



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Offensive Coordinator Greg Olson

Q: What attracted you to coming back and working with Jon Gruden?

Coach Olson: “Well, more than anything, just the opportunity to work for Jon Gruden, number one. We certainly had these conversations since he got away from coaching. If he ever got back into coaching, I knew that he’d be the one guy that I would want to have another opportunity to work with. Even though I only worked for him the one season in Tampa, I think our personalities just meshed. We always kept in contact since that time. I just feel real fortunate now to be back with him. Then the fact that for him to be able to come back to the Raiders, certainly it’s a big deal to him. It’s a big deal to me. Just real excited about both him and the Raiders combined.”

Q: How different does Derek Carr look on tape then when you had him as a rookie?

Coach Olson: “The previous season prior to this year, he had such a big year. He still looked extremely talented again this year. You see the arm talent there. You see the talented player. Took a little, obviously, step backwards, but I just think there’s such a big jump from that Year 1 to Year 2 and he demonstrated that. He’s demonstrated growth throughout his career up until this past season. I just think you can see a more mature player. I think, obviously, his knowledge of the game, you can see that on the tape. His ability to get in and out of bad plays, get the ball out of his hand. Again, I think there’s been tremendous growth since I left him.”

Q: What do you think the next step is in Carr’s growth?

Coach Olson: “Probably more so than anything, this guy has to get some continuity. The fact that they signed Jon Gruden to a 10-year contract, that’s going to provide that stability that he needs and the continuity that he’s going to need. He’s going to be in a system now. He’s going to be coached by a head coach that’s going to be the play caller. He’s completely hands on with the quarterback position, and that’s the first time Derek will have, first time he’s going to have an offensive head coach that has a quarterback background and will be hands on with him on a day-to-day basis. I just see that growth curb skyrocketing because of that. That, coupled with the fact that the guy just signed a 10-year contract, should ease a lot of concerns for Derek.”

Q: Jon Gruden has made it pretty clear that he’s going to be calling the plays. What’s that going to be like and did you factor that at all into taking this job?

Coach Olson: “Not necessarily. Again, to get an opportunity to get back and be with a head coach that I have a tremendous amount of respect for and that I learned a lot from. I would say even my one year with him, I felt like my learning curve greatly increased, just in spending one year’s time with him. This guy is all about football. I think that’s going to jump out at Derek on Day 1 that wow, this guy eat, drinks and sleeps football and eats, drinks and sleeps the quarterback position, understands responsibility of that position to the team and the organization. So there were no reservations on my part. I certainly enjoy the play calling part of being a coordinator, but I also enjoy all of what goes into game planning and that part of that is not going to change, as far as the game planning and the strategizing what’s involved in the coordinator position. More so than anything is just the opportunity to get back with Jon Gruden.”

Q: Did you take anything away from working with Sean McVay and the Rams during your one season there?

Coach Olson: “Certainly. Anytime you get a chance from year to year, the game is constantly evolving, it’s constantly changing. If you don’t change with it as a coach, I think that’s where you get left behind. As you guys know, Sean McVay, his offense is really a derivative of Jon Gruden’s offense and Sean spent a lot of time with Jon Gruden and Jay Gruden, obviously, and spent a lot of time down in Tampa with Jon in the offseason and has worked with Jon before, so much of what Sean was doing were things that he had learned from Jon along the way. Obviously, there’s going to be some things that carry over and they fit because of the fact that they really originated from Jon’s offense and Jay’s offense. They’re going to fit into what Jon wants to do here, so excited about that.”



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Q: Is Marshawn Lynch what you guys are looking for in the starting running back for next season?

Coach Olson: "I think again, only being here a week, we'll sit down with the entire coaching staff once the coaching staff is in place and all in the building and we'll do a thorough job of evaluating the personnel that we have in the building, the personnel that we have on the team. I'd be doing Marshawn a disservice if I were to comment on what I thought of his play this previous season. Until we sit down, like I said, and do a real thorough evaluation and watching every carry that he's had and every catch opportunity to catch the football or run with the football, I really would not be making an educated comment on something like that right now. But once the staff's in, we'll take a look at every position across the board and that's when we'll try to decide where our needs are and where we can get better at."

Q: What excites Coach Gruden the most about Derek Carr and have you talked with Coach Gruden about possibly going more up-tempo with Carr in the offense?

Coach Olson: "Yeah, yeah. Certainly, and again, I had a chance to visit with Jon when I left Oakland about Derek Carr and certainly, he had him when he did his quarterback show. But, I was just so impressed with Derek's football acumen – intelligence, to me, was kind of off the charts. The guys I've been around, I thought he was real talented that way, the mental part of the game. And then physically, his accuracy and his quickness of his release and just a lot of the physical tools there that were special. I think that's probably what enticed Jon as well into taking this job, that there was a young quarterback in place here with a lot of upside and a lot of room for growth. I think that's the challenge that he's looking forward to, how do we get the best version of Derek Carr and how do we get the most out of Derek Carr. That's what drives him every day."

Q: What do you see from the receiving corps and their role in helping the offense overall?

Coach Olson: "Well yeah, you're always looking at the surrounding pieces around the quarterback. You want to build around that quarterback and I think that that's the other thing, again, I think with the hiring of a head coach like Jon Gruden, everything we do in this building is going to be about the development of Derek Carr. The way we script practices, the way we are doing drills, everything that we do is all about the development of the quarterback. That will really speed the development of Derek. More so than anything is that there's somebody here in place that's going to make everything that we do and that everyone in the building understand that we grow as Derek Carr grows. We drafted this guy to be that franchise quarterback. We feel like he has the potential to be that guy that can be here and play for 10 more years. It's up to us to try and get that out of him. We'll do everything in our power to make sure that that happens, from practice to offseason programs, to what we're doing defensively in practice, all those things will be designed to help Derek's growth."

Q: With the amount of experience between you and Jon, are you still considering bringing on a quarterbacks coach?

Coach Olson: "Kind of still in discussion right now to be honest with you. We haven't finalized that. We'll continue to talk about that next week or so, as to how we're going to handle that."

Q: What do you think the value is of the senior bowl, having the staff together in that environment?

Coach Olson: "We're going to determine that this week, who's going to be at the Senior Bowl and who's not. We're still putting the staff together and getting arrangements to where we can all meet up. We really haven't discussed that just yet as far as how we're going to handle the Senior Bowl."