



## Oakland Raiders Transcript

### Head Coach Jon Gruden

**Opening statement:** "How's it going today? So real quick we put Brandon LaFell on injured/reserve. Unfortunately, he hurt his Achilles. It's a big loss for us. We activated, or I should say we signed, Keon Hatcher, who was on the Packers practice squad. A former Raider who had a pretty good preseason. We're happy to have him back. I'll be happy to answer any questions I can."

**Q: LaFell is someone who wasn't here in the spring, but he knew this offense. What did you see from him in his time here?**

**Coach Gruden:** "He was good. He was a good player. He beat Patrick Peterson on a touchdown pass yesterday. Went up and got a huge third-down conversion. Touchdown against the Colts. He did a lot of things for us. He played multiple positions. We're going to miss him. He's going to be a hard guy to replace."

**Q: Is it a different Monday after a win?**

**Coach Gruden:** "It's been a tough year. It's been a tough year for a lot of reasons. It was a great locker room yesterday. These guys played hard. Really proud of the effort, the enthusiasm, the togetherness of our team. I know we're not where we want to be, but the attitude and the effort and the comradery is a big part of establishing a program. For that I'm really proud."

**Q: You played in really competitive games, but can the win add to the enthusiasm? Sometimes do you need that victory?**

**Coach Gruden:** "Yeah, I think so. If you've seen us practice, I know it's not open to the public. We've had a lot of good practices. Guys have been putting forth tremendous effort. They've been preparing hard. Winning is a great motivator, it's a great cure. It also builds momentum. We're missing a lot of players. Our injury list is unfortunate. Hopefully we get [Justin] Ellis back on the practice field this week. Hopefully Jordy Nelson can get back as well."

**Q: What do you think of the play by the two rookie receivers?**

**Coach Gruden:** "I thought Marcell [Ateman] did some good things. He handled some audibles. I think Derek [Carr], early in the game audible and went to him on a quick screen. He handled that part of it well, the changing of plays. He made some very good blocks. Even on the Seth Roberts play to set up the field goal. Then he had the big catch. I was really pleased with Ateman. It wasn't too big for him. He was confident. He was under control. He was calm. He made some plays. Saeed [Blacknall] did the right thing for the most part. He had a couple of assignment errors, but he got his first action in some critical moments and I thought he handled himself pretty well."

**Q: Two rookie receivers, two rookie tackles, how challenging is it to have four rookies out there?**

**Coach Gruden:** "It's tough. Credit to them. Credit to Derek. Credit to the assistant coaches. Paul Guenther has been doing it all year. He's had three rookies on the defensive line. He's had a rookie middle linebacker. Then when we kicked the field goal we had a rookie snapper, a rookie holder and a rookie kicker. So, it was the day of the rookies yesterday, happy for them."

**Q: You had a lot of turnover at kicker this season. Do you think you found stability in Carlson?**

**Coach Gruden:** "We hope so. We like [Daniel] Carlson coming out of Auburn. A lot of people did. He just got off to a rocky start like a lot of kickers do in Minnesota. He's been good for us. He has a big leg. He can kick off. He can get us touch backs. He's a long-range field goal, and yesterday he proved to be a clutch field goal kicker. I think that can really jump start his career because he's a very talented young kicker."



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**Q: Why do you think a lot of kickers got off to a slow start this year?**

**Coach Gruden:** "Well the goal posts are tighter. The goal posts are tighter, and you need to gain some confidence. Sometimes you miss a couple. I went through it with [Sebastian] Janikowski my first year here. Joe Nedney went to training camp and out kicked him every day. We kept Janikowski, he missed a couple of kicks and people thought we should've kept Nedney. I'm glad we kept Janikowski."

**Q: Is there an update on Doug Martin?**

**Coach Gruden:** "I think he'll be OK. I think he'll be OK. We distributed the ball pretty good yesterday. We got three good backs. We've been saying that DeAndré [Washington] is healthy. Happy to get him in the game, he deserves to play. We're going to try to get him on the field more. All three backs had 10 or more carries and ran the ball, I thought, with some authority. I was pleased with that."

**Q: How much was Kolton Miller impacted physically?**

**Coach Gruden:** "I think he's going to be alright. I think he's battling Chandler Jones over there. Chandler Jones is one of the best defense ends in football. Brandon Parker had his best game of the year. He was very good for us. He's going to have some moments. Not just because he's not 100 percent. He's going to have some moments over there because of some of the guys he's dealing with. He is improving. Hopefully he gets healthier and healthier as the season unfolds."

**Q: What does it say about Kolton Miller that he's out there competing injured?**

**Gruden:** "It says a lot about him. It's one thing to go out there and play hurt. It's another thing to go out there and play winning football when you're hurt. Not many guys can do that. Not many young guys, especially. That's why we made him our first-round pick. He's got really good inner strength, mental strength, mental toughness. He's a tough guy and he's showing it right now."

**Q: What have you seen from Karl Joseph over the last few games?**

**Gruden:** "He gives us more speed at the safety position. He's got very good striking ability. He's a good tackler in close-range situations. I think he's improving. I think he's learning this defense. He's been able to practice, and I think he's starting to recognize plays and smell plays out. he usually arrives in a pretty bad mentality. He's a tough guy. We need a physical presence at or near the line of scrimmage and I think he can help us do that."

**Q: You spoke about the Carr/Gruden debate. Do you find that people put too much emphasis on exchanges on the sideline?**

**Gruden:** "I don't have a 'no yelling' sign on the sideline. Things happen. We get excited down there. I get excited when we get a first down. Get excited when you work on something all week and it doesn't work out. I get excited when he makes big plays, too. that's just part of football. I think cameras can catch things sometimes that maybe make things look a little bit peculiar, but that happens."

**Q: Are there some quarterbacks that you can bark at more than others?**

**Gruden:** "I'm a big cheerleader sometimes. I'm very positive a lot of the time. every once in awhile, I think you have to make your points in some different ways. Sometimes raising your voice... I look ridiculous to some people, but I want urgency. I want to have some urgency to get things right. It doesn't mean I'm always right, either. Derek pointed that out to me yesterday. So be it."

**Q: Talk about using DeAndre Washington more.**

**Gruden:** "Marshawn [Lynch] was here and running really well for us then Marshawn went away. Doug Martin has been doing good things. Jalen Richard might be the MVP of our team. He really has done well. If you've seen us carefully, we haven't had a whole lot of snaps in some of these games so it's hard to get equal distribution of the ball to too many runners. Yesterday I think we ran the ball almost 40 times. We



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stuck with it. We had success and we were able to get DeAndre into circulation and hopefully that leads to bigger things for him.”

**Q: Did you see improvement in the run game overall?**

**Gruden:** “Yeah, we did. We had some good two-back runs with Keith Smith as the fullback. Good, old-fashioned runs. We even used David Sharpe as an eligible receiver at tight end to get in some jumbo packages. That helped us a little bit. I thought we ran the ball in a no-huddle offense out of a single set pretty good at times, also. All three backs can catch the ball and they all three can pick up the blitz. [Running backs coach] Jemal Singleton has done a good job with our backs.”

**Q: How did you feel about Johnny Townsend’s punts?**

**Gruden:** “Pretty good. I thought he had some good punts yesterday. Field position was much better for us, starting point one of the best of the year, for sure.”

**Q: Lee Smith plays with personality. What strikes you about him?**

**Gruden:** “That’s a good way to put Lee Smith, personality. He loves to play. He gives our team a lot of behind the scenes energy and confidence. He’s a tough guy. Old school ball player. It’s good to have guys like that, throwback players, on your team.”

**Q: How has Derek Carr responded to criticism since you’ve been working with him?**

**Coach Gruden:** “He’s been good. A lot of my criticism is constructive criticism. I think he has the ability, I tell him, to complete every pass he throws. I mean that. He’s got that kind of arm talent and I am going to continue to raise the standards for him. I thought he threw a fly ball yesterday to Jalen Richard, I thought it landed out of the end zone and I let him know about it, that he was out of bounds. I just think he’s got as good an arm talent as there is and I want to try and hold him to those standards. I think deep down somewhere, he appreciates that. As we continue to get better around him, with our pass protection, if we can ever get some continuity at wide receiver it’d be nice. I think he has got a chance to really be special.”

**Q: What kind of resilience have you seen from him [Derek Carr]?**

**Coach Gruden:** “He’s done well. I think that’s what every great quarterback has to do in this league. I think if you look at Drew Brees, I don’t know how many receivers that have come and gone through New Orleans. Aaron Rodgers is going through it. They all go through it. Tom Brady goes through it. These guys go through it, he’s got to deal with it. That’s what comes with being a C.E.O. type quarterback, and I thought he has handled it extremely well and that’s a credit to him.”

**Q: Towards the end of the game when Jalen [Richard] kind of limped off, was that just exhaustion from all the things you were asking him to do?**

**Coach Gruden:** “Probably was, he had to return punts and then he had to go get us peanuts and snacks upstairs after the game. (laughter) He did it all for us. He got the concessions. He is a helluva player, a great competitor and he has really come on as an every-down back, not just a third-down back. There is not much he can’t do for us.”

**Q: Have you talked with your brother (Jay Gruden) about how the injury bug has hit both of your teams?**

**Coach Gruden:** “Yeah. My brother, he lost his quarterback. Alex Smith is a great guy and I wish him the best. I don’t know any of the lineman playing out there. [Jamison] Crowder, [Chris] Thompson and [Paul] Richardson, they are all out. My mom and dad have gotten to know both of the rosters completely this year.”



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**Q: Do you anticipate Jordy Nelson coming back to practice?**

**Coach Gruden:** "I think he's got a chance. I visited with Jordy a little bit last night on the airplane. I thought he ran pretty good this morning. He's got a chance. It's important to him, I think he wants to come back and play no doubt, and he's getting close to doing that. I can't update anything on Martavis [Bryant] yet."

**Q: Often times, guys that are out do not travel, but Jordy was there. Was that just to talk to the young guys?**

**Coach Gruden:** "I asked Jordy if he wanted to stay in Oakland and get extra treatment. He said, 'heck no, I want to come to the game.' It's just that kind of attitude we need right now on this team. A veteran presence, being with the receivers, being with Derek on the sideline. It's a good group of guys and he is at the head of the list. He's really a special person to give himself to the team like he has."

**Q: Obviously you had seen him play before, but were there things that you learned about Jalen Richard more since you started coaching him?**

**Coach Gruden:** "Yeah. He's a mean guy, tough guy when the game starts. Hard to tackle. He is a Charlie Garner type back. He reminds me a lot of Garner, if you all remember him? He's a guy that I think someday could run for 1,000 yards and catch 1,000 yards worth of passes. He's a guy we can line up in the slot, we can line him up out wide. He might not be the biggest back, but he plays big. He's very quick and decisive, and he's got great vision."

**Q: How did Dwayne Harris come away from yesterday's game?**

**Coach Gruden:** "He's pretty good, I think. He had some tough moments, but he's a tough guy, too. I like him."

**Q: Frostee Rucker was given a game ball after Sunday's win, what do you think he has meant to this team?**

**Coach Gruden:** "We have a real young defensive line. He's an ex-Arizona Cardinal by the way. A highly-regarded Cardinal, the people there loved him. I know that meant a lot to him, going back to Arizona and winning. He's been our hardest worker, our most valuable veteran presence on defense. I think he's really given our team something and I wanted to reward him yesterday, not only with a good performance, but just thanking him for his everyday leadership and hard work presence."