



## ***Oakland Raiders Transcript***

### **Head Coach Jon Gruden**

**OPENING STATEMENT:** "I'll be happy to answer any questions I can. We have a lot of guys that are still being evaluated from the trainer. Short week. I have a lot of respect for the Chargers seeing what they did yesterday against the Packers, so it'll be a challenge on a short week."

#### **Q: Do you have an update on Trent Brown?**

**Coach Gruden:** "No. He's getting an MRI. Those MRIs take a while, so we'll have to wait until a little bit later this afternoon to find out. But, David Sharpe did a good job. Hopefully we have Trent, if not we'll have to go with David Sharpe, who has played quite well in the games that he has been in."

#### **Q: How close was Rodney Hudson to playing on Sunday?**

**Coach Gruden:** "I don't know that he was close. He gave it everything he could. Don't know his status for this game either. Cross my fingers, we'll try to update it here as the week unfolds. He just couldn't push off it and I'll leave it at that."

#### **Q: What is Daryl Worley's injury?**

**Coach Gruden:** "Worley strained his Achilles. He's getting an MRI also. So, we're optimistic, but you never know until you get the MRI read by a trained technician."

#### **Q: Did you want to take the timeout on the fourth-and-1 at the end of the game?**

**Coach Gruden:** "We had a little bit of a chaotic situation. They were substituting from 11-personnel, or three receivers, to goal line personnel. It was a little bit of a fire drill there. One of our players, a secret player actually took that timeout, but I'll take credit for it because it worked out. (laughter) But yeah, that was a chaotic situation, you don't know what personnel they're going to be in and the ball is at the one yard line, so we gave ourselves a chance to reload and get the proper call in."

#### **Q: Do you feel like you came out of the game healthy or are you worried any of these injuries are long term?**

**Coach Gruden:** "You never know with these MRIs. Arden Key, we fear broke his foot. I'm worried about that. I don't want to predict anything, but I do have a lot of concerns that Arden is injured. But I'm waiting to hear on the finality of all the others. But, I can't really tell you the severity of anything until I know."

#### **Q: What does it say about this offense being as efficient as you have been with the shuffling of receivers and offensive lineman?**

**Coach Gruden:** "Well, we have smart guys. We're able to do a lot of things, three tight ends, two tight ends, one tight end, no tight ends. Derek's [Carr] playing really good, it starts right there. We have had some guys step up, no doubt. The rookie class, not only are they good football players, they love football and they love to study and they are versatile guys. They can do a lot of different things. But we're only halfway home. We're making progress, we're excited about that. When you watch the Chargers, you don't feel really good about yourself right now."



## ***Oakland Raiders Transcript***

### **Q: Where has Hunter Renfrow improved the most?**

**Coach Gruden:** "His route tree is expanding every week. His yards after the catch, he's improved there. His blocking, he's much, much better. Some of the routes he's running are very difficult routes. He's improving at those. You're in the middle of the field, you're running an option route, several different ways against different types of defenders. Critical third-down situations, we're going to him at times. Just give him a lot of credit. His playing stamina, his strength has been good. He has a lot of instincts that are hard to coach and hard to find."

### **Q: Josh Jacobs didn't have any runs for negative yardage. For an offense that relies so much on not being behind on the down and distance, what does that mean over the course of a season, even if it is a yard gained?**

**Coach Gruden:** "It's big. It's a big formula we have here. You don't want to lose yards on running plays. You don't ever want to lose yards, period. You're running the ball to obviously use the clock, set up some play-action passes and shorten the game. There's a number of reasons why we run it. But, this kid is really good and as he continues to develop in the passing game, he's going to be great – I think one of the best. He makes a lot of hard yards, tough, three, tough four-yard gains and he's elusive. He's powerful and he's an Oakland Raider. We're happy about that."

### **Q: What's the key to dealing with these short weeks from a coaching perspective? Have you been prepping for the Chargers for a while?**

**Coach Gruden:** "It's hard to prepare for them when you don't really know who's on your team. We've had so many changes it's tough to do that. I hate this. I don't believe in this Thursday football. I'm not going to be on my soap box any more than that. It hurts both teams, obviously the preparation. We take a lot of pride in getting our guys ready to play. We need a little time to do that, but a lot of people disagree with me obviously, so it'll be a challenge."

### **Q: Where has Derek Carr taken the biggest strides this year?**

**Coach Gruden:** "I think he's a coach on the field instead of a player on the field. Learning a new offense last year, he was playing, and we had two rookie tackles. We had a lot of issues, a lot of injuries, a lot of problems last year. I don't want to reiterate those, but he was playing the best he could play and he played pretty good. But, now he's coaching. He sees it before it happens. He's as good a coach as we have on our staff. I mean he's really a heady player and he's got incredible arm talent, we know that, but I think his ownership of the offense, his leadership, his coach on the field demeanor is really important to us with this young group that we have. He made some plays yesterday scrambling too that are signature plays. Things that we've been really coaching and prodding him on, and he's really responded to the things that we want him to do. The touchdown to [Hunter] Renfrow, the bad snap, getting out of trouble and throwing it away saved us three points there. Doing a lot of things at a high level that I don't want to say too much more about."

### **Q: What's the plan for Isaiah Johnson?**

**Coach Gruden:** "We activated him. He'll be hopefully up playing. We released Brandon Marshall, hard thing to do, to make room for Isaiah. Another young corner. Like we said a couple weeks ago when we made the trade, we'd like to see Isaiah play the second half of the season and see him develop."



## Oakland Raiders Transcript

**Q: At some point do you reassess if coach's challenges are worth challenging if they aren't getting overturned?**

**Coach Gruden:** "Yeah, I don't understand the whole instant replay formula. I hate it. I'm not going to get fined here today, but I don't understand it. I thought that's pass interference. We got a guy upstairs that works for us that wore the white hat in the Super Bowl three times, told me it's pass interference. We had an offensive pass interference in Green Bay that it's no way it's an offensive pass interference. So, we are challenging things that we think are plays that are going to be overturned and we are going to trust the process. But so far, I've been given the Heisman. I've been stiff armed. *(laughter)* I'm 0-for-27 I think, but when I listen to people tell me they're going to overturn a call because it's the wrong call, I believe in the process. And I still believe."

**Q: How would you describe the atmosphere at the Coliseum?**

**Coach Gruden:** "It was great. Yeah, it was great to be home in the Coliseum and see the fans and it's just a special place to me. We have a lot of new players that really never got to play there, so it was kind of cool to see them make their debut. But, it's always a great experience to play in the Coliseum and in the black hole with all the fans."

**Q: What are some of the challenges that you face with DE Joey Bosa and DE Melvin Ingram?**

**Coach Gruden:** "They're two of the best. They're dynamic players. The effort level that they have is special. They have a range of skills. [Melvin] Ingram is all over the place. Someone needs to do a statistical chart on this guy, how many miles he runs per game. He's the middle linebacker on your goal line defense. I mean he's a rover on third down. He walks around, I don't know where the hell he is. He's going to play over the guard, over the edge. He's sideline to sideline. He runs like a linebacker, he's got defensive end prototype size. And [Joey] Bosa, he's a problem. He's just a really good pass rusher. He's got tremendous hand usage, a get-off. He's got an arsenal of moves and it's hard to find him. He moves around, so we'll have our hands full with them."

**Q: The NFL hit Maxx Crosby with two more fines and he got another penalty this week, is there any kind of area at all where needs to tone it back?**

**Coach Gruden:** "We're looking into the fines to see if we agree, whether we'll appeal those fines. Jon Runyan [Vice President of Policy and Rules Administration, NFL] is in charge of that and we're trying to play within the rules. We've had too many penalties, I'll say it like that. We've got too many penalties. I don't want to make any excuses. I got to do a lot better job. We have to do a better job as a team eliminating penalties and if we do that we'll eliminate the fines. But some of these fines, we'll not always agree with and we'll have to appeal them, and we'll have a grievance hearing of some kind I would think. But, Maxx has got to use better etiquette at times and common sense, but we don't want to harness his energy that's for sure. That's what's going to make him a great player."

**Q: What's the biggest challenge QB Phillip Rivers presents?**

**Coach Gruden:** "He's, like we said earlier about Derek [Carr], he's a coach on the field. He seems like he has a green light to do a lot of things and he has a lot of experience to draw from. They've got a great supporting cast now that their line is getting healthy and when you look at Melvin Gordon and [Mike] Williams and Keenan Allen and the tight end is a force, they have a lot of weapons. And they play good enough defense to get them the ball here and there quickly, so that's the biggest problem, is they can run it and they've got some weapons and he's really good. A really good player, a great competitor too."



## ***Oakland Raiders Transcript***

**Q: Were you able to collect much from the Chargers in terms of how much they have changed with the coordinator change in one week?**

**Coach Gruden:** "Not really, no. Like I said, we just played yesterday so we are going to be here a long time tonight, but credit to them. It's a credit, when you lose a guy like Ken Whisenhunt who's a great offensive coach and you got to play the Green Bay Packers. They rallied, they did quite well and a lot of it had to do with their defense. Green Bay didn't get a chance to do much offensively."

**Q: When you see what QB Aaron Rodgers did against you a couple weeks ago and then you see what he did against the Chargers, what does that say?**

**Coach Gruden:** "It makes it for a tough, sad day. *(laughter)* Like I said to the team after the game, it's fun to win but it's one of these wins we can't enjoy for very long. It's a short, short turnaround and before you know it we'll be back in the Coliseum playing again."

**Q: Having reached the midpoint of this season, are you able to gauge the progress you've made compared to where you would like to be at this point?**

**Coach Gruden:** "We'll do that at the end of the season, honestly. We are seeing so many new players. We saw Will Compton play yesterday. Zay Jones made his first career start yesterday. We are going to see Isaiah Johnson play this week. Didn't expect Andre James to be the center really the last two weeks, but we are seeing a lot of progress from a lot of guys. And that's a good thing, that's all I say, but we are going to need everybody to pick it up because we still got half a season to play."

**Q: Are you seeing teams trying to take away Darren Waller and how do you counteract that?**

**Coach Gruden:** "Yeah, we do. We try to move him around and there's an old saying that, 'we're going to try and make you play left-handed.' We are going to take away your number one option and make you play left-handed, so we've tried to improve our left hand. I told the players LeBron James, I read where LeBron James as a young player learned how play left-handed even better and when he did he became the best player. And what we have to do is, if you want to double Waller, you got to get more out of Renfrow and we did. We got to get more out of our backs in the passing game. They got to win and they made some big plays yesterday, so our left-handers, I call them left-handers, you guys got to step up and they did. And that's exciting when you have five eligible players that can all win and I think they all responded pretty good when they had their numbers called yesterday."