



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Head Coach Jon Gruden

Opening Statement: "Good afternoon. I'll be happy to answer any questions that I can."

Q: Coach, what is it like seeing some familiar faces from ESPN?

Coach Gruden: "It's like pretty weird. I had a lot of fun doing that job. I sure miss them, and I hope we give them a good show to broadcast."

Q: Who gets the green dot, on the helmet, on defense for you guys?

Coach Gruden: "Well, we will go with our middle linebacker. We will go with Derrick Johnson."

Q: Donald [Penn] told us two weeks ago he would hope to be 100 percent comfortable at right tackle by Monday. How do you see his comfort level?

Coach Gruden: "He's fine. I think he's fine. I think he's doing well. He might be one of the few guys in the league that can be considered a top left tackle and a top right tackle. He's got, I think, that interest in doing that right now."

Q: There's been a lot of talk about Derrick Johnson's leadership and he's the captain, but his on field play. What have you seen from him?

Coach Gruden: "We are anxious to see it. We haven't really seen very many of our players play in a game throughout the preseason but we're not the only team that can say that. We are confident, that he can not only lead us, but he can make plays. He's a very good pass defender. He's got a real good recognition for where the football is and he's had a history of making a lot of tackles. Hopefully he can prove that again with us."

Q: Yesterday, you guys announced team captains and we all tweeted out Kyle Wilber is one of them. Fans tweeted out, who's Kyle Wilber? So, who is Kyle Wilber?

Coach Gruden: "He's our special teams captain. *(laughter)* I think I said a few weeks ago, or a couple weeks, that a couple years ago the Raiders had a very good nucleus of special team's players. They had [Andre] Holmes, [Brynden] Trawick and [Daren] Bates. We lost those players and I think special teams suffered last year a little bit. So, we wanted to bring in some core special teams guys. Dwayne Harris who's been in the Pro Bowl and Kyle Wilber who played for [Assistant Head Coach/Special Teams Coach Rich] Bisaccia in Dallas as a force, not only on the coverage teams, but also in protecting the punters. so, he gives us some real leadership and playmaking in that unit. Some people tend to forget that they can help you win games although they are not involved in fantasy football much."

Q: Do you like the intrigue of week one, where they haven't seen what you guys are going to do. They probably have some wrinkles you guys haven't seen. As a coach, do you like that kind of intrigue?

Coach Gruden: "I mean it's intriguing that's for sure. It's crazy. I mean you play four preseason games and you don't see one of their starters play. Not many of our starters played very much. That's universal now around the league I think. It will be a challenge. We are going to have to make some adjustments to what they are doing. I'm sure they have a lot of secrets up their sleeve that they haven't shown. That's why we have the Microsoft tablets on the sidelines, so we can make the adjustments as soon as possible."



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Q: AJ McCarron has been here for a little over a week now. He said, he will be here day in and day out learning the playbook. Can you tell us how the learning process has gone so far for him?

Coach Gruden: "He's done really good. I think Brian Callahan, our quarterback coach, has done a great job with him. He's taken him out of our meetings really and isolated a one-on-one, fast tracking meeting him with him. Teaching him the nuances of our snap count, our personnel packages, audible system. All that stuff but he's a quick study. He learned it fast in Cincinnati and he learned it fast in Buffalo. He will learn it fast here."

Q: Will you be as nervous/excited for this game as you were for the first game you ever coached with the Raiders?

Coach Gruden: "I'm just as excited and get the butterflies you know. It's the same way every year. Especially opening day, it's special. This is really special for me. I know there's been a lot of news this week with what has happened, but I want to do everything I can to help bring the Raiders back. I really like the effort that our team has put forth, our coaching staff. It will be special going out there Monday Night that's for sure."