



Oakland Raiders Transcript

First-Round Press Conference following the selection of T Kolton Miller

General Manager Reggie McKenzie

Q: Can you tell us what transpired on the way to this pick?

McKenzie: "It was a lot happening, that's for sure. There were a lot of calls. Moving up, moving back, everybody wanted... It seemed like our pick was pretty favorable. After sorting it through, we just went ahead and pulled the trigger."

Q: How did you rate Kolton Miller and Mike McGlinchey?

McKenzie: "Well, we thought both of those guys were really good football players. We would be upgraded with either one."

Q: What is it that you like about Miller?

McKenzie: "The fact that he's a big man that can move his feet. He's played left tackle and right tackle. He's been an offensive lineman pretty much his whole life. He understands the game. He's an excellent athlete who has great potential, so we feel really good about adding him to the Raider roster."

Q: Kolton Miller obviously has a lot of athleticism. How much did you take from what Miller did on tape?

McKenzie: "That's how we evaluate – tape. We don't draft guys by combine."

Q: How big of a part did Tom Cable play in this pick? How well does Kolton fit that profile?

McKenzie: "Oh, he played a big part. We look at all the coaches in the evaluations. We interviewed him and we had a lot of meetings with him to try to figure out who he is as a person and what drives him. We feel very good about everything about Kolton Miller."

Q: Did you guys also make a trade for Martavis Bryant?

McKenzie: "Yes, we did."

Q: What went into that and what do you like about him?

McKenzie: "Other than he's scored a lot of touchdowns and gets all the first downs, he's ideal what you're looking for in a receiver. He can play big. He can play fast. He makes plays. We think he can be a dynamic receiver for Derek [Carr]."

Q: How did that trade come about? Was it something you guys have been thinking about for a while or was it last minute here?

McKenzie: "Oh no, we've been thinking. This is not a last-minute deal. We've been thinking on this for a while. To make it happen this quick, trading back afforded multiple picks. That's all a part of draft day. When you're able to get some breathing room so to speak and play around with some picks. We just felt like this was a good opportunity to try to upgrade and get better."

Q: What about the Bryant trade? Was it the same idea?

McKenzie: "Oh absolutely. Same thing. Martavis was all about being able to use that pick and get another player. It's like drafting a player. We feel like we've drafted Martavis Bryant."

Q: Miller missed a lot of time with injuries. What do you think of his durability?

McKenzie: "Yeah, we feel good about that. Some of the injuries that he's had and the medical stuff, went through all of that with our team doctors and all that stuff at the combine. We feel good. He'll be a healthy guy for us."



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Q: After being adamant about bringing in good character players to this team, how do you reconcile bringing guys like Daryl Worley and Martavis Bryant into the building?

McKenzie: "That's a good point because when we talk about character, we're not going to condemn them. We're not going to nail them for life, so to speak. If we see some semblance of whether it's remorse or whether it's getting on the right path. When you talk to the guy, when we talked to Worley, we feel good about bringing him in. We feel good about giving Martavis an opportunity. We think with our resources, we could help him."

Q: Has anything in this draft surprised you so far?

McKenzie: "Quite a bit. That's every year. That's what makes the draft fun. I didn't think last week that I was going to trade down to 15. I didn't think I was going to make a trade before the day was over with, but that's what makes draft day fun."

Q: Did you expect to get a tackle or did you think defense was a possibility?

McKenzie: "Both were a possibility. The thing is the draft, unless you're picking No. 1, that's the only time you know who you're going to get. You never know how the chips are going to fall. You're prepared for many things. Depending which player is there. If you can trade up, if you can trade back. Sometimes you can't do either. It just fell the way it did today. We were very excited to get Kolton."

Q: Was it tough to not to pull the trigger on Derwin James or Tremaine Edmunds?

McKenzie: "Those are all great players. All great players. We had all those guys right around there, but we like Kolton."

Q: What did you like when reviewing Kolton Miller's tape?

McKenzie: "What Kolton can do is, when you talk about pass protection and staying in front of his guy, that's what he does. I mean he's got the length, he's got the great feet and when you're talking about playing at the second level, pulling. I mean, this guy has a lot of talent and we think if we can get him on scheme and get coach Cables [Tom Cable] working with him, he's going to flourish."

Q: It's not every draft where an All-American defensive back that your secondary coach personally coached for two seasons was on the board when you guys were there at No. 15. Was that at all a unique situation and how much of a conversion was that?

McKenzie: "Oh yeah, I mean that conversation was since the combine. The whole process, and he's one of the guys also you may have mentioned about two other players. He was in that group too you know. But we felt really good about Kolton and when you're trying to compare different positions and stuff like that you know, the grades we had on these guys were very similar."

Q: Can you talk about what Jon Gruden brought to the decisions that you guys ended up making tonight?

McKenzie: "Communication, it was great the whole offseason. He's really good at sitting down, talking to me and letting me know how he feels. You know, we watch tape together and that's what I like and we see eye-to-eye on many things. That was the easy part. And then just trying to figure out when to take guys and lining them up, he was very good to work with during this whole process and we have a big day tomorrow and the next, so I'm looking forward to it."

Q: What did you trade for Martavis Bryant? One of the third-round picks?

McKenzie: "Yes. The third-rounder we traded for."

Q: What is the goal going forward? Obviously to get good players, but is there a specific way you're looking?

McKenzie: "We're trying to win, so if we feel like a certain guy can help us be more dynamic, which we think he can, we're trying to go get him and we were able to do that today."



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Q: Is Kolton a guy who you could see being at right or left? Could you foresee a situation where he starts on the right and eventually succeeds Donald Penn on the left?

McKenzie: "I don't want to talk about starting. These young guys, you want to get them and try to work them. But he can definitely play both and he has played both, started."

Q: Is UCLA set up so he can be here right away? In terms of some schools, some guys can't come until they graduate.

McKenzie: "The rules are different now, so he'll be good."



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Raiders First-Round Draft Pick T Kolton Miller Conference Call

Q: There were some talk leading into the draft that the Raiders might be interested in you. Did you get that inclination?

Miller: "I didn't have any idea where I'd end up. I saw something on social media about that, but I really had no idea that they were going to pick me. I talked to 23 teams at the combine. I took a bunch of team visits."

Q: Who called you with the news tonight?

Miller: "Coach [Jon] Gruden. I was super stoked about it. I'm so glad to be a Raider. Growing up in Sacramento, that was sort of a hometown team. I'm super stoked. Ready to go in there and compete and learn from the older guys. There's a lot of experience surrounding me so I'm ready to embrace it."

Q: How was that conversation with Gruden? Did that fire you up?

Miller: "Hell yeah. I've been waiting this whole time for that phone call to ring. It was sort of overwhelming. I'm super happy now. I'm ready to get to work. The draft and going through these team visits and the combine, I'm sure excited that I got picked. I'm more excited now to go to the facility and get to work."

Q: What are your thoughts on playing right and left tackle?

Miller: "I played both right and left my redshirt freshman year, started at right my redshirt sophomore year and started at left all of last year. I feel more comfortable at left, but if my name is called at right, I'm ready to play either-or. Primarily, I'd like to play left."

Q: This is a division with some pretty elite pass rushes. Is that a challenge you look forward to?

Miller: "Yes, sir. There wasn't too much competition this year but in terms of last year, Takkarist McKinley being my teammate going against him every practice, I feel like I got a lot better. Playing against Owamagbe Odighizuwa, Kenny Clark through UCLA, there's a number of guys that have come through at UCLA and I think they've really helped me."

Q: Has Eddie Vanderdoes reached out to you yet?

Miller: "Yeah, he just did. He was super stoked. To be drafted on the same team as Eddie... Him being from Placer, too, just down the road from Roseville, that's something pretty neat."

Q: Physically, where are you right now?

Miller: "I'm in Dallas right now."

Q: Is it weird that you got traded for Josh Rosen the way the picks went?

Miller: "Yeah. That's very interesting to say the least. There's definitely something there that was pretty unique and cool."

Q: Is this about where you expected to go?

Miller: "I really didn't know heading into the draft. I didn't know where I'd end up. I talked to all these teams and got invited to the draft and making a name for yourself at the combine, I had some sort of idea, maybe around this where I ended up getting picked up. Finally getting picked, it's so great and overwhelming."

Q: Growing up in Sacramento, is there any memory of Jon Gruden being a coach of the Raiders?

Miller: "Other than videos and movies, clips and things, I'd seen him. But I was more a fan of playing rather than watching."

Q: Did you have a visit here to the facility?

Miller: "No, I just met with the Raiders at the combine."



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Q: Have you had communication with Tom Cable?

Miller: "No, just a few minutes at the combine and when he picked up after the phone was given from Coach Gruden."

Q: Can you describe what it was like to get the call?

Miller: "Actually living it. When you see it on TV, the combine and the draft, you have no idea what it's going to be like. Finally being able to live it is overwhelming. To be surrounded by your family, coaches and loved ones and guys that have helped you along the way is something truly special. I'm just truly grateful to be in this situation."



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Introductory Press Conference with First Round Draft Pick Kolton Miller

General Manager Reggie McKenzie, Head Coach Jon Gruden and T Kolton Miller

Q: How much pressure do you feel to step in right away at right tackle and contribute?

Miller: "I feel, put at either position, left or right, wherever I'm needed, I'm looking to compete and establish myself as a starter."

Q: Could you describe from the time you got drafted until now?

Miller: "Following the season, I trained at EXOS in Arizona. I trained there for eight weeks where they prepped me for the combine. After the combine, I did a number of team visits and was pretty busy then. I had about a week break before the NFL Draft. Last night was a very long night, to say the least. It was an awesome experience, especially being surrounded by your family and friends, people that have helped you along the way. I felt really blessed to be in that spot."

Q: Did you fly a lot of those people to Dallas to be with you?

Miller: "They allow eight coach tickets. They fly your high school coaches down and the rest of the guys they flew themselves down."

Q: You grew up not too far from Oakland. How does it feel to stay in the Bay Area?

Miller: "It's really great. It's only a short drive away. That was sort of a hometown team, a lot of great fans. It's also great to be playing with Eddie Vanderdoes, who was just down the street from Roseville at Placer. He's also a UCLA guy, of course. That's pretty neat."

Q: You're stepping into a position group where there are a lot of proven veterans around you. What do you foresee in terms of the opportunity there?

Miller: "I want to be a sponge, to say the least. I want to soak in as much information as I can from them, ask a lot of questions and I really want to establish that bond between us. That will be really important in the future and I think that will be huge for my development. I hope to maximize that."

Q: Jon, what exactly about Kolton appealed to you?

Coach Gruden: "Reggie and I really have a lot of respect for this man's athleticism, number one. He can pass protect. You can use him a lot of different ways. He can pull, he can redirect. He's got a huge upside at a position that's very hard to find. In the AFC West right now, the people that you have to block, Kolton, hate to break it to you but they're pretty good. He's got versatility, he can play right tackle, he can play left tackle. He's got the right stuff inside. He's going to be a huge part of our future. He's playing a position that, like I said, is very hard to find these days."

Q: Coach, it's been a decade since you were in a war room. What did it feel like to get the juices flowing again on draft night?

Coach Gruden: "It felt good. It was great. I think Reggie did an outstanding job. I think preparing a new coaching staff with his scouting department working together with a lot of people for the first time... And at crunch time, making a trade that I think really benefitted this football team. We added an outstanding young prospect at left tackle, who can also play right tackle and I think a game-breaking wide receiver that is going to make his presence felt as well."

Q: How much do you know about the pass rushers in the AFC West?

Miller: "I love it. I love the competition. I think it's a great opportunity, especially being at this level. Once you're a tackle, you're kind of part of a club. You're striving to be the best tackle in the world, playing against the best. I'm really looking forward to it."



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Q: How would you characterize your season last year?

Miller: "Switching from the 2016 season from right tackle and starting the 2017 season [at left], I believe I didn't start where I wanted to. There were some technique issues that I cleaned up on. I think I progressed through the season. If you see where I started and where I finished, you'd see a lot of improvement. It didn't stop there. I also improved in the offseason. I'm still improving. I'm just super stoked for the opportunity."

Q: What are do you think you need the most improvement on as you make this jump to the next level?

Miller: "I think technique is huge. I think that's what really separates guys, especially since guys are so fundamental in their techniques playing eight, 10 years. That's something I'll definitely work on. Then, I'm always improving my strength. I'm just going to take as much as I can from the older guys and coach [Tom] Cable and really get better."

Q: Can you detail when you started playing football and how soon you were playing offensive line?

Miller: "Sure. I started football when I was in seventh grade. I played both right and left tackle, also played D-line. I was a two-way player and I did that all the way up until my senior year in high school. So yeah, I've always been a lineman. I was tried out at a tight end, but didn't catch it then, but I did get an opportunity against Kansas State, I caught it but I didn't have any blockers unfortunately. *(laughter)* But yeah, I've always been an O-lineman guy."

Q: What does this pick say to Donald Penn? Is it a message?

Gruden: "Well, Donald Penn is still on our football team. He's still rehabbing his foot injury. Donald has been a very good player for the Raiders – a guy that I coached in Tampa. I know him extremely well. This has nothing to do with Donald Penn. This is about the future of the Oakland Raiders. We have an outstanding, young quarterback, we have a need at the position and we're very fortunate to address. But, it doesn't really say anything to Donald Penn."

Q: Are you aware of any negative backlash on social media from the fanbase from this draft pick?

Miller: "If you actually notice, I'm not huge on social media. *(laughter)* There's actually, I think a guy, that impersonated me on Twitter just because I didn't have enough followers. *(laughter)* Yeah, so I don't really pay too much attention and I think that's more of a distraction than anything. I just look at what I can do each day to better myself and I try to stick to those things because I think it really helps."



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Introductory Press Conference with WR Martavis Bryant

General Manager Reggie McKenzie, Head Coach Jon Gruden and WR Martavis Bryant

Q: Did you see a trade coming this offseason? And what was your reaction when you found out it would be the Raiders? And why do you think you would fit in here?

Bryant: "I honestly try to keep my mind off it and stay focused on working out. I got the call yesterday and it was truly a blessing from God. I thank the Raider organization and Coach Gruden for giving me a second chance. It's a clean slate and I'm trying to be great."

Q: Can you talk about your game and how you're going to fit in here with Derek Carr and the other receivers?

Bryant: "I'm just going to come in and try to contribute the best way I can. Whatever coach need me to do or whatever my teammates need me to do, just be there for them and have their back and just go to work every day, come to work every day and let everything fall into place."

Q: Jon what do you get from Martavis? What does he bring to the mix?

Coach Gruden: "We've been looking for a size receiver, a big receiver. He's big, he's 6-foot-4. We're looking for a fast receiver and he's fast, he runs sub 4.4. So he has size, he has speed. I've seen the Steelers practice in my previous position. The man knows how to practice. The guy knows how to prepare. He's been through a lot in his life and he's got something to prove and I think we're catching him at the right time. Mike Tomlin is a friend of mine. I coached with Mike and I got a lot of confidence in this young man. I think a change of scenery can unleash his greatness and put him in the line up with Jordy Nelson and Amari Cooper and Jared Cook and Derek Carr excites me a lot."

Q: When you hear what Jon just said about second chances and yesterday Reggie said that they feel like they have the capabilities to try to help you get going again. What does that mean to you to hear that?

Bryant: "It's a blessing and an honor. It just shows that they kept faith in me and they got faith in me and also that I believe in myself. Things aren't going to be easy, things are always not easy but you've got to just keep fighting and keep working and I'm going to be alright. I'm going to handle my business, come to work here and prepare and go out and handle my business as a man."

Q: What did you find out about yourself last year after having to sit out the previous year? What did you find out about yourself personally?

Bryant: "Just a reality check and just seeing all the people who were there for me, who was really there and who wasn't. I stayed close to my family and I have a son that's about to be born so I just stayed focused on my family and just working out and taking care of myself and being the best Martavis Bryant I can be. I wasn't able to play football, so I tried to stay away from it and just focus on my family and myself."

Q: You heard Coach Gruden list the receivers and quarterback this team has, how much does that excite you?

Bryant: "Very exciting. We have great guys here that want to contribute and want to be great and I want to be great as well. We just have to work hard at practice develop the chemistry. Once the chemistry develops, the sky is the limit."

Q: Traditionally there has been huge rivalry between the Raiders and the Steelers way back when. Being in Pittsburgh, what was the impression of the Raiders as an organization when you were a player for the Steelers?

Bryant: "Great organization just like Pittsburgh. Very competitive, great fans. Of course, each team wants to win so you know how it was but I'm not focused on that anymore. Just trying to focus on what I got to do now."



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Q: How do you make sure this situation isn't just a one-year thing, that it's long-term?

Bryant: "Just by handling my business as a man. It's not my first rodeo. I've had my difficulties in my past, but I've come a long way from that. It's all about keeping the right resources around me and continuing to stay on the right path. I'm going to make sure I get that done."

Q: Has Derek Carr reached out to you?

Bryant: "Yes, I talked to him last night. Very excited."

Q: Adding a guy like Martavis to the mix, what does that do to an opposing defense?

Coach Gruden: "It puts a lot of pressure on them. I think it'll help our running game, honestly. We have Marshawn Lynch. I'm sure he's sitting at home happy with this acquisition. I think our running game will improve. You want to bring the safety down in the box and play an eight-man front, we have a quarterback that can recognize that and create some matchups on the outside that are one-on-one. This man has made a living going down the field, getting the football. It's a great day for us. We have a lot to prove and we're anxious to prove it."

Q: What do you feel you have left to show, that untapped potential?

Bryant: "It's a clean slate and a fresh start for me. I've got a lot to prove. I don't want to be just a one-dimensional player. I have a lot to work on, all aspects of my game. I'm going to do that, just to prove to myself that I can be great."

Q: Reggie, Martavis came out in the same draft as Khalil Mack and Derek Carr. Do you remember evaluating him?

McKenzie: "No question, absolutely. When you get a guy this size, the way he ran, he was going to be a threat. We are excited to add him to our roster right now. I'm sure he's going to elevate our offense and elevate this team."



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Raiders Second-Round Draft Pick DT P.J. Hall Conference Call

Q: We see you've blocked 14 kicks at 6-foot-1. How do you do that?

Hall: "Really, it's just all about effort. Just going hard every play no matter if it's offense, defense or special teams. I just make sure I give effort on every play because you never know when one of those specialty plays will come and make a difference in the game."

Q: Did you have any idea where you were going to fall in this draft? Were you surprised that you were taken in the second round?

Hall: "Yeah, I was really surprised. I hadn't heard about me going in the second round at all during this draft process, so it really shocked me when I got the phone call."

Q: How much contact did you have with the Raiders in the process leading up to the draft?

Hall: "I had a little contact with them. I went up there for a visit and everything, so I had talked to them a bit."

Q: P.J., you were doing a lot of standing up early in your career before switching inside. How did that transition go for you and what was maybe the most difficult part of going down inside and playing full time down there?

Hall: "I felt like it helped a lot. Whenever I had to go inside, I was way more athletic than a lot of the guards I went against so that helped a lot. When I had to go inside, it was a little tough. It was my first time ever playing it, but as the season went along, I got more used to it and got comfortable playing it and then it got better."

Q: Did you feel slighted when you weren't invited to the combine, and is this kind of vindication for you?

Hall: "I was a little down about it for like a day or two, but after that I felt like it helped me that I didn't come to the combine. I got more time to prepare for my pro day and I had an excellent pro day. I crushed it, and I feel like that's what kind of raised all my stock. After my pro day, that's when everybody tried contacting me. I had a lot more private workouts after that. So yeah, I feel like it didn't affect me as much after that."

I wasn't at your pro day. What exactly did you do there?

Hall: "I jumped 38" vertical, I benched 36 reps, I ran around the low 4.7 range, somewhere around there. I broad jumped 9-foot-8. Stuff like that."

Q: Where are you now watching? And whom did you get the call from? Can you take us through what the moment was like?

Hall: "I'm back at home in Seguin, Texas with a bunch of my friends and family down here. I picked up the phone call and the first person I talked to was [Reggie] McKenzie. When I got the phone call it was surreal, like I couldn't believe it at first. It was just crazy. This is one of the days I dreamed of and it's crazy that it finally happened."

Q: What were you doing? Because like you said you weren't thinking you were going in the second round. Were you bracing yourself for that phone call at any second anyway or were you caught off guard?

Hall: "I was still bracing myself trying to get ready just in case. I still had my phone open. I was just walking around in the house just chilling, walking around talking to friends, but then once I got the phone call it was crazy."

Q: Did you at all doubt it was real? Did you think it was a prank call or did you know it was legitimate?

Hall: "No, yeah I knew it was legit. I knew it was real from the go but yeah, I was just excited. I was so excited. I couldn't believe it."

Q: Other than your visit to the facility when you came out here, have you been to California or the Bay Area before?

Hall: "No, that was actually my first time ever going to Cali. Never been to Cali. My visit was my first time and I'm ready to get back out there."



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Q: What was your visit like?

Hall: "It was cool. I really enjoyed it. I really enjoyed the facility. I enjoyed the coaches and all of the personnel staff over there. I really enjoyed myself out there."

Q: What do you think a comfortable playing weight will be for you in the NFL?

Hall: "Somewhere around 300-305. That's where I'll be able to be the most explosive."

Q: Did you ever have the opportunity to perform against some upper competition to show them what you can do?

Hall: "Yeah, I was invited to the East-West Shrine Game and there I was able to go against a lot of the guys from FBS schools. I did really well the whole week there and also at the games. I was able to get more comfortable and get that on tape and to stop those question marks of not being able to play at that level, so I felt that it helped me out a lot during this process."

Q: Coming up through high school and college was the "too short" thing coming at you a lot?

Hall: "Yeah that was one of the biggest things and reasons why I wasn't highly recruited. A lot of people said I was too short and too small all the way into this process too. I'm glad that's not the way now. I'm here. I'm ready to play."

Q: Exactly how tall are you?

Hall: "I'm 6-foot and a quarter."

Q: Do you think that size actually helps you with your leverage inside?

Hall: "I really do. I think my size helps me with my leverage. I'm already low, it helps me stay low and as long as I'm low than I'm good."

Q: Sacks can be a misleading statistic but your number in that department fell off a little bit last year. Was there an injury or weight thing that you would attach to that number?

Hall: "I feel like some of it was due to growing in size and I wasn't on the edge as much. So, I feel like that made my stats go down a little bit, but I was still disruptive and had a pretty good season this year."

Q: What technique are you most comfortable playing in?

Hall: "The three-technique."

Q: Growing up, was the NFL always a dream for you?

Hall: "Yes, it was always something I wanted to do. I've been playing football since I was a child. It always was a dream and I'm glad it came true."

Q: So who do you role model yourself after?

Hall: "Aaron Donald. He's been someone who I've always watched and admired."

Q: From talking to Paul Guenther, what sense do you have of the Raiders single-gap defense and how you fit into it?

Hall: "I feel like I'll fit really well on the defense. Their four-front, they want me as their three-technique, they have a penetrating defense, especially for the defensive line. And I feel that's exactly where I'll best fit at, getting up field, being explosive and just disrupting things. I feel I'll fit right in and I'm excited."



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Raiders Third-Round Draft Pick T Brandon Parker

Q: Take us through what it was like getting the call, and were you surprised that the Raiders traded three picks to move up and get you in the third round?

Parker: "I was very surprised. Just sitting here watching the thing, watching everybody else get drafted. Then your phone rings with an unidentified number with the California area code. I answered it and I think I was so excited I missed the guy's name. My emotions were everywhere."

Q: First pick of the third round. Did you anticipate being selected in that range?

Parker: "I had heard anywhere from third to fifth. Ironically, it just hit third so I guess everything worked out. Still was a little higher than I thought I was going to go."

Q: Did you meet with the Raiders during the pre-draft process?

Parker: "Yes, sir. I spoke to them at the Senior Bowl and saw them at the combine and had an interview with them. Also, Raleigh [McKenzie] was at the pro day and I talked to him as well."

Q: Your bio said you didn't give up a sack in your entire college career.

Parker: "I don't know. I think I gave up maybe one or two sacks, but it's low. I don't know where that came from."

Q: What do you know about Oakland's offensive line?

Parker: "I know they have Donald Penn. As a tackle, I think getting to learn from a guy like that... I watched him play for years, from the Buccaneers on. Getting to learn from a guy like that and work hard with him, that says a lot."

Q: Did you play both right and left tackle in college?

Parker: "It was primarily left. Sometimes we played a swing set and I would go to the right side."

Q: How do you feel playing from the right side?

Parker: "I feel just as good. I haven't played a whole lot, but the more I play it, the more comfortable I feel. I don't have a preference. Either side, I'll play it. It doesn't matter."

Q: Name some of the notable players you played against and shut down on the edge.

Parker: "During my college career? Watching a lot of the guys play against in the draft... The guy from Rutgers that got drafted, I played against him and blocked him. Marcus Davenport went in the first round, I played against him. Uchenna Nwosu, played against him a lot and won my fair share against him. A couple of other guys like Nathan Shepard and them were also in the Senior Bowl and I blocked them pretty well. A lot of those guys that I played against recently in the Senior Bowl got drafted."

Q: How important is that Senior Bowl for a small school guy?

Parker: "For me, it was like the Super Bowl. I knew I played at a small school. They question your talent. Can you handle it? Can you stand up on your own? I came in there every day approaching it like it was a game, just came there and competed and gave my all."

Q: How familiar are you with the Raiders' tradition of players coming from historically black colleges?

Parker: "I'm very familiar with that. My grandma is a Raiders fan since I was a kid. She's kept me up to date with the traditions. I know a lot of the players that have come from there, the names are escaping me right now."

Q: What are you expecting from being coached under Jon Gruden and Tom Cable?

Parker: "Tom Cable is a coaching legend. Jon Gruden... Growing up, the Bucs were my favorite team so I watched them coach them for years. It's like a childhood dream to get to play for him."



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Q: Are you going to put your electrical engineering career on hold for now? How did you get into that?

Parker: "Yes, sir. I've always grown to learn to take stuff apart. I broke a lot of PS 2's in the past, so I had to learn to get them working again. I could look at it and make them work and learn to work with systems, circuits, programming and all that. That's what piqued my interest early on."

Q: Is there any relation to being meticulous and being an offensive lineman and that kind of thing?

Parker: "That, and being an offensive lineman, you have to learn to decipher situations quickly. You have to be prepared for scenarios and the worst-case scenario possible. You have to get solutions on the fly. That's a big part of being an offensive lineman, being able to adjust to blitzes and stunts and last-minute adjustments."

Q: Your grandmother was a Raiders fan, were you as well?

Parker: "No, I wasn't. I was a Buccaneers fan as a kid."

Q: How was it that she became a Raiders fan?

Parker: "I can't tell you how long she's been a Raiders fan. I think it started when the Raiders had been beaten by the Buccaneers for the Super Bowl, I think, but she's been a Raiders fan as long as I can remember."

Q: Was she there with you today? How was that reaction?

Parker: "Yes, she is. Needless to say, she was probably the most excited person in the room as soon as I said Raiders. She couldn't stop moving."

Q: With her fandom and yours, is there something a little extra to playing for Jon Gruden?

Parker: "I think so. I guess now that he's there, that's twice the reason to root. I'm there, Jon Gruden is there, twice as much motivation to play there as anywhere else."

Q: How comfortable are you in zone blocking scheme?

Parker: "Very comfortable. We did a lot of zone blocking scheme at A&T actually."

Q: At what point did the NFL become something you started thinking about as a possibility?

Parker: "It was a dream from a kid to play, but the more I played at a high level in school and the more accolades I got, the more I started getting recognition, the more it became a reality."

Q: What are some of your favorite PS 2 games?

Parker: "NFL Street, NFL Street 2, NBA Street. Those are definitely some I could pick to play all day long."



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Raiders Third-Round Draft Pick DE Arden Key Conference Call

Q: How do you feel about being taken in the third round with first-round talent?

Key: "Just being picked up is a blessing, being a third-round pick. I know I'm not a third-round pick, I'm a first-round talent, top five. I went through some situations that caused me to be a third-round pick. I've learned from those things and this is the consequence of me going through what I went through. I'm a better person now than I was prior to it. I'm just happy to be at the right place. I feel the Oakland Raiders is the right place for me. That was the best visit I went on out of all eight of my visits. Being on the other side of Khalil Mack, learning things from him and that sort. Him taking me under his wing, if he wants to do that."

Q: What made it your best visit?

Key: "The defensive coordinator and I had a great talk, D-line coach, we had a great talk and then we had the player engagement guy, [Lamonte] Winston. He is off the chart. We had a long talk. We talked about things outside of football, what I want to do as far as business and career, things of that sort. We wrote a plan out and we stuck with that plan. It was saying I was going to be a Raider. We spoke it into existence, now look where I'm at."

Q: Were you aware going into the draft of the Raiders' reputation of being a place where people get second chances and clean slates?

Key: "I wasn't aware. I was just hoping I was going to get picked up by a team, didn't know which team it was. Whatever team I got picked up by, that was a new slate for me. I could start over and start my new legacy."

Q: Were you watching the draft tonight? As it goes on, did you have an idea of where you were going to fall?

Key: "I was watching the draft. I didn't know what was going to happen. It was a guessing game. You had Harold [Landry], who is going first round, went second round. Denzel Ward went fourth to Cleveland and [Bradley] Chubb went fifth. It's a lot of tricks in the NFL draft. The media, the analysts and those can say what they want to say, but the coaches and things have the say of the decision."

Q: You're listed at 6-foot-6, 240. Is that your current weight?

Key: "I'm right at 250 now. I stay around 240 to see what team I'd get drafted to. If I got drafted to a 3-4 team, 260-270 would be too big for a 3-4 linebacker. I just wanted to see what team I get to and whatever weight they want me to get to, I'll get to the weight I am comfortable at and feel like I am able to perfect my craft and play my best at that weight. DeMarcus Ware was only 250 in Dallas and he played a 4-3, so."

Q: What's one thing you want to prove your rookie year in the NFL?

Key: "That I'm not the guy that the media portrays me to be. The only thing. On the field? Football things? Football is not the question. Everybody knows, talent-wise, if we're just talking talent, top five pick, automatic."

Q: Clearly the Raiders have confidence in you, but how do you make decisions here in the NFL to make sure that you're on track?

Key: "I was honest. I spoke up on the mistakes I made and the plan that I need. Now, it's not a surprise or 'what kind of plan do we need to set for this guy?' This is the plan we need to set for this guy and this guy will follow the plan. That's it. The main thing is get me going."



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Day 2 Press Conference following the Third Round

Head Coach Jon Gruden

Gruden Opening Statement: "Been a long day today. Obviously, a very exciting day. Really proud of our scouts, coaches and I thought Reggie [McKenzie] did a great job pulling the trigger and making some trades last night and today to help us basically get five football players. I'll answer any questions that I can."

Q: P.J. Hall, Brandon Parker and Arden Key, what do you like about those three guys?

Coach Gruden: "Hall is an inside rusher. He's a potential three-technique, outside shoulder of the guard, which is a critical part of this defense that we're going to run here. With Paul Guenther, we like his production, we love his measurables. The only thing he isn't is he's not tall, but this man is extremely powerful. I believe he did 38 bench presses, 39" vertical. The man can run. We need an inside pass rusher, which I think I've said that since I've been here. Somebody that can disrupt running plays and penetrate, and this guy can do that, so we're really excited to get him. Brandon Parker is another tackle, almost 6-foot-8. He's a great kid and really impressed us. His movement skills at the combine and certainly in the Senior Bowl has a huge upside. We feel like Kolton Miller and Parker have great mentors in [Breno] Giacomini and [Donald] Penn. So they have a tremendous opportunity. Arden Key can do the one thing that very few people can do in this draft and that's rush the passer and we're happy to get him in the third round."

Q: There's no debating Arden Key's talent, but he certainly has some issues. Is your sense on this that you can just coach these guys and at some point you let the character questions go because you can handle them?

Coach Gruden: "Well he's not a finished product. He's made some mistakes. He's had some difficult times in his young life, and I know where he's been for the last several months, and I know what he's been through in his career. We've done a lot of research on him and he has a lot to prove. We have a lot to prove. But at the end of the third round, we feel like it's a gamble worth taking and this young man has some qualities that are rare. We do think he's a very good kid so I'm not going to get much more into it than that. I realize we have our skeptics, and rightfully so, but this is a young person that needs some help right now and we're going to help him."

Q: Two players taken from the FCS level in a row for you guys. What do you have to see from them to know they can contribute?

Coach Gruden: "We saw Brandon Parker at the Senior Bowl. It didn't bother him one bit. He didn't care who he blocked. He played right tackle, left tackle in the All Star Classic. I think if you're as productive as P.J. Hall and your measurables are what they are... Believe me, we weren't the only team that wanted P.J. Hall. I think these two guys are going to be great future Raiders. They have a passion for football. We put a Raider sticker next to them because they have a five-star character, great work ethic. They're going to be finishers, they're going to get better every day and I'm really happy to add those two men."

Q: What's the energy like when these trades are happening?

Coach Gruden: "It's exciting, man. It really is. The trade last night, obviously a trade down to 15, you have four or five names on the board that you're considering. You net a third-round pick, which basically turned into Martavis Bryant, which is a huge addition to this draft class, huge. But it's exciting, it's nerve racking, I hate it. You're hoping your guy slips, you're hoping your guy falls. Sometimes you get heartbroken, sometimes you get excited, but it's a long day for sure."

Q: What goes into when to move back, when to move up? You guys have made a trade before each of your picks. What goes into deciding whether to stay put, move up or move down?

Coach Gruden: "Well it's been said, I think by both of us, that we're going to collaborate on the decisions that are made and I really give him a lot of credit. He fielded phone calls. I fielded phone calls. We exchanged information and we talked about the consequences of not making a trade, talking about the reality of what happens if we do



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make the trade. It was a good, I think, communication throughout the process and we did what's best for this football team and we just got to see what happens when these young men get here. I realize we're going to have our skeptics. We took two guys that were from small colleges, but so were Willie Brown and Art Shell and Howie Long and other great players that have come through here. We don't discriminate from people just because they didn't play at Notre Dame or USC or in the Pac-12 or SEC. But it was a great effort I think by everybody and Reggie deserves a lot of credit."

Q: Which one of these guys did you come in looking to go after and which of them when it came that time were you just so surprised they were still on the board you just had to have them?

Coach Gruden: "Well, all these five guys were men that we targeted. We had a list of players that we really liked. As you get ready to make your pick, you put four or five names up there and you kind of rank them one through four and if someone calls you, you have to consider, do we move back and pick up a pick because we have needs we feel that we need to address? But I think all five of the men we added, including Martavis Bryant, were guys that we targeted. We wanted this Pittsburgh Steeler and we wanted these two tackles and we wanted this defensive tackle and we certainly wanted to take a look at Arden Key. We were happy he was there at the end of the third round."

Q: What do you think about hearing the skeptics as someone who has sat in the chair?

Coach Gruden: "Well, I don't really hear all the skeptics. I have a cell phone too that works. I got a lot of coaches and friends in the NFL that are ecstatic about the picks that we made. And I apologize to people that don't like our picks and that are skeptical and I also realize we have to prove that we did the right thing. But I'm not going to apologize or be sad about taking two young offensive tackles with the people we've got to block in this division. We're not playing seven-on-seven here, you know? We don't get to count steamboats or three Mississippi's before they rush. We need guys that can block, and we addressed that today. And we have a quarterback I think that's one hell of a football player and it's a priority to protect him. He's been hurt the last two years and it bothers me. We got a big receiver, who can jump up over you and a guy that can run right by you and he's going to add a dimension to our team that we have not had here. And we needed an inside pass rusher and we needed an edge rusher, a third rusher potentially with Bruce Irvin and Khalil Mack and we've got to prove we did well, but with every pick comes skeptics."

Q: What do guys like Kolton Miller and Brandon Parker do differently that is going to add to the group?

Coach Gruden: "Well they're young players. Obviously, Brandon comes from North Carolina A&T and hasn't seen the high level of competition that he's going to see when he comes here. Kolton Miller is an underclassman. So, we have a maturation that has to take place obviously, but like I said, we have, I think, very good mentors in place with Donald Penn and Breno Giacomini. I think we have one of the best line coaches in football. Look, I've gone around this league as a broadcaster. You cannot call plays without offensive tackles. You can't do it. And we need depth and we've got to be better on the edge. Without Donald Penn last year and with issues at right tackle, we struggled to score in the last four games. We just had a two-day minicamp. We felt it was a priority and we're happy with how we addressed it."

Q: With the bodies in place now and grouped with the players drafted on the offensive line last year, how do you determine who are your guys that you are going to trust moving forward?

Coach Gruden: "Well, you're right, we did draft a fourth-rounder and we did draft a seventh-rounder, and so did a lot of teams in the NFL. It doesn't matter what round what players are here, we have to play better. We've got to be better on the edge. We have competition. We have some depth and you need versatility. You need guys that can swing and play left and right because men get hurt in this league. It's a 16-week grind, so I'm not going to sit here and put forth a depth chart today, but in the coming weeks we will. We certainly needed these two big offensive tackles. And when you see them, they are big guys – great guys too."



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Q: Some analysts on television believe Arden key is a first-round talent. On talent alone, where do you think Key falls in the draft?

Coach Gruden: "Don't listen to everybody on TV, trust me, just so you know. *(laughter)* I mean, some of the critics on TV, I was one of them, you don't want to listen to those critics all of the time. Like I said, two years ago, his tape was unbelievable. He was a heck of a football player. He gained 25 or 26 pounds – he bulked up. I think he tried to add a different dimension to his game size-wise. Perhaps it backfired, he got hurt and there were issues there. He underachieved his year, but I go back to the film two years ago – the kid is special – and I know the man that's been training him. I've got a lot of confidence in Paul Guenther and Mike Trgovac. They've done this a long time, they've developed players like this. I'm not going to make any other predictions other than that. He is a talented kid. I believe he's at the right place, at the right time, this is a great day for him and I think he would agree with that."

Q: What made you feel like you had to trade up for both Hall and Parker?

Coach Gruden: "I didn't want to lose them. You know, you go into free agency to make additions to your team and linemen don't get there, they just don't get there. You can often times find a cornerback, you can find a linebacker, a lot of those guys at those positions get there. But, big offensive tackles, quality defensive edge rushers, they don't make it to free agency. You have to be able to draft these guys. You have to be able to develop these players and I really felt a big area on this team was the edge rush. When Khalil got tired last year, who's the third rusher? Who do we put in? When Bruce got tired, who's the third rusher? You've got to have at least three guys that can get after the quarterback because you win games with your fourth-quarter pass rush. You work 57 minutes to get a lead and your fourth-quarter pass rush has to close the door down. So, we think Key can be one of those guys at the end of games. We think P.J. Hall can give us an inside rush that we have not had. Did not want to lose him. To find to quality, young people, that are massive and athletic, did not want to lose them and we didn't."

Q: Is this a vintage Raiders draft with second-chances, clean slates and small-school selections?

Coach Gruden: "Yeah, my mom called and she said that, 'Maybe Mr. Davis was calling the picks down from Heaven.' *(laughter)* It's a philosophy that I have, it's a philosophy that I learned here. Bigger guys can be a good thing, faster can be better. We feel like we added one of the fastest receivers in all of football today in Martavis Bryant, two really outstanding, young, massive offensive tackles that can pull, that can pass protect, that continue to get better that will fight, that will take us to another level with execution, an inside rusher and an edge rusher and that's all we did today – add five young players that we think can be dynamic. That's just a prediction right now, but I feel good about it."

Q: The marriage between Key, getting him right physically, and the faith you have in Tom Shaw, is that what you had in mind?

Coach Gruden: "Pretty much, that's how it goes. The development of a football player starts downstairs. Even a guy, Martavis Bryant, has a history with Tom Shaw. If you're a fast guy, you know Tom Shaw. A lot of our players, I think, if you talk to them I think they're impressed with Shaw and his staff and the direction that they're going. Obviously, we had a mini-camp, two days, three practices, four practices prior to the draft to learn about what we have and what we need. Here we go, we got some more picks tomorrow. We're fired up. At the beginning, I thought Reggie did a good job and I thought we work well together. There were some tense moments. It's not easy working with me, I'll be honest. I'm a pain in the ass up there. I'm really happy with what we got done here in the first two days. Thank you, guys. Have a good night."



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Raiders Fourth-Round Draft Pick CB Nick Nelson Conference Call

Q: Can you clarify for us the status of your injury that you suffered not too long ago and what you expect the recovery time to be?

Nelson: "It was only a six-week process. This is my second one so about four more weeks. I'll be good to go in the summer. By fall camp, I'll be 100 percent."

Q: On talent alone, where do you think you would have gone in this draft?

Nelson: "I feel like I would have been a late first, early second if not for the injuries based on my talent."

Q: What do you think about the opportunity available to you in the Raiders' secondary?

Nelson: "I think it's a good opportunity. I can come here and learn from a lot of the guys and apply what they teach me to my game, and help me help the team win."

Q: Can you talk about your choice to transfer schools and what do you think playing for Wisconsin did for you?

Nelson: "It helped me a lot. My coach, Jim Leonhard, he played in the league for 10 years. He played with a lot of players like [Darrelle] Revis and [Antonio] Cromartie, Champ Bailey. He played with some of the greats – Joe Haden. A lot of this stuff he taught me, a lot of the little stuff. You couldn't get that from any another coach."

Q: You had some pretty good pass defense numbers, 42 passes defended, but no interceptions. At the combine, you showed some pretty good hands. How do you put that together?

Nelson: "I felt pressed in college. Pressing the ball was really the problem. I worked on my hands. I'm still work on it though. Everybody can catch the ball when you throw it to them. I've been working on catching bad balls, catching from weird positions."

Q: Did you play predominantly on the outside in college or did you play any slot? Do you have any experience on the inside?

Nelson: "I played both. Most of the time, I followed the best receiver. If he went inside, I went inside. I played both inside and outside."

Q: Do you think you are more suited for playing both inside or outside or do you think you are better at one over the other?

Nelson: "I feel like I'm pretty good at both, especially because my coach showed me some of the best nickels in the NFL. He showed me some of the best corners. So, I just studied their game and I feel like I'm pretty good at both."

Q: Which team was working you out when you got injured?

Nelson: "I was working out with the Detroit Lions."

Q: Did you ever work out with the Raiders?

Nelson: "No, I never worked out with the Raiders."

Q: Have the Raiders said anything to you about exactly what roles they want you to play and how much special teams if any at all?

Nelson: "I don't know but whatever they want me to play whether it's special teams or whatever they want me to play, I can play anything. I'm a football player – I'm not just a corner. I feel like I can do it all on the field so whatever role they want me to play I'm going to be the best leader I can be at that role."

Q: Have you had some experience as a return specialist?

Nelson: "Yes, I started punt return for two years and that's really it."



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Q: You were a wide receiver correct?

Nelson: "Yes."

Q: Does it upset you a little bit more that you didn't have any interceptions in college given that I'm sure you have confidence in your hands and ball skills based on your past history?

Nelson: "I mean, it's a little bit different when you're a receiver because the ball is actually coming to you, where when you're playing corner, the ball is not coming to you so it's a little bit different."

Q: You said you trained with Denzel Ward?

Nelson: "Yeah, I trained with him at EXOS."

Q: How was that to be beside somebody like that, the first defensive back that was taken, a top pick, and did it help you get a sense of where you are? Were you able to get a chance to stack yourself up against him?

Nelson: "It was pretty cool because our game is a little bit different. At Ohio State, they teach something different and then when we go on the field, I apply what I learn from him and then he asks me and he'll apply what he learns from me. A lot of stuff like when it comes to watching film or practicing for the 40, whatever. Just a lot of stuff."



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Raiders Fifth-Round Draft Pick DT Maurice Hurst Conference Call

Q: What were these three days like for you?

Hurst: "It's tough just going into it thinking that you're one of the top players in the draft and having good tape and everything like that. Just having to wait and see guys that you believe that you're better than go ahead of you, I mean it's tough. But I'm just happy to be in the right place and part of a great organization."

Q: What can you tell us about your health right now and the timeline for when you'll be ready to go?

Hurst: "I'm ready to go right now so just show up to rookie mini-camp just like everyone else and just go through things as everyone else would."

Q: As you got into Day 3 and even into the fifth round there, did any part of you start to think that you might not get your name called today and might have to go with the undrafted process?

Hurst: "I didn't get ideas that my name wouldn't get called. It was just a matter of where and when. So yeah, I didn't really think about going undrafted."

Q: Were you surprised to hear on TV that teams were taking you off their board entirely?

Hurst: "Yeah, I was a little surprised just because I was cleared through Harvard and Michigan, but every team can't bring you in and do their own tests and formalize their own opinion. I'm just blessed to be a Raider."

Q: When you say you're in the right place with the Raiders, what does that mean? Is that joining up with guys like Khalil Mack and Bruce Irvin?

Hurst: "Yeah, Khalil Mack, Bruce Irvin, Shilique Calhoun, and you know, P.J. [Hall] and Arden Key. I mean it's just such a talented group of players and just growing up watching Coach Gruden, I loved the Bucs. Warren Sapp was my favorite player growing up and I just loved that defense and that's what I think he's trying to bring back there and I'm just excited to be a part of that process and be one of those pieces to the puzzle."

Q: How high do you think you would have gone if you hadn't gone in with the questions about your health?

Hurst: "That's hard to say. I think I'm the best defensive tackle, one of them, in this draft. Obviously, I think highly of myself in that regard. I'm excited to have an opportunity."

Q: How did your visit out here go?

Hurst: "It was great. I had a great time with the coaches with a lot of personnel and the staff. It was definitely a dream scenario for me to be able to be a Raider."

Q: Were you examined medically while you were here and if so, did you get any feedback on how that went?

Hurst: "They weren't going to give me too much pressure testing or anything like that. I was cleared, so I was pretty good in that regard."

Q: You obviously played in college. Has anything changed with your heart condition since then that you know or that teams may have saw?

Hurst: "No, nothing has changed between now and then."

Q: You seem very confident that medically you're ready to go and that everything that forced you to fall in the draft is irrelevant moving forward. Is that fair to say, that you don't think this medical issue is going to be any sort of factor or something you need to manage moving forward?

Hurst: "I don't see it being a problem at all."



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Q: What motivation are you going to take out of this being drafted in the fifth round instead of the middle or late first round?

Hurst: "It's money. I'm just upset and disappointed teams decided not to pick me. But a team got a great player for very little. I'm very excited to be a part of the Raiders organization."

Q: Are you still going to drive Uber in the NFL?

Hurst: "I'll probably have to."



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Raiders Fifth-Round Draft Pick P Johnny Townsend Conference Call

Q: You set a few SEC punting records. What do you think about fellow SEC punter getting picked ahead of you despite that?

Townsend: "I'm happy for everyone who got selected, including those punters who got picked ahead of me. I had the opportunity to get to know J.K. and Michael Dickson well throughout not only my college experience, but through the combine and things like that. I'm ecstatic for those guys and their opportunities. I was actually on the phone with Oakland when that pick went through with J.K., so it was cool to see some of those guys go ahead."

Q: Did you have a private workout with the Raiders and if so how did that go?

Townsend: "I did. I worked out with coach [Rich] Bisaccia when he came down to Gainesville and spent some time with me and it went great."

Q: Who do you model your style after?

Townsend: "I've always grown up admiring Thomas Morstead. He's been a guy I've had the opportunity to interact with at different kicking camps. He's always a guy that I've tried to model my game after a little bit."

Q: The Raiders have had some pretty notable punters over the years such as Ray Guy and Shane Lechler. Do you know much about the punting history here?

Townsend: "I do, I do and it's pretty unbelievable. With [Shane] Lechler and Marquette [King], you guys have an unbelievable history with punters so I got some big shoes to fill when I step up in there."

Q: Do you know Marquette King?

Townsend: "I do. I've had the opportunity to meet him through camps, and I have a good relationship with Marquette."

Q: Do you follow Marquette on Twitter by any chance?

Townsend: "I do. I follow him across all social media."

Q: Do you celebrate like him after punts?

Townsend: "We actually celebrated a lot after kicks more so than punts. I'm the type of guy just to kick the ball and run off the field or kick the ball and try to make a tackle, but if something big time happens, if it calls for a celebration, then sure."

Q: Have worked with Ray Guy or gone to any of camps, anything like that?

Townsend: "I actually have no relationship with him. I've never actually met him in person or had the opportunity to interact with him on the phone, nothing like that. I'm familiar with who he is as a player and what he accomplished."

Q: What are your thoughts on being drafted by a squad that needs a punter and will give you the opportunity to play as a rookie?

Townsend: "It's an unbelievable opportunity. I'm going to have to come in and compete and I'm going to have to bring my 'A' game throughout this whole process. Just having the opportunity presented to me is just unbelievable. I'm just going to take it and run with it."

Q: Were you a holder on place kicks in college?

Townsend: "I did, yes."

Q: So you're pretty comfortable holding?

Townsend: "Yeah, I'm very comfortable with holding."



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Q: Have you held for left- and right-footed kickers?

Townsend: "I've only held for righties, but I've done a bunch of practicing for left-footed kickers if I ever have to do it."

Q: How do you feel about your ball placement and how did you get to be so accurate?

Townsend: "A lot of it just comes from repetition. The best thing to do is compare it to a golfer. Every single inch or centimeter makes a difference from having a good punt or having a bad one. In this league, directional punting and hang time is so important, so if I can execute the way I need to and put the ball near the sideline with good hang time, we'll have an effective punt unit that can change the game of field position."



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Raiders Sixth-Round Draft Pick LB Azeem Victor Conference Call

Q: What did you anticipate in terms of how your draft would go, when your name would be called?

Victor: "I was pretty much told anywhere from fourth and beyond. It was just a waiting game."

Q: Last season, just from reading about it, it obviously didn't seem like close to how you'd want to close out your college career. Can you put into detail what you learned from it?

Victor: "In life you can't be stagnant. I think that year, that whole 2017 year, was a chance for me to grow into a young adult. To grow into this young adult life and know how to take care of the small things. I think that was one key thing I had to take away from it. You're not young anymore. You have to start taking responsibility even for the small actions you don't think will occur."

Q: What do you think the strengths of your game moving forward will be?

Victor: "I think I'm an instinctive player. I'm good at stuffing the run, coming off the edge. I'm also good in zone. I'm good against the pass as well. I can do everything a linebacker can do."

Q: What do you know about the Raiders, about the defense you're going into? How much contact with the team did you have going into the draft?

Victor: "I haven't had much. I wasn't expecting it. I know they're a 4-3 defense. They like run-stopper guys at linebacker. It's a good scheme for me."

Q: Have you played much special teams, and is that a role you can see yourself playing early on?

Victor: "Yeah, I played special teams every year in my college career."

Q: What teams were you on?

Victor: "Kickoff majority, played a little punt here and there. Kick return and punt return. I played a little bit of everything."

Q: Have you spoken yet with Rich Bisaccia?

Victor: "No, I haven't. Not yet."

Q: Are you familiar much with Paul Guenther?

Victor: "Yes, I am."

Q: He takes great pride in looking at linebacker prospects deep in the draft. He had Vontaze Burfict who maybe some thought was a character guy. Is that the mold you want to build upon and do you see your NFL career going in that direction?

Victor: "I mean Vontaze Burfict is one of my guys. I've known him since I was a young guy. I think we're two different linebackers. We have the same kind of style in terms of tenacity in the way we play though. We have a nasty style. I do agree on that."

Q: What's the nature of your relationship? How did you two meet?

Victor: "Through my dad. My dad's always been around football and he's close to Vontaze. Me being the young guy, barely playing football, being these guys' water boy, I've been around a lot of these guys."

Q: During that tough season last year, were you in contact with Vontaze at all? And if so, was he someone you could speak to during the tough times?

Victor: "Not really, we haven't been close, like super close these past years, but I've got a lot of friends around the league, Shaq Thompson, you know, a lot of guys from U.W. [University of Washington] as well that helped support me along the way. So, it's all I could ask for."



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Q: Where did you train for the combine?

Victor: "I trained at EXOS in Carlsbad, San Diego."

Q: Were there any other top linebackers who were there?

Victor: "There were a lot of linebackers. Me, Kenny Young, (inaudible). There was about 13 or 14 of us there all together."

Q: What kind of a first impression do you want to make on this team?

Victor: "I want to show everybody that I have no off-the-field issues, I'm a great character guy, and that I can play some damn good football. I think that's about it."



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Raiders Seventh-Round Draft Pick WR Marcell Ateman Conference Call

Q: What do you think you need to do to establish yourself here in the NFL?

Ateman: "Just going and doing what I know I can do, which is playing big, making big time catches and just playing up to my size. It's going to be big for me to contribute to special teams so whatever they need me to do, I'll just go out there and do what I know I can do."

Q: Maybe your 40 time at the combine wasn't as fast as you would like. How do you compensate for that in your receiving style?

Ateman: "Just play big, get separation, working on my routes, just been working on getting separation. Just been working on coming in out of my breaks. Using different releases at the line to get separation. I've been working, I've been putting in and will continue to put in and just compensating for that like you said and just playing up to my size and making plays."

Q: Do you think playing with a guy like James Washington maybe made you a little overlooked?

Ateman: "No, that's just how it was. I wouldn't change my situation or none of that. That's my brother. He's somebody I grew a relationship with and I can forever call my brother. I did what I needed to do and we all have our stories, so it plays out how it does."

Q: A lot of the projections had you as high as a Day 2 pick. Do you pay attention to that? And is that where you expected to go?

Ateman: "I really didn't know where I was going to go. Seventh round was where I was picked, so I guess that's where I was supposed to go. I believe God has a plan and that everything happens for a reason. I'm just thankful for this opportunity – it's a blessing. I'm just ready to go out to Oakland and get to work."

Q: Did you know that the Raiders liked you? Is that one of the teams you thought you might go to?

Ateman: "I didn't even talk to them much. I talked to them a couple of times at the combine, but not much. But I heard it happens like that, so you just have to be on the lookout."

Q: Were you watching the draft when you found out they were taking you?

Ateman: "No, I wasn't even watching. I was outside with my family. I was outside just chilling and talking then I got the call and we all went back inside and watched it on TV."

Q: Were you watching yesterday or earlier today and then just got tired of watching?

Ateman: "No, it was on in the living room. It's just that I knew they were going to call me and I can come back inside real quick and watch it before they pick. I've been watching and I've been keeping up with it just because I didn't know, whatever the case was going to be so I was just on the lookout."

Q: When you talk about your receiving style, are there receivers out there with a similar build or skillsets that you watch or study just to look at?

Ateman: "Yeah, I watch all kinds of guys in the league. I just like watching the game, period. So just studying, seeing how they use their bodies, seeing how they run their routes. You've got a lot of guys around the league, like one of the guys that was recently there in Michael Crabtree. Jordy Nelson, how he does his stuff. Just paying attention to those guys. I like learning from everybody."

Q: Did you talk to Jon Gruden today or previously in the process?

Ateman: "No, but I talked to him today though when he called. That was my first time talking to him. He called me and told me they were getting ready to pick me. That was my first time talking to him."



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Q: Did you know him as a TV personality?

Ateman: "Yeah, he sounded just like he does on TV. That's exactly how he was on the call. He didn't change."

Q: Medically, how are you doing?

Ateman: "Yes, I'm 100 percent ready to go. I've been training and working out locally in Dallas, so I'm 100 percent. I'm ready to go."

Q: Were you thinking, "Why am I still here?"

Ateman: "That's exactly it. As it went by, it's just natural to think that. As a player, as a competitor, to say I could have gone or I could have done this. After a while, my mind was at ease. I thought that whoever gets me, like you said, is going to get a steal and they're about to get a ballplayer."



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Press Conference following the 2018 NFL Draft

General Manager Reggie McKenzie

Q: Azeem Victor, do you see him more as an inside linebacker or is he going to play special teams quite a bit?

McKenzie: "He'll definitely be a special teams player. That's where he's going to have to make his mark. We'll let him compete at inside linebacker."

Q: What's Maurice Hurst's status? Is he up in the air as far as his status medically?

McKenzie: "No. He's good."

Q: Why was he still on the board at that point then?

McKenzie: "The fact is, he does have a heart condition, but it is a situation where he'll get checked every year. Right now, he's good."

Q: How high did you guys have him before the heart condition?

McKenzie: "I'm not going to tell you my board, but we had him higher than where we took him. Let's put it like that."

Q: What did you like about him?

McKenzie: "We loved him as a person, number one. The one thing he can do is work the edge of the offensive line. He does a good job maneuvering around that block and getting up field."

Q: What did you learn about him from his visit? Do you think he'll be a good fit at this spot?

McKenzie: "Definitely a good fit. What we learned about him was we learned about him as a person. We definitely got more information, medically. That was one of the main reasons we brought him in. We got a lot of information about the person."

Q: During that visit, did it make you more secure having evaluated him medically?

McKenzie: "Yes."

Q: What did you learn about yourselves as an organization working with Jon Gruden and his staff over the last three days?

McKenzie: "It was fun. The one thing that this staff has, they have a vision. They know exactly what they want, what they need and what will help them be successful. They communicated really well. I thought it was really good the way the scouts and coaches interacted, myself and Gruden included."

Q: The theme today seemed like 'risky business' where you went after top talent but a lot of questionable issues. Is that a change for you?

McKenzie: "When you say risky business, you're talking about medical and a couple of character issues. On the medical deal, we're not going to, unless our medical people flat out rejects a guy, we're not going to flunk them. If they feel like they can play this year, we're going to pass them. If they're going to be well at a certain point, we're going to keep them on the board. If it's something that will prevent them from playing forever, then we'll take them off the board. As far as character, we're not going to condemn these kids for mistakes. We're not going to lower our standards. Ever. But we feel like we have a great system in place to help guys who have fallen. If they're willing to stand up, own it and get better within themselves, we're going to give them a shot. We're going to hold them accountable and this staff is going to do a great job of holding them accountable and helping them."



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Q: Why do you think Jihad Ward's time here didn't work out? What went into that trade and what do you guys think you're getting from Ryan Switzer?

McKenzie: "When they called, it kind of opened doors. Bottom line is we drafted two interior guys and that kind of opened the door, and I was willing to listen. They had a player that they were willing to let go and we want some competition as a returner. He's a slot receiver, so it made it easy for me with that decision and thought it was a good way to upgrade our football team."

Q: Was your selection of Johnny Townsend at all a reaction to the selection before yours?

McKenzie: "Absolutely not. I had that pick target for my punter and I'm glad I had my punter there. It worked out great."

Q: What is it about Townsend that you like?

McKenzie: "I love the kid. I know his little brother, who was a roommate to my son in Tennessee before he transferred back to Florida to be with his brother. I know the family really well. I know what he's made of. He does a great job with directional punts. He's a great holder, great athlete. I think he has a lot of intangibles to be one of the best punters in years to come."

Q: What's going through your mind and your heart when you see Kahlil McKenzie get drafted and on a professional level as well?

McKenzie: "A lot going through my mind. I'm proud of him and I told him that. I always told him if we take you, we're going to put you on the offensive line too, so I see what Coach [Andy] Reid's thought process is. I got a text from Charles Woodson. He said your son has to retire. There's no way he's going to put that red helmet on his head. Part of me felt that way but in all seriousness, it's a good opportunity for him and I was hoping that he landed at a spot that will kind of grow him to that position. He can play D-tackle but he probably could be special on the offensive line and that's where we were going to play him."

Q: Are there parts of Azeem Victor's character that stood out to you in the positive that made up for the other things?

McKenzie: "No question. We brought him in for a visit. We got to spend some time with him. We got to know him as a guy. He was at the combine. We got a lot of information. We were there at his pro day. And I'm not going to say information overload, but he understands his mistakes and when he's willing to transform that, we're willing to give him a shot and we've got a system in place for him to help him. As long as he's committed, we're going to commit to him."

Q: What do you think about Marcell Ateman.? You've got a lot of depth now at receiver. You've got a lot of guys with adding Switzer today. How do you assess that position and where you are in terms of the depth of guys?

McKenzie: "I'll tell you what, Marcell, when we had an opportunity to get a big receiver like that, we jumped at it. We're going to give him a shot and see how it goes but you know even with Switzer, those guys, they can do certain things, being in the slot with Switzer and being able to return punts and with Marcell, giving him the opportunity to show the coaches what he can do. I mean he made a lot of big plays in college and we want to see if he can do that for us."

Q: What are you guys getting in Nick Nelson, your fourth rounder, once he becomes healthy from that meniscus injury?

McKenzie: "We think we're getting a pretty good little corner who can play nickel. We think we're getting a two-for-one deal there. He's a really good football player. He knows how to play the top of routes and a lot of pass breakups. He's just going to have to learn how to get some interceptions."



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Q: You characterized Maurice Hurst as being evaluated each year for the heart condition. Is it fair to describe his ability to compete in the NFL as a year-to-year basis based on the results of those evaluations?

McKenzie: "It's something he has to go through, however you want to term it. Now that they've found out whatever this condition is, I'm not going to get into all the medical terms, all the what-ifs. He's just going to have to follow a certain deal where he gets checked just so everyone is on the same page and we all know everything. When something like that happens, to be smart is to keep getting checked. We all go through our annual physical exams to see what kind of shape we're in. Some of you guys need to get that checked up a little more often. I'm not naming names." *(laughing)*

Q: Reggie, is there any thought to easing him in to things with this whole situation, his heart?

McKenzie: "No, not at all."

Q: Jon Gruden talked about the urgency or the quest to get that interior pass rusher. Now after this draft you have P.J. Hall, you have Maurice Hurst, you have some incumbents there with Mario Edwards Jr. How do you assess that defensive tackle spot, especially in terms of your interior pass rushers? Are you at this point satisfied with the talent you have there and feel that could be an improved group?

McKenzie: "I'll be more satisfied when I see our sack total rise. If that turns into results, for our interior to get more sacks and to help our edge rushers get more sacks, then absolutely. The intent will always be to get, not only add depth, but competition and rotation. The more you have in there, the better off you'll be throughout the game from the first quarter to when the final whistle blows. Adding some of these players during the offseason and in the draft, we feel we got better in regard to that."

Q: Now that the draft is over, is there still a possibility there's still a spot for NaVorro Bowman on this team?

McKenzie: "There's always a possibility, absolutely. We're not going to close doors to get good players in this building. We'll do that until the 53-man cut."