys that can kickoff through preseason."

Q: Was there an area that stood out with Cole that had you choose him and let Drew Kaser go?

Bisaccia: "We like what A.J. did in college. He had a good college career and he was asked to roll out some and be a conventional punter some and then when he came here, we just felt like he had more control, had more hang over the other guy that was here and we kept him. So, we were only going to take two to training camp."

Q: What are the keys when you are evaluating a long snapper?

Bisaccia: "There's so many things. Everything from where are the laces on the catch on the short snaps and their ability to protect the A-gap, and as far as the B-gap, in the punt protection sets. And the ability to have any kind of awareness as to when the front changes and can he redirect on those things. They both played in games. Trent [Sieg] has played in 15 and Andrew [DePaola] has been playing a long time, so it's a good competition right now. They are both in great shape. We are glad Andrew is healthy, so we are going to rotate those guys all through training camp as well."

Q: How much do you see holding factor in to who wins the punting job?

Bisaccia: "Well, I think holding is a factor for anyone that has to hold. So, we are looking at both of those guys to be the holder, whichever one wins the job. Johnny is a tremendous holder, a tremendous athlete, great eye-hand coordination. And A.J. has really played well. He had two really good holds the day before yesterday and he had another good day today, so he is improving as well."



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Q: How did you feel about Townsend's offseason?

Bisaccia: "I thought he had a good offseason. I had a chance to be with him a bunch, certainly at our facility. I thought he had a good offseason. I thought he got his direction back and that's really what he's best at, so we will see as training camp goes but I thought he hit it okay the other day. I know he can hit it better than that."

Q: What impressions have the rookies made on you in special teams thus far? Players such as Isaiah Johnson?

Bisaccia: "Well I think probably, you know, without speaking of Isaiah specifically, I think to answer your question, with this whole class, I know as a staff we are all excited about this class. We really think they all like football and for the most part, the majority of them have the ability to play different phases for us in teams. And then for Isaiah, we're excited about him. He kind of missed the end of OTAs and minicamp. He had a little bit of a knick knack. I think he's back in full speed. He has been impressive in the full speed competition both out there at flyer and flipping around at the corner position."

Q: General Manager Mike Mayock says he has known you for over 30 years and you have obviously known Head Coach Jon Gruden for a long time. What do you make of their dynamic as far as the way they feed off each other? They are all football all the time.

Bisaccia: "Yeah, well Mike and I know each other from the late '70s when we used to work Joe Namath Football Camp together. But, I think the thing about those two is they worked together way back when they were doing the draft deal together. So, they developed a mutual respectful relationship about personnel and how to view it. There's not a lot of people that can have great football conversation with Coach Gruden. I think Mike and him developed that relationship that had to do with respect of each other's opinion before Mike ever got here. And now certainly, they're in constant communication, constant conversation about everything personnel, different techniques we're using and all of those things. Mike is a football guy, his dad was a high school coach, long time coach, Coach Gruden is a football guy, his dad was a coach for a long time. So, I think they have a lot of commonalities."

Q: Is there a pitch you could make in a crunch-time situation where Antonio Brown could return a punt?

Bisaccia: "You know, I think when Antonio certainly comes back to practice we're going to get him back catching and put him in a situation where hopefully he's in a backup role or who knows, there could be two guys back there together. A lot of different things can happen. I know he didn't return last year and I've played against him when he was the return guy. He's certainly capable of doing that. But, our intention is certainly to use him on offense and have a guy return and him possibly be the backup."

Q: How valuable in a special teams sense are the practices against the Los Angeles Rams?

Bisaccia: "Yeah, well I think we're going to do punt both days and field goal one day for sure. I'd rather not kick Daniel [Carlson] two in a row. So, I think especially for the guys that may not play in the game on special teams on that night, to practice against them will be physical and it will be live reps and [special teams coordinator John] Coach Fassel and I will be able to work out some looks that we would like to see that we know we're not going to see in the preseason game. So, for the guys that are not going to play in the game, they'll get good, physical looks that we may not get throughout the preseason."

Q: Have you known Fassel for a long time?



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Bisaccia: "I have, I have. He was here as a Raider one time. I was at San Diego and we played against each other. He does a tremendous job as a coach and he's really a good person."

Q: Are you confident your punter is on the roster?

Bisaccia: "We're going to have a punter on the roster, I'm real confident about that."

Q: Could it be someone who is not on the roster now?

Bisaccia: "I don't have a crystal ball, I don't have the answer to that. I'm hoping it's one of these two guys. I feel like we have a good competition going right now."

S Lamarcus Joyner

Q: Can you talk about your responsibilities in defensive coordinator Paul Guenther's defense?

Joyner: "It's pretty much similar, just different terminology. Cover 4 is cover 4, landmarks is landmarks. It's just getting the terminology and the communication with some of the guys here down pat, but it's pretty much the same."

Q: What have been your impressions of Hunter Renfrow so far?

Joyner: "It's been awesome. We've been counting the reps. He came up to me the other day and was like, 'We're 2-1.' He was winning, so I was like, 'I hate to break it to you, you're not catching any more balls.' It's been going great. It's been friendly competition. He's here because he's a great route runner. He's very smart and intelligent. He's going to get me ready for Sunday and I'm going to get him ready for Sunday. We've been competing that way."

Q: Does he look like a guy that can step in and produce in the NFL?

Joyner: "Oh absolutely. Absolutely. Like [Head] Coach [Jon] Gruden said and I feel the same thing, if you can beat me than you can beat any nickel in this league. He's been getting it done and I've been competing with him. He's going to be Sunday-ready when it's time to go."

Q: What makes Renfrow an affective route runner?

Joyner: "Understanding leverage. Just understanding how to get a receiver to fear that he's going vertical or going out and able to stop on a dime and come back in real quick. He's a very prestigious route runner and I think that's his game."

Q: It seemed like the first day he was making a couple of catches on you, but recently not as many. Was it just getting used to the way he plays?

Joyner: "I think it was Coach Gruden and [offensive coordinator] Coach Olson teasing me. They came over and said, 'Hey, we told you to help mentor the guy, not get your butt kicked.' I'm like, 'Woah, woah, slow your roll.' I was like, 'You just opened up a can of worms there.' So it's been competition. My mindset with him has been Sunday, game on the line, it's third down. I have to approach that with him because he's a very great route runner."

Q: When you play defense against the slot, do you rely on instinct a lot?



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Joyner: "I'm a whole believer in there's no ability advantage in the league. Everybody is equal. He can go out there and tear me up. I can go out there and tear him up. With him being instinctive I have to know what routes are coming, what route tree can he possible run. Because if I go out there and try to cover Renfrow just 1-on-1 like a chicken with my head cut off covering the whole route tree, I have now chance. So three-by-one, two-by-two, I have to understand what kind of routes are coming and take my chances from there."

Q: It seems like every young guy that takes the podium tells us how you are mentoring all the younger guys on the team. What's that role like?

Joyner: "I just love the guys here. They recognize my accomplishments as a good football player. I don't look at myself as anything great. I'm still trying to become great. I have seen and I know a lot. My biggest goal while I'm here is to pour out myself for the guys around me so we can be a great defense. Selfless, all about my guys."

Q: How eager are you looking forward to when the Rams come here to practice?

Joyner: "Oh that's just a another practice to us. That's just another way for us to get to Monday Night, that opener. Just one day at a time, one practice at a time. That's going to be great competition. I mean it's not a game. It's nothing to really look forward to other than to get more work and to get that competitive adrenaline rush while another team is in here. That's all it is."

Q: You've focused a lot on the slot, but you've done so much safety work in your past. Do you feel like you could go back to that in a pinch if you need to?

Joyner: "It's something I've been doing all my life. It's almost like Renfrow said, that's something that's instinctual. You need me at free safety? I've played it all my life. I've played it in the NFL at a high level and I can go do it here. But Johnathan Abram and Karl Joseph have to get their reps so they can be great. Those are going to be two great, young safeties. I'm just here to know my role and be the best I can at that and help the guys around me."

Q: Does the slot in this scheme still have safety responsibilities?

Joyner: "Oh yeah, it does. Coach Guenther does a really good job with moving the nickelback around at safety, outside, inside. It's going to be a special year for the secondary. We just haven't shown it yet. We're just going through the bases, but it's going to be a lot of fun for this secondary."

Q: What have you seen from Gareon Conley so far?

Joyner: "From what I heard and from what I've seen now that I'm witnessing is the spirit. It's all about the spirit. Guys are having great vibes around here and it's keeping Gareon going. Obviously, hands down, he might be the most talented DB we have. If you add that work ethic and that spirit that he has, the positivity that he's coming to work with every day, we have something special on the outside. We just have to keep him going."

Q: Gruden said he's always trying to look under the hood with Conley because he's so laid back.

Joyner: "Right. He's coming out of his shell though and I love it. I love it. He's dancing around. He's joking around. Karl Joseph is the same way. Positive energy. Man, we're going to be a special DB unit this year."

Q: On Tuesday when Antonio Brown had his most action in practice so far, you were the only DB that could keep up with him and knock a ball down. Can you run through exactly what happened on that play?

Joyner: "I mean Antonio Brown is one of those guys...It's like Sunday, every rep against him and Renfrow is Sunday. You know that if he's out there, the ball is coming to him. So I just locked in and I just competed because if you



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don't compete with Antonio, he's going to embarrass you and he's going to rub it in your face. I didn't feel like having a down practice that day. I didn't want to see him dancing with the stars (*laughing*). So I had to compete."

Q: It seems like afterwards you were rubbing it in his face a little. What was that conversation like if you remember?

Joyner: "Brotherly love, brotherly love. He's like that extra...when you're grilling, that extra fire barbeque pit. What you need to bring the juice to make it that 400 degrees. When he's out here, we're on fire. We need him. He's that extra gas that you need in that science experiment that's going to help get things boiling. That's what he does. When he's out here, everybody is on fire because we know if you're not on fire he's going to set you on fire. So you have to be ready."

Q: Has this been the first time in your career where you've been exclusively slot?

Joyner: "No, with the Rams for three years I was exclusively slot. I got reps at corner and safety, but it was mostly slot."

Q: I thought there was more safety last year?

Joyner: "The last two years with [Rams Head] Coach [Sean] McVay."

Q: How big of a role has Vontaze Burfict been in terms of communication in this system?

Joyner: "It's Burfict trying to get the best out of me. When you think about a guy like Gareon, he's more a shell guy, but now he's coming out his shell. Me I'm more a lead by example, but now I'm communicating more. Burfict is just trying to get me to do that communication every down and distance so we can become that much faster as a defense. So I have to do a better job and I appreciate the point that he's trying to squeeze that out of me."