



## ***Oakland Raiders Transcript***

### **T Donald Penn**

#### **Q: Does it feel good to be back out there?**

**Penn:** "It feels great, man. It feels real good. Getting out there with the guys. During the walk-through I jumped offsidelines like three times, but I didn't have any during practice. Getting back in there, man, it feels real good. I've been learning this offense. Just watching and learning and now going out there and actually being able to do some of the schemes and run through them yourself, it feels good. I have a lot of rust I have to knock off, but I'm just happy to be back out here and get back to work."

#### **Q: Does being injured test your patience because you want to rehab right, but you also want to get back out there quickly?**

**Penn:** "With me, this being my first major injury, it did a lot because I've never missed practice. I never missed OTA's. I never missed offseason workouts, so this was a very new experience. It was a very humbling experience. It was a tough recovery time. I wanted to do more than they were letting me do. It's just me being a competitor and the type of athlete I am and wanting to be out there. I had to just listen, and I listened. I felt pretty good today."

#### **Q: How did the move to right tackle come about?**

**Penn:** "They asked me. They talked to me about it, about trying it out. Seeing what it would do. Seeing how I feel over there and I told them I'm willing to do whatever it takes to help this team win. If you guys feel like this is going to be in the best interest of the team, I'll do it. Today it felt very awkward and rusty, but I need time to develop. I don't know if that's going to be a permanent thing or not yet, but it is something we're testing out. I told them I'm all for it. We have a young kid [Kolton Miller] over there (at left tackle). He's doing a lot of things."

#### **Q: You got a lot of work out there for it being your first day back. Why do you think you're able to step right in and play so much right away?**

**Penn:** "I guess I'm like that fine wine, a seasoned vet. Nah, I'm just joking around. I don't know. One thing I was focused on today was just technique. A lot of times if I get in trouble in the game and stuff, I go back and rely on technique. So, today being in a new side, new position, I was just really trying to focus on my technique because I feel like if my technique is good, everything else, it'll make up for lost things. Not being out there. It was good to be out there. I need to get back in that good shape. I'm in shape, but I'm not in football shape if you understand what that means. Football shape is different. I know you guys see me out here training and running with them, but having the pads on, all that extra weight and actually pushing on people is a different condition. I'm happy to get out there and get that condition. I'm happy to be out there."

#### **Q: Are some of those techniques backwards on the other side?**

**Penn:** "Very backwards. Very backwards. I almost went the other way today because I was thinking left side when he audibled and luckily Gabe [Jackson] reminded me and I snapped into it right before the snap. That's part of the time and part of the stuff that's going to take a little bit of time. I'm out here working. These guys have been working their butt off. I've been watching them. I just want to try to hop in and not miss a beat."

#### **Q: When did they approach you about moving sides?**

**Penn:** "Well they mentioned it during some of the negotiations with the contract stuff. We talked about it a little bit. Not really at any length. Then this morning they told me they wanted me to try it out today and see how it goes. I told them I'm going to give it my best effort and go out there and try to be Donald Penn out there."

#### **Q: While you've been trying to learn the offense, have you been trying to learn it mostly from a left side?**

**Penn:** "Yeah I have. That's why I said, it was very hard today because I have been learning the offense. A couple of calls...like one time I was standing by K.O. [Kelechi Osemele] in the huddle and he was like, 'Hey bro.' and I was like, 'Oh [expletive], let me go over here.' It's little things like that. One time I got in my left-handed stance on accident, and I actually had to switch real fast. It's just I've been doing it for so long, it's tough. One thing that I've



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been, I've been a good athlete. I'm a good athlete, so I think me being athletic can make that transition a little easier and smooth. I don't know if it's going to be permanent or not, but like I told you, we have a good thing going here. I just want to help us win. I'm not playing too much longer. I just want to win, really. If this is going to help us win, I'm all in for it. I just want to win."

**Q: You played right tackle in the season opener against New Orleans. Anything learned from that?**

**Penn:** "Not really. It was tough. I'm glad we won. I was out there battling, holding on for dear life. It was tough."

**Q: You look like you stayed in good shape. Is your weight down?**

**Penn:** "Yeah, I'm at my playing weight. I've been at my playing weight. One thing I had to focus on during the season because I wasn't doing a lot of conditioning, a lot of running. I wasn't burning that many calories, so I had to really watch what I was eating. With this being a foot injury, it being a lower extremity, you don't want to have all that extra weight on there to help it heal. So I stayed around my playing weight all during the offseason and all during this time to relieve that pressure on that foot. I didn't want to put any extra weight on there because it would've been harder for recovery. Even during the offseason when I wasn't really doing a lot. I was watching what I was eating, I was staying around my weight so I could help with this recovery. So that was one thing I did really focus on this offseason."

**Q: With some of the things Tom Cable wants are you eager to go out there and prove you can do it?**

**Penn:** "Oh yeah. I don't know if you guys know, during OTA's I was doing a lot of individual stuff, so I was getting a lot of that movement and learning his system. Learning what he wants. One good thing is me watching and hearing him correct other guys. I put it in my memory bank in meetings and stuff so when I get out there I'm not making the same mistakes they're making. I'm doing what he wants. It did feel good to actually get out there with some pads on, hitting somebody. Gabe keeps messing with me, talking about how he wants me back over there playing by him like the old days. Gabe's in heaven today."

**Q: How would you assess Tom Cable as an offensive line coach?**

**Penn:** "He's one of the best. I've been lucky enough to play for some good O-Line coaches in Coach [Mike] Tice, Bill Muir back in my younger days with [Head Coach Jon] Gruden. But you know, Coach Cable he's up there. He's probably one of the top offensive line coaches. The coach's knowledge, the way he coaches his guys. If it's something for me, he's not going to change it. He's just going to be like, 'OK, that's what you do? I'm going to mold your game to that.' Some coaches try to change you. You got to do it this way, this way, this way. He'll find ways to make what you do right. That helps you being a player, especially helps me being a vet because I've been doing some stuff for so long that's different to him. He'll talk to me about it and be like, 'Alright, if that's how you want to do it, we're going to do it.' But he might give me a little advice. A tweak here and there to just make it better. That's a good thing. He's a good player's coach. He gets a lot out of us. He has us working hard. He's a very good coach. I'm lucky to have him."

**Q: I'm sure you've shared some wisdom with Kolton Miller. Has he proved to be a quick learner?**

**Penn:** "Yeah. I'm not going to lie, I've been very impressed with Kolton and [Brandon] Parker because when I came in, when I went to Gruden's offense my rookie year, it was very hard for me to learn the offense. These guys have picked that offense up so fast. They're doing real good at it. That's hats off to them being real smart and coming from college programs. Kolton he's been playing good ball. I'm very impressed with him. He's way further along than I was as a rookie. He's doing some good things. I'm trying to help him as much as I can. Sometimes I'll be telling him, 'Kolton, talk to me.' He's so quiet of a guy. I'll be like, 'Talk to me, ask me a question.' I shouldn't have to tell you everything. He's just a quiet, humble guy. We have two good, humble draft picks in that are really humble. They're hard workers and they fit in our room really well."



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**Q: Although you've been injured you've been helping Miller. Why is it important to you to help Miller?**

**Penn:** "Growing up when I was coming up, I had some good vets that did the same to me. I'm not stupid, I'm not dumb. I'm 35-years-old. I'm not going to be playing football, I don't want to play football too much longer myself. I understand what's going on here. I'm just trying to help as much as possible because when I do leave here, I'm going to leave friends here. DC [Derek Carr] is a great friend. Doug [Martin], Gabe [Jackson], everybody. Kolton, me and Kolton, we're developing a good friendship. So I want to have him ready so when he goes out there he can succeed. It's not like I'm over here jealous or mad. I'm trying to help the kid out so the kid can be as good as possible because it's going to help us out as a team. It's going to help us win. So anything I see, I'm more than willing to help them to help us out better. I'm not one of those veteran guys that's like, 'Oh, he's taking my spot.' I'm not. I'm all in his ear. I'm always helping him, trying to give him little tips and stuff like that. Like today during my 1-on-1's I told him to watch me because I'm going, so let me know what I'm doing. So, when I come off he can give me tips. I'm always here to help, man. It's no animosity, nothing like that. We're here to work and we're having a good time. The good thing is they listen, they listen. And they actually do what you tell them."

**Q: Can you put it into further perspective of how missing this time was like for you?**

**Penn:** "It was tough. It's been a hard process. I'm not going to sit here and sugar coat nothing. It's been a very hard process. I have a great support group. My wife, our family, kids, keep me motivated, and my agent, the team. I had a lot of down days. I had a lot of down days where I had to pick myself up and go. Like you said, this was my first injury and it was a major one. Everybody was telling me about it, but I'm thinking, Hey, I'm Donald. I'm going to come back from this faster and everything. It didn't happen like that. I had to really sit back and have some humble pie. It was tough, and I just kept fighting. I had a great system. Good coaching staff. One thing I do like about them, they were upfront with me. They told me a lot of stuff. They weren't trying to hide stuff. They've been like that ever since they got here, so I can really respect that. Especially being an older veteran guy. So I knew what the plan was. I knew what direction they were going in with me and other things. It was hard. I started 170 straight games until this. It was the first time missing all of this time. It was very hard. I'm happy this is behind me."

**Q: How long had it been since you knew that you were going to be working at right tackle?**

**Penn:** "We talked about it but I didn't know until this morning that I was going to actually line up today at right tackle. They told me this morning he wanted me to try it out and see how it is. I told him, 'I'm going to give you my best effort. I'm going to try my hardest and see how it goes.' I just want to win. I want to help this team win. If they want me to play right, I'll play right. At the end of the day I'm a tackle. As long as they don't ask me to play guard or center, I'm good."

### **QB Derek Carr**

**Q: Is it strange to see Donald Penn on the right side?**

**Carr:** "Yeah, that was different. I think he's only done it a few snaps in that one game, New Orleans. Yeah, so it was a little different, but that's why you have good players. That's why you add good players to your team, so that when things happen you can put guys in different spots, so that helps us."

**Q: Penn said he lined up wrong in the huddle once and it was kind of confusing... (laughter)**

**Carr:** "Yup, the first time we went out there, he started walking to the left side. We kind of just looked at him and waited until he got to the right side. (laughter) It'll be alright."

**Q: It was funny because yesterday Head Coach Jon Gruden was upset that Connor Cook and the offense broke the huddle wrong. All the huddle machinations seem to be really important to this team, so I just thought that was kind of funny today.**

**Carr:** "I'm with you on that one. Yes, it is kind of funny. (laughter)"



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**Q: Your grasp of the offense seems to exceed the actual time you have put in to understanding this offense. I imagine there is a ton of work that you have put in to arrive at that point. Can you explain how you have been able to reach this point already?**

**Carr:** "Well, obviously I have secrets that you have edges on people that you don't want to give out, but a lot of hard work for sure. A lot of hours spent trying to master it. You think like he thinks, you know? Which has been fun and interesting for me to learn. A big part of it was – to both of us – when we hit the field, we don't want it to look like we've been together for six months, we want people to think, 'Wow, these guys have been together for 10 years.' In order to do that, the time you have to put in is a lot, it is. It's a lot. And both of us worked really hard on getting on the same page and thinking. I think we're always going to continue to grow together and think about things differently and then figure it out – how do we want to do it? And the main thing is when we hit the field, that's us, that's what him and I are putting on the field, the product at the same time. Again, we didn't want it to look like we've only been together for a short period of time. We wanted it to look like these guys have been around each other, it seems, like forever."

**Q: Is there a period where you have just memorized it but don't understand it? When does the understanding come in?**

**Carr:** "That's really initially. Because at first, you just have to...it's like cramming for a test. You have to memorize all this stuff. And then after a while, you start going back over it and you go back over this and you go back over that. He does a great job, his teaching, progression for quarterbacks, the system, every single day he'll hit on the new things but he'll always remind you of what we did the past couple days. So, you're hitting it about seven to eight times before you really move on, you know? To where it really becomes repetition and you become used to it and all that. That's not even including the walkthrough reps, the mental reps on the side and special teams and all that kind of stuff. It's been a lot of work, let's just say that. It's been a lot of work to get to the point to where it's not just, 'yeah, I memorized something on a paper.' Well, I have to memorized every detail of it, and then know it inside and out and still know the defense inside and out and how do we beat it, how do we get to certain things? Initially, it was just what can I remember? As you continue to reference it and go back over it, it just becomes who we are."

**Q: You guys have the only female strength coach in the league. When you first heard Kelsey Martinez was being hired, what were your first thoughts and now that she's been here what have you thought?**

**Carr:** "When we first found out, we thought she must be a good strength coach for the Raiders and Coach Gruden to hire her. She's been great working with the guys. I haven't heard anybody complain or anything like that, like 'oh man, she didn't know this or that.' She's very smart. She knows her stuff. I think that's why she's so respected."

**Q: Do you think Gabe Jackson is underrated?**

**Carr:** "Yes. Those other three have made Pro Bowls and have gotten a lot of accolades. I guess they just don't want to put all our guys in the Pro Bowl, that's what it comes down to. There's no way we could have four, we can only have three. Gabe Jackson is probably the most underrated person in the NFL because of the other three. Now you have another first-round pick on the line, too. Poor Gabe is just left in the wind, but not by us. We know how special he is. We know how important he is. I will say this: every time I look at his Madden rating I get mad, though. It doesn't do him justice."

**Q: Donald said that Kolton is a quiet guy that he has to force advice on sometimes. What's your impression been of him?**

**Carr:** "Kolton is the perfect rookie. He came in and didn't say a word. I'm just going to show you that I'm a darn good football player, and that's what he's done. Any time you bring something up, he'll ask questions for sure in the meeting rooms. Coach Cable and those guys are imparting their wisdom. He knows being the rookie tackle, people are going to give him information anyway, whether he wants it or not. We're going to give him some veteran advice. He's been great. Like I said, he's the perfect rookie. He came in and didn't say a word, worked his tail off. If he messed up, he got mad, came bac to the huddle and do it again. Makes sure we get it right. He's been awesome."



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### **Q: Was he upset after the holding call on Friday?**

**Carr:** "He still didn't show much emotion when that happened. He basically may have whispered to me 'I don't know how they call that' but I don't know. I think that's every offensive lineman when they throw a flag. He's awesome. On game day, he's the same as he was on the practice field. That was a big thing for me to see, especially if you're going to protect one of the tackle spots. How are you on game day? How's your interaction and all that? He was the same guy."

### **Q: What has your interaction been with Tom Cable?**

**Carr:** "Awesome. Here and there, he's up there teaching all the time. He's giving us a lot of information. We communicate really well. Every now and then, probably every other week or so, we sit down together and I'll say 'hey, update me. How's everything going? Do you like what I'm doing? If it's this run or this look, what do you want?' Our communication has to be on point because we have to make the run game and protection stuff go. My communication with him has been kind of like how it is with Coach Gruden, just obviously not as much time spent together. We have very open communication and we're talking. When he's installing a play, he's looking right at me. 'Derek, if we get this look, this is what we want,' and all those things. It's been fun. He's super smart. I'm glad we have him."

### **Q: How much fun is it for you out there with these new guys?**

**Carr:** "I love it because it reminds me... when I think of that kind of run game, it reminds me of Pat Hill. That's where we were at Fresno State: power. Run the power. It's third-and-one, what do you want? Power. That was his mindset. It takes me back to those days at Fresno with Coach Hill. We don't care if you know what we're doing, we're going to knock your face back and we're going to get the first-down, that kind of mindset. That's been fun. We can do it from that, we can do it from a spread, we can do it from wishbone. No one believes me but we can do it from a lot of different ways."

### **Q: Chris Warren, overall, what have you seen from him?**

**Carr:** "Marshawn's mom called down to the sideline and gave him a pep talk and he played real well for us on the game this last week. He started to run physical as a rookie. You guys can ask Marshawn about that, if that's true or not. Make sure you guys bug him with that one. Next time you talk to him, make sure you ask him. She called him during the game. Love you, Mama Lynch. He started to run physical. He started to learn that I am 255-pounds. There was one on the sideline that I think he wishes he had back. Those are instances where you see Marshawn almost turn back into the field of play to put his pads on somebody. Chris is starting to get that. He's starting to figure it out. He's trying to figure out which way left and which way right is. That's for any rookie, especially in this system. It can get wordy and tough. For him to continue to take the thrashing and the beatdowns, and at the same time the encouragement when he does it right, but for him to stay the course, has been really cool to see."

### **Q: Is there more verbiage and longer dialogue we can't hear in the huddle? What is the dynamic of being in the huddle in a Jon Gruden offense?**

**Carr:** "It's wordy for sure. You can see why some ex-quarterbacks that played with him didn't get along because he's going to get on you if you do it wrong. So, don't call it wrong, you know what I mean? Just studying and spending extra time learning and honestly, just reading the scripts. Saying things over and over again. Walking down the halls and calling the play to a lineman saying, 'what do you got?' That helps me to spit it out faster. They're wordy and all that, but time-wise it's the same because we're just spitting them out, we're just rolling through it. He asks me every meeting, we'll turn a play on and he'll show me the beginning of a play and he'll ask me to call it. I have to compute in my brain what the formation, the motion, the shift, the routes, the runs or whatever it is. I have to be able to call it. Him challenging me in that way has been really helpful. When we hit the field, I can spit them out."



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**Q: Griff Whalen was a quiet addition to the team. What have you seen?**

**Carr:** "Yes, I love you Griff Whalen. Every time he makes a catch, I'm the one hooting and hollering. He's smart. He thinks the same way I do as a quarterback. He'll come to me and say 'I know that this is this signal, but what if we did this to make it look like this?' I love this guy. Yes, keep please bringing these ideas to me. He's someone that not only can do it physically, but from the mental side of things. I made a check on one route to Jordy [Nelson] and we've never even gone over it but he just knew what I was thinking like 'oh, I shouldn't 'run over there because it's that route.' Little things that he does, it's obvious he went to Stanford."