



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Head Coach Jon Gruden

Opening Statement: "Good afternoon. We're still waiting on some official updates from the trainer in regards to injuries. I don't have anything really to add other than what I said yesterday after the game, very disappointed in the outcome. I thought the guys played very hard. The penalties, the turnovers, that goes on me. Got to do a much better job."

Q: In the passing game, what have you seen from your receivers in gaining separation downfield?

Coach Gruden: "Well, I've got to do a better job. We've got to do a better job getting them better looks and getting them involved in the game no question, so I put that on myself. I think we've got good, young receivers. We might shake it up a little bit, give some other guys some more opportunities this week, but we'll study the Titans and see what goes."

Q: Are you seeing the penalties as something that can be addressed?

Coach Gruden: "Yeah, we just did address it again today. Pre-snap penalties and after the whistle penalties, that's a reflection of me and I'm not going to stand for that. We're not going to stand for that, our players don't stand for that. We've got to do a much better job and it's clearly 12 penalties to none. I've never heard of that stat before. Like I said, it's a reflection of me and we're going to get better at that."

Q: What do you think of the way the defense played overall?

Coach Gruden: "Yesterday was going to be a slugfest. It was going to be a tough game I believe. It was going to be a close score. The weather conditions were difficult, very difficult to throw the ball, period. To kick the ball, I think it was a big deal. The penalties and the turnovers, the hidden yardage is a huge statistic and it's one we're not good enough to overcome. But, we did some good things on defense and we expect that."

Q: What was the key to limiting big plays against the Chiefs?

Coach Gruden: "Well, we emphasized it. We really did a good job I think of trying to keep the ball in front of us. They missed a couple opportunities down the field, but give our guys credit. They tried to keep the ball in front of them against a lot of really good receivers and a great quarterback, and it was a real tough day to throw the ball in."

Q: How have you seen Trayvon Mullen's game grow?

Coach Gruden: "He's getting better. He had some really good plays yesterday. He was obviously flagged a few times for penalties. One of them, I can't quite say where it came from, but it was a big reversal in the game. He made a couple great plays against a great receiver and I think he's getting confidence. I think he's getting better. I think he performed better and he's performing better and better each week."

Q: The offense went a long time without scoring a touchdown, what was the missing ingredient in being able to finish drives?

Coach Gruden: "Well, we've had to go the long way most of the season and we've been pretty good at going 80 yards on long, sustained drives. Against the Jets, we had some dropped passes. I think three or four drives in a row. We've had some penalties, we've gotten off schedule. We've said it time and time again, for us to be good offense right now we are going to have to stay on schedule and be balanced."



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And yesterday I think we had a penalty on a swing pass. We had another penalty on our opening possession on an isolation block. The penalties, the turnovers, dropped passes, miscues have hurt us and it's been a big factor I think in the last couple of weeks. But again, that's something I've got to do a much better job of. I'm the man calling the plays."

Q: Do you anticipate Marquel Lee being active this week?

Coach Gruden: "Yeah, there is a possibility of some changes to try and give us a spark, and we'll see from Rod Martin, the trainer, where everybody is here in the next 24 hours."

Q: The most problematic quarter for you, in terms of score, has been the third quarter all year. Is there any common denominator there that you can think of?

Coach Gruden: "No, just poor halftime talks maybe. Again, I take credit for that. We're playing pretty good football at times. We've struggled the last two weeks. There's a lot of statistics out there that look bad and there's some that look really good. I think that's kind of a summarization of where we are right now at 6-6."

Q: What about this locker room makes you believe these guys will bounce back after consecutive bad losses?

Coach Gruden: "I have no doubt we're going to respond. I mean we didn't show up yesterday and not respond and come to compete, we came to play. We played extremely hard. We ran the ball good, played good defense in some spots. Like I said, we have some really good veteran leadership, some emerging young players. We just got to collectively play better together as a team and that falls on me."

Q: Is the notion of qualifying for playoffs, is that something you discuss with players or do you like to keep that separate and focus on the game?

Coach Gruden: "We're going to focus on the Titans. We can't control what's going on in the league. Who is playing who and what the scores are in other places. We got to control the things we can control and that's minimizing pre-snap penalties, eliminating after the whistle penalties and winning the turnover battle. Those are the things that we can control. Preparing ourselves to play and going out and competing, but we'd love to make the playoffs, love to win a championship, but that's out of our control right now."

Q: You guys moved Jalen Richard to kick returner yesterday against the Chiefs. Is that something you will stick with going forward?

Coach Gruden: "Yeah, we want to look at Jalen. Looking for a spark, you know? We're looking for somebody to create some field position and Jalen's had a history of doing it, making some big plays. So that'll be an area we continue to study and try to improve at."

Q: Daniel Carlson has been struggling a bit the last few weeks. What do you see there?

Coach Gruden: "Yeah, it's disappointing. I think a couple of snaps weren't perfect yesterday. The conditions weren't great the last two weeks. We don't practice in the conditions. I'm not making excuses, but we think he's a great kicker. We think he's going to work himself out of it and be just fine, but you know we're struggling right now in a lot of areas. Again, I'm the head coach. I've got to do a much better job of getting our team ready to go."



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Q: The way Tennessee has been playing lately and how Derrick Henry is running, What kind of challenge is that going to be for your run defense this week?

Coach Gruden: "A big challenge man. I mean, Henry's unbelievable. He never tires. I've got friends in Tennessee. I'm from Tennessee. My wife's from Tennessee. Derrick Henry never gets tired man. Jesus crimony, this guy runs hard. He's a fun back to watch. He doesn't want to go down. So, it's going to be a challenge for us. I know we're looking forward to it. We're anxious to play a home game again, and we're going to need to play a lot better in all three phases to slow down the Titans and get our offense in gear."

Q: Josh Jacobs had another big game yesterday. At this point in his rookie season, are you impressed with the way that he's holding being the power back that he is?

Coach Gruden: "Yeah. You know he's fighting through a shoulder himself. You know a lot of the things that these guys are doing behind the scenes go unrecognized. He hurt his shoulder in the Green Bay game. So, we've tried to be smart with him. But what a great competitor he is. He's going to be one of the best complete backs in all of football, I believe."

Q: Have you had a chance to look at Derek Carr's interceptions and assess what went wrong?

Coach Gruden: "Yeah. I think the first one was a blitz. It was a five-man rush. I credit [Tyrann] Mathieu for making a great play. Fooled us there. The second one, I think Derek perhaps could have got off Tyrell [Williams] and gone someplace else, but I'm not going to sit here and criticize my quarterback. You know, he's done a lot of good things. He's competing, and he's performed very well with a lot of moving parts, and if you think that's easy, then you're mistaken. I compliment him for his competitiveness, his preparation and his ability to compete each week."

Q: Mathieu said after the game yesterday that they were able to tell when Carr was going to be taking down field shots by some of the pre-snap formations. Is that something you look into at all?

Coach Gruden: "Hopefully I can get a copy of his tip sheet. You know, like I said, you're going to hear stuff like that here and there, but I credit the Chiefs. They did a great job. If they had something on us then that's another reflection of me, but I've got a lot of pride in our preparation and you know we'll just have to leave it at that."

Q: Do you think at all about the fact that you only have two more games left in Oakland?

Coach Gruden: "That's tough man. It is tough. You know it's tough driving in here seeing these fans. It's tough, the thought of all the change that's happening on our roster and in our future, but it's exciting at the same time. So, you try to again just focus on what we can control and play it one snap at a time, one game at a time, and try to be very, very respectful of where we come from. We come from Oakland and we'd like to finish strong."

Q: The jet sweep to Trevor Davis yesterday, was that a play he could have cut up and got the yards?

Coach Gruden: "Well, maybe. You know, it would have been a nice play by him. I think [Juan] Thornhill, the safety from Kansas made a great play. You know, one-on-one in space, that's a big part of pro football now, and you try to create some opportunities where you fool them completely and you can keep running, but they made a good play. They recognized it and the kid made a great play, the rookie out of Virginia. That's a play that, obviously, was a big turning point in the game. It's another one that I called."