



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Head Coach Jon Gruden

Opening Statement: "I don't have an official update on the injuries yet. I will have to let you know on that here later today or tomorrow but we have a number of guys in the training room that are sore. Obviously, very disappointed in the outcome of the game. Proud of our guys for the effort that they gave. There was some really good individual efforts, Jared Cook among others. I thought Jalen Richard came off the bench and made some great plays. Marshawn [Lynch] had a great touchdown run. Credit the Rams, they are a good football team. We have areas that we have to improve and that's obvious. I will answer any questions I can."

Q: What does Karl Joseph need to do to get on the field more?

Coach Gruden: "Well, he's going to get on the field more. It's just a matter of time, it's our first game. I don't want to read too much into it. The Rams are a diverse, complex offense and we chose to go with a unit that we felt gave us the best chance but you will see more and more of Karl here in the coming weeks."

Q: What did you think of Kolton Miller and Donald Penn?

Coach Gruden: "I thought they did well, I was really pleased. I don't know how many times we threw it officially but pass protection against that outfit was good. They gave us a lot of different looks, a lot of different blitzes. They have some formidable people inside that are hard to block. We had some good looks in the passing game ... I wish we got more out of it."

Q: Yesterday Derek said that the loss felt different with you as his coach. What was that conversation post-game like with him?

Coach Gruden: "Losses all feel painful. Especially Monday Night losses when you have to get up and get ready for another team like Denver. Put a lot into it. We put a lot of time into this. I thought he was on his way in the first half. He's 20-for-24 I read, doing some really good things. I heard a skunk got loose in our tunnel. I think that's what screwed us up a little bit. *(laughter)* I don't have any doubts that Derek Carr is going to be great. I can't wait to get started and get ready for the Broncos."

Q: Anything jump out when watching film of him [Derek Carr] in the second half?

Coach Gruden: "Yeah, there was a few plays that uncharacteristically he wasn't at his best. Sometimes you have to credit [Defensive Coordinator] Wade Phillips, you have to credit the defense. They gave us multiple looks. They have some talented people out there. It's just disappointing but I think knowing how good Derek is it gives us hope that we can get it all solved."

Q: Marshawn played for less than 30 snaps last night. Was that a reflection of how the game was going and would you prefer to get him more involved?

Coach Gruden: "A little bit. One of the matchups that we tried to utilize last night was our halfback, [Jalen] Richard, against their young linebackers inside. Jalen did a great job. Jalen is a really good receiving back now, I don't want to discount that. Marshawn was awesome in the first series. He had a little bout of sickness there on the sidelines so we put him in the garage for a minute. We got three really good halfbacks when they are up and they all are going to play a part in the game plan. They all are completely different runners and receivers. The situation sometimes will call for a different back."



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Q: With Tank Carradine being inactive was he banged up or was that a coach's decision?

Coach Gruden: "That was a coach's decision. I believe we dressed eight defensive linemen. We got beat up last night. We lost some men. Justin Ellis hurt his ankle. PJ Hall hurt his ankle. If you look out there you see Frostee Rucker playing nose tackle. We were depleted inside, it's tough on us. It's a good chance you will see more of Tank this week."

Q: Bruce Irvin only played about half the snaps. Was that something physical with him?

Coach Gruden: "No, no. Again, it was our first game. Hopefully, you'll see a little bit more of Bruce this week. We're trying to keep him fresh. We're trying to keep him in positions to do what he does best."

Q: There were a few instances last night where the players were fighting for extra yardage? Was that the kind of effort you were looking for?

Coach Gruden: "I was excited. I was really proud of our guys. Jared Cook, he was awesome last night. He made some tremendous plays. He really did. He's been that way since I've been here. He's really playing good football for us. Seth Roberts, that was the first time I really got to see Seth for a prolonged period of time. I'm excited about some of the things that he did. Those are great individual efforts that you're proud of. It's just too bad they went for not in a tough loss."

Q: When you look at the film, were there plays that could've been made on the outside to receivers?

Coach Gruden: "Yeah, a couple of times. There were a couple of times. We had a big play to Amari [Cooper] called back. We had 100 yards of penalties in the first half. Yeah, there were some opportunities to get the ball to Amari, certainly. Again, a big part of that game plan last night was Jared Cook against their safety and our halfback against their linebackers. That's the way their coverage was played. Those are the matchups that we really primarily targeted. But we did have some opportunities to get our wide receivers involved."

Q: What did you think about your cornerbacks play?

Coach Gruden: "I thought Gareon Conley, for the first time playing football in a long time, I thought he did some really good things. I was pleased. Obviously, [Rashaan] Melvin, the P.I., the P.I.s are not good. You have to play the ball in flight better. And we have to make sure we get him some help over the top in some of those situations. It's still a work in progress. I thought Leon Hall did a really good job as our nickel. He made some really good, competitive plays, physical tackles against a great back. We have to improve, there's no question."

Q: It's been 10 years, but do the losses still feel the same?

Coach Gruden: "Yeah, they feel the same. It stinks. It's not very fun. We have work to do. It's obvious. We have work to do. We're going to build this football team back. It might not happen tonight, but we're going to keep laying bricks. We have a great group of guys. We'll get ready for the next battle."

Q: Are you going to need a new long snapper?

Coach Gruden: "Yes, I believe so. That was tough losing our long snapper on the very first punt. Lee Smith came in. I don't think our fans knew. I don't know if the Rams knew it, but he fired it back their fairly accurately and let us execute. So, credit to Lee Smith."



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Q: What does that also say about Johnny Townsend to deal with all the changes he's gone through?

Coach Gruden: "It says a lot about Townsend. I thought he handled the adversity pretty good for a rookie player on Monday Night Football. I thought he did some good things."

Q: Do you have any clarity on who your next long snapper will be?

Coach Gruden: "I don't have any clarity. We have a bunch of guys coming in. I didn't get home until late last night. I think we have several candidates in the process of being worked out."

Q: What does it say about Jared Cook to set another franchise record for another team?

Coach Gruden: "It says he's pretty good. A pretty good player. I just like the way he works, competes. I think the thing that was missed in the statistics...I don't get caught up in all the yards and fantasy stuff, honestly. But the way he competed for every one of those yards. Running through tackles. Diving for another foot. Diving for another yard. That's what I love about him."

Q: What do you see from your rookie defensive linemen that they need to really focus on?

Coach Gruden: "They keep getting better. This was their first game and they played a lot of football. I think we talked about Hurst and we talked about Hall coming in here being a very good inside pass rusher. Last night they had to defend the run probably more than they had expected. When Justin got hurt particular. They have to keep improving. They have to keep improving. They have to keep seeing schemes. Keep their pad level down. Using their hands better. Just improving. We have to get Arden Key some better looks. When they run all those jet sweeps, there's a lot of eye candy out there. It's tough. It gets your eyes off the initial role which is to rush the passer. There was a lot of play action last night. It's hard when you're faking the ball to Todd Gurley to cut loose the rush. We have to keep getting him some looks. All three of those guys have to roll their fist up, keep fighting. It's going to be a tough year, as it is for every rookie."

Q: What was the process throughout the week to identify who your second gunner would be?

Coach Gruden: "Well it's just been what we've done on the practice field. We have only so many candidates that can serve that role now. We had a number of candidates available in the preseason. Right now when you put your inactives down, you only have a select group to choose from. [Keon] Hatcher got the first run at it last night. We'll see what happens this week."

Q: Was Brandon LaFell just not quite...

Coach Gruden: "Just not quite ready. He's only been here four or five days. Edgar Bennett is a good coach, but it's tough to cram all of that stuff that he has to know. Backing up Jordy [Nelson]. Backing up Amari. Going in as the third for Seth. Little too soon for him. He has upside. Hopefully we can get him up here soon."

Q: Will Dominique Rodgers-Cromartie be pushing the starters at corner?

Coach Gruden: "Yeah, I think so. I think he is. He's another guy that we signed late. He may have had a pick-six, but the ball was batted down. He had a couple of really good tackles. He broke on the ball well. He has a real big history in this league. He's had a lot of production in a lot of different cities and for different defenses. I think he's picking up the system and he's going earn the right to be on the field more if he continues to pick it up."



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Q: What did you see on that third interception?

Coach Gruden: "Well the last one, the pick-six was some confusion. Obviously, Derek thought Jared was going to stay on the move and Jared sat down. That goes on me. That's coaching. We have to do a better job of defining our routes at times. But when you get behind in the clock and behind down and distance and behind on the scoreboard. You're running out of time sometimes, you make some of those decisions."

Q: Did the low hit on Derek affect him?

Coach Gruden: "You know, I don't know that. I don't know. I know he's sore today. I think [Aaron] Donald got in there and got him low one time. I don't think it was an illegal hit at all. But I don't know that [it affected him]. I don't think it did. I'll have to check with him when I see him."

Q: Do you have a vertical threat in your receiving core?

Coach Gruden: "Yeah, Coop can get vertical. He can get vertical. There's no question he can get vertical. We'll have to get Amari going this week. It's easier said than done when you have [Bradley] Roby and Chris Harris and a fierce pass rush, it doesn't let you drop back and let these routes develop. You have guys that can really hum around the edge. You have to be creative in how you get guys the ball deep. We're going to have to try to get Amari going."