



## Oakland Raiders Transcript

### Linebacker Vontaze Burfict Conference Call

**Q: Obviously, you have a history with defensive coordinator Paul Guenther. Can you detail your relationship with him since the beginning and talk about what he has meant to you?**

**Burfict:** “Paulie G’ was my linebackers coach my rookie year going to Cincinnati. We hit heads as soon as we met. I respected the guy, he taught me the game playing as a linebacker playing at a high level. Sat me down, actually, Thomas Howard got hurt, he hurt his knee, ‘Paulie G’ came up to me and was like, ‘Look, we’re going to have you play outside linebacker next game.’ The next game was against the Washington Redskins. He said, ‘You’re going to start.’ I was like, ‘Bro, I don’t even know the playbook like that.’ So, he took his time out, it was like 8 p.m. that night. Took his time out, set the trash cans up and went through the whole playbook for like a whole two hours for me. I went into the game, I got like nine tackles and I just looked at him at the end of the game, like, ‘Appreciate that. You took your time out. You didn’t have to do that. You could have went home.’ Ever since then, it’s just been a close relationship where I know his kids, his wife, we go out to dinner, all of that good stuff. It’s just a good time to have a good relationship like that with a coach.”

**Q: Was this pretty much an easy decision then once Cincinnati released you?**

**Burfict:** “The first person I had called when I got cut was my mom and told her the situation. Then the second person I called was ‘Paulie G’. He didn’t pick up. I think I called him seven times straight (*laughing*).”

**Q: How are you physically? Are you confident?**

**Burfict:** “Yeah, I’m confident. Some of the concussions, I passed the concussion protocol. Sometimes the team actually told me to stay in the locker room, that I couldn’t go out there because the replay was bad. I can’t fight the trainers. I have to do what they say. Football is a dangerous sport like that, but I’m totally fine. I got my physical and I passed it, otherwise I wouldn’t be signing with the Raiders if I wasn’t good.”

**Q: What’s the first thing you’re going to say to Antonio Brown?**

**Burfict:** “We’re on the same thing, there’s one goal. It’s all positive, man. He’s a great player. He’s going to be in the Hall of Fame one day. Honestly, I’m just going to approach him like I do all my other teammates, introduce myself, all that good stuff. There’s nothing negative over here. We’re all on the same team. We’re trying to win a championship over here.”

**Q: You have a reputation of playing beyond the whistle. Have you ever looked at the Raiders and think this is somewhere that you’ll wind up?**

**Burfict:** “Nah, football is football. I think every team plays a little bit after the whistle. It’s just a matter of if the ref catches it or you know what I mean. I didn’t think anything of it when I signed with the Raiders or kept an eye on the Raiders. That’s football, it’s just whoever gets caught.”

**Q: People consider you to be a dirty player. What’s your response to that? Are you a dirty player?**

**Burfict:** “No, I’m not a dirty player. I play a physical position, which is middle linebacker, outside linebacker. That’s physical. I can’t go in there playing patty-cake. If I go out there playing patty-cake, then I’m going to be getting run over. I have 300-pound linemen, 300-plus pound linemen coming at me, trying to block me. If I play soft, then I’m not doing my job. I could see if I played quarterback or kicker or punter, then yeah you can be, I wouldn’t say soft, but you know what I’m saying. I play a physical position to where I have to put my jockstrap on right, put my shoes on right, put my cleats on right and come out ready to play physical.”

**Q: Did you get a chance to talk to Head Coach Jon Gruden?**

**Burfict:** “Yeah, of course.”

**Q: What was your interaction with Coach Gruden like?**



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**Burfict:** "It was great. It wasn't my first time talking to him. I talked to him actually when they came out to Cincinnati. I talked to him right before pre-game, shook his hand and you just feel the energy off of him. Energetic, exciting, he wants the best out of his players and a great coach; and he just wants to win."

**Q: What about Coach Guenther's scheme brings the best out of your game?**

**Burfict:** "Just knowing the defense in and out. That's what I've known since day one. I know what everybody on the defense is supposed to be doing. Lined up, yards, off the man type stuff. I know just little details in the defense and I think my knowledge can help everybody, especially while I'm on the field wearing the mic. If somebody doesn't know what they have to do, then obviously I'm going to realize if we are supposed to have an end in the 9-technique or 6-technique. And if they're not in the right spot I can obviously help them by just my visual and knowing how it's supposed to look set up."

**Q: Did Coach Gruden watch film with you before today's signing?**

**Burfict:** "Nah, we watched a little clip that he had put up, but we already had discussed my film play actually last night on the phone call when I actually got cut."

**Q: Has anybody at the Raiders joked that you can't hit Antonio Brown like that anymore in practice?**

**Burfict:** "Actually, 'Paulie G' said something like that, but it's all fun and games. We are on the same team, it's one goal. Honestly, we might be the closest friends on the team, you know what I mean? So, just got to go along with it and I can't wait to meet him."

**Q: Do you enjoy being a leader on the field and also in the locker room, and is that a role you that you feel like you can fill here?**

**Burfict:** "Yeah, of course. I've been around a lot of [veterans] vets in Cincinnati, learned a lot from them and they taught me a lot of things. So, it's just like I get to teach some of these young guys what I've learned and pass it along."