



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Head Coach Jon Gruden

Q: How do you think the strategy of throwing a challenge flag for defensive pass interference might go around league?

Coach Gruden: "I don't like the thought of it, but we'll do the best we can. We will challenge when we think we have to and will avoid the challenge when we think we have to also."

Q: Before the day off you seemed optimistic about Antonio Brown returning to practice? Is there a setback of any kind?

Gruden: "I'm an optimistic guy. Yeah, I mean I think we're all disappointed. We think he's disappointed. We'd like to get the party started. We'd like to get him out here. He's a big part of this team, but in the time being we're going to continue to work hard and we've seen the development of some other receivers we are excited about."

Q: Who's really stepped up in his absence?

Gruden: "Well, Tyrell Williams has been very good here. I mean he's made some big plays at multiple positions and he's showed great stamina, so he's been outstanding. And Darren Waller's been really good. Really, really good, so we are really fired up to talk about those two guys. They've stood out the most and we are starting to see others like Marcell Ateman make some plays and my young friend from the Arizona Cardinals, J.J. Nelson, is starting to make some plays in many different situations, so that's good. And Derek [Carr] has done a great job distributing the ball."

Q: Is it almost a blessing in disguise then? If he's not there, then these other guys are getting quality reps?

Gruden: "I'm not going to get into all that. I want the guy out here as soon as possible. I'd like him to never leave and stay in the huddle every play, but life goes on and you got to continue to work. Other guys got to take advantage of these opportunities and so far they have."

Q: How are the running backs grading out in terms of blocking and assignments?

Gruden: "Good. We had a great blitz period yesterday and Alec Ingold from Wisconsin has really done an excellent job as a lead back and a pass protector. Josh Jacobs is picking it up, not only who to block and how to block, but he's really shown the excitement to block. He's a physical guy and we know [Jalen] Richard can block and DeAndré's [Washington] back healthy, so we got a lot of backs that take pride in that and are very good at it."

Q: How would you assess the offensive line through the first part of camp?

Gruden: "Obviously Trent Brown is a huge addition for us. He is standing out on the video every day. [Richie] Incognito and [Johnathan] Cooper are giving us some really good snaps at left guard. We already know Rodney [Hudson] and Gabe [Jackson] are very good players and Kolton [Miller] is a better player in year two. So, we are looking for some more depth. We are going to look to continue to get better and we'll see how we stack up against the Rams because that's a formidable front."

Q: What are some of the things you see about Miller that are different this year?

Gruden: "Well, number one, he understands the system. I think he's in second training camp, he's anticipating audibles, anticipating stunts, understands situations better. He's stronger, that's the big thing. I mean the guy is a lot stronger and he's healthy and that certainly helps."



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Q: Those practices against the Rams next week, are they almost more valuable than the preseason game itself to you as a coach?

Gruden: “Yeah, probably, because the starters will get a lot of work where they won’t in the first preseason game, so we’ll be able to see our young corners against some great receivers and vice versa. And we’ll see how we stack up against the NFC champs and it will be a great challenge for us.”

Q: Do you plan on throwing more challenge flags in the preseason just to test and see things out?

Coach Gruden: “No, I don’t foresee that. Every time you throw a challenge flag in the preseason game the referees yell at you because they don’t want you to do that. Just kidding, but no. I’m not a big fan of the whole replay process, but we’ll challenge plays that we feel need to be challenged.”

Q: Are you seeing Maxx Crosby learning quickly and being able to apply what he has learned?

Coach Gruden: “Yeah, he’s done great. He’s a guy that has really gotten stronger. He really likes the training table in there and the 10 o’clock snack. We’ve encouraged him to eat and take those supplements to get stronger and heavier. He can play left end, he can play right end, he has an incredible motor. He wins the gassers too at the end of practice. That’s a great ingredient to have, effort. He’s working on his repertoire. [Defensive line coach] Brent Buckner’s a heck of a coach and we’re seeing some improvement.”

Q: Mike Glennon has more freedom to get guys in the right place. How have you seen him develop?

Coach Gruden: “Pretty good. We talked about Nate Peterman the other day, I think Glennon is a good player. He has to have some freedom at the line of scrimmage because he is a pocket passer. He’s not a guy that is going to run the read-option and to run around. So, we let him get to some plays when he sees advantage looks. But you have to earn your freedom. You have to prove that you can recognize, you can communicate and you can execute. The more he does that, the more freedom he gets. But the last two days he has played better.”

Q: What went in to bringing in Jonathan Cooper?

Coach Gruden: “I liked Cooper coming out of college. He reminded me of a guy, McIntyre, he was a 285-pound guard that could really move. He was an early draft pick, he’s had some freak injuries. I know the guy that coached him last year in Washington. He started 13 games in Dallas where [assistant head coach/special teams coordinator] Rich Bisaccia was. He’s a natural left guard. Incognito is out for the first two games. We need a veteran to play next to Kolton. And ‘Coop’s’ done a good job. ‘Coop’s’ a good player if he can be healthy now.”

Q: Is there any update on Gabe Wright?

Coach Gruden: “He tweaked his knee and that could be a week, could be two weeks. We have a couple defensive lineman, Gabe Wright, Eddie Vanderdoes who is in there also, hopefully back within the next week.”

Q: Alec Ingold was regarded as one of the top fullbacks in the country but went undrafted because teams do not use fullbacks like they used to. You used to use fullbacks a lot. Do you still want to use a fullback as much as you can?

Coach Gruden: “Yeah we would, we certainly would. If you have a tight end that can block and a fullback that can block, you merit using that personnel group. But when you watch Josh Jacobs run, he is really good in a two-back set. And when you have Trent Brown and Gabe Jackson on your right side, you have Incognito and a Pro Bowl



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Center [Rodney Hudson], yeah, the thought of handing the ball off repeatedly to a back that gets hot is exciting to us. We have a lot to prove and earn before we say we're going to commit to that."

Q: General Manager Mike Mayock talked about establishing a new culture with the draft picks from this year. Are you seeing that new culture here?

Coach Gruden: "I don't know about culture, that's a little deep for me. We just want to win. We have guys that will lay it on the line, not that we didn't have that before, but we're trying to get a collective mindset here in the locker room, guys that will push it and work it and work together. We did acquire some guys that have captancy in their background, they have winning in their background and they have really good criteria when it comes to character. We put a priority on that and I'm glad we did."