



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Head Coach Jon Gruden

Opening statement: "I'd like to say I'm just excited for another opportunity to get better. I'll answer any questions that I can."

Q: Did anything jump out on film from the game on Saturday?

Coach Gruden: "A lot of guys playing. Obviously, extended amount of plays early in the preseason, which is uncommon. The heat was a challenge also for a lot of these players. Plenty of errors, plenty of things to clean up. There were some really good individual efforts. I thought [Shilique] Calhoun played well on defense. He did again have a couple of penalties that have to be eliminated. Offensively the first half was not good. I do think we got some things going in the second half. Some guys played themselves into contention, some guys didn't."

Q: What have you seen from James Cowser?

Coach Gruden: "He's just showcased his versatility really. He's been playing inside linebacker. Been rushing the passer as a defensive end. Contributing on special teams. He's been playing through some nicks with a beat-up body. I give him a lot of credit. He's our kind of guy. He's played himself into position to make this team."

Q: Will you go through a mock game plan this week?

Coach Gruden: "Not a lot. We're going to look at Green Bay and try to put our team on a Wednesday schedule during the regular season. This is not going to be exactly how it's going to be because we have 90 men on roster still, but we did show them some Packer film this morning. We did have a walk through, preparing ourselves for Green Bay, but it's not going to be a whole lot of intense game planning. We will see the starters play a little bit this week. We have looked at Green Bay a little bit, yes."

Q: What has Jordy Nelson brought to the receiver room?

Coach Gruden: "He's been a playmaker on the field. He's been a consistent, reliable target at a couple positions. He's been a real good influence behind the scenes. We've been really, really happy with his addition to this team. Hopefully someone can step up and clearly emerge as the third receiver."

Q: What's it like have Edgar Bennett in that room and what have your receivers learned from him so far?

Coach Gruden: "Well Edgar is a great coach. I coached Green Bay as a receiver coach in 1992 and Edgar was drafted out of Florida State. So, I go way back with him. He's a great personality. He's a very good teacher. He's got a lot energy. I think our receivers have benefitted from his coaching. I think he would agree that we need someone to step up in that room this week."

Q: You benched a lot of starters on Saturday, but in the secondary a lot of starters were playing. What was the design with that plan?

Coach Gruden: "Well, we wanted to see a little bit of [Gareon] Conley, obviously. He hasn't had the pads on very much in the last year. So, we got him eight or nine snaps. He'll get a little more this week. Just wanted to take a look at [Rashaan] Melvin. He did some good things against the Lions. Again, just for a couple of series, eight to 10 snaps. Wanted to see a little more of Reggie Nelson. Needed his leadership back there, [Marcus] Gilchrist was still out. We had a lot of young guys playing, so we wanted to have Reggie back there calling the shots. We held Leon Hall obviously because we want to see some other guys play the nickel position."

Q: Where does the team stand?

Coach Gruden: "Well it's very competitive. I think Erik Harris has had a good camp. I think Marcus Gilchrist has been a good player. We haven't seen him. Hopefully we get him back out here today. Reggie Nelson certainly, Karl Joseph, give us four guys that have been working in the rotation, but we haven't settled on anything yet."



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Q: Can you talk about the new tackling rules?

Coach Gruden: "I have a pretty good idea. I think they're trying to eliminate the crown of the helmet from football. They're trying to eliminate the unnecessary blind hits where I clearly get a run at you and you don't see me. I lower my helmet. We're trying to take all those hits out of football, but we've been trying to take those hits out of football since I've been in the league. They don't the runner lowering his helmet. They don't want the tackler lowering his helmet. That's been in football forever. Forever. It's been a bad thing, but we're trying to emphasize it. I still think it's going to be a hard thing to call. You're running full speed. I don't know which way you're going. I'm running full speed at you and I got to bring you down. We're both getting paid to get our jobs done. It's going to be tough on the officials, but I think we can clean up some of the vicious hits that are uncalled for."

Q: It seems like there's been some of those calls in these preseason games where it was an accident. Do you think they need to address it with replay?

Coach Gruden: "If we do any more replays, we're going to be out there for all night. We'll be out there all day and all night. Like I said before, I don't care if people don't agree with me, I don't like instant replay. I don't like it. I think the officials that are out on the field have a tough job. They've done an excellent job, I think, as a unit getting themselves ready to call the game. they study the opponents all week. They stand in their positions every week. I like letting them...is it a catch? Is it a touchdown? Is it a fumble? Is it a legal hit or not? I think if you keep challenging everything, pretty soon we're never going to play football. The game is going to last forever."

Q: As an affective coaching technique do you teach them tackling?

Coach Gruden: "Well no. We're trying to emphasize good technique at all times. We are taking safety into account. We want our players to remain healthy and have the proper fundamentals when they play this game. Yeah, we are emphasizing it. It does change the way you coach a little bit. Changes the way you play. You have to adapt."

Q: What's the status of Seth Roberts? What other players might return?

Coach Gruden: "Yeah, I think Seth will be back too. He'll practice today. That's great for us. We need to get him out on the field, back in with our receivers. Gilchrist will practice today, that's a positive. I think Brandon Parker, although he played last week, is getting a little bit more healthy. Those three guys in particular. Jordan Simmons cam back, got some snaps in the game. I think [Daryl] Worley will be back practicing today as well. There's five healthy guys that have a chance to help our team."

Q: What does it do for your offense when you have outside receivers that can play the slot?

Coach Gruden: "Well it does a lot. I think when you throw in Jared Cook who is a joker that can play wide receiver, slot receiver. He can do a lot of things as a tight end. I think [Derek] Carrier has some of those qualities. Some of our running backs like Jalen Richard, DeAndré Washington, they can line up as a slot. That's what you're looking for. You're looking to create matchups on a weekly basis. The more positions you can play, the more you can do that."

Q: Will Eddy Piñeiro kick today?

Coach Gruden: "There's another man. I'm not quite sure. I haven't seen Eddy yet. [Assistant Head Coach/Special Teams Coordinator] Rich Bisaccia and Eddy Piñeiro will answer that bell shortly. We'll see."

Q: What do you need to see from one of your receivers to step up as the third receiver?

Coach Gruden: "Well, more consistency, honestly. Seth has been out now for nine, 10 days. Martavis has been in and out of here. It's been tough. I think just someone to come out here and string four or five really good days together and showcase their stuff. Make some plays. With and without the ball."

Q: What does having a running back like Richard do for an offense?

Coach Gruden: "It does a lot. If you watch New England play the last couple of years, they've been using [James] White, Rex Burkhead, Dion Lewis to tell the quarterback what the coverage is. You put a running back out there in



Oakland Raiders Transcript

space, if the linebacker is covering them, if the safety is covering, they know it's man-to-man. So, they're satellites. They can go out there and help the quarterback determine man or zone and they can win. They can run an array of routes. We're going to continue to try to get Jalen Richard and DeAndre Washington more and more on their plate."

Q: Do you have a sense of where Obi Melifonwu in terms of his evaluation?

Coach Gruden: "No, I don't. He's still being evaluated."

Q: Chris Warren III said running violently isn't something that came naturally to him. Are you seeing more and more of that from him?

Coach Gruden: "Yeah, I think he's running behind his pads better. I think he really picked that up in the scrimmages against the Lions. He made some great runs in those two practices. I'm really as worried about him as a ball carrier as I am [thinking] what kind of back is he without the ball. Picking up blitzes, handling the audibles. He still has to grow a lot as a running back, but as a runner, he's learning how to run behind his pads and be physical."

Q: Do you need to see anything out of Doug Martin this next game?

Coach Gruden: "I've seen a lot out of Doug since he's been here. I think Marshawn [Lynch] has one carry. I think Lynch has one carry. I think if you would have told me that Chris Warren would be my leading rusher and Paul Butler would be our leading receiver at this time, I would say, 'That's crazy. That's unbelievable.' But we don't really want to see those guys a whole lot to answer your question. We've seen a lot of them."

Q: What has Tahir Whitehead brought to the linebacker group?

Coach Gruden: "Yeah, he's been great. He brings a lot of energy to our team, too. He's upbeat, positive, competitive. He wants to win in a walk through. He wants to win at practice. He wants to beat you at a game of cards on the airplane. He just brings a lot of energy. He's a really good guy. He's a really good player. When your best players are your hardest workers and your most energetic people, it's a good thing. He's brought us a lot."

Q: How did you handle running audibles on Saturday knowing you're going to face them again in Week 1 of the regular season? How did that impact your game plan?

Coach Gruden: "Not really much. Sean McVay and I talked before the game. They didn't do very much and we didn't do very much. A lot of backup players played, and lot of backup schemes were used. I don't think a lot was gained by either team out of that game."

QB Derek Carr

Q: Quite a game on Saturday...

Carr: "Yeah, oh yeah, it was. It was weird to actually go to the stadium and not do anything. I'm not going to try and get used to that anytime soon. *(laughter)* But yeah, it was weird. Just mad that we lost."

Q: When did you know Head Coach Jon Gruden's intention of sitting so many players?

Carr: "I think we knew pretty early on in the week. You know, it's especially weird that we're playing them in Week 1. For us to play them in Week 2 of the preseason, that was kind of a shock to us when you got the schedule. We knew kind of early on and you kind of got the feel that would probably happen for both teams."



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Q: It didn't seem like you guys were doing a ton and it didn't seem like Connor Cook or EJ Manuel were running through the gamut of what the team might usually adjust to pre-snap. Can you detail what didn't go into that game?

Carr: "If I told you what didn't go into it, they might have all of our secrets. You hit it on the head. We did not throw a lot out there. I think we'll just continue to do that and just continue to play football until the regular season hits, when the wins and losses and those things are on coach's record. I think that's when it'll change."

Q: Do things ramp up in terms of preparation and such around this time of the preseason?

Carr: "Yeah, you know, I think for us a big part of it is making sure that our weekly schedule is routine because we haven't really done that yet. With the two first preseason games, you don't ever really prepare for them, the third one is like a mock (game), how do we prepare, how do we go about our week, me figuring out my lift schedule with the new coaches, me figuring out when Coach Gruden's going to want to meet with me and what do I need to have ready and done by what point. So, it's all different. Really, the biggest part of this week, obviously the game you want to go out there and win, but really the most important part is the preparation. How are we going to lay that out? How are we going to do that? And making sure we're on top of that stuff."

Q: How has the vibe changed between here in Alameda and training camp in Napa?

Carr: "It's nice to be home. To be with the wife and kids is always better than stuck in a hotel. But, I think you just get more into the game mode, whereas training camp is groundhog day. I don't care who you are, you're just trying to make a team. I will never think any differently, you want to go out there and put your best foot forward every day, trying to make the team, watch the film and do all of those kinds of things – the way training camp goes. But, when you come here and now, we're ready to hit the season. You're full in game preparation mode. I even met with our video guy, 'Hey, I need it this way.' We have a new video guy [Joe Harrington]. There's a lot that goes into it when we get back. But, hopefully we'll get a good routine going."

Q: Is there anything about Jordy Nelson that has surprised you since his arrival?

Carr: "Nothing has surprised me. I will say, he's faster than I thought and I thought he could already run. Obviously, I know Davante [Adams] really well. Davante said, 'Oh, he can still go.' But, if anything I think it's that. But, it still wasn't a shock, I knew he could go. He's been able to run since he was little. He won the 100-meter (dash) in the state and all of that kind of stuff. I knew he could go, but nothing has really surprised me. I mean, everything that you hear about him is what you get. He helps the receiver room raise their level, whether you're the second guy, third guy or you're just trying to make the team, he raises the level for others. It's not only with the way that he practices and works out and the way he takes care of his body and those things, but the way he goes after it mentally. He wants to think like the quarterback. If we throw a ball, we're always communicating. We'll say, 'Hey, if they play it this way, I like it like this.' Just the way he communicates, it rubs off on those young guys too."

Q: If Coach Gruden tells you you're only going to play a quarter on Friday, do you push to play more?

Carr: "Not in the preseason. Whatever coach wants. If it's regular season obviously, 'Coach, I'm going to play the whole thing.' (laughter) But preseason, it's just nice to go out there and play football. And however long coach wants to do that, cool. Obviously as a competitor, you get out there, I remember the Lions and we got out there and I was like, 'No, no, no, please. Can we please keep playing?' You know, that kind of thing because it's the first time. Then you quickly realize that hey, we have a couple weeks to go until the real ones start."

Q: Coach has talked about wanting to see a third receiver emerge. What have you seen out of the players that are battling for that position?

Carr: "Yeah, a couple of them are new, fighting for that spot. A couple have been banged up. So, I think we're all sitting there excited to see what happens. They're all, I think, healthy. We'll see. I think they're all mentally ready, physically ready. Hopefully come game time, we can sit there and we can evaluate that spot. Because, obviously it's important. When you have guys like Martavis [Bryant] or [Amari Cooper] Coop or Jordy [Nelson] on the outside, you have Jared [Cook] on the inside, someone is hopefully going to get a good matchup on the other side and in the slot,



Oakland Raiders Transcript

wherever we put them. We have to figure that out and it'll be exciting. I'm just excited to watch how that goes this week, preparation wise and then in the game."

Q: Are you looking forward to getting Seth Roberts back and is it easy to keep the chemistry you've had with him because of the experience you have had in the past?

Carr: "Yeah, absolutely. I've thrown a lot of passes to Seth in-season and out of season. The fact that he missed a little bit, it is what it is. That happens as we know. It won't be any hurdle to get over. What it did give me, it gave me time to throw to the other guys too to build rapport, build timing with them. I'm excited to have Seth back though obviously, I've played a lot of football games with Seth."

Q: When you have three wide receivers and they all have been trained like any one of the three positions, are you cognizant of who that person is or are you cognizant of who is playing that spot?

Carr: "This game's all about matchups. So, the fact that we have a system in place that I can get to any play that the coach obviously wants and those things, it doesn't matter who is where. Lee Smith could be out wide at receiver and we might not throw it to him. *(laughter)* Just kidding. The way it's set up is for everyone to play any spot. That way, he does it that way to make it easier on the quarterback. 'Hey, if you get this look verses this, get to this.' And they all have to know what to do. He knows where the matchup is and like I said before, I feel like it's like a trained robot for Coach Gruden. He builds a system in such a way that all of the other guys have to learn everything else."

Q: Jordy Nelson said that many guys are puzzled that Jared Cook hasn't settled in with a team over his career before coming to the Raiders. it puzzling to you? How much more comfortable are you with him in Year 2?

Carr: "Yeah, I think I'm one of those guys Jordy was talking about. It blows my mind. We have a lot of those guys: Jordy is one of them, [Kelechi Osemele] 'K.O.', Rodney [Hudson], you see Donald Penn, Doug Martin. You see some of these guys that were on other teams that are not anymore. You're like, 'Man, how does that happen?' We're very fortunate and very blessed to have them. But Cook, you guys know I love throwing to Cook. We have a great relationship, talk to him in the offseason and we get a lot of work in together. A lot of communication with him and I. I'm just glad that we have him. I'll just say that. It's nice to have someone with that kind of speed, that kind of toughness and all of those kinds of things playing tight end, especially with who we have outside. He gets a lot of good matchups sometimes."

Q: How has the day-in and day-out been with offensive coordinator Greg Olson? Have the level of your discourse when it comes to talking football graduated from the first time you two were together in 2014?

Carr: "Yeah, I think it kind of just...We didn't really pick up where we left off, we were just at another level when we both got together. The conversation wasn't like, 'Hey, what do you think about this? What do you think about this?' We just kind of hit it rolling because we knew each other. I knew how to talk to him he knew how to talk to me. There was no learning in that sense. Our communication has been great. I love talking to him, I love 'Oly'. I'm so happy that he's back, I think you guys know that. I love that guy and it's been fun. We have a good time, honestly. Just trying to, as of now, beat up on [defensive coordinator Paul] Guenther. But now we'll play some other people. *(laughter)*"

Q: Griff Whalen made that catch the other day, has he played himself into a spot or at least at the brink of making this roster?

Carr: "I would think so. Obviously, he ran some really good routes. Not only on just that play, obviously the catch was amazing, amazing route, but he ran a lot of good routes in that game and he's been doing it over and over again. Every time I've checked to something in practice, OTAs, going back all the way to April whenever we were starting, he hasn't had a mental error at all. He's just one of those guys that quarterbacks love. Obviously, EJ [Manuel] decided to throw to him on that play for a reason. We see what he does in practice and I'm glad that he got in the end zone. I really am, because hopefully now, if that helps him, obviously then I'm all for it. I want the best guys, however many we keep, I want the best ones and if he's one of them then I will be super fired up."



Oakland Raiders Transcript

WR Jordy Nelson

Q: What do you think it'll be like emotionally this week against the Packers?

Nelson: "Emotionally, it won't be a problem. It'll be fun to see those guys, not only the players but the trainers, equipment staff, weight staff, all those guys I was with for ten years. Those are the guys you miss that you see day-to-day, that you don't get to talk to as much as you're used to. It'll be fun to see them. It's kind of enjoyable as a preseason game so we can have some fun and get in and get out."

Q: Do you think there will be some trash talking out there?

Nelson: "Probably not. If it is, it's going to be all jokes. They know the type of guy I am."

Q: Are you a trash talker in general?

Nelson: "No."

Q: When Coach Gruden came back here, he said there were still people he knew from his time here. You were in Green Bay for ten years; a lot of those guys will still be there.

Nelson: "Yeah, everyone except who came in as the new coaching staff. Like I said, that will be the cool thing. That's even the same thing when I go back to K-State. A lot of the same staff there. Those are the people that, day-in and day-out do a lot of the things for us behind the scenes that don't get any of the credit. Those are the ones you enjoy talking to and catching up with."

Q:

Nelson: "I've talked to him a couple times, seen him a couple times. Obviously stayed in contact but him and all the other guys will be good to see pregame and postgame."

Q: How long did it take you to feel like you were part of the Raiders?

Nelson: "Not as long as I thought it would be. I can't give you a day or whatever it is. I don't know if that's because of the whole change on the coaching staff, too, because there was a lot of new faces that came in at the same time so that might have made it easier. I'd say once we got into football, it felt natural. It felt normal. Once you're out there on the practice field, it's football again."

Q: Was having Edgar Bennett here helpful in that process?

Nelson: "It's one less person I had to figure out who he was. I've known him for ten years, or 11 now. I know what his expectations are and the way he coaches and what he demands from his receivers."

Q: What do you need to accomplish personally to get into a rhythm getting into the season?

Nelson: "Same thing I've been doing the last two weeks: continue to get in a chemistry with Derek, continue to get in shape, everything that you can slowly build on towards the season. It's going to be here quick. It's a decently short week and we'll be into another one next week. Just building that chemistry and that work, to continue to grow through these next couple weeks and throughout the season."

Q: There's a rule now that you could be penalized if you drop your head. Has that changed how you approach the game?

Nelson: "No. I don't think I naturally do that, so it's nothing I'm worried about. We'll see once live-action comes but it's nothing I've given too much thought to."

Q: Are players a little gray as to what is and is not a penalty?

Nelson: "I think everyone knows the answer to that one as you've seen the reactions over the last two weeks. I don't know if it's just players confused or possibly officials as well. Hopefully they're over the top for the first four



Oakland Raiders Transcript

preseason games and then it will dial down. We understand it's for payers' safety. There's a fine line that we have to walk."

Q: Anything that you miss the most about Green Bay?

Nelson: "Just the people, not only the ones with the Packers organization, but our friends that we met off the field away from football, our neighbors and all that stuff. I think that's what makes a community, that's what makes you enjoy a place for ten years, the people you surround yourself with. We're still in contact with them and are still great friends and will always be in contact with them. You always miss people when you leave a place, no matter where you are."

Q: What have you seen from the competition at no. 3 receiver?

Nelson: "Some good. Probably just some inconsistency. I don't want to say bad but just the ups and downs which are typical of training camp. Every year I've been a part of it, guys come out of blocks fast then slow down, or come out slow then pick it up. You have injuries you have to deal with. I think the main thing is being consistent, so you can become reliable."

Q: What is your role in the WR room?

Nelson: "Just keep reminding them after practice in meetings or whatever that you can't ride the roller coaster. For as much as we practice in training camp, you're going to have good days, you're going to have bad days. You're going to have good routes, you're going to have bad routes. Our defense, as they say, gets paid, too. They're going to get you every once in a while. Watch yourself on film, improve off a good play and improve off a bad play. Continue to grind and make sure you leave it out on the field. At the end of the day, if you do that, it might not be the result you want but you'll be comfortable with it because you took care of what you could control."

Q: Gruden wants all the receivers to know all the slots. I assume it was that way in Green Bay?

Nelson: "As I've learned the playbook, I've learned the concepts of everything. You can easily get moved around based on formations and you never know who might go down or who needs their rest. As a young guy, to me, it's always best to know all positions so you're ready to go. It gives you more opportunities to get on the field if you play three positions instead of just one. I think learning it as a whole is an easier way to learn a playbook rather than just learning one position. That's always how I've approached it and most of the guys I've been around have approached it."

Q: Is there anyone in the receiver room that you didn't know a lot about that have surprised you?

Nelson: "Yeah, everyone but Amari [Cooper] *(laughter)*."

Q: Is it tough to find your own way here to be the new guy and the veteran guy?

Nelson: "Absolutely, especially early on when it was hard for me to teach the offense because I didn't know it. I was still learning and still trying to figure out what the coaches wanted as a whole and how they wanted things ran certain ways. Once I started feeling that out, I've been able to have more conversations with guys and really get into the fine details of maybe some suggestions or ways to help them create more separation which is what we're all trying to get at the end of the day."