



OAKLAND RAIDERS vs. LOS ANGELES RAMS

Monday, Sept. 10, 2018

Oakland-Alameda County Coliseum

Postgame Quotes



RAIDERS HEAD COACH JON GRUDEN

Opening Statement: "I would just like to say that there was a lot of great effort on the field tonight by our team. I want to thank our fans. I am proud of our football team and the way they competed. It was a tale of two halves and obviously we did not take care of the ball enough. That was a critical part of this football game."

Q: How do you explain the way things went in the second half?

Gruden: "Well, they are a good offensive football team. They got the opening drive. I think they went right down the field. They were impressive. They had balance today, they could run it and throw it. They proved their stuff tonight in the second half. Offensively, we just couldn't get anything going. We turned the ball over, we failed to pick up a blitz one time. It was very disappointing."

Q: What was it like for you to be back doing this for the first time in nine years?

Gruden: "It was great. But, it's not time for that anymore. It is about getting this football team better. It wasn't good enough tonight."

Q: Describe what you saw and how you envisioned the first drive?

Gruden: "I thought we moved the ball exceptionally in the first half against a very good defense with a lot of highly talented players. Marshawn's [Lynch] finish was vintage. The crowd was in it. It was electrifying. Unfortunately, we couldn't bodily sustain it."

Q: What do you think they saw in your offense tonight?

Gruden: "We had plenty of opportunities to make plays, but we didn't. Obviously we got fooled on the pick-six late in the game by Marcus [Peters] and Aqib [Talib], those are very good players. This is the first time we played wire-to-wire as an offense. We played against a good defense and they got us tonight."

Q: Do you think there was a lot going on outside of the receivers?

Gruden: "We called our numbers. We tried. Obviously Jared [Cook] came up huge tonight and they disguised their coverages. It allowed us to get the ball to our tight ends and backs. Unfortunately we were not able to get more out of it."

Q: In a lot of ways you said you are proud of this team, do you think there was a difference in talent level?

Gruden: "The score wasn't really (indicative) of the game. We threw a pick-six late in the game. We were trying to get back in it to make it a one possession game with just a few minutes left in the football game. We have a short week getting ready for the Denver Broncos, we will see what the film says tomorrow morning."

Q: What did you think of your pass rush today?

Gruden: "When you can run the ball like they ran it in the second half it's very hard to rush the passer. Obviously we didn't get to Jared [Goff] enough and we didn't dig early enough. We will take a look at the reasons why we didn't."



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Q: What went wrong on Derek [Carr] second interception?

Gruden: "He was throwing the ball to the right side of the formation. I believe when he reset and knew the ball was going to be thrown away. I don't know if he saw the Ram defender or not but obviously that one hurt."

Q: Thoughts on Andrew DePaola injury?

Gruden: "DePaola got hurt in the first play of the game. The first punt of the game. Lee [Smith] had to do all the snapping tonight. Credit to Lee Smith, but it is an injury we are concerned about. We are proud of Smith for stepping up and doing some really tough work under a short notice."

Q: Did they try to keep Amari [Cooper] away?

Gruden: "We had all day to throw. We did call his number several times and sometimes the coverage did take it away. We have to do a better job as a coaching staff getting him the football and that will be the goal this week."

Q: Did you like how Carr handled the progression?

Gruden: "He did some good things tonight. Obviously there are some critical errors that we have to eliminate. He knows that, you know that, we all know that. One of them wasn't his fault. He got fooled by one of our own receivers and we have to do a better job on coaching. It's on me."

Q: What happened on the one where Carr threw it away?

Gruden: "I think he got fooled. I don't think he saw the LA Ram defender."

Q: Do you consider this a growing day?

Gruden: "Obviously I don't think it was a smashing debut, by any sense. We need to get more pass rush and that goes for all of us. Like I said in the beginning of this I am proud of the way our guys competed until the end. We will have some more information for you after we study the tape."

Q: Do you feel like the offense just needs more time together?

Gruden: "I think so. We moved the ball very good at times. They're a good defensive team. They have a lot of pieces. There are going to be a challenging opponent for a lot of offenses. We expect a lot better from ourselves and that goes on me."

OAKLAND RAIDERS QB DEREK CARR

Q: Can you describe the difference between the first half and the second half?

Carr: "Our execution as an offense – whether it's bad throws, miscommunication, all that kind of stuff. Stuff that usually happens in a first game, but you don't really pay the consequence for them all the time. But we did today. And that's my fault. I have to do a better job for my team and I will."

Q: How did you guys execute differently in the first half compared to the second half?

Carr: "To be honest, we did some of the same stuff but we executed better in the first half. They tried to do some things a little bit different, but nothing that mattered. They tried to put different looks for the run game, different looks for the pass game, but nothing that we didn't prepare for. Some of the things



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that we did are going to be overlooked by the bad stuff and it sucks. That's tough. e did a lot of good things, the score doesn't really dictate what the game was. It's just a bad feeling. It just sucks, man."

Q: Do you think the Rams were trying to take WR Amari Cooper out of the game?

Carr: "Well, they really wanted to take both wideouts out. Not only did they have [Marcus] Peters and [Aqib] Talib on those guys, but most of the time they were doubling them also with the safety. Kind of like a little box deal – trying to keep them into a little thing. That's why Jared [Cook] had a big game. We had no problem seeing what they were doing, obviously. It's not an indictment of Amari or anything like that. If the coverage looks a certain way during a certain play, we have other options. That's why Jared and the running backs came up big than the pass game for us."

Q: Looking back at that first interception, do you think you just made a bad throw?

Carr: "Oh yeah, I would just throw it better. I just made a bad throw. When we get Jared one-on-one, obviously, we know what he can do. I just made a bad throw. That's all it was."

Q: Can you describe the second interception?

Carr: "So, I went to the right side, they buzzed underneath that route, so I came back – bad decision. I went to throw it away, then kind of, maybe give the bench route a chance, but I saw the dude underneath it so I tried to pull it back with my hand and obviously that's why it looked so terrible. It just floated near and landed in the guy's lap. It's just one of those where you sit there and think that's one of the dumbest plays you could ever have. It is what it is. I know what I should have done the minute the play was over, but it just sucks that it happened."

Q: What about the third interception?

Carr: "The corner was running with him and I thought it was going to keep running. Jared saw it and I threw it out in from of him and the guy just ended up getting a gift, basically. Again, those are the ones that are like...obviously, me and Jared were on the same page a lot, we'll look at it together, talk about it and get it better for the next time for the next look."

Q: How was it to play a full game with Head Coach John Gruden?

Carr: "It's awesome. He gets really excited when we get really big plays and things like that. It's fun to hear him – his communication, his thought process, he loves to feed stuff into the headset. I thought our communication was really good for the first time with both of our personalities on the field at the same time, getting plays in, checks that coach wanted and all of those things. I honestly thought that part of it was really good today."

Q: Can you talk about that first drive in the first half?

Carr: "Against that defense, it's not always going to be how the first half was. They hadn't had film on us and we didn't have film on them, really, with the players and things like that. They were hiding stuff; we were hiding stuff. To have that first drive, obviously it feels good. It lets you know what we're capable of and things like that – really the whole first half and parts of the second half. It just wasn't good enough in the second half."



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Q: What did you think of the Raiders's defensive performance?

Carr: "I thought they did a great job. I knew when we got Coach [Paul] Guenther that it was going to be good. I think our DB's had their hands on multiple passes and they like to be around the ball. Again, those are things that didn't go our way. A lot of things didn't go our way in the second half. But to see them play, I love our defense. I love the way they play. I love the scheme that Coach Guenther brings because it makes it difficult on quarterbacks. I'm glad that he's on our team."

Q: Inaudible

Carr: "Oh yeah, absolutely. You try and move defenders, like please come take this, so I can push the ball down the field. I think you saw one thing is I think we ended up throwing about 40 times. Obviously, at the end it gets a little different right? But 40 times for 300 yards versus certain looks and things like that. Again, you would hope that you could throw for more. You want more but again you can't do that. That's where I got in trouble on the second pick. To be honest with you I tried to do too much. I tried to hold on to it and the dude got a free gift."

Q: Considering all the different things you try to do on offense was it almost too much to ask in the first week?

Carr: "I don't think it was too much to ask because you know I would never think that. Again, we do have corrections to make. I mean every team Week 1. You saw a whole bunch of people with turnovers or miscommunication. We were watching games all Sunday and you see it. That's Week 1 things. It's going to happen no matter how sophisticated, no matter how much you rep a certain play. Things are going to happen and the most important part is we take the film, we see what we did right and we keep practicing and repping that. We see what we did wrong and we rep that and make sure that we are all on the same page. That way moving forward we are going to be better and we will. I'll take care of the ball better and make better throws, decisions. We are going to be a good team."

Q: There was some execution issues in the second half. Is that because you guys have not been together?

Carr: "Honestly, I think a lot of it is first game stuff. You know a lot of it guys are amped up. We actually get to play a full game. We kind of take the human part of it sometimes too. Guys get fired up and you're ready to go and those kinds of things but besides that it's Week 1 stuff. It's never acceptable, I know that. I know how we coached it. I know how we demand it. As leaders it's never acceptable. At the same time those are things that will see and now we have film of our offense actually being played against one of the best defenses in the league. And we can take it and get better from it."

Q: Does the anticipation of this being the Raiders last season in Oakland and Gruden's return to coaching make it more disappointing to lose?

Carr: "I think anytime you lose its disappointing. I'm not going to sleep good. I never do after we lose. It doesn't matter where we are playing. It doesn't matter what level I'm playing at. When we lose and when you make a couple bad decisions you never sleep good. It's always disappointing. We don't give into the hype kind of stuff. We are just a football team trying to do our best. I can tell you this, there's no stopping the fight in us. I can tell you this, also, losses with Coach Gruden feel a little bit different than I ever felt before. Just the positive coaching, the next step, demanding what he needs from me next time and all these kinds of stuff. I just talked to him for ten minutes and I already feel like we are going to be better next week kind of a thing. You know it's really cool to watch our coaches go throughout the locker room and how Coach Gruden has his stuff. It's pretty neat. It's always disappointing to lose. We don't want to do that especially in the first game. We got 15 more, and I think we are going to be pretty good."



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Raiders LB Tahir Whitehead

Q: What changed in the second half?

Tahir Whitehead: "Penalties. We couldn't get off the field. They hit us on a couple plays. Outside of that we did a good job of containing [Jared Goff] pretty much."

Q: It gets tough to contain him if he doesn't have a lot of pressure on him. How big of a factor do you think that was.?

Whitehead: "The biggest thing is we need to get him on third down. As a defense, we need to get off the field. We need to find a way to get off the field, minimize penalties. That's about it."

Q: They gave the ball to [Todd] Gurley 4 times in the first half, 10 times in the 3rd quarter alone. Do you feel they wanted to get back to the bread of that offense?

Whitehead: "You're already going into the game knowing the objective was to get Gurley the ball. We knew that. We felt like they wanted to get back to it. A couple of runs skirted through. We needed to bottle them up and make the tackles."

Q: How do you feel you played as a defense?

Whitehead: "Overall we played solid. But we have to minimize penalties, find a way to get off the field. No matter what is going on in the game, as defense we need to find a way to get off the field. That's it."

RAIDERS WR JORDY NELSON

Q: Obviously they got a good set of cornerbacks and it was hard to get receivers many targets on the night. Is it just a tough matchup or what did you think?"

Nelson: "I think we had some opportunities, obviously [Raider Tight End] Jared [Cook] had an incredible game inside and [in the] match up we went to, our backs did a good job in their match ups so like you said, we'll look at the film, make the adjustments we need to make and...get ready for Denver."

Q: What do you take from that first half, scoring on the opening drive, and despite the 145 yards in penalties, still leading by 3 in the first half?

Nelson: "I think you can take a lot from not only the first half, but the whole game. Made some plays, had some big plays, made some mistakes and you can obviously learn from both. So..again, it's week 1, so we'll learn from it, we'll work on it, continue to improve and get into week 2."

Q: Derek [Carr] obviously had some passes he was pretty frustrated with, what do you guys say to him? I know you don't need to say a lot-[Jordy begins answer]

Nelson: "Yeah I mean just continue to stay with him. I think anyone would get down on themselves, and I mean, everything doesn't always fall on the quarterback. We always got his back and he knows that, and it's part of the game. He'll be fine."



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Q: How many different looks could you say you guys were trying to accomplish especially against that Rams defense?

Nelson: "I don't know. Gruden had a great game plan, trying to work some matchups, obviously we have, especially with the running backs, some very talented guys that have special abilities and can do different things. We're trying to create those matchups, and we only hit some of them, made some big plays, we just need to do more of it."

Q: Could you tell how much it mattered to him to be back at coach?

Nelson: "Oh I think it meant a lot to him, obviously he's been out of the game for a little bit, and I think when you're out here coaching it means something completely different and probably to have that feeling again, was great."

Raiders Tight End Jared Cook

Q: After such an explosive start, what do you think went wrong in the second half?

Jared Cook: "Slow start, turnovers, and execution. It's important we come out to a fast start, especially when they get the ball to start in the second half. We have to make plays, keep the ball moving, and keep the chains moving."

Q: What was it in their scheme that allowed you to have such a big night?

Cook: "We knew going into the game they were going to play a lot of man [coverage], so we knew we had matchups all across the board. We planned on [Rams safety Mark] Barron. We had a feeling he was going to be doubtful, but he ended up playing."

Q: What does it say about this team that in the first half that you had 145 yards in penalties and still had the lead?

Cook: "Just resilience. You've got to be resilient and push through. It's important at this level and it's important in this league that you do that. Don't let one play define you. I feel like we left a lot of football out on there field and this team is much better than what was depicted in the second half."

Q: What was it like to watch Marshawn [Lynch] carry the whole team into the end zone in the first drive?

Cook: "It was exciting. It's been something we've been waiting to see ever since the end of last year. We know what he's capable of. He's a huge piece of this puzzle that we're putting together here. Hopefully he just keeps going, and keeps running through people's faces."

Q: Jon Gruden back here, his first game in a while in the silver and black, what did he say to the team in the locker room tonight after the game?

Cook: "We are a better football team than what was put out there on the field. This one game does not define us. We need to make the corrections where we need to and always push to get better. We can never be satisfied and always push to be better."



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RAIDERS TE LEE SMITH

Q: Have you always been the back-up long snapper? Have you been practicing?

Lee Smith: "I've always been the back-up. I think the last time I snapped a ball was in high school. I'm not even going to lie to you, that was the most stressful game in my career. I love playing tight end, I have a lot of confidence in myself at tight end. I had to tell myself it wasn't Monday Night Football and the whole world wasn't watching. Fortunately, Johnny [Townsend] had to jump on one I think I threw a little high. The field goals were okay. To be honest, I didn't want to let my teammates down. That's what I was most nervous about, letting the guys down in this locker room and not being there for my teammates. Thank the good Lord, I said a lot of prayers tonight. Derek Carrier came over and prayed with me on the sideline. He could tell I was in a bad place. It was stressful. I can't even lie to you guys. I'm just glad they all got back there. I feel horrible for my man [Andrew DePaola]. Obviously you don't want anyone to get hurt, but the first game of the year on an exciting team. There's a brotherhood on this team not like I've seen before in my career. Regardless of what just happened, this is a fun place to be in with the Oakland Raiders. It's a fun group of guys. There's nothing worse, I remember two years ago when we won 12 games and I had to watch most of it. There's nothing worse than that, you feel disconnected. Our hearts are with him, I wanted to snap good for him so he didn't feel worse than he did for getting hurt. I didn't want to let my teammates down. I think there was a little bit of the good Lord guiding me back there because I'm definitely not a pro long snapper."

Q: How often do you practice snapping?

Smith: "I practice with my wife every night [Laughs]. No, you know, I told our starting long snapper Andrew [DePaola] 'You better not tell [Raiders Special Teams coach] Rich [Bisaccia], I can snap. I don't want those problems, I don't want that stress in my life.' I think Rich dug up some old practice tape from last year with Brad [Seely] was here We had two snappers in camp. Once we let one go, I got some rips at it and a full practice here or there. When I woke up this morning getting ready for Monday Night Football the last thing I thought I'd be doing was snapping. That's life, that's the NFL. I think the good Lord was with me. I didn't let my teammates down. Thank God Johnny [Townsend] can jump or it'd be a different memory. Terrible loss, it stings but I'm proud of that one. I'm going to tell my boys one day, like coach Bisaccia says, 'The bumper sticker says [expletive] happens.'"

RAIDERS DE BRUCE IRVIN

Q: You look at the first half, and you keep Jared Goff to 98 yards, what's your take?

Irvin: "I think we just gotta finish man. Halftime, we were playing good, we were containing them, and you know in the second half, I think they just came out with more energy than we did. Started competing passes, [Rams running back Todd] Gurley started breaking big runs, and it was all downhill from there."

Q: Gruden was saying at his press conference the score was not indicative of the way you played tonight. Defensively, how would you assess the way you handled the Rams' offense?

Irvin: "I think we were good at times, but I think we were inconsistent at times also. You know, that was the number one offense in the league last year. So we knew it was going to be a difficult challenge for us coming in so, you know. All I care is about guys going out there and leaving it out there for me. The



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scoreboard, we control that for the most part, but at the end of the day, it's about guys going there and playing their butts off, and competing. And we'll make the corrections and get back to it next week.

Q: You think guys did that [played their butts off] tonight?

Irvin: "I think they did, yes sir."

Q: Talk about that first strip sack you had.

Irvin: "It was good but you know it wasn't enough. I'd rather have a win."

Q: But when you have a quarterback like [Rams Quarterback] Jared [Goff] that can get the ball out really quickly, and you bring pressure, but you have so many runs you have to cover on the back end, what was the balance that you guys were looking for on this defense tonight?

Irvin: "We had to rush, we knew we had to rush Goff and we couldn't give too much time. I don't think we did a good enough job of putting a lot of pressure on him. They run a lot of play-actions. Their O-linemen, I think they stuttered us pretty good, they knew we were a bunch of speed rushers, so they did a lot of play actions to get their hands on us and made it very difficult for us to get away from them on the play action. It is what it is man, it's a long season, and I got complete confidence in my guys and you know, we'll be back next week.

Q: How would you describe the Black Hole tonight when you guys were moving the ball down the field and [Raider Running Back] Marshawn [Lynch] finished in that first quarter?

Irvin: "That's Raider football, man. Physical, nasty, and you know, just never give up. It was a hell of a play by Marshawn to get in there and you know, hopefully more to come."

RAIDERS CB DOMINIQUE RODGERS-CROMARTIE

Q: What was the gameplan, what went so well in the first half?

Dominique Rodgers-Cromartie: "I think a lot of things. They gave them different looks. They have a high tempo offense. They come out there and give different looks. They try to confuse you. In the second half they came out and they picked it up a bit. We need to work on it."

Q: What was the difference in the 3rd quarter?

Rodgers-Cromartie: "They utilized [Brandin] Cooks a little bit. Once we jumped on him, they went to someone else. [Jared Goff] was finding the open man. For the most part we just need to finish."

Q: When you face a quarterback like Jared Goff, is it the pass rush that's necessary or is it also covering on the back end and making sure the receivers are covered?

Rodgers-Cromartie: "It's both. They're a high-flying offense. They like to get the ball out quick. We have to cover on the back end and get out front."

Q: What do you learn from this loss as a defense?

Rodgers-Cromartie: "I've been at it a long time. It's the first game. We brought a bunch of guys in, we're going to learn to play with each other. We're going to gel and it's only going to go up from here."



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RAIDERS DE ARDEN KEY

Q: Were you nervous for your first game?

Arden Key: "Yeah, I was a little nervous at the beginning. I got confident throughout the game. What we saw on film was different than what they did. They run a ton of boots. They tried to slow our rush. Attackers got on us quick. There weren't sets, when they gave sets we were slow because they jumped us a lot. They kicked back on us. The things they did on film weren't what they did a ton today."

Q: Do you feel like having that film on the Denver Broncos next week will help?

Key: "Definitely. We have work to do. We're going to see on the film. We didn't play well as a D-line. We missed some calls. Communication was bad. It's the first game, the Black Hole was loud. We could hear people, but we couldn't hear what they were saying. And just battle."

Q: Were you surprised at how loud it got?

Key: "Yeah, preseason didn't have anything on today. But we got it under our belt. We have film to watch to correct and come out against the Broncos on Sunday."

RAIDERS RB JALEN RICHARD

Q: Do you feel there were too many opportunities left on the field?

Jalen Richard: "There were definitely a few opportunities left on the field. We just got beat today. They made plays when they needed to, ate up the clock, drove it down. That was a big key. I haven't looked at the numbers but I think key of possession was probably big for them too. They definitely beat us on that. We have a lot of quick three-and-outs. It's hard like that to get the offense to give the defense a breather. Field position was a big thing too. There were a few times where they started up towards the 40, a couple times on the 30. It's hard to win like that."

Q: In the first half you were able to move the football, the 2nd half is when things stalled. What did they change defensively?

Richard: "I don't think they changed anything defensively. We just got out there and missed opportunities. There was one where I looked away from the ball too early with [Derek Carr] on a drag route. That caused a little issue. They were getting some pressure on [Carr]. I really can't say, I'd have to go back and look at the film. We just didn't play up to par today."

RAMS HEAD COACH SEAN MCVAY

Opening Statement: "Alright guys good hard-fought win tonight against a tough opponent, they came out ready to go. The fans were going, it was an excellent atmosphere, there's a lot of things that you never take for granted of winning this league, so it was a great job by our guys, making some plays in the second half. Defensively, to be able to get three turnovers, I thought was the key to the game. But it was a good start, you'll never take a win for granted, and we have a lot of respect for the Oakland Raiders and you know the problems that they present."



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Q: Sean did you see any rust?

McVay: "Yeah I don't know if it's necessarily rust or if we just have to execute a little bit better you know, specifically offensively. There were some things defensively, we need to clean up our communication but at the same time I thought they did a great job. You know with the Oakland offense, being able to present a variety of exotic looks having some different regulated personnel groups, things where you're having to get some matchups and it forces a lot of communication at a speed that is tough. We can certainly be better there. And then offensively, there's definitely a couple things where I have to do a good job with some of the situational play calls. I was definitely disappointed in myself in a lot of situations tonight. We were just real close to making some of those big plays, a couple to Robert Woods. [I] think one of the things that didn't show up maybe on a stat sheet though are the two PIs down the field by Brandin Cooks that ended up leading to field goal drives for us. So certainly we've got a lot of things that we can clean up. I don't know if you say rust or just we've got to execute better. Whether that's because we didn't play 15 to 20 plays in preseason or not, we have to do a better job making sure that we improve going into Arizona [Cardinals] this week."

Q: There were a lot more touches in the second half, was that a conscious move?

McVay: "It was Jason and I think it also was the result of having more plays. You know we only had 21 plays in the first half, they did a good job sustaining some drives, and then when we go three-and-out the first drive, we had three drives where we got a chance, the one where you get a couple field goals off. I think it was a conscious effort to get Todd [Gurley III] more involved. And then I also think it was the result of us having more opportunity, just in terms of plays overall."

Q: In a game like this where they force you to go into halftime and make adjustments, the whole kitchen sink is basically thrown at you. Is that a good thing?

McVay: "Yeah, I think so and I think for us to be able to go through a little bit of adversity and have to come back from behind going into the half, I think that's always a good test of your resolve as a football team. Certainly it was a good job by those guys and I thought the offense responded where even though they didn't punch it in, being able to sustain that drive and come away with a field goal I thought was key. And then get some good momentum going into the second half, and the guys did a good job finishing off. [And that] really big time play by Marcus [Peters] to kind of really close out that game."

Q: With Jared [Goff] did it take a couple series to get him back into the rhythm and get the speed to the game?

McVay: "Yeah I think the first couple plays... we run it on the first two plays and then the third down we end up... [Rashaan] Melvin does a good job playing man coverage, and we kind of try to throw a little hitch route to the right side and we're off the field. And I thought he made a couple good throws on that second drive that ended up leading to some good points. So I thought he [Jared Goff] settled in pretty good. Some of those throws that we just missed, you know those are hard throws down the field where it's just a tick off and he'll continue to work at that. And there are a couple things in some of the third downs where we can be a little bit better with the location but that's the standards we have for Jared [Goff] and I know he'd say the same."

Q: Are those throws where you like to have him on film for people down the line to kind of think about?



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McVay: “You know, I think we felt like some of the coverages presented the opportunity to try and make some short plays down the field, and we just missed on a few of them. Those are things where we’re gonna be an aggressive offense and if those opportunities present themselves, those are shots we’re gonna try to take.”

Q: You scored 15 points off the dirt, was that impressive?

McVay: “Yeah it was, and I think what’s even more impressive, [Los Angeles Times Reporter] Sam [Farmer], is the fact that he responded after you know missing one earlier in the game. It’s a real credit to [John Fassel] Bones’ confidence in Greg [Zuerlein], and then Greg’s ability to be able to deliver. Where there was no hesitation. He said, ‘No, absolutely this is a situation where we need to kick this field goal.’ When you’ve got guys that have that much confidence and belief, you know it makes you feel confident to go ahead and make those decisions. But that was big time by Greg.”

Q: What you saw from the defense, was it because you didn’t know the Raiders playbook to start?

McVay: “Well, I think that no matter how you wanna cut it, the Raiders did a good job. And we’ve gotta be better, we’ve gotta be better with our communication. They definitely presented some things that are unprepared looks. You had no idea what they’re gonna come out and what other personnel groups. How are they going to displace certain players, and you know Jared Cook made a couple great plays. They end up hitting him where it breaks him out of that fire-zone that we had him and he ends up running for almost 50 yards, and I thought those were some key plays that allowed them to sustain some drives. Everyone knows how great a quarterback Derek Carr is, so they do a good job. You know I don’t want to take anything away from the respect I have for the Raiders offense.”

Q: You scored 23 unanswered points in the second half, what do you take away from that?

McVay: “I think that it was a good job by them for responding the right way. You know we talked about it at the half and came out and I thought that the guys executed and gave themselves the chance to come away with the win. So it was a good test for us, anytime that you can come away with the win. That’s the goal so to be 1-0, however you get it. You never take those wins for granted. Certainly, there’s going to be a lot of things when we look at this film and clean up and try to get better as we move forward.”

Q: You could see Jared Goff trying to fit the ball into tighter spots tonight, is that because he showed more confidence in the offense tonight?

McVay: “Yeah I think so. I think some of it too is because they had some good coverage, and I could probably give them some better options in some play calls in some of those situations. But I think it is a result of his [Jared Goff] confidence and really his confidence in his skilled players, too. He’s gonna give them the chance, he’s gonna trust. You know I thought that third down catch by [Pharoh Cooper] Coop or [Cooper] Kupp on the right sideline was unbelievable. [He] goes up with aggressive hands. Then we mentioned a couple different plays that didn’t go our way but I think he’s [Jared Goff] got a lot of confidence and there’s gonna be some things that you know we can improve on. But I like the fact that he’s aggressive, as long as it’s smart and within the framework of what the coverage and what the play call dictates.”

Q: Marucs Peters brings a certain toughness almost swagger to your defense, can you talk about that?



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McVay: "I think really...you know you call it, swagger you call it confidence. I think those are good things as long as there's a humility that comes with it. He certainly has that. You see the way that he works in practice, the way that he prepares. There's a reason why he's had so much production being able to get interceptions throughout the course of his career because he recognizes things. Then he's got the ability to be able to finish and make those plays and make you pay. He does have the confidence I thought it was great for him to be able to come home and get that type of play as well in front of a lot of his family and friends. We're really excited he got a game ball for it."

Q: Any news on Pharoh Cooper?

McVay: "Pharoh, he hurt his ankle. Hopefully we'll get some good results back, but he did hurt his ankle that forced him to leave the game. That's why it was so tough back there with the returns. So I haven't gotten a full diagnosis yet, but I do know that he did leave because of his ankle."

RAMS QUARTERBACK JARED GOFF

Q: Did you have any rust at all?

Goff: "Yeah. I think just any first-time games at the beginning of the year, you're dealing with some of that. You saw it around the league and it's no different for us. Just the first drive or two you can kind of get those jitters out and move on."

Q: Aqib Talib called the first half a freestyle. You had to slug it out and make some halftime adjustments. Did you feel that a little bit as well?

Goff: "Totally. I think anytime it's the first game of the year, especially with a new staff like they had and especially on offense, for their offense, for our defense, to prepare for, there's a little bit of kind of feeling it out. Feeling what they are going to do. Seeing what their scheme is. I thought the defense did a great job responding as well as the offense. We don't think we played up to our standards in the first half. I think the second half we came out and we did."

Q: How challenging was that first half for your offense. You really weren't out on the field much.

Goff: "Yeah, they did a good job keeping the ball away from us and teams are going to do that. You just have to respond accordingly. I think we only ran 20 plays or so in the first half and whenever that happens it's hard to get in a little bit of a rhythm. We scored a pick and then we went three-and-out and couldn't really sustain long drives, I guess. That can hurt, but like I said in the second half we were able to do that and respond."

Q: Was the shuffle pass to Todd Gurley one of the plays you were excited to debut?

Goff: "Yeah, that was a good one. That was one we've been practicing. He came down the pipe with the headset and said let's go out and score and he straight up did."

Q: Does a win like this send a statement at all that you guys are as good as advertised?

Goff: "Oh, I don't know. I think, like I said, I think the first half we didn't play great. The second half we did. I think a lot of it has to do with the adjustments we were able to make at halftime and whatnot. But I think the game was a lot closer than the score indicates. We scored two touchdowns late. I'm sorry we



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scored a field goal and a touchdown late, and we were able to extend that lead, but it was a lot closer than it looked.”

Q: Have you ever played on dirt before? How much of an adjustment was that?

Goff: “So, we played a preseason game here last year and that was our only other time playing on dirt. It’s a little weird. Honestly, you don’t feel it too much. It hurts when you land on it. That’s kind of when you only feel it, but as far as my cleats and everything, it felt fine.”

Q: Can you describe from your standpoint what Brandin Cooks does for this offense?

Goff: “Yeah, he stretches the field because of his speed. Then we threw enough deep balls tonight to kind of show that off. Unfortunately, we didn’t hit on any of them, but had those two pass interferences which were huge and moved the ball down the field. You see it with that as well as anything between or underneath coverage, he’s really intricate with his routes and does a great job and has been a great addition for us so far.”

Q: You guys were close on a bunch of those deep balls. What is the difference between hitting and missing?

Goff: “A couple of inches. Yeah, I don’t know. It’s sometimes, some games you hit all of them, sometimes you don’t. You hit a few and hopefully in my mind I think we hit the two we got the pass interference on. I’ll take a win there, the 45 yards or whatever it was.”

Q: Do you like the fact that Sean McVay dials it up?

Goff: “Yeah. We are going to stay aggressive and we love these guys going deep and keep throwing it. We’ve connected on that a million times. We’re so close tonight and feel like it’s good stuff to learn from though. There’s probably a few throws I could have thrown a little differently, not even the deep balls, just everything in the whole game. It felt like a lot of the game I was still kind of feeling some stuff out just like everyone else is in their first game but that lets you settle in.”

Q: The sequence there where you guys threw two screens in a row to [RB] Todd Gurley on the left side. The second one goes for 17 yards. Is that just [HC]

McVay’s play calling working at that point?

Goff: “Yeah, he [McVay] is obviously a great play caller and does a great job and puts us in great situations. Anytime you get him the ball [RB] Todd [Gurley] in space, good things tend to happen and those were 2 good plays there and definitely something we like to feature.”

Q: Marcus Peters came home and took one to the house. Do you sense the swagger that he brings to this team?

Goff: “Yeah, I think so. I think having him back in Oakland, you can feel that and how excited he was and to be able to make that play and seal the game for us there. Yeah, just his presence is great. Him and [RCB] Aqib [Talib], the whole secondary has a presence about them. They’re always going after the ball. Always trying to make plays and getting solid confidence in our defense. You add them with our pass rush with the linebackers, it all marries really well. They had a good night.”

Q: Did you sense that you could really control the time of game in the second half?



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Goff: “No, we knew that they were trying to keep us off the field offensively as teams may do that to us and that’s not uncommon. But in the second half, we knew that we were getting the ball to start the half. We knew we were getting the ball now. Don’t worry about them running the ball. We were able to go down and I can’t remember what happened on the first drive if we scored or not coming out of the second half. A field goal, okay. Yeah, so getting points like that and then just continuing to roll and kind of getting into a little bit of momentum and just making plays. You know eventually down the stretch you get comfortable, settle in and guys make plays, and that’s what we did towards the end.”

Q: Are you trying to fit the ball into tight spots more than last year? Confidence and growth as a QB? Why do you think that is the case?

Goff: “Yeah, I think all of that. Just confidence in what we do and really understanding the scheme and understanding what we are trying to get to and knowing where the windows are and not guessing. And just really truly being confident in yourself and that showed tonight I think. There’s a lot of things, like I said, wish I had back. A few throws, I didn’t feel as sharp as I wanted to be in the first half, but that’s a part of the first game and settled in towards the end of the game.”

Rams CB Marcus Peters

Q: How does it feel starting the season with a win and you get to be a protagonist on a beautiful play?

Peters: “Yeah, it shows how much we trust and really believe in our process. We were down three coming in at the half, and we went back out there, we got some stops, and the offense put up some points and we got some turnovers on defense. It was an excellent team win.”

Q: The first half was relatively quiet; the second half you guys caught fire. What was the difference?

Peters: “That’s just the first game jitters man, you know how things go. You want to be out there playing so bad. We watched everybody play yesterday man, so we just sat around all day anticipating when we were going to get the chance. I was expecting us to be a little up and down. They came out and did what we thought they were going to do, try and run the ball on us. Our front seven held it down. So we did our part, we just needed to get off on third downs a lot more. But our offense helped us out with that.”

Q: Can you tell us about what you did while running into the end zone?

Peters: “Oh! I did the Beastmode. That’s what I did.”

Q: Tell us why, in the second half, there was such a dramatic change for this team defensively.

Peters: “We just needed to come out, we were only down by three points. We just needed to get off the field on third downs. We gave up a long third down on the screen, we just needed to get off.”

Q: Can you explain what it’s like to play out there as a unit for the first time?

Peters: “Oh, that [expletive] was fun! We are just getting started though, you feel me? You see how we looked pretty cool. But once we really settled down, I think that tempo kind of caught us off guard. Well, I wouldn’t say caught us off guard, we kind of anticipated it. That just helps us all around



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from the coaches to the players and just us getting things fast. We can get out there and get things fixed.”

Q: You got a game ball from your coach [Sean McVay] for coming home and getting that pick, how much does it mean to you that he recognized you for that?

Peters: “Oh man, I appreciate everything that this organization has been doing for me since I been here, man. It feels good to be around here, it feels good to be an LA Ram.”

Rams WR Brandin Cooks

Q: With your first game with the Rams, how do you feel?

Cooks: “I mean it was alright, you can never underestimate coming in to an away game and get the win. I feel like we have a lot to work on, and to continue to build off today.”

Q: How do you describe this team’s second half?

Cooks: “I think its one of those things you have to adjust when you come into the locker room. You don't blink, you don't flinch, you go back out there and stick to your game, and understand it will come sooner or later, So I think that will come as a team in all three phases.”

Q: What does that mean to go 1-0 against the Raiders on a Monday Night Football game?

Cooks: “I think its huge. Any time you can get away with a win, on an away game, in a hostile environment, that continues to build your confidence and build you as a team. So it was huge for us tonight.”

Q: How important is it for you guys to be able to hold the Raiders to 13 points?

Cooks: “You have to speak to our defense. They did a great job adjusting, coming out there playing ball, and giving us the ball back every chance they get. So I think it is a great team win all around.”

LOS ANGELES RAMS P JOHNNY HEKKER

Q: What can you say about the special teams unit tonight and how you guys played throughout the game?

Hekker: “Yeah our special teams unit, we pride ourselves on working hard during the work so that way if we are called upon on Sunday we’re ready to go. It was a fun atmosphere out there and starting the season off on Monday night, we were able make a couple good plays to keep things tight.”

Q: Considering it being the first game of the season, did you feel like the team had a case of the jitters at all coming into the game?

Hekker: “I think it’s a situation where you come into a game and it’s all about the feel. You have to really get yourself amped up to go into a road environment especially as difficult as Oakland. It’s difficult to get those things clicking right away but I think we’re a patient team and a connected team that showed in the second half.”



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Q: It might seem cliché but everyone needs to contribute whether it's special teams, offense, or defense right?

Hekker: "Yeah absolutely. It's a team game. It's not like any other sport in the world where guys of all different sizes, shapes and abilities contribute to an overall goal of winning the game. I think today all of our guys did the right thing. There's definitely things we can clean up moving forward but it's much better to look at that coming from a win."

Rams DT Aaron Donald

Q: How was this first game for you?

Donald: "Oh it was good. I'm pleased with my play, but it will get better. I'm just happy we won. I didn't do much, but I'm going to get better. I have to break down the film, you know, get myself going. But we came away with a big win so I'm happy about that. Just, I have to try and do more."

Q: Did you feel like you were in football shape tonight?

Donald: "I was. It was just more, you know, I just have to rush better and do things better. I'm second-guessing myself on certain things. But, like I said, I just have to keep playing football and I'll get better."

Q: Is that a function of playing with a couple new guys on the line with you?

Donald: "No, that's just me playing and getting myself going. So I'll be better next week. I'll be more productive, because I didn't do much today. But like I said, I'm just happy we won."

Q: Are you encouraged by the fact the defense really picked it up the second half?

Donald: "Yeah, for sure. We made a lot of big time plays, a lot of turnovers, and we came away with a big win."

Q: Did the ref say anything to you on the sack penalty?

Donald: "It was a low hit. Not much you can do when you're falling. But it is what it is."

Q: Marcus Peters brings an attitude to this team and a swagger. Do you feel that? Do you sense that?

Donald: "Yeah, the guys back there, like I said, they playmakers. They can do that any time in the game. Anytime you got guys like that, it brings a whole swagger to the defense, a new swag. So I'm just happy the guys are on our side."

Q: What did you guys see on that touchdown run by Marshawn [Lynch]?

Donald: "Yeah, they got us in a formation that we shouldn't have been in. But we fixed that. But we just have to talk about that, too. We shouldn't have let that happen. And then like I said, I'm happy we won."

LOS ANGELES RAMS CB AQIB TALIB

Q: Was tonight a good test for your team to have to go through?



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Talib: "It was. It was like a freestyle game. Nothing really on tape so we had a half to trade blows with them and then in the second half we had a good feel for what they were trying to do."

Q: You guys came out in the second half and outscored them 23-0. How good does that make you feel that you did make those adjustments and got the win?

Talib: "It felt great. Our coaches came in and they broke it down good. Our coaches gave us great information and we did a good job of taking it to the field and stopping what they were trying to do."

Q: How big of an advantage is it to have Wade Phillips in situations like that?

Talib: "He's the goat. He's the goat man. His daddy was the goat and that means it's in his blood. They got goat blood. They are the best. You try to attack him one way, he's going to come out second half and he's going to have something for you. That's one of the main reasons why I'm here. I love playing for him."

Q: Marcus Peters said that there were a little bit of jitters in the first half since you guys were waiting for this moment for so long. Would you agree with that?

Talib: "A little bit. But I think it was more of the fact that we had no idea what they were going to do. They ran some stuff that we just didn't see on tape. It was new to us so we just had to adjust."

RAMS RB Todd Gurley II

Q: What made the team really click in the second half?

Gurley II: "Just kept doing what we are doing and practicing what we are practicing. Our defense did a great job and stepped up the second half. Our O-Line blocked everyone, and we all did a great job."

Q: How did it feel to actually get hit out there? I know you were not looking forward to it.

Gurley II: "Yeah, I feel it right now. I just got out the cold tub, but I will be fine. It felt good being back out there."

Q: How about just seeing your defense out there get going in the second half with all those new guys?

Gurley II: "Yeah, we knew that was going to come. We did a very good job in the third and fourth quarter, especially the fourth quarter, with just stopping guys. Jared Cook had some great catches, but for the most part [John] Johnson [III] had a great interception. [Aqib] Talib did a great job with just sitting in in there and making tackles. It was a great team effort."