



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Head Coach Jon Gruden

Q: Where did you guys go to practice today?

Coach Gruden: "We went to a secret location...Alameda."

Q: Was it just too swampy at fields here?

Coach Gruden: "Yeah, you know the fields obviously had something to do with it. The trainer had something to do with it. We needed an extra day for some guys and we have to make some adjustments on our roster obviously. So, we took advantage of a great facility and we got a lot of reps, a lot of teaching done, and we'll be back at it out here tomorrow."

Q: Have you guys made any roster adjustments and do you have any update on Hunter Renfrow?

Coach Gruden: "Yeah, he won't play this week at Kansas City, he's out. So that's an adjustment that we have to make. Obviously with the newcomers that we've added on defense, we need to catch our breath and help these guys continue to get acclimated to the big picture of our system, and it trickles down to special teams. We took advantage of a lot of time. We got a lot of work done today, although it was a little bit different."

Q: Do you think Renfrow will play again this season?

Coach Gruden: "I don't know. Right now, we're listing him as week-to-week. We're not going to mess around with the rib, lung area. But right now, he won't play against the Chiefs. I know he wants to play. He feels good, but until we get the green light from the training staff, he won't play."

Q: The last time you guys played the Chiefs was in week 2. Can you still use the game tape from that game to prep for this week considering it was so long ago, or do you just throw it out and start fresh?

Coach Gruden: "We use it. We expect them to do some of the things that worked again, I would. You know you get a chance to see how you matchup personnel wise with some of their guys, so yeah there's a lot of value in looking at that game. And you've got to take it with a grain of salt because nothing stays the same in this league."

Q: Are you seeing defenses concentrating to take away Darren Waller?

Coach Gruden: "Yeah sometimes. Also, we've been distributing the ball pretty good. I mean, we've made an effort to use all five eligible. We've tried to get Renfrow more involved and we have. We've tried to get Tyrell [Williams] back into the flow of things after being out for a while. So, we're going to continue to do that but when you're a good player like Waller is, you become a primary target for defenses to stop."

Q: What have you seen from your offensive line the last few games?

Coach Gruden: "I think they've played pretty good. You know we had a false start at the 1-yard line against Cincinnati. We fumbled the ball at the 8-yard line. It would have been statistically a pretty good day had we not done those two things. The Jets game I take credit for. We didn't catch the ball. I can't blame the line for that. The stats running the ball aren't as good. I think we all take that personal. You know it's a hard thing to do in this league, which is run the ball the way we run it. We're not running options and scrambling for yards. We're turning around and handing it to a back, and we're doing it in



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some predictable situations. So, we just got to keep working, but I love our line, and we're going to need them to play great for sure on Sunday."

Q: Considering the way you guys run the ball and the way you're built, shouldn't you guys be equipped to do well in bad weather?

Coach Gruden: "You would think so. You know it's hard on any team to fly Friday and get in your room at two o'clock in the morning Friday night and play at 10am. Your body clock time on Sunday takes a little experience. I'm not going to again make any excuses, but we're the king of the road man. We're the traveling road show, and it ticks me off in a lot of ways certainly, but we have to do it again on Friday. We have to get on a plane on Friday and go to Arrowhead and play one of the best teams in football in one of the great, great places to play. I love going there and playing. It's a cool place and hopefully it brings out the best in us."

Q: Going back to Waller, if teams do focus on a guy and they try to shut him down, is that on a player to try to beat coverage or is something schematically to try to figure out?

Coach Gruden: "Yeah it's both, it's both. Usually a great player sees their best player if they're going to play one-on-one. It's not real hard to disrupt the tight end on the line of scrimmage or play zone coverage or do something to try to slow him down. But, he's still statistically getting things done and making a big impact on the game."

Q: It seemed like your receivers had a lot of drops last game against the Jets. Is there anything you can do to address that?

Coach Gruden: "Not really. I try not to over analyze it. Sometimes the more you talk about something, the more it happens. We have good receivers. We have really good receivers that are getting better and better. Sunday was a setback but I'm going to try to look at things positively, and I've got a lot of confidence in our guys."

Q: You've talked a lot about the success of the young players, but they haven't really been through something like Sunday. Do you feel that they were ok coming out of that mentally?

Coach Gruden: "Yeah, it's football. There's a lot of teams that got their eyes opened. We're not the only ones. This is a tough league, and we have to go on a plane Friday and go on the road and play a team as good or better."

Q: What's been Lamarcus Joyner's progress?

Coach Gruden: "Yeah, pretty good. We hope to have him back. He took some turns today and got the game plan. He's been out for a couple weeks now, which has really been a big deal for us. You know when you lose two safeties, your nickel, and your linebackers, it's been tough, but we do think he has a real good chance to play."

Q: How big of a part has Kirby Wilson played in Josh Jacobs' development this year?

Coach Gruden: "Yeah, big. Not only Josh [Jacobs] but Alec [Ingold]. You know, he's a great coach. He was with me at Tampa. He's coached some of the best runners in the league. He has a lot of credibility. I think Josh looks up to him that way. You know when you coach Adrian Peterson and Emmitt Smith and Le'Veon Bell and Mike Alstott and some of these guys you've got a lot of playoff experience, I think it rubs off on you. He's really good at coaching running backs, teaching them pass protections, how to read things, how



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to take care of their body, and how to be an every-down back. I give him a lot of credit. It's great having him here."

Quarterback Derek Carr

Q: Can you take things away from last game against the Chiefs in Week 2 or has a lot changed for both teams since then?

Carr: "Yeah, a lot has changed for both teams, especially when you watch the film and there are a lot of different people on the field for us. There are some different people for them on the field and it is what it is, but it definitely has some things you can take away from it. Matchups and things you saw personally. Nothing like personal experience. I always talk about that, especially as a quarterback. Playing the same scheme or playing the same coach or trying to get to them, especially when they're new in the division and things like that, but you're right a lot of things have changed and you take it for what it is."

Q: Going against Patrick Mahomes and this offense, do you have to resist the temptation of trying to do too much?

Carr: "Absolutely. I think I've gotten to a place because earlier in my career I would say, 'Oh yeah! Got to make every play.' Yeah, no. And [Head] Coach [Jon] Gruden does a really good job about worrying about the scoreboard himself. When he calls a play, my job is just to know what he wants done on that play, and if he wants to take a shot, he'll call it. If he wants to do A,B,C, he'll call it. And I just try and play the position the way that he wants it plays and I think that's freeing for me. Especially for a quarterback, because there's been times where I've gone into games like, 'I understand who we're playing. I understand how it's going. Man, I may need to force this one.' And I'd get myself in trouble and just making sure I stay within what coach wants because if he calls something then that's what I want, but if not you just try and manage the game and be exactly who he wants you to be."

Q: Given the way that the games have gone at Arrowhead since you've been here, how important is it for you to get over that hump to win there?

Carr: "Honestly, like every time we play there, it's funny you say that, the last couple of times it's like, 'Ah, we're playing the Chiefs again. Ah, dang, we haven't won there yet.' And it hits you like later on. It's not something that's conscious or anything like that. And they've been a really good football team for a long time. It's a tough place to win. You can ask a lot of people that have been through there, it's not easy. I think even the year the Patriots went to the Super Bowl they got blown out there at Arrowhead. It's not easy to play there. It's loud, it's rowdy, they put up a lot of points, they do a lot of things well on defense, so it's just tough to play there. Tough place, but it's way we play the games. You look forward to moments like this."

Q: You always play them in December and the cold weather things comes up. Even Jack Del Rio mentioned on Twitter this week that 'Derek Carr struggles in cold weather.'

Carr: "Jack was there with me a couple of those times. (laughter) I used to think this was a team game, but yes, it's all my fault and I take full responsibility. (Laughter)"



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Q: How do you balance the holidays and football? How do you treat Thanksgiving week during the season?

Carr: "Kind of like I treat every week. I get here early to get some more work in. Stay here, grind, get a lot of stuff done so when I get home, I'm a good husband, I'm a good father and that is during Thanksgiving week or not. As I've learned throughout these years, if that isn't right this doesn't mean anything. Being a good husband, being loyal to my wife, treating her with honor and respect. Doing the same for my kids and making sure their father is there, plays with them, does what they want to do, all those things. I try and do that all the time. Am I perfect at it? No. Sometimes I get home and I'm like, 'Man! I got to watch that blitz cutup again.' But with that said when this week comes up, it's Thanksgiving. We have a lot to be thankful for. We'll have 30-plus guys, teammates and their families at our house and people that don't have anywhere to go they need a place. So, it's a moment for us to take a few hours and just be around each other and really express what we're thankful for. Especially just being around one another, and so this week gives you an opportunity to really think about it, but it's definitely something I try my best to do every week."

Q: How comfortable do you feel with Zay Jones now that he's been here for a while?

Carr: "Absolutely feel good about it. One of the things with Zay too is, when he showed up it's hard coming in mid-season because when you go through training camp, coach is trying to find out what routes he likes people on. Trying to find out what he likes certain plays to be called for certain people and then he gets here and kind of gets thrown into some positions where I got to clear this out or you're a backside option. Things like that, right? But what you start to see with Zay is his role increasing every week with how coach installs the plays and the positions that he's putting him in and things like that. If we are in one of those big groupings. If Tyrell [Williams] is not there, then Zay is in and you start to see like, 'Oh, man. His role increased.' And it's hard with Waller, with Tyrell, when Hunter [Renfrow] was playing, with our running backs, coach likes to get them the ball in the pass game. It's hard to find a place, 'Where's my five catches?' It's tough, and so especially with Hunter out he's got to step up and be a guy for us, which he is, and he's been doing a great job. When we've thrown it to him, he's made some great plays on some big third downs. Has won versus man coverage, which is not easy to do in this league and I say all that to say confidence is very high in what he can do. Just coming in mid-season, it's tough to find your place in that offense."

Q: Hunter Renfrow is a guy you've really come to learn to trust, how big of a loss is that going to be?

Carr: "Yeah, it's going to hurt because I love that guy. We spent a lot of time during training camp before every walk through him and I would walk the field and go over certain types of routes that we knew we were going to throw all season. We did it every day and when you have that kind of chemistry built over time, you just trust somebody. Then when you get into real games and they are making plays for you, you're like 'How do you not keep getting them the ball?' And so, it'll hurt. He'll be back whenever he gets back and everything is fine. Most importantly we care about his health and things like that, but with him out it definitely opens the door for other guys to get more catches."

Q: His injuries were pretty substantial. Could you see how hurt he was during the game?

Carr: "No, he does not show it and one thing about him too is he never wants his teammates to think, 'Ah, man. I can't do it, or I don't want to be out there.' And I don't think any of us here would say that about Hunter Renfrow. We know how much it means to him. Another thing for him is like, 'Oh, man, he



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was too small coming out.' So, he doesn't want to get hurt and then 'Oh, I can't play.' The guy literally maybe hit him before the ball was there and straight in his back. There is nothing Hunter could have done about that. Versus that coverage he ran the route perfect, that's where the ball has got to go and I mean things happen. It's a collision sport. I say all that to say, I hope Hunter doesn't feel like he let anybody down or anything like that. We trust him, we love the guy and we can't wait to get him back."

Q: You and Waller had such a good rapport early. What have you seen over the last month in the way teams are taking him away for you? How important is it going to be for you guys moving forward to get him back involved?

Carr: "Yeah, I think a lot of our production came from people trying to double and triple team him and then you see guys like Hunter or Zay get a big play, or Trevor [Davis] in some earlier games, and Tyrell obviously and all those kinds of things. You try and take advantage of those things. People play Waller different. He kind of reminds me of how people started playing 'Cookie' [Jared Cook] last year and the years prior when I had a good tight end and loved to feature him. They play things a little bit different and so there is different ways to get him involved and things like that, but I will say if teams do want to put two guys on him, that does open the door for somebody else. Now, if they don't want to do that, then we definitely have all the trust in the world that Darren will make plays."

Q: What have you seen from the offensive line the last few games? Are they up to where you think they should be?

Carr: "Absolutely, and there's been a couple plays where I mean you tip your cap to the play the defense made. As good as our offensive line is, it's also the NFL man. They're going to scheme some stuff up where guys get edgy and it makes it tougher on them and things like that, and we learn from those things and I think we have actually grown in the last couple of weeks in a couple of those areas. But there are always things we can improve on. It starts with me just being able to get to a read faster or help them with a call and get the ball out better. So, I always look at myself because sacks are never all on them, we know that. It's a lot on the quarterbacks, running backs, receivers maybe missing something. I think from when I've been able to stand back in the pocket, we saw a couple third downs against some blitzes where I'm just back there and I get to wait for the whole thing to clear up and find guys, so I think they're doing a great job."