



## Oakland Raiders Transcript

### Head Coach Jon Gruden

**Opening Statement:** "It was a long game yesterday, we have a lot of sore bodies. I'll be happy to update the injury list tomorrow, but I'll answer any questions that I can."

**Q: Maurice Hurst has been playing well. With every passing play do you feel like you got a steal for him in the fifth round?**

**Coach Gruden:** "Well, we have a lot to prove there yet, obviously, but he is getting better. They play him at lot of different positions. He'll play the nose. He'll play the three-technique. You'll even see him at end at times. Playing a lot of snaps for a rookie, but making progress. I'm sure he's sore today as well."

**Q: What did you see from Brandon Parker playing for Donald Penn?**

**Coach Gruden:** "He did well. He did some good things. He had a couple of plays that he needs to clean up. When you go in that game, it's an obvious passing situation, obviously. Up-tempo and all the chips are on the table to go in there and play against a team like Cleveland who's blitzing repeatedly. I thought he did some good things. We're pleased with both of our rookie tackles. I know it was a sore topic when we drafted both of them a few months ago with some people, but we need those two guys."

**Q: What are the challenges with two rookie tackles?**

**Coach Gruden:** "Well we got a lot of first year players playing. It's a challenge. I don't remember any team doing that. Kolton Miller has been very good for us. Tom Cable, one of the best line coaches in the league, fortunately we have him to fast track these guys. We'll have our hands full this week for sure."

**Q: What does it mean to get Daryl Worley back in the mix this week?**

**Coach Gruden:** "We like Worley. We like Worley, the job that he did in the offseason. He's a good player. We'll see where he is, and we'll make any adjustments that we'll need to make in a few days after we see where he is."

**Q: Can you talk about Rodney Hudson's study habits?**

**Coach Gruden:** "Well he just takes tremendous pride. If you ever see him in a meeting room he is locked in from the very beginning to the very end. A lot of guys have a hard time concentrating, especially when I'm installing plays, because it's pretty boring. Hudson is locked in from the very beginning. When we go out and have a walk through, we walk through every blitz, we walk through the calls and communication that we liked to see happen. Then he'll give us his interpretation and then we'll go through it at practice. Then we'll give it to him full speed. We'll give him some chaotic looks that we think they're going to run that they haven't run before. He can handle those. He loves football. He's passionate about the game. I think his ability to concentrate when he's here, at a high level, really helps everybody around him. He has two great guards playing next to him. Two young tackles that rely on quick, concise communication. Every once in a while Derek [Carr] will go up there and change it, so it's a very complex matter, but it's great to have a center like that on your team."

**Q: What toughness have you seen from Derek Carr?**

**Coach Gruden:** "He's a tough guy. There's not a lot you don't like about him. He stood in there, made a throw to Jared Cook yesterday. Deep pattern down the left sideline. He got punished on a cross-dog blitz. Throw the interception on a deep ball to Martavis [Bryant] and came back and played his best football. He showed mental, physical toughness. Those are two things you have to have to be a great quarterback. He showcased it yesterday."



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**Q: What does it do for Matt McCrane's confidence to make the game winning field goal?**

**Coach Gruden:** "I hope it does a lot for him. I think we missed a couple of field goals. Put him in some tough spots, obviously on the dirt, long-range field goals. I thought his kickoffs were good. I certainly think when you make a game-winner, it's good for your confidence."

**Q: What did you think of the overall defensive effort yesterday?**

**Coach Gruden:** "We got some takeaways. We have to play better on defense. Obviously, we have to eliminate these big plays. I think [Nick] Chubb had three carries for 105 yards. I've never seen that. We just have to eliminate the big plays. We had a breakdown in coverage one time, huge pass play, should never happen in the coverage that we were in. We just have to eliminate the five or six plays per game that dearly costing us. That's very uncharacteristic of our style of defense. We have to tackle better when we are in 1-on-1 situations. We have to eliminate the big plays. But there is some great effort. Some great individual and collective effort. We have to figure out how to solve these big plays."

**Q: Do you think you're fast enough on the backend?**

**Coach Gruden:** "Well I don't know if anyone is fast enough on the backend if some of these guys get loose. We can't let these guys get loose. It's a combination of a lot of things. Acceleration and speed shows up in the open field sometimes when guys get clean into your deep secondary. But we have guys that can play back there. We just have to get everybody playing together better."

**Q: How important was field position yesterday?**

**Coach Gruden:** "It was big. Dwayne Harris was huge yesterday. Not only with the return, he made two tackles. He forced a penalty. He'll be our special teams player of the week. We talked about it the last few weeks. We had the worst starting field position in football over the first three games by far. When you get the ball back in decent field position, you can take some shots. That we did."

**Q: Are you glad to see common sense prevail on the Dominique Rodgers-Cromartie hit?**

**Coach Gruden:** "That was a good job picking that flag up. Playing a zone coverage and the wide receiver is running a crossing route. He's got to sit down in zone. He ran right through a zone. If you run through a stoplight, you're going to get hit by a car. That's really what happened. I thought Cromartie did a great job. Avoiding head-to-head contact, he didn't lower his head. He hit him with his shoulder. It's a great lesson for all receivers out there. If you're playing against zone coverage, you don't stay on the move. You sit down. I'm glad they picked that flag up, honestly. I wish they would've let Marshawn Lynch continue on the run. I thought that was a touchdown. But anyhow."

**Q: Arden Key wasn't so lucky earlier in the game.**

**Coach Gruden:** "Yeah, I didn't like that call either. The calls that go against us, I don't like. The calls that do, I do."

**Q: The replay review on the spot?**

**Coach Gruden:** "That was a good call by the official. *(Laughter)* It was a great call. We challenged a spot ourselves if you remember. We didn't win that challenge. Look, it's tough. We've got people officiating a game, making calls that aren't even in the stadium. We've got a lot of electronics and technology everybody likes to use nowadays, and boy are we using it."

**Q: Marquel Lee played about 40 more snaps than Derrick Johnson. What would you say that is a testament to?**

**Coach Gruden:** "Marquel Lee is playing pretty good for us and he is earning the right to play. Sometimes it's the situation. Sometimes it's just going with the hot hand. We are going to use all of our linebackers here in the coming weeks."



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**Q: You mentioned how much the young guys are playing. Has that affected the game planning at all? How did you guys approach this coming into the season?**

**Coach Gruden:** "Not really. We've run a lot of different plays. We've used a lot of different types of personnel groupings, check-with-me's. We give [Derek] Carr the green light to showcase his preparation. If he sees something we give him the green light to go get it. In so doing that, everybody around him has to be able to play at that level too. This is a process that hopefully we continue to show improvement. I think offensively we are doing some good things and it's a credit to both of these young tackles because they are smart, they are athletic, and they are really into football...And are well coached by [offensive line coach Tom] Cable. I think that combination, day in and day out, is helping us big time."

**Q: There weren't that many snaps after that long pass play to [Browns WR Antonio] Callaway, where [Gareon] Conley was trailing him. Was Conley sat down at that point or was he just out in terms of the rotation?**

**Coach Gruden:** "We are trying to get [Dominique] Rodgers-Cromartie into the game, honestly. We are trying to roll some guys in there. It was one of the longest games ever yesterday. We are still trying to find the right mix on defense. Still trying to find the right combination, but we do have some guys we are going to move in and out of the lineup at times."

**Q: Do you want to get to the point where you have the same cornerback pair in base defense playing?**

**Coach Gruden:** "Yeah, you'd like to have that."

**Q: Is Brandon Parker pushing Donald [Penn] at right tackle?**

**Coach Gruden:** "Parker is pushing on everybody. Parker is interesting. He's been hurt. He's had that ankle problem that has been pretty persistent for a while, he's just now getting well. He's a very intelligent guy, a very athletic kid. He started four years in college. There is a lot of upside there. I think he could be a left tackle or a right tackle. He's going to be a good player, I believe that."

**Q: There was a forward progress call when Derek Carr was sacked and so the strip was nullified. I'm sure the Browns would say that should have been a fumble. What did you see on that play?**

**Coach Gruden:** "I thought it was a good call. *(Laughter)* I mean there is a lot of judgment calls out there. You can challenge plays and send it to New York City and let them review it. There is a lot of bang-bang plays out there that are hard to officiate. I'm just happy we won a game."

**Q: How cognizant are you of managing Marshawn's work load, given the violent way he runs, or do you just have to let him go?**

**Coach Gruden:** "If that's not a Hall of Fame back, I don't know what is. Honestly. What he did yesterday, what he's done since he's been here is incredible. He wants the ball more and more and more. We got a good back over there in Doug Martin, who is ready to roll. Doug can't get on the field. This guys does not want to come off the field. He picked up six or seven blitzes yesterday too that no one is talking about. But some of the runs, good night! Why would you have a quick whistle with Marshawn Lynch? I don't understand how you can blow a whistle like they did yesterday, but some of the runs he's making, some of the finishes and determination he is putting on tape is unbelievable. I don't see many guys in football running like this."

**Q: You're not concerned about the way he runs?**

**Coach Gruden:** "Not until he tells me. I just keep patting him on the back, 'Hey, you ready to go?' I check on him periodically and when he can't go, we go to Doug. Jemal Singleton, our running backs coach has done a great job making sure Marshawn is in the game when he feels like he can be in the game. When it's time to go to Jalen [Richard] in some unique situations, we go to Jalen. Hopefully, in the coming weeks we will be able to get some two halfback sets going like we used to around here."



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**Q: How would assess your red zone offense at this point?**

**Coach Gruden:** "Not bad. We had a couple tough moments yesterday, but we also had some great plays. The key is getting down in the red zone. Get down in there and get points. Don't turn it over. I think we turned it over a couple of times the previous games, but pretty good. I'm pretty pleased with it honestly."

**Q: You've obviously seen a lot of the league's top tight ends over the years. Do you think Jared Cook gets lost in the shuffle?**

**Coach Gruden:** "Well, I think he's pretty good. Wherever he's played he has been very good as a receiver. I think he's an unheralded blocker. He's a better blocker than people think. He's very good after the catch. You can line him up anywhere. He played wide receiver at Suwanee, Georgia. You can line him up in the slot, you can put him out there at wide receiver. He can mismatch you big time. I love him. He's having a great year for us and man is he competing. He's a weapon for us."

**Q: You've forced a three-and-out on the first drive of every game this season. What do you attest to your fast starts to games?**

**Coach Gruden:** "What do I attest that to? I give [defensive coordinator Paul] Coach Guenther and our coaches credit, players credit. They're coming out ready to go. They're locked in. They're ready to roll. We just have to sustain it. I learned from Bobby Knight a long time ago, the first five minutes of each half are usually key ingredients in winning. That's something we have to continue to emphasize. Starting fast. We try to do that in every practice period. When it's the defense's turn, we try to start fast. Offensively we want to start with success. You don't want to stub your toe on the first play of the game or start in a negative tone."

**Q: How much do you take from speaking with other coaches outside of football?**

**Coach Gruden:** "A lot. I mean it's a unique profession. Obviously in the last eight or nine years I've had a chance to meet a lot of really neat people. There's a lot of analogies. There's a lot of things that we have in common. Basketball coaches, football coaches, golf coaches, coaches in general, different levels. They're all leaders. They're all trying to motivate, teach. They're all faced with significant challenges these days. I try to draw from everybody."

**Q: Is there a different feeling when you come back on a Monday after a win or have you already move onto the next game?**

**Coach Gruden:** "Yeah, pretty much ready to go. You start seeing the Chargers, you see Philip Rivers. It's hard to rejoice in your victories for very long. We have a real challenge. [Melvin] Ingram is unbelievable. Derwin James is a good player. [Joey] Bosa they tell me is coming back, so we have work to do."

**Q: You anticipated jet sweeps correctly. What did you take from the defense?**

**Coach Gruden:** "I thought we did a good job. The one on the goal line, the play that Kansas City ran twice against the Chargers going around the league like, I don't know it's like the rage. You almost saw it coming. Knocked down the jet sweep yesterday was really a credit to our preparation and guys on the details. You have to set the edge, you can't let these plays get out in the open."