



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Head Coach Jon Gruden

Opening statement: "How's it going today? Injuries to update, Leon Hall is out of the game, Martavis Bryant is questionable, and Maurice Hurst, with an ankle, is questionable. I'll answer any questions that I can."

Q: How much time did Bryant get to practice this week?

Coach Gruden: "Just a little bit. Not too much."

Q: What have you seen from Darren Waller?

Coach Gruden: "I like Waller. I'm excited about him. I really have a lot of enthusiasm about him. He's a great kid. He's been through a lot in his young life. I remember him coming out of Georgia Tech as a big wide out. Broadcast a game, he caught a touchdown pass against the New England Patriots on Monday Night Football. He's gotten bigger. He's gotten stronger. I know he's been well trained by the people in Baltimore. You get a 255-pound young prospect that has speed and versatility, we'll see where he is. Hopefully we can get him up to speed here quickly."

Q: Could he be up this week?

Coach Gruden: "No, not this week. No."

Q: Do you anticipate Justin Ellis being up this week?

Coach Gruden: "That's a conversation we're about to have. I want to see how he feels. He's been out for about three months. We'll get a true idea of where he is after we talk shortly, but I would say he's questionable right now."

Q: Is there concern about Leon Hall's ability to return this season?

Coach Gruden: "I think there's a lot of concern, personally. We're going to go with Nick Nelson right now. Marcus Gilchrist will have to be the backup nickel. We have to get ready for the Chiefs. Their plane is on schedule. I heard they're going to be here on time ready to go."

Q: What does a guy like Rico Gafford bring in terms of being the show team guy?

Coach Gruden: "Everybody seems to have a dangerous return man, so you can put him back there and put a red dot on him and make sure everybody is aware of the danger that he brings. Everybody is running jet sweeps. Everybody has a threat, most teams do at least, threading across the formation. We use him to do that. Obviously, most teams have some real deep speed, and we use him to do that. I'm excited about him because he seems to like football and really enjoy the challenge."

Q: You had practices be forced indoors lately, but yesterday you choose to hold practice inside. What makes the beneficial to this team?

Coach Gruden: "Well the numbers on our team are what they are. We're not allowed to have 90 guys like it is in training camp. We have a number of players that are sore, that aren't able to take many reps at all, you see. So, when you go out and have a 10-play, 12-play period and your men can't go at full speed, they don't get any reps. Perhaps you can tweak the schedule and go in there and multiple the reps and they can take all of the reps. That's basically what we did is try to manufacture work and take the full speed part of it and the contact part of it out."

Q: Why go offsite for that instead of staying here?

Coach Gruden: "Well we never know who's flying around here at the Oakland Airport. We want to be secretive. It's Chiefs week. We have a lot of new stuff going in. The weather was threatening. You're not quite sure sometimes, so we had a nice setup over there. Our players have really responded pretty good I think."



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Q: Are the fields in good shape over here?

Coach Gruden: "Yeah, our fields are great. They've done a great job."

Q: What were your impressions when you first worked with Andy Reid?

Coach Gruden: "We stayed in contact closely over the years. It was kind of the Brat Pack, [Steve] Mariucci, me and Reid together a lot. [Mike] Holmgren beat us up. He beat me up the most. Andy was his pet. Andy was a line coach at Missouri. Mariucci was the hotshot quarterback guy from Cal. Andy became the tight end coach and really learned the entire offense. How to block plays. How to protect plays. How to throw the ball. He slowly, but surely moved up. Became Brett Favre's quarterback coach. He got everything he deserved because he earned everything. He really has. He's phenomenal, a great person."

Q: How much of the competitive spirit between you guys did you have even back in Green Bay?

Coach Gruden: "Yeah, we had a big board where Holmgren had us write all the plays on the board. Mariucci and Reid and we'd draw the plays. He'd come in there and he'd slash the plays. 'Who's play is this?' Andy Reid would say, 'That's my play.' He'd say, 'OK, I'll leave that on the board.' I never got a play in. Mariucci got his plays called. One day we played Chicago, I got three plays in. One of them scored a touchdown. Edgar Bennett caught the thing or Brett Favre ran it in for a 36-yard touchdown. Long story short, on the plane on the way home Holmgren gave me a game ball. I walked backed to Andy Reid and I said, 'Game Ball! All you got was a 6-yard gain against Seattle.' We used to compete like that a lot. Good friend, great coach. We have our hands full."

Q: What are your thoughts on the Kareem Hunt video?

Coach Gruden: "I don't really have a comment. I haven't seen anything. This is the first time I've really thought about it. I don't want to say anything other than that."