



## ***Oakland Raiders Transcript***

### **Head Coach Jon Gruden**

**Opening Statement:** "Tough day yesterday, but the sun came up today. We're anxious to get ready for the Chiefs. I got some bad news, we feel that Hunter Renfrow hurt his rib and he's going to be out for a while. Big loss for our team."

**Q: Did Renfrow come back with the team?**

**Coach Gruden:** "Yes."

**Q: Did he suffer a punctured lung?**

**Coach Gruden:** "I'm not going to get into the severity because I really don't know. We're looking at his ribs and as soon as I get the official, exact determination I'll let you know."

**Q: Where do you go in the slot without Renfrow?**

**Coach Gruden:** "We'll obviously have Keelan Doss who's played in the slot a little bit this year. He's a good player. Darren Waller can play in the slot. [Derek] Carrier can play in the slot and Zay Jones made a living in the slot at East Carolina, so we'll see who we plug in there as we prepare for the Chiefs. But it's a big, big loss for us. We've had a lot of turnover at that position this year, it's really too bad. I'll say this, Renfrow is going to be a great Raider. He's really been playing good for us."

**Q: Did you gain any insights on how things kind of snowballed and got away from you last game?**

**Coach Gruden:** "The opening drive we won the toss, we went down and had a field goal. We mishandled a pass and then we had the ball again and we mishandled another pass. It was a big play, would have set up a scoring opportunity and then we had the ball again and we missed a field goal. We missed some opportunities to put points on the board. There was a questionable call on a personal foul on the quarterback which put points on their board that I didn't agree with, but I don't agree with many things that happen in life. We did not get that contagious play-making vibe yesterday. It was like we were waiting for somebody to make a play, it just didn't happen. I take credit for it. I got to do a better job, but it's a learning experience for our entire team and hopefully it makes us better in the long run."

**Q: Do you think there was any looking ahead?**

**Coach Gruden:** "No, not with this team. Nuh-uh, no, uh-uh. We had four straight games go down to the last play of the game. Four in a row: Houston, Detroit, Chargers, Cincinnati and the team is fighting hard. I think sometimes fatigue might be a problem. Six-hour flight, we were delayed two hours getting in. Three-hour time change, East Coast kickoff at one o'clock was hard when I coached a veteran Raider team years ago. And we are not a lot of experienced people when it comes to rain and cold, and I'm not making any excuses, but hopefully that got our attention and it makes us better as we prepare for one of the best teams in football in another cold, nasty place."

**Q: How do you go about simulating rain and cold weather being in California?**

**Coach Gruden:** "I'm not a genius. I'm not Thomas Edison, I don't know how to do that. *(Laughter)* We're just trying to show pictures of people that are cold that deal with cold. *(laughter)* I don't know. We're not going to over analyze it. We did not play our best football and as I said yesterday, we're really excited about this team, these guys that we have and I said some things to them after the game I think they all bought into and agree with. We're united in what's ahead here and we know we've got, not only



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young players, but new players that weren't even here with us when the season started. So, we got to roll our fists up and have a great week of preparation and rally around the men that are going to be ready."

**Q: Are you confident that the team can put this behind them as quickly as they need to and move forward?**

**Coach Gruden:** "Yeah, I'm very confident in that. That doesn't mean we're going to go out there and do anything. We are going to have to earn every first down, we are going to have to work hard to get [Patrick] Mahomes off the field. They're coming off a bye week. They'll be fresh as daisies. So, it'll be a great challenge in one of the great places and great rivalries in football. Hopefully it brings out a much better performance in us."

**Q: Do you know why Andy Reid is so good after a bye?**

**Coach Gruden:** "He has good players. That helps. He's a good coach. I think it's a combination of all of that. My sources tell me he gave his team most of the week off, so hopefully a lot of their flights are delayed and they're late getting in today. *(laughter)*"

**Q: The first game against Mahomes, you started well against him and weren't able to keep him under control in the second quarter. When you look back at the game, what do you guys need to do better?**

**Coach Gruden:** "Well, we started off 10-0 and we had the ball at mid-field. We needed to, I think finish a couple of drives there in the first half, take advantage of a 10-point lead and field position in front of our home crowd. We failed to do that offensively and you got to credit this Mahomes now. He's not only got great receivers, he's got one heck of an arm. He makes and attempts throws I have not seen before. When he gets hot, he can really hurt you. We just got to keep the ball in front of us. We can't give up the vertical bombs, we just can't do it. We've got to hard this week on preventing that and it was jaw dropping the display he put on there for about six minutes, and we got to try and eliminate that obviously."

**Q: You talked about the rivalry and playing in Arrowhead. Is this the type of game you came back into coaching that you were looking forward to these types of games?**

**Coach Gruden:** "Pretty much. I remember coming here in 1998 I think it was. We hadn't had any success against the Chiefs and the biggest when I think that I've had as a coach, other than one game, was beating Kansas City in the millennium game in 2000 at the end of the season, but that's a long time ago. This is great for NFL fans and football and we're excited to have a meaningful game this time of year against the Chiefs."

**Q: How do you handle a postgame cross-country flight like that? Are you just watching film or you talking to players?**

**Coach Gruden:** "A little bit of both. I go back in the plane and talk to a few of the guys, but pretty much turn on the film and study what happened in the Jets game, and then get on to the Chiefs. We have Thanksgiving coming up here, I'm respectful of that. We got a lot to be thankful for, so we're going to try and keep our schedule normal but we want to do a good of job as we can as coaches to prepare our guys for Kansas City, so we spent four or five hours on the plane. We've had a great schedule this year. We've had a chance to spend numerous hours on the plane. I've gotten really good at studying on planes, so that's what I did. That's what we did as a staff."



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**Q: Do you expect to have Marquel Lee this week?**

**Coach Gruden:** "I don't know that he'll be back this week, but he'll be back soon, either this week or next. With Hunter's injury we have to obviously look at what to do at that position. That's a big concern right now. Getting Marquel [Lee] back will be a good boost for us. Hopefully we'll get Lamarcus Joyner back. That would certainly help. So, I'll keep you updated as I find these things out."

**Q: Has Maxx Crosby's arsenal of pass rushing moves grown over the course of the season as he's gotten used to playing in the NFL?**

**Coach Gruden:** "I think Maxx [Crosby] is going to be great. I mean he has, he has grown. He's gained more confidence. He's gotten stronger. He's so confident in what he can do. I really think we've got something there with this Crosby. And I hope [Clelin] Ferrell and Crosby together can form a nice combination, but we're really happy with Maxx Crosby. I would not trade him for just about anybody."

**Q: Having seen what you guys have done offensively running the ball during the beginning of the year, are teams loading up the box and trying to stop it now? Should you still be able to run with the fronts that you are seeing?**

**Coach Gruden:** "Well we think we should be able to run better than what we have statistically. We've got a great runner. We like our offensive line. We've had some moving parts there you know. We've had some injuries at right tackle and center, but I think our guys are getting healthy. It's a combination of us needing to do a better job as coaches, putting our guys in better position. I think teams no doubt see [Josh] Jacobs and they want to try to commit people to stop. We've got to do better, maybe throwing it at times to keep them off balance, but we're still running it pretty good compared to other teams that I study."

**Q: There have been some changes in the secondary so some of those guys aren't as familiar with each other. What are you seeing from those guys and are there things that can be addressed before you play the Chiefs?**

**Coach Gruden:** "I think experience in the system is a problem at times. I think communication is a problem sometimes. You know people don't just line up with a guy over there and over there. They motion, they shift, they come out four wides, five wide, empty backfield sets. You've got to make adjustments. Some of these guys are learning the defense that haven't played together. I think it's a combination of that. You know we've lost linebackers, we've lost safeties, and we've lost our nickel back. And you don't have to be a genius but you're not going to be as good communicating and adjusting on the fly as you would be if you had some continuity there. So that was a challenge. It will be a challenge this week and we've got to respond to those challenges."

**Q: Do you think Lamarcus Joyner will be back in time for the Chiefs game?**

**Coach Gruden:** "I sure hope so. Yeah I'm confident, but I was confident last week. So, we'll see where he is today. He's out there working with the trainers as we speak."

**Q: When you look back to when you got Darren Waller about a year ago, what did you think you were getting at the time?**

**Coach Gruden:** "Well we knew we were getting a great looking athlete. I mean his athletic ability at Georgia Tech is undeniable. I mean he's big and fast and he has really developed physically. I would not



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hesitate to say I think he's as good as any tight end in the league when it comes to doing it all: blocking, catching, lining up anywhere. If you asked him to cover a punt, he'd cover a punt and be a great punter. He's been astonishing. It's been a great story for young people. I know there's a lot of young guys out there, young people that have problems. What a source of strength and what a great accomplishment. But I had no idea he would be able to do this. He's essentially a rookie playing tight end. He was a wide receiver and he's transformed himself into one of the best tight ends in football and we're excited about having him as a Raider."

**Q: Tyrell Williams has done some nice things on the field but he's also dropped a number of passes. Do you have any concerns about his focus and concentration when he goes through a rough stretch like this?**

**Coach Gruden:** "You know, not focus and concentration. I think he's had some foot problems. He's missed a lot of time. He's missed some games, and I don't know if he's 100% but he's giving us everything he has and I admire him. I think he's a good player. He's fighting some tough times. He knows we need him. It's been a tough year at our receiving position. He's had some tough moments. He's also had some really good moments and hopefully we'll see the best of him down the stretch."

**Q: Are there considerations to possibly shutting down Renfrow for the rest of the season?**

**Coach Gruden:** "Well, we'll see the severity of it. You know, we'll never put anybody at risk but there is a possibility. We just got to make sure that he sees the people he needs to see and we make the decision based on the medical exams. We're concerned, disappointed, and we'll miss him."