

Head Coach Jon Gruden

Opening statement: "I'll be happy to answer any questions that I can."

Q: I think the most defensive snaps Erik Harris had played in a game was two before Sunday. How do you think he did?

Coach Gruden: "He did very well. I think we talked about him emerging in the offseason program. He steadily has really earned the right to play. He got hurt in training camp, hurt that finger and missed a couple weeks. Not only did he flash, he has consistently flashed, and really has earned the right to play more and more."

Q: You got to coach against [Miami RB] Frank Gore years ago. What do you see from him and is it surprising he is still going strong?

Coach Gruden: "Yeah, he is one of my favorites. He has been able to adapt and prove that he can play in any offense. He's been one of the great two-back I [formation] runners that I've seen in my time as a coach. Then [QB] Alex Smith came along and they morphed into a shotgun operation. He played with [QB Colin] Kaepernick, he proved that he could play in that style of offense. Did some really good things, quietly, in Indianapolis I think. It's really cool to see him back in Miami where it all started."

Q: Miami has done a really good job of spreading the ball around their offense. Does that make things more difficult when you game plan against a team like that?

Coach Gruden: "Yeah it makes it tough. They are a spread operation. They spread the field and they have a lot of RPOs. A lot of running plays with built-in pass options. And they will throw the ball to anybody. [QB Ryan] Tannehill is as viable a ball carrier as Frank Gore is. You got to account for him. [RB] Kenyan Drake is capable of making big runs, so they got different styles of runners. They have a unique running game that is wide open. A lot of their passes are on running plays where they are throwing the built in RPOs, so we got to defend the entire width of the field. They have Kenny Stills and [Devante] Parker, two guys that make you defend the field vertically. That's what Adam Gases' system does, it's tough."

Q: [HC Adam] Gase was saying that Tannehill may have benefited from being out last year. He was around the team, in every single meeting, took a step back and was looking at things a little bit differently than he ever had before. Can you see that in his play at all?

Coach Gruden: "Yeah, well, it's hard to say. He's only played a couple games. I was there in Miami last year and witnessed it. A lot of guys get hurt, they disappear from the scene. They go home, they rehab privately. He was involved in the quarterback meetings, he was a coach on the field. It's a credit to him and I do think you benefit by watching and observing. The good things that happen, the bad things that happen. He is a veteran quarterback now. He's been in this system. I think he has a clear understanding of what his objective is. They are 2-0 in a large part because of his play."

Q: You made some strides last week. What is the next step for the offense?

Coach Gruden: "Well, I was really pleased with what we did. Started the game in both halves very well. We just got to keep getting better in all areas and hopefully we get some turnovers, we get some better field position and some more opportunities. I think that's important. We got to finish some drives. Play calling will help."



Q: After the game you thought Derek could have completed every one of his throws. After going back and looking at it, what was your overall impression?

Coach Gruden: "He made some great audibles in the game. He recognized some looks, he helped us get in the right play. He helped the protection by fixing some things up front. He benefited too, I think he would tell you, from some really good play around him. We were able to pass protect, for the most part, at a high level. Guys ran great routes. Amari was outstanding in the game. The combination of Derek performing at a high level and those around him I think. We ran the ball and stayed in some third-down-and-regular situations. We weren't second-and-20, we didn't have a lot of penalties, weren't behind in the chains against a team like that in the noise"

Q: Through a couple of weeks he [Derek Carr] has gotten the ball out quickly and a lot of the attempts have been close to the line of scrimmage. Is that what you wanted to see so far, and do you see that opening up as the season goes on?

Coach Gruden: "I just want to be productive when we throw it. I think [TE Jared] Cook averaged 20yards a catch in the first game. Throwing the ball on-time and accurate is a big part of winning football. We hope to get more big chunk plays. We are making an attempt to do that, and I think you will see some more of that as the year unfolds."

Q: How much is Derek, in some sense, his best protection when it comes to staying upright?

Coach Gruden: "I think if you go around the league, I don't have the official stats, a lot of balls are completed within 10-12 yards of the line of scrimmage. The great quarterbacks protect themselves as much as some of the protection protects them. They don't hold the ball for a significant amount of time, they have a feel for pressure. They avoid the catastrophic plays. He's got a good feel back there for pressure, for when to let it go and for when to hold onto it. That comes with playing experience."

Q: The pass rush was better in week two but I'm sure you feel you can generate more. How much of that do you think you can do with scheme and how much is it just guys becoming more comfortable in Paul's (Guenther] system?

Coach Gruden: "I think it's a combination of those two things. Honestly, we are hoping we can get the opponent behind in the down-and-distance. You can ask any team in the league, when you have a number of opportunities, at-bats, when its second-and-twelve, third-and-11, or third-and-eight that certainly helps. Blitzing could be a part of it. Winning your one-on-one's is a big part of it. We just got to do it collectively, coaching and playing. Hopefully, we are much better in Miami."

Q: Do you want Guenther to stick to the system he brought here? Do you think you have good blitzers here?

Coach Gruden: "I think so. You do what you have to do with the personnel you have to win a game. There were years in Cincinnati when Mike Zimmer was there. They blitzed more than they did in other seasons. When you have Dunlap and you have Geno Atkins and others, sometimes you don't have to blitz. You can mix coverages. Sometimes the illusion of pressure. Making the other quarterback thinking your blitzing and not blitzing is good. We were able to get Denver in some seven-man protections and just three-man routes. We just have to do a better job collectively not matter how we get off the field."



Q: What kind of challenge do Robert Quinn and Cameron Wake present?

Coach Gruden: "Well Wake has a history of being troublesome guy. I think a great free agent acquisition or trade they made I should say was Quinn. He raises hell off the edge. He can bend the edge. He's very athletic. Plays hard. I love his motor. It's hard to do in Miami where that heat is what it is. He's given them a lot of high-effort rushes. Down in and down out. I really like the addition of Quinn. They've emerged I think. They have some young linebackers from Ohio State that are playing well. [Xavien] Howard, their left corner, he's as good as we've seen so far this year."

Q: How do you feel like Donald Penn and Kolton Miller have done in pass protection?

Coach Gruden: "Pretty good. Like I've said, we've played two really good defenses. We've done some really good things upfront quietly."

Q: Do you like that Amari Cooper is quiet?

Coach Gruden: "Coop can do whatever he wants. I like him. I've had a chance to be around all kinds of different guys. The ones I like being around the most are guys that can do what he did on Sunday. He had 10 official catches on 10 targets. He really was 11-for-11. I've never had that before. He's a great receiver. I've said that from the beginning. He's strong, he's fast, he knows what he's doing. He is quiet, but we are communicating better. We're getting to know each other. I like where this relationship is heading."

Q: What are your thoughts on Frank Gore?

Coach Gruden: "Similar to some of the free agents that we brought here. He brings more to your team than just running back yards, catches, blitz pickups. He brings character to your locker room, to your team. He's one of the top five or six football players that I've ever seen. We weren't very smart for not drafting him."

Q: Do you know yet if you had a good bounce back from Sunday's game or do you find that out this afternoon?

Coach Gruden: "We'll be a little bit carefully today. We'll put the pads on tomorrow. Today will be a big learning day. We have a lot to learn in regards to Miami. We'll let the team get fresh physically, but we'll really go after them mentally and try to get them more and more reps to try to get them familiarized with the Dolphins."

Q: What is it so hard to find a pass rusher?

Coach Gruden: "It's hard to find a great one. It's hard to find a good one. It's hard to find one. You just said it. College football now, they're not really dropping back to pass and throwing footballs anymore. They're throwing laterals and they're throwing bubble screens. They're running read options. So you have to train these guys. It takes a little bit of time to learn how to rush the passer. We have some guys that are in that process right now."

Q: Why hasn't Jordy Nelson been very productive so far?

Coach Gruden: "We're using a lot of receivers. We expect to see more and more from Jordy as the weeks unfold. Cooper had a big week last week. Cook had a big week in Week 1. Hopefully Jordy has one this week."



QB Derek Carr

Q: Did you still see things on the tape that you could have done better even after completing 29-of-32 passes on Sunday?

Carr: "Yeah, always. That never fails, right? You always go back and see things, what happened on the other three? We could have completed them. That just shows us what we can do, what we're capable of. When you go back, coach, right as I come in the building he goes, 'Good job, but let's talk about the three you messed up. Let's talk about those." That's how it will always be. He always pushes me in that kind of sense and everybody on this team gets coached that way, that's why I think we're going to be really good going forward."

Q: What do you think is missing in terms of coming out with a victory?

Carr: "Just finishing the games. I think we've done, really, a lot of good things. We've been able to get first downs, move the ball, keep the clock running, scoring points. Obviously, I think we could score more touchdowns rather than field goals. Obviously, that would help. To be honest, us a s a team learning how to close it out. Obviously, we had the lead I think the whole game against Denver except the last eight seconds. I think as an offense we could have done a better job for our defense by taking time or picking up a first down to end the game. I think the defense – they feel bad as well – but it's a team thing. We could have helped them out a lot better."

Q: Is there something about the way Coach Gruden scripts plays that helps lead to an opening possession score?

Carr: "Yeah, absolutely. The way that his mind works and the way that he installs things and likes to get things run. It also helps for later on in the game. He does a good job of getting things out there that are efficient plays, help us move the ball and have a chance to be big plays like the second pay to Jordy [Nelson]. They busted an assignment and Jordy popped open. So, he does a really good job of scripting things to give us things that we're confident in, things that work well in practice and so far we've been able to do well on the opening drives."

Q: Are you at the point with Coach Gruden where you are anticipating the play calls?

Carr: "Yeah, absolutely. I think that's something that has been really cool to see unfold over the last couple of weeks. The first week was like, 'I think he's going to go with this or I think he might do this.' But, usually with a coordinator, you know third down what they want to call. With him, really first, second and third down I know what he wants to do. I'm thinking the same way he is and that has a lot to do with the way he trains the quarterback. He wants us to think the same way that he does and if he calls a play, I know why he's calling it. If they give us another look, I know what play he wants me to get to and he doesn't even have to say it – those kinds of things. So far we're building that and it's going to take time to continue to build that, but it's kind of cool to already be thinking what he's thinking before it even comes out."

Q: Do you think as you grow in this system you will take more shots down the field or do you feel like you are taking as many shots as you need to take right now?

Carr: "Well, I think we ended up with about eight play-actions on the day against Denver, and that's a lot with the kind of rush that they have. Play-action, you're holding the ball for a long time. The rush is coming and trust me I know that from experience. To stay on schedule, you hear coaches say that all the



time, you have shot plays and sometimes you have to check them down to get six yards, well third-and-4 is a lot better than third-and-10 for a missed shot. The coverages change, the pressures change, the scheme changes, the personnel changes, all of those things that people don't think about change. We have certain plays that we like verses certain looks that sometimes, it's hey, 'get us in this manageable situation, we like these calls and this grouping.' I could go on for hours about that kind of stuff, but you know. I think that taking eight play-action shots against Denver was pretty aggressive and we were able to do some good things against him."

Q: What has the process been like getting comfortable with an offense that uses play-action often?

Carr: "Yeah, obviously it's different for me, because we didn't do a lot of stuff from under center, playaction stuff (last year). I honestly think it not only helps the pass game, obviously you get linebackers to cheat up and you get to hit them over the head like we did with [Amari Cooper] 'Coop' a couple of times and those sorts of things, but I think it helps the running game also. Because, if they are worried about the play-action shot, they're going to be a little softer to fit the run. You just play that game really and it's been fun to learn that kind of offense. In college I was spread, shotgun, came here and there wasn't a lot of play-action stuff and so just learning that kind of football has been kind of fun and intriguing. Obviously, some of the best teams, they can do both and it really helps them move the ball really well."

Q: It's early in the week, but what do you know initially about the Miami Dolphins and the kind of problems they create?

Carr: "Oh, I know a lot about them. Today's Wednesday, so if I didn't know about them, we'd be in trouble. (laughter) Obviously know about their edge rushers, they got good run-stuffers in the middle, they go young linebackers – Kiko [Alonso] is the vet in that group who I've played against. They've got good corners, very athletic, sticky corners. I don't think number 25 [Xavien Howard] gets enough credit to be honest with you. He's one of the better corners in the whole league and he does not get enough credit for that. He's a very good player. Obviously, I know T.J. [McDonald], he's a Valley guy. I know T.J. real well – good at covering, good at hitting, good in the box fitting the run. And obviously, [Reshad] Jones number 20, he's a Pro Bowl player, can do everything. I played against him before and I think he's a real special talent. I know quite a bit about them. They got a young guy that plays nickel for them and they have a good couple guys that come off the bench that have played good football in the NFL also. They've got some guys that I actually have played against a little bit and I have notes on those guys. They have good personnel and their scheme is difficult. They bring a lot of different looks, a lot of different things, different pressures, different coverages. They try and make things look a certain way and play something else out of them. That's kind of been fun for me because this coordinator [Matt Burke] kind of thinks the way I do sometimes. Sometimes I'll be watching and say, 'Man, they can show that look and play this coverage' and he's the kind of guy that actually does it. They'll show this look and play something else. It's a great challenge, he's very smart. With all of that talent and his brain, they're a really good defense."

Q: How different now is Amari as a receiver and as a person than he was as a rookie?

Carr: "Obviously he talks more. He definitely talks more. Our communication during the game, I said this to a couple guys actually, but I said our communication during that game was the best it's been since I've ben here. Adjustments, things we thought were coming up. Not even on the sideline, but in the huddle as well. Just our quick communications that we need to have to win games. I feel like all those



kinds of things are growing. I think that that is the biggest difference. We know he's talented. But those kinds of things are the biggest difference that I notice in the first two games."

Q: You guys are thinking the same way or he's more vocal?

Carr: "Anything. Coop knows he can say anything to me. You're not going to hurt my feelings. 'I beat him on this route, just so you know' so next time we get to it, same look, and I know he won. That kinds of stuff. If they give us this coverage, run it with this release or run it with this release and then I'll put it on this spot for you. Talking that way and doing those things and seeing it happen in the game is what built that communication to grow. If they put it like this, I'm throwing it like this. Over time, we really worked on it. It was growing and growing but now we're at a point that's a good spot for communicating during the game."

Q: How quickly do you know where you're going to go with the ball?

Carr: "That is a loaded question. There are a lot of times that you get certain fronts or coverages where you know where the ball should go. But, still, after the snap you have to see where the safeties are going and their techniques and all the pressure, different things change. There is about 100 things that go through your mind in about half a second as soon as that ball is snapped, you know what I mean? For the most part, schematically and percentage-wise, you have a feel of where it should go. After that, you still have to play and react and move off of that. Most of the time you can have a clue, but a lot of times after the snap is when you can really know."

Q: What did you see on the third-and-8 to Martavis? Do you look at that and wish you had thrown to the sticks?

Carr: "Well, we were hot. If I were to hold onto the ball, I would have fumbled it and gotten hit and the ball would have been a touchdown and you would ask me some different questions afterwards. I'd much rather throw it the way we planned it and do it that way. We were hot on the play. Obviously when you call certain plays, there are certain things the defense can do to make you hot. It's just like 'dang, they got us on that one.' If you go back and see it, there have been times where if that's a broken tackle, the game is over. It's risky on their part, probably not high on their percentage chart. We have an answer and then we executed it. That's one broken tackle with our big, old receiver from the game being over."

Q: Seemed like you threw a fastball to Seth Roberts in the endzone. How good did that feel?

Carr: "Yeah, especially in that kind of protection. It was a short edge so you know the ball has to get out. It was awesome, man. To see Seth run the route exactly how it should be run. We've done that a lot of times but I'm glad you asked about that one."

Q: Talk about calling audibles.

Carr: "Jon is big on that. He's big on the quarterback making sure we don't run into bad looks or have bad protection calls or things like that. The coaches can do so much but we know defenses are smart. They can change on the fly, too. Being able to check things if they gave us certain coverages. You kind of have to have a photographic memory because he'll tell you something in April or May and say 'if we get this look, check this' so you have to be on it back in your notes all the time. IF we ever do get that look, I have to be ready to check to this in that look. We had a couple of times where we were able to do that and it worked."



Q: When did you start doing that?

Carr: "Really in college, to be honest with you. My coach had me call the plays, at least the ones that didn't work. He called the ones that worked. I called the plays in college a little bit. My rookie year here with Oly, he comes from the same tree of believing and how we train the quarterback. So my rookie year, Oly was making me check runs and those kinds of things. I've been doing it. It's the way I like to play. It's good to be that way because Coach Gruden thinks the same way."

Dolphins Head Coach Adam Gase

Q: This is a very different Raiders team than the one you saw last season. What sort of impressions of this team have you made so far these two weeks?

Gase: "I think it's tough to really label the team yet. I know they're learning two different ... Both sides of the ball are learning new systems. On defense, it's completely ... It's different than what they did in the last few years. Usually after those first two weeks, when you're in a new system, there are a lot of learning experiences that go on. Usually from Week 2 to 3, that's when you have a really big jump. Offensively, (it's the) same thing. Coach Gruden probably is going to be able to really start spinning that offense the way that he wants it because guys have two games in now. It moves quick as far as how quick players learn and everybody kind of gets a feel for each other. The longer the season goes, it's going to be more things they do on both sides of the ball and then it keeps improving. We understand, because we've gone through it the last couple years, to where when you start a new program and new systems, it takes a few games to really dial it in to where everybody knows what's going on."

Q: What has RB Frank Gore brought to you guys and are you amazed at all the production he's still able to put up at this age?

Gase: "I don't think I'm amazed by it because I was around Frank 10 years ago and just knowing him, he's just one of those guys you just never doubt. When he says he's going to do something, I've never seen him not follow through. I think it's been fun to be around him again. I love watching him practice. I love watching him play in games. Everything he does, the way he meets, he's a great influence in our locker room. And then when we get him on the field and we get him touches, it's fun to watch him find the holes and make plays for us."

Q: Besides RB Frank Gore, you've got LS John Denney and DE Cameron Wake and WR Danny Amendola and DE Will Hayes. When Gruden got here, he brought in a lot of veterans to try and get the program going. What does having those guys do for a team?

Gase: "I think when you first start a program – and you guys see this a lot of times – where players that when you're the head coach and you have players that have already played for you and understand you, it's good to have in the locker room, because other guys are just learning who you are, your personality, how you operate and how you do things. It's always nice to have guys that – recognizable faces – that understand you so when guys are like, 'Why are we doing this?' and other guys can step in and speak up when sometimes guys, they don't want to ask that question. A lot of times when you have veteran players, those guys have seen so much and they've been around different programs or they've been around this league long enough to where their experience can help you in the locker room and help guys



understand why you're doing certain things and help toe the line for you to where you're not constantly talking on every little point where you've got guys that are backing you up."

Q: What have you seen from Raiders rookie left tackle Kolton Miller?

Gase: "For us, we're looking at a really good group in general. It's a tough group that we had to face last year. Even if new guys are in there, it makes it difficult for us, because that's where a lot of our things are generated from – our defensive line. We know the challenge that we have ahead of us. That's really going to be a key matchup for us as far as our guys playing well against this group because this has been a very good group the last few years."

Q: QB Ryan Tannehill lost his entire season last year. How engaged was he throughout the year in keeping up with the offense and helping in that regard? And has he pretty much hit the ground running after missing that year?

Gase: "Yes, pretty much. He was here every day. He was in every meeting. He was at every practice. He was very engaged. He probably spent more time with me really just helping me out with some of the things he saw on tape. I think, unfortunately, he lost a season, but I think it was good for him to take a step back, because ever since he's been in the NFL he's been the starting quarterback. For him to be able to step back and see everything that was going on – and he was listening different because when you're in the middle of first year of a program and you're trying to take everything in, you've got guys asking questions, you're trying to help direct them – he was able to take a step back and really listen to the fine points of a lot of things we talk about. I think he absorbed a lot of it and has a better feel for what we're asking him to do a lot of the times."

Q: I know you spoke a little bit earlier about Raiders Head Coach Jon Gruden's offense here. I was curious, what are your impressions of it from a sense of sophistication conceptually?

Gase: "He's obviously evolved over time. I think the time off that he was away from the game, he studied a ton of film. I think it was beneficial for what he was doing because he was able to ask a lot of questions, watch a lot a ton of tape and see a lot of different schemes. His offense was always tough to prepare for in the past. Even though I wasn't a head coach, being on the offensive side and listening to defensive coaches anytime that we had to play him about how difficult things were for them, I think now he's able to add a few wrinkles here and there. That's really what makes it harder to defend now probably than in the past, because he has a huge library that he can always go to and find what's best for that week."

Q: Can you give an example of a wrinkle that stands out to you?

Gase: "That's tough for me to say. I'd rather not say anything like what we're looking at. That's really what I'm avoiding there."

Q: It seems like there's been a lot of attention paid to QB Derek Carr's release time both last season and through the first two games this season. I think he's been one of the quickest quarterbacks in the NFL as far as getting the ball out. As somebody who's worked with quarterbacks, what is that an indication of when a quarterback has a fast release time for you?) – "I look at it as his guys are getting open quick. He just has one of those releases where it's just so smooth. It's like he flicks his wrist and the ball just comes out and the distance is irrelevant. He does a great job changing his arm angle. When he throws the ball, it looks as clean as it can get. It has zip on it and it just looks smooth. I think sometimes when guys get open quick and he knows where to go with the ball and the coverage is right for what is



called offensively, that's where he hurts you a lot. He's able to get the ball out quick and out in front and let guys run after the catch."

Q: Does his tendency to release the ball quick almost – defensively – not say force you, but certainly play a little more press coverage than you might otherwise?

Gase: "It always depends what you're playing. I think really if it affects anybody, it's the fact that the dline, how much impact are they going to have? What happens is guys are looking to try to affect the game somehow and now all of a sudden you run a play-action pass where he's able to hold onto the ball and now you've helped the offensive line out. When you mix it up and you're getting the ball out fast and then when you go to hold onto it and the d-line is not thinking you're going to, now all of a sudden that causes an issue to where the d-line is kind of slow as far as getting going on the rush and the offensive line is at an advantage."

Q: What have you see from Raiders RB Marshawn Lynch on film?

Gase: "I know this, he's extremely hard to tackle still. He almost popped out a big one last week again. He's a dangerous guy to deal with. He's a big man that does not like to touch the ground. I've seen him way too much it seems like."

Q: You've been asked a lot locally about your backfield and carries and workload and that sort of thing. It seems like a pretty nice problem for you to have in terms of RB Frank Gore and RB Kenyan Drake. What's that been like with those two as part of your backfield?

Gase: "I think the people that complain about it are the ones that aren't living it. I've got no problems with the group we have. I like the fact that we have a lot of different guys that we can go to. I like that we have a lot of different personnel groups we can get to. Really, that was the focus and our guys knew it, heading into the season – that we're going to spread the ball out and it might be a different guy every game that has a bigger game than somebody else. It's a positive thing, the way I look at it, because it makes it harder for us to defend. That's really the direction that we knew we were going to go at the beginning of the season and I don't know if it's going to change anytime soon."

Q: With roster spots at a premium, it's unusual for teams to carry four quarterbacks. I'm curious as to why and your assessment of QB David Fales, a local guy from around here.

Gase: "The one thing that I look at it as I'm a quarterback guy, so I don't mind having as many as we can get. We had an opportunity with Luke (Falk) becoming available and we felt like it was worthy of keeping four. David has done a great job. It was good to get him back last year. That was circumstances where we had some injuries and he was able to come in and he did a great job of improving every week. He was probably playing some of his best football towards the end of the year. And then we were able to give him an opportunity in that last game and he had to go against a team that ended up playing in the playoffs and they needed to beat us to make the playoffs. He played well in that game and really showed that he can play at this level and he can be a guy that went in the game and did a lot of good things. He's a guy that we've been developing since 2015 when we were in Chicago and I don't see it stopping anytime soon."



Q: What's it been like for you and for your guys to see RB Frank Gore and what it takes to be playing at his level at this stage in his career? Not many guys at his position can play into their mid-30s. The day-to-day, what's behind the scenes with him, what's the value of that for you and also for your locker room?

Gase: "It's huge. You don't have to say anything because you see it every day. You see it in meetings; you see it on the practice field. The way he practices is exactly how he plays in the game. You wouldn't know when you watch him practice, you wouldn't know his age. I think guys respect him so much and they see what he does and I think he's been great in that running back room. I think it's great for Drake to see that, but we've got a couple other young guys between Senorise (Perry) and (Kalen) Ballage in there and those guys just being around that environment and watching him practice, it really helps us because Frank, he doesn't say a whole bunch; but guys pay attention to that and it affects other guys in a positive way."