



Oakland Raiders Transcript

General Manager Mike Mayock Introductory Press Conference

Owner Mark Davis, General Manager Mike Mayock, Head Coach Jon Gruden

Mark Davis Opening Statement: "Before we talk about yesterday, I'd like to talk about today and tomorrow. There is no better way to do that than to introduce the new General Manager of the Raiders, Mr. Mike Mayock. I believe his family is here. His wife Mandy, his daughter Leigh and son Michael. The other part of the family is Mackenzie and Jack. From that, I am going to pass it over to Jon."

Head Coach Jon Gruden Opening Statement: "I'd just like to say I'm excited about adding Mike Mayock to the Oakland Raiders. Mike and I go back about 20 years, from 1995 when I was with the Eagles. We've been friends and associates for a long time. I know a lot of people in this business that love football and that study football, but I don't really know anybody that loves it and studies it more than Mike Mayock. For the last several years we have been meeting behind the scenes on players and talking about one day maybe working together. Today is a really exciting day for me, personally. I think our players will be charged by this. I think the ex-players and the future players are going to really be excited about this acquisition as well. Welcome aboard Mike, I'm really happy to have you here, man."

General Manager Mike Mayock Opening Statement: "Well, I'll tell you what, I've spent most of the last 15 years behind a microphone and I got to be honest with you, I haven't been this nervous or this excited in that entire timeframe. I think the last time I was just as excited I got cut by the Pittsburgh Steelers the next day. I'm really happy to be here. I appreciate Mr. Davis. You have no idea, Mark, how much I appreciate being here and thank you for coming out and offering me this job. What Jon was alluding to in 1995...I probably have had over 300 text messages which I haven't had a chance to get back to anybody because we've been working all morning, but a couple of them were like Archie Manning. Archie Manning is going, 'You guys are a great fit.' The more I was scrolling through, all of these football guys are reaching out and saying, 'You and Gruden are a great fit. You guys love ball, you have a passion for it and you are going to make it work.' I think to just kind of highlight what this is all about is that Jon and I have talked a lot of football in the last 20 years and I think what we are seeing is the formal unification of something that's been going on for a long time. I can't tell you how happy I am to be here. I'm happy to be a Raider. I'm starting to understand what that means. Once a Raider, always a Raider. I'll tell you another thing, I'm not going to get into any other interviews I ever had except for one, and that was about 10 or 12 years ago. I kind of flew out here clandestinely to meet Mr. Al Davis, and he took me into this building and he hid me for about eight hours and he grilled me on everything, as you know. I came out of the building that day with my head spinning. Nobody really knew for a couple of years that he and I had talked about a potential job with the Oakland Raiders that long ago. I think the harmonic convergence of what's happening today is kind of cool, and having said all of that, I just got to tell you I'm jacked. I'm juiced and I'm ready to go. There is nobody I'd rather go to war with than Jon Gruden and Mark Davis."

Q: Why do you think that your lack of front office experience won't be a hinderance?

Mayock: "It's a good question. I think it's a fair question, too. I think the one way to answer it from my perspective is that for the last 15 years I think I've tried to be the GM for all 32 teams, and because of that, from a scheme perspective, I think I'm sound. I think I've been used to evaluating all kinds of different players, at all kinds of different positions, for every team in the league. What I don't have, and I was pretty honest with Mark and Jon when we talked about this position, is every day backup as far as the mechanics



Oakland Raiders Transcript

of running a team. I've been in all 32 buildings over the last 15 years. I know what it looks like and I know what it smells like. I just need a little help with the mechanics."

Coach Gruden: "I'd just like to say that I know Mayock is going to energize our building. I know he is a great people person and he's got great people skills. He'll learn fast what he needs to learn. He's already met with [Director of College Scouting] Shaun Herock. I think he is going to be able to adapt to the personnel that we have in place and put his own spin on things quickly. He's got great people skills and he's a quick learner, that is for sure."

Q: Why is now the time for you take this job? What makes this the right fit?

Mayock: "I've said for a lot of years that when the right opportunity came along for me personally, and from a big picture was the right fit, I was going to make the move. I'm not going to get into the individual circumstances like I said earlier, but I never thought those two things converged. This is a situation where again, the fit, and that's what I mean by 300 text messages and all these football guys saying, 'What a fit!' I felt the energy 20 years ago and I feel it even more now. I know we are going to argue about some guys and I can't wait because it really comes down to, 'What do you think? You've watched all this tape. What do I think?' Let's get to the right answer for the Oakland Raiders. It doesn't have to be your guy or my guy, let's get the right answer. All I can tell you is I felt the fit here more than I ever have."

Q: What opportunities do you see from the upcoming Senior Bowl?

Coach Gruden: "Well, Mike is going to run for office in Mobile. Honestly, the last time I coached the Senior Bowl as the head coach of the Raiders, we drafted Eric Barton and Rod Coleman. It was a great tool for us, in Tampa and in Oakland. We have three picks in the first round. We also pick in every other round and we also have the potential to add players after the draft. It will give our coaches, I think, a chance to go to Mobile in front of the entire NFL and show what kind of coaching staff we have - show the energy and enthusiasm that we have as a staff. We are going to sell ourselves to the players. If we can eliminate two or three players by coaching the Senior Bowl, sometimes that is just as important as finding two or three guys that you really want. We are really excited. It will be the fourth time that I have done it. We have to do a good job in this draft and the best way to do it is to be as close as possible to the players."

Mayock: "I've always felt like I did a better job when I got to know the players a little bit. Take Carson Wentz for instance. He went to the Senior Bowl and kind of announced himself. I got to know him a little bit there. Then we go to the combine and I interview him and spent some time with him there. Go to Fargo, North Dakota, you start talking about quarterbacks, and every position for that matter, the more you find out what makes a kid tick, the better you can evaluate that kid. I came away from Carson Wentz, like banging the table at that point just because I felt so strongly about the kid. That's just an example. I think when you get to the Senior Bowl and you get the access to these kids and the opportunity to see both teams practice, how they practice, how they retain information, how they process information, both on an install basis and mechanics on the field. I think it's just a huge advantage and we've been talking about this for several days now, hoping that this would come together."

Q: What do see as necessary to focus on first when turning this team around?

Mayock: "I kind of look at it with the calendar in mind. In other words, free agency comes first on March 13th. We've got to do a great job preparing for that. One of the great opportunities to come here and work



Oakland Raiders Transcript

with these guys is that, as Jon said, three draft picks, 11 overall, some money for free agency. We have to do a great job simultaneously crunching everybody that is a potential free agent while we are also working on the college side. The way I look at it is we got to be ready, first and foremost, for free agency on the 13th and then beyond that do a great job with the draft. That all happens simultaneously, and the opportunity is self-evident.”

Q: When did you guys zero in on Mike as the general manager? What did you think of Jon’s draft last year?

Davis: “Over the years I’ve talked with Mike on the sidelines prior to games for many years. Always telling him how much I respected his outlook and measured approach to talent evaluation, and I’ve always felt that I would love to have him as part of the Raider organization. I didn’t know in what role, so we talked about it, joked about it and all of that stuff over the years. When the opportunity came to talk with Mike this time around, he was one of the first people we wanted to talk to, among others. He hit it out of the park.”

Mayock: “Regarding Jon and the Raiders draft class last year, you know it was interesting. Because when I did the draft last year and I’m sitting next to Daniel Jeremiah and Charles Davis and all my guys and we were kind of laughing between breaks, like this is starting to look like the old Raiders. It was kind of like physical traits – height, weight, speed – that jumped out at you, jump off the tape. You look at that left tackle. If you watched that game yesterday, of course you can be negative about it, but one of the things I took out was that first-round left tackle chasing a guy down about 60 yards on an interception, made a tackle on the 10-yard line. After that, [defensive coordinator] Paul Guenther’s defense made a four-down stop and saved seven points with hat hustle play. It wasn’t just hustle, it was athletic ability, catching up, a left tackle. I’m like, ‘Wow!’ Then they went down and kick a field goal, it’s 21-3 instead of 28-0. That gets me jazzed, I like that kind of stuff. That’s what I see in the left tackle. I see an awful lot of physical talent. Does he have a long way to go, sure. But every rookie left tackle in the league that gets thrown in like that has a long way to go. And then P.J. Hall. You want to talk about explosive numbers, he just jumps off the tape, jumps off the chart. What he ran in his 40, his vertical, all of those kinds of things. Again, second-round kid from a small school played more snaps than he probably expected as a rookie. Does he have a lot to work on? Of course he does, but he’s got the physical traits. If you go through the rest of that Raiders draft, there were physical traits everywhere and I just kind of felt like while I was sitting in the chair with NFL Network a year ago, it was kind of a return to the old Oakland Raiders in height, weight and speed and let’s be dynamic football players.”

Q: Obviously a lot of your draft evaluations are very public.

Mayock: “Yeah, are you going to bring some bad ones up? Is that where we’re going? *(laughter)*”

Q: No, I’m just curious. I’m sure there are guys on this roster that you have not evaluated highly. Do you wonder what that will be like if one of those guys walks up to you and mentions it?

Mayock: “No. I have to be honest with you, when I was doing Thursday Night Football for NFL Network, every time we did the production meeting, the joke was don’t sit next to Mayock because somebody is going to go off. And it was either really, really good, and I’ll give you an example of one day. Okay, it was the Eagles at Seattle, I walked into Seattle’s locker room the day before and Earl Thomas came up and hugged me and asked me if I would go out and take a picture with him and his Mom because I had him as a top safety, blah, blah, blah. And then we did the Eagles that night and Shady [LeSean] McCoy came up to me and said, ‘You’re the guru? You had me at No. 4? Are you kidding me?’ *(laughter)* He ripped me. And every week that was pretty much what happened. I just saw a couple of the guys that I worked with and evaluated and been on the field with them in pro days and they gave me a big hug and wished me well. When you talk about athletes and ball players, most of them are the same. They just want to compete and win. I think that they know that that’s what I want too.”



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Q: Everybody knows about your knowledge of draft-eligible players. I'm curious about the pro personnel side of things and how much you have dealt with that in the past as it is now a big part of your job.

Mayock: "That's a good question, Jerry [McDonald]. I've spent more and more time on the pro side in the last seven or eight years and part of it was driven by the fact that I got Thursday Night Football for our network and part of it was a couple of coaches around the league who I trust and respect an awful lot and have helped me over the years. They said, 'Mike, if you want to take this thing to another level, you just can't be a college guy comparing college players. You have to take those college guys and say does he make a pro roster? Is he a backup? Is he a starter? Is he a difference maker?' So, seven or eight years ago, I made that a priority. So, I've watched a heck of a lot of pro tape over the last seven or eight years, both to prepare for games that I had and then also to try and get better at my craft."

Q: How comfortable do you feel with free agency negotiations and how much will you lean on people already in the organization for help with that? Also, to Mark Davis and Coach Gruden, how many people did you interview for the position and how did you satisfy the Rooney Rule?

Mayock: "One of the things I told these guys, and I'm a big believer in when we met, was that I don't have all the answers. To sit in there and try to pretend that I did, I think would be disingenuous. And the bottom line for me, I was very honest, were some things I needed some help with. I already talked about the mechanics about the daily regimen. So, when you start talking about trades and negotiations and draft day and being on the clock and all of that...First time for me for real? Yeah, but for 15 years, have I talked to all of the top people in the game about what they do and why they do it? We'll spend a lot of time getting ready for that draft, trust me, and we'll be ready for free agency. The fact that we've got people like Jon in the building that has a strong opinion and it's all film-based and his background is amazing. We've already been talking about a lot of that stuff."

Mark Davis: "We did five or six intensive interviews of people. I think the last time when we hired Reggie McKenzie when somebody asked about the Rooney Rule I said, 'You know what, we looked around and we finally found a guy with red hair and freckles.' (laughter) This time, we didn't interview any of those, but we took care of the Rooney Rule. As far as naming the names of people that we talked about and talked to, I'd prefer that if they want to come forward and do that, they can. But, there's a good chance that we may be hiring them to augment our staff, so I'd prefer not to put our names out there for competitive reasons."

Q: Have you done a deep dive into the current state of Raiders roster and how important is it for you to hit the ground running considering how much salary cap space this team has and the fact that it has four draft picks in the top 35 spots?

Mayock: "Yeah, it's critical that we hit the ground running, and the good news for me is I'm already ahead on the college side. I've spent a lot an awful lot of time. When the lists come out from the NFL teams in July, that's when I start. So, I feel pretty good about where I am on the college side right now. We're going to hit the ground running. I know Jon is going to push me real hard. What was the second part of your question? I'm sorry."

Q: In terms of free agency, have you done a real deep dive into the current state of this roster?

Mayock: "I'm happy you asked that, because I think job No. 1 for me, and this is what I said to Jon, job No. 1 for me is to get on the same page with the coaching staff about the current Raiders roster. I've watched, I think, the last eight game tapes. I've spent a lot of time just trying to be prepared for my interview with the Raiders and ready to go. I've got half of the season already. I'll get the rest, I'll be sitting down with every position coach with my opinions, their opinions, trying to mesh it together. I think the most important thing is we come out with a unified game plan when it's time to go after free agents. We know what kind of money there is, we also know that there is a lot of mistakes made in free agency. We're going to go after it in a pragmatic and practiced approach."

Q: Do you think that Derek Carr is the long-term solution at quarterback for this franchise?



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Mayock: "That's really part of my study right now. Bottom line, it's easy to pick names right now, but I'm not going to make a comment on anybody on the current roster until I've done a complete deep dive and I've had a chance to meet with all of the coaches."

Q: Can you detail what the interview process was like?

Mayock: "It's really even hard to describe because Jon and I talk a lot of football. I'm not sure what was an interview and what wasn't to be really honest with you. *(laughter)* You know, the interview that we did have that was a little bit more formal, I enjoyed meeting some other people in the Raiders organization. They drilled me pretty good and I enjoyed it because most of it was Jon Gruden and me talking football. Again, I can't tell you how many text messages, phone calls, comments, 'what do you think about this', just back and forth. I was on East Coast time, he was on West Coast time, which put us on an equal level because at 4:30 he is texting me in the morning. So, it's a different kind of process to be honest with you and a lot of it had to do with the connection between Jon and I."

Q: As far as making trades, who will be making those phone calls?

Coach Gruden: "If it's a good trade, I'll make the call. *(laughter)* If it's a bad trade, it will be Mayock. That's the way it is going to be around here. *(laughter)* We're going to work together. You know, one thing that I really believe is that this is a people business – the Oakland Raiders. I don't know about every other building, but we're going to work together hard. There might be teams he's calling, there might be teams that I am calling. There might be teams that we cross each other up on a little bit, but we're going to work together on this and if we can get a trade that benefits the Raiders, we're going to make a trade. We're open for business, I know that."

Q: What do you see as the biggest needs this offseason?

Coach Gruden: "Obviously, we've been through an entire season. We saw the Chiefs, the AFC West Champions yesterday. We have to matchup better with the Chiefs in all key areas. We have to continue to improve our pass protection and our pass rush. I think it starts there. I think we gave up too many sacks, we didn't get enough. We have to add some speed to this football team. You saw how fast they are. The Chargers are fast. This is a fast division. The Denver Broncos have two great rushers. We have to continue to improve at all areas. We have some resources. That doesn't mean there's going to be a player at every position to meet the needs this year. We have to get on the same page with our scouts with our entire staff, coaches, scouts, everybody included, all hands on deck. We have a lot of work to do. Really proud of our football team. I want to reiterate that. The effort was outstanding. We got a couple big wins down the stretch. I think the work ethic, I think the way that we prepare, the style of football we want to play is in place. I love our coordinators. I think [defensive coordinator Paul] Guenther did a great job with our defense. I thought [offensive coordinator] Greg Olson and [offensive line coach] Tom Cable came in here, implemented a very diverse scheme. We had some success. I think [assistant head coach/special teams coordinator Rich] Bisaccia is the best in football on special teams. We just have to continue to build this squad. Mayock's addition is a huge, huge day for Raider Nation. I want to put an exclamation point on how excited I am. He'll prove his worth quickly."

Q: Is there anything you recalled from your meeting with Al Davis? Was talking to Al about football similar to talking Jon Gruden?

Mayock: "What I remember about that interview process was being in this big conference room, just me and Mr. Davis. He told me to get up on the board and he told me to put up a certain formation, a certain front. And while I was doing that, I realized he was already on the next topic. He was like, 'Who are the top five quarterbacks in the draft? Go one through five.' I got done with five and he'd change the topic again."



Oakland Raiders Transcript

For six to eight hours he hopped from topic to topic. I realized my answers needed to be quick and they needed to be on point because he's moving on. That's how he challenged people. It taught me a little bit about the interviewing process to be really honest with you. He'd get you off kilter a little bit and see how you react. When you deal with Jon Gruden, and I learned this a long time ago, he's looking you right in the eye, he's challenging you. Everything's a question or a challenge, you better be ready for it. By the way, there's going to be video backup in the form of a text. With Jon, you have to be ready, you have to be prepared. He's so quick mentally on the football side, it is a lot like Mr. Davis."

Davis: "It's kind of a lot like talking to you guys (*laughing*)."

Q: How do you protect yourself in free agency when investing in veterans, but staying under the salary cap?

Coach Gruden: "I think you have to be honest with yourself. If you want to look at a tier one free agent. What's a tier one free agent? It means it's a guy that's age appropriate, clean medically, already a starter in the league and a difference maker. How many of those guys hit the market? Very few. Now you want to call some of those people tier one guys and they're really not. You have to be careful. It doesn't mean we don't want to go out there and sign the right guys, but you have to be careful with the major ticket guys. Then there are the tier two guys that I think are critical for every team. Which ones are the emerging players that you can get that won't kill you on the salary cap side. Then the tier three guys that fill in your roster and make you better. Special teams, Bisaccia is back there, if I didn't mention special teams, he'd probably quit (*laughing*). Bottom line for me is that it's buyer beware. There's nothing wrong with being aggressive, but do your homework, understand who that person is as a person in addition to a football player."

Q: Is there any clarity on where you will be playing next year?

Davis: "Really, we shouldn't be talking about that right now, but I'll just reconfirm what I said before. We'll wait until the season is over, we'll let the emotion get out of the decision making process and we'll go from there. When we do have a decision, we'll let you know."

Q: How much do you have to familiarize yourself with not only the best players but the best players for your coaches?

Mayock: "I think that's one of the things I've had to do because I've had all 32 teams to evaluate. For me, I think the scheme part of it is the guy sitting to your left [Guenther], I've known for 20 years. I know what his scheme is. I know what he likes. That's a big deal. Then you have to sit down on the offensive side of it with Olly [Olson] and Jon and kind of dig deep. I ran into Tom Cable upstairs. We don't know each very well. I literally grabbed him, and I just said, 'Coach listen, I want to sit down and watch some film with you. Let's sit down, you and me in a room and let's just get through some film. I want to know what you like, what you don't like. Let's talk offensive lineman at a different level and you can teach me.' I'm going to do that with all the coaches. The way I look at this whole thing is we're here to support the coaches. We're going to do a great job of understanding what they want and going and get it for them."

Q: Do you anticipate making more changes within the scouting and personnel department? Also, do you have some guys in mind who you think would be a good No. 2 or No. 3 for you?



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Mayock: "I have 15 years worth of names. I think anybody on the coaching side or the personnel side that ever wanted to be in this industry always has kind of a ready list. I have that. I have a lot of guys that I respect, but the most important thing is to respect the guys that are here first. We have four months to get after it with the guys that are in this building, and we're going to do it. At that point we can evaluate."

Coach Gruden: "I'll just piggy back on that. This is a tough time right now, obviously, for our scouts. I want to assure you that [director of college scouting] Shaun Herock is excellent at what he's done. I have a lot of confidence in his history here and the scouts that we do have. Mike is going to evaluate them. We're going to give them every opportunity to continue to be a part of this. I don't foresee any changes, but I do think Mike is going to talk to a lot of people. If he finds somebody out there that can come in and have the same vision that we have, we're going to jump on the table to get that guy in here. We're going to lead the league in effort. I will not make any other promises than that. Mayock and I will be committed to work together. We're going to be passionate about what we do. We're going to be loyal to one another and we're going to lead the league in effort. And if we don't, I want to want to meet the two that beats us in that."