



## Oakland Raiders Transcript

### Offensive Coordinator Greg Olson

**Q: You mentioned last week that you thought Derek Carr had his best game. Did he surpass that game this past weekend?**

**Coach Olson:** "Yeah, we thought he played well last week and just happy again about the progress and where he's at."

**Q: Are you seeing him be more confident with his decision making?**

**Coach Olson:** "A lot of it is just taking ownership of the offense and again that's a comfort level (within the system). Each week I think he's become more and more comfortable with the system and with the way [Head Coach] Jon [Gruden] calls the game and with the things that Jon wants from him on gameday. Again, it's just more of a comfort level within the system."

**Q: Is that the reason his efficiency level and the way he has played has just gone up even as the receiving group has changed?**

**Coach Olson:** "We'd like to think so. Anybody that's played the position at this level understands just how difficult it is to learn a system and to get comfortable within that system. We'd like to think that's the reason."

**Q: You've had change to the receiving group and the offensive line due to injuries...**

**Coach Olson:** "Again, the one constant like we talked about a couple weeks ago is the tight end position, but that's been about it, otherwise he's had fluctuating backs, receivers and offensive line. So, it's difficult, certainly on any position, but really for the quarterback that's got to get it all organized. It's good to see that he's played at a constant level."

**Q: How do you see Carr put emphasis on his accuracy in practice?**

**Coach Olson:** "He's a very accurate passer and that's been one of his strengths, even in college. That's one of the things that I think our scouting department – when they first brought Derek Carr to me when I was here the first time when we drafted him – that was the one thing that jumped out, his accuracy. I think that's a skill that he has always possessed. He takes great pride in his accuracy and like Jordy [Nelson] said, he is hard on himself. That's what you want at that position – someone that's not just happy with the completion, but they've got to be happy with where they're putting the football."

**Q: He's closing in on the most completions in NFL history among players through their first five seasons. What does that signify to you?**

**Coach Olson:** "I think growth as a football player and as a person and as a quarterback – both the mental and physical side. But also, again, this guy's very resilient, he's been through different coordinator changes and head coaches and as we just talked about, different personnel since he's been here. So, he's a very resilient, mentally tough player. He's handled everything that has been thrown at him."

**Q: How challenging is this game going to be with all the changes on the offensive line?**

**Coach Olson:** "They are all challenging. Any time that you are rotating players or have different players, especially within the offensive line, you'd love to have five players because the communication for those guys is so critical at the offensive line. I was fortunate enough last year to be with a team where we had the same five linemen the entire season when I was with the Rams. It's such a smoother operation when you got those guys in constant communication with one another. It's a real critical part of any teams' success, having those five offensive linemen playing together."

**Q: How big has it been to have Rodney Hudson play every game?**

**Coach Olson:** "Extremely tough. One of the toughest players I think we have been around as a coaching staff. Rodney and Gabe [Jackson] really personify what you are looking for, as far as those interior guys."



## Oakland Raiders Transcript

They are extremely tough and really when K.O. [Kelechi Osemele] is out there, the interior three are the type of players you are looking for.”

**Q: How much have [Denzelle] Good and [Chaz] Green been able to pick up in the offense?**

**Coach Olson:** “We like Chaz Green. I know the scouting department, they liked him when he came out of college. We like him as a guard and some other teams played him as a tackle. We think he looks comfortable at the guard and think that’s his natural position. With Good, certainly we had some coaches that had come from Indianapolis and had some insight on him as a player and we like what we saw. Certainly, since he has been here, we’ve been equally as impressed with them as we were with seeing them on tape.”

**Q: How concerning is it going up against a guy like DT Geno Atkins, especially with all this flux up front?**

**Coach Olson:** “Again, he’s a great player and they’ve got a great defensive front, and they have for years. It’s challenging enough when you have the same five guys you have in there, but when you’ve got some changes up front it creates a little more of an issue. Again, the guys are preparing, they have had a good week of practice here so far and I think they are up for the challenge.”

**Q: What can you say about the tight end group?**

**Coach Olson:** “I’m excited about that room. Really excited about that room. We think we have four quality tight ends. We brought four up last week for the first time on the season. We really like those guys as a group and they all contributed last week. We see that as being the strength right now of our offense, is the tight end position. Frank [Smith] has done a great job with that group and has had some new guys come in but is doing a phenomenal job and those guys really stepped up.”

### Defensive Coordinator Paul Guenther

**Opening statement:** “It was a good week for us. Obviously, we’re on to Cincinnati this week. I got my jacket on today, but geez, I’m not used to this nice weather. What is this, December 13, but my time is all yours guys.”

**Q: Have you been talking Derek Carr more because you know the tendencies of that defense?**

**Coach Guenther:** “They change a little. The structure is very similar. He had some questions just about the personnel to give him some help. Some of the guys on defense, and I’m familiar with more so the personnel and what their abilities are. They have a good group of guys over there on defense. I know the season hasn’t gone like they wanted it to, but they have a lot of talented, veteran players over there. A lot of respect for those guys.”

**Q: What are Jeff Driskel’s attributes like? You watched him practice for a year.**

**Coach Guenther:** “Actually AJ McCarron was our scout team quarterback. Driskel was obviously playing quarterback, but when you needed him to, he played receiver and tight end because he’s fast. The guy can run. He’d run deep posts. A couple of times he’d beat our corners over there. I’m like, ‘Guys, that’s a quarterback you have to cover.’ He’s a good athlete. Obviously, he’s done a good job for them coming in with Andy’s [Dalton] injury. He’s handled the offense, it looks like, very good.”

**Q: Is there going to be some emotion involved in going back to Cincinnati?**

**Coach Guenther:** “Naturally. There’s people who were real good to me. I spent a lot of time with those players and the organization, the Brown family. The coaching staff means a lot to me. They still do. When toe meets leather at 1 o’clock it’s business. I root for those guys every week and I hope they do good except for one game, which is this one.”



## Oakland Raiders Transcript

**Q: Why do you think [Tahir] Whitehead is turning it on?**

**Coach Guenther:** "I just think he's starting to really understand the whole picture of everything. He's in charge of running all 11 guys, he's got the green dot on and he's got to get us set up to work. I just think he's got more comfortable with that and all the little adjustments that may happen in coverage, a pressure or whatever it may be. I think that's real with all the guys. I just think they are really coming into their own, as far as understanding everything. The first 8-10 weeks of the season we had so many moving pieces in there. It's hard when you are playing next to a different guy every week to build chemistry that way. I think that's been shown here the last couple of weeks."

**Q: Has he [Tahir Whitehead] always stayed positive, even when things weren't going well early in the season?**

**Coach Guenther:** "Yeah, I always tell the guys, 'The same guy that's rubbing the back, he is going to stick the knife in the same spot.' Never listen to the outside noise and keep trying to get better as an individual, and that's what he has done. He's been a positive guy and a great asset for us. Hopefully he will continue to get better."

**Q: How are you going to deal with Bengals RB Joe Mixon?**

**Coach Guenther:** "He's a talented guy. Really both backs. I got a lot of respect for Joe [Mixon] and Giovani Bernard, they are both really good backs. 'Gio' is a smaller guy, height wise, but he can run with strength and he's got good short area quickness. They are both good backs. Last week was probably one of their best games running the ball. I know they have been putting an emphasis on that, trying to get him more touches, so we are going to have to deal with him and that's not an easy task."

**Q: Why do you think the run defense is starting to come into their own?**

**Coach Guenther:** "I just think with the guys we have, one, and number two, I think they really executed the plan last week. The Steelers line is as good of a (offensive) line as you are going to see. They've played together for a really long time, those guys. I think we had a good plan going in, just understanding the types of runs we are going to get. The linebackers played off some of those things. I just think, in conjunction with the guys we had in there, the plan was executed by those guys because we had some things at the line of scrimmage that we were doing based upon some things. They did a really job and really the week before against Kansas City, the rush numbers were up because the quarterback ran for I don't know how many, and they had the one reverse that got out of there with Tyreek [Hill]. As far as a true running game, we are coming into our own in that way."