



## ***Oakland Raiders Transcript***

### **Head Coach Jon Gruden**

**Q: You guys are 5-24 on third down conversions in the second half. Is there something defenses are doing a little bit differently in those situations in the second half?**

**Coach Gruden:** "We've taken a long look at it. A lot of it is us and some of it is good defense, but a lot of it is situational. We're in obvious passing situations. It's hard to convert. So, it's a combination of a lot of things. Again, it falls back on me."

**Q: Where are you with Trent Brown and Josh Jacobs?**

**Coach Gruden:** "Not good. Brown is going to be on injured reserve. He won't play again this year. His shoulder, his pec I should say, is just not getting any better. It's disappointing. Congratulations to him for making the Pro Bowl. Obviously, what he did put on tape was very impressive. I don't believe Josh will play this week. We'll hold out hope that he can play against Denver. That might be part of the problem in the second half too. I don't know."

**Q: How good was Trent Brown when before he started to struggle physically?**

**Coach Gruden:** "Pretty good. I mean to me he's the best right tackle in the game. Obviously, he's a difference maker. If you watch us play in London. If you watch us play against any of the teams that he played against. He's a difference maker in pass protection, he's a good run player, and obviously he's been well respected by his peers in the league."

**Q: Has he been pretty much everything you'd hoped he'd be when you made the move to get him?**

**Coach Gruden:** "Yeah. You know when we drafted Kolton Miller, we didn't feel like we had a healthy tackle on our team when we came here. So, we had to address that position. We drafted Kolton Miller who's really made huge strides in year two. Hasn't missed a snap. And we went out and acquired Trent Brown to give us what we think are two really good tackles. Again, we're disappointed that Trent won't be able to play, but really thrilled that he's here and that he got selected to the Pro Bowl."

**Q: Has Josh Jacobs just gotten to the point where the shoulder is not bouncing back like it was earlier in the year?**

**Coach Gruden:** "Yeah. It's been tough on him since the Green Bay game honestly. We've had to manage it. He's had to manage it more than anybody. And it's affected his overall game working in the passing game, and you know when you miss practice and you're injured, it's hard to work on a lot of things sometimes."

**Q: You guys signed Lamarcus Joyner to a big contract. Do you think you've gotten the bang for your buck?**

**Coach Gruden:** "I think we will. We're going to get the bang. When you lose your safeties and your middle linebacker, it's a big issue. We didn't have a lot of proven depth coming into the season. I'm not going to sit up here and make excuses, but Joyner's a big part of the solution, so is Trayvon Mullen and our young corners. You know we we're making strides there for a while. I think Joyner's a big part of the solution here, although the stat sheet might not show it right now."



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**Q: Was that slide that Derek Carr made at the end of the game kind of a breakthrough play for him despite it being incorrectly ruled by the refs? To run as decisively as he did and to slide and make that play, it seems like that's something that you've been trying to get him to do since you've gotten here.**

**Coach Gruden:** "Yeah. Thanks for bringing that up, Jerry. That's the most ridiculous call that I've been associated with. I mean we have to take accountability, you know, managing the clock for crying out loud. We got four downs, and we got a clock, and we got a clock operator and we got all this technology. But yeah it was a breakthrough play in some ways. It was a read-option, you know, it was a run-option. He's going to hand the ball to Josh [Jacobs] or keep it himself. He chose to keep it in a critical situation and potentially it could have been a big play in the game. Yeah it was a big play for him."

**Q: You guys might be done playing games in Oakland, but some might say you have another home game coming up going to LA. Did you get that vibe playing the Chargers there last year that it was a pro-Raiders crowd?**

**Coach Gruden:** "I don't understand. It's a little different than it used to be playing at the old San Diego Chargers stadium. You're playing at a venue that really is a temporary venue for them. I've got a lot of respect for this rivalry wherever we play it, but California football right now is in limbo. 49ers moved, we're moving, Chargers moved, Rams moved, so there's a lot of moving parts, but I enjoy playing this matchup. Always have."

**Q: You obviously have a lot of contributions from rookies this year, but in the last few weeks you've had several rookies experience injuries. 'The rookie wall' is a term that gets thrown out there some times. Do you feel like some of the rookies at all hit that, or is that a concern at all getting to this point in the season where they haven't been yet?**

**Coach Gruden:** "I don't know if they hit the wall, they just got hurt. They were playing great. Injuries happen to veterans. Third-year, fifth-year, eighth-year veterans get hurt. Losing [Hunter] Renfrow, losing [Foster] Moreau, losing [Josh] Jacobs is obviously big because they play critical, every-down roles for us, but [Maxx] Crosby's still churning away. We're proud of our rookies. It's a tough, tough task to walk in here and get this much play time in your first year, but there might be something to that. I don't know. I don't believe in all that stuff."

**Q: What kind of challenge is it to come in after four straight losses with a team that was 6-4 at one point?**

**Coach Gruden:** "Yeah it's challenging. It's also exciting. Look I'm not going to sit here and be overly optimistic or pessimistic. I'm just going to be honest. We're building our team. We've lost some critical members of our team, and we've had some tough losses. We felt we played good enough to win on Sunday, but we're building our team, and we're building it with football character. This young class is a big part of our process here, and we're going to stack another class next year just like it, and we're going to do the best we can to win another game. We're still in the hunt. There's not a lot of teams that are much different than us. There's a lot of teams in the same boat."

**Q: Do you feel as good about Derek Carr now as you did at the beginning of the year?**

**Coach Gruden:** "Yeah I feel good about a lot of things. I'm not going to sit here and have a season-ending press conference. We've got a lot to do yet. Like I said, he's done a lot of good things in some tough circumstance. We don't see the ball a lot in the second half if you want to do the math on that."



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We don't get a lot of possessions, but we've got to do better, he's got to do better, I've got to do better and we've got to do better."

**Q: Even when you had won three in a row, you had mentioned after games that you were still building your team and it was a process. We're you trying to pump the brakes a little bit in terms of the fans getting a little too carried away?**

**Coach Gruden:** "No, I'm just being honest. I'm not doing anything but being honest. I know what we needed to do when I came here, and we've had some tough times, but we've also made some progress and I'm going to continue to emphasize the strides that we have made. I've said from the very beginning we have a long way to go, but we're going to get there."

**Q: Is Hunter Renfrow on track to play this week?**

**Coach Gruden:** "He did practice today in our beautiful indoor facility, our secret indoor facility. We're going to try to play him, perhaps let him catch a few punts. That's another position that obviously we've had a lot of turnover at. So, the plan is to play Hunter a little bit, get him back on the grass."

**Q: You mentioned the rivalry against the Chargers. Do you enjoy going against Phillip Rivers?**

**Coach Gruden:** "Yeah, he's one of the premier quarterbacks in the league, and one of the great game day competitors. One of the all-time trash talkers ever. P.G. trash talk, too. That's a credit to him. But I think he's great for football. I think he's great for the game and we know we're going to get a great, great performance from him as the season's winding down. He remembers, obviously, a lot about this rivalry too."

### **Quarterback Derek Carr**

**Q: Before Trent Brown got hurt the first time, what kind of force was he?**

**Carr:** "He definitely makes a difference on the football games, that's for sure. Him and Rodney [Hudson] getting the Pro Bowl, rightfully so, those guys are two of the best at their position. And Trent, that guy is just a monster when it comes to pass game, run game. I mean you literally see him throw grown men 8-10 yards off the ball, like it's crazy what he's able to do against some really talented people. So, when you lose a guy like that obviously it's next man up, it hurts. But with the year that he had, him going to the Pro Bowl, rightfully deserved."

**Q: Have you gone through a season with this much changeup on the roster?**

**Carr:** "It must be your first year here, huh? (*laughter*)...I've been through a lot, man."

**Q: With having those two guys named to the Pro Bowl and Richie Incognito as an alternate, does that kind of speak to the strides of the offensive line this year?**

**Carr:** "Absolutely. Coach always talked about that 52-53 (sacks allowed) number, that was a big emphasis all offseason and those guys worked their tail off to do a great job of cutting that number big time, and those weren't all on them obviously last year. But, when it comes to it as a team it was definitely a mindset and to see those guys get rewarded for the hard work that they put in is always awesome. I wish all five of those guys would go, but you got to win to get more spots."



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**Q: That RPO, to make the decisive move, to slide inbounds, was that kind of a breakthrough? It seemed like that play was executed as well as you've done one.**

**Carr:** "Oh yeah, I mean that play was a thing we talked about all week. We don't run many zone-reads where I'm just a runner. We usually have some kind of pass option or something like that, but that play was a fun one, especially the way we ended the football game. Like that would have been awesome. Two-minute warning, take the clock down, hopefully get a first down, all that. Game over, we're all high-fiving and it feels different. But, that wasn't the case and at least they said sorry."

**Q: Does that matter at all, that the league apologized?**

**Carr:** "No. Gosh, no. It means absolutely nothing. Like I said, I like to keep my money in my pocket. *(laughter)* But to decide the outcome of a football game, it's a little different."

**Q: What's it like to play down in Los Angeles in the Chargers-Raiders rivalry?**

**Carr:** "Yeah, I think the Chargers try and do a good job of not selling the tickets to Raiders fans. They try at least, but it'll be a lot of Raider fans in that building, just as it always was in San Diego. Just like it always is in LA. Our Raider support in Los Angeles is unbelievable."

**Q: How do you see that locker room shaking out right now? Do you still see much positivity and everything you want to see?**

**Carr:** "Absolutely. Some guys, sometimes it looks like their dog got kicked because they're human. It's hard to go through this business and when you're not winning as many games as you want to and everybody is talking about crazy stuff about this and that, whatever, and it weighs on some guys to be honest with you. So, you got to make sure you got to do your best as a player or as a coach to come in every day and be the same person no matter the circumstance. I hope that the people that were around when we were winning 12 games would say that I act the same way then as I do know. I try my best to be the same at all times knowing what's going on, knowing circumstances, knowing things that have gone on. You still just try and stay positive, be up-beat and make sure you hide everybody else from some of those things."

**Q: What does Hunter Renfrow bring back to the offense?**

**Carr:** "Hunter being back, I'll say we were on the same page obviously before he got injured. We had a really nice thing going, so there's nothing like live reps though. There is nothing like actually playing games and getting that feel back, so we'll have to do that. But getting a guy like that back, he's a guy that's been awesome for us. Not just on intermediate routes, but deeper routes, different kinds of things against some good players."

**Q: What do DeAndré Washington and Jalen Richard bring to the mix?**

**Carr:** "They are very talented. They both have a lot of production in this league. Whenever you have guys that have to come in and spell somebody and take the load off somebody, you hope those guys aren't new. You hope those guys aren't just first time out there because it's hard to go from standing on the sideline for eight plays in a row and then go in and you have to do your job excellent. And those guys have a lot of time on task of doing that, so anytime they're thrown into a role where they have to start or play extended downs, anytime we've asked them to do that, they've done a fantastic job. And so you miss Josh [Jacobs] if he can't play, but at the same time you don't worry because we have two good backs that can handle it."



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### **Q: How are those two guys different?**

**Carr:** "So DeAndré, he always reminded me so much of Domanick Davis, whom my brother played with from LSU in Houston. Great balance, very tough runner. He's more of a, he's going to stick his face in your chest kind of a guy, but at the same time has good speed. Whereas Jalen is that old scat back. He's that old run-the-routes, make-you-miss, dance-around, make-you-look-silly kind of guy and both of those guys being able to do different things physically, but able throughout the scheme be able to do every position and do everything that the running back is asked to. Like we've had Jalen in there on power, he can run inside the tackles as well as run the routes and do all that stuff. So, both of those guys being versatile enough to do that is awesome."

### **Q: How much of an impact does Hunter Renfrow make on third down?**

**Carr:** "Huge impact, because if we want to throw it to him he does a great job winning, but we also know teams know that and you can use him, whether you want to throw it to him or use him as a diversion. Same thing with [Darren] Waller, same thing with Jalen. You can do those kinds of things with those guys when people are like, 'they want to get the ball to here.' It's nice because sometimes you'll actually throw it there and sometimes you'll actually just use them. Just having that element back, it just adds back to our offense."

### **Q: Head Coach Jon Gruden called Philip Rivers one of the best P.G. trash talkers of all-time. What kind of competitor is Rivers and what do you respect about his game?**

**Carr:** "Yeah, him and Coach got into it. I hope they got it on NFL Films last time, it was pretty funny. I'll remember that one forever. He's super competitive, but he's also a great guy. He's got a great, big family. I'm not trying to catch him, I've always joked about that. We've competed for six years now, that's a long time to play against somebody multiple times a year and love competing against him. He talks trash to our defense, talks trash to our coaches, all those kinds of things. But someone you respect, he doesn't cross the line."

### **Q: Is it P.G. or is it G?**

**Carr:** "I don't know. *(laughter)* You got to ask our defense."

### **Q: What is it that makes Jalen effective picking up blitzes?**

**Carr:** "Very smart. Whenever Rodney and I, and the centers and quarterbacks, we have extra protection meetings and things like that it started off he was always in there with us for these last four years. And Rodney and I would meet and do that with the centers, quarterbacks and then he started showing up and now all the running backs show up. He's someone that makes sure that room knows what's important. In this league, obviously coach has talked about it all the time, you can be a great runner, but if you don't know who to block, you don't know how to block, you don't want to block, you're not going to play in this league at all. Teams find out really quick on film that this guys doesn't want to block and now they're going to blitz every time he's in the game and it causes problems in the pocket. Jalen is a guy that knew coming out, 'oh, can he block?' I'm sure he was doubted in that with his size, where he played at school and he's taken it upon himself one of the best third-down backs. We say third-down back all the time and people just think run routes, catch the ball. Third-down back means he is in there pass protecting too, because not only does he know who to block, he can make calls just like Rodney and I can. You don't find very many running backs that can do that and whenever you know who to block, you know how to and you



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know what to do and you want to, the sky is the limit. And he's shown why he's special because it's important to him."