



## ***Oakland Raiders Transcript***

### **QB Derek Carr**

**Q: Where were you when you found out [about the Khalil Mack trade] and sent that tweet out?**

**Carr:** "I had just woken up a little bit before that. It's one of my few days I ever get to sleep in and I woke up to the news. I had been talking to Khalil the night before, when I woke up. Obviously, I texted him during all that. Talked to him afterwards, talked to him yesterday. You know I've been talking to him. That's where I was. I was at my house and I was about to eat breakfast."

**Q: Over these last couple weeks, months did you ever think he [Khalil Mack] would get traded?**

**Carr:** "No, never. I don't think, to be completely honest, I don't think anybody did, top-down here. I don't think anybody did. It's not what anybody wanted. I think that's clear. It is what it is. It's part of the business. It's one of those sucky things that happened. The hardest part for me is, obviously, you lose a good football player but he's my brother man. That's one of my best friends. That's the hardest part, I don't get to see my friend every day. Besides that I'm sure we will see each other in the offseason."

**Q: Has the shock worn off at all yet or is it too soon for the locker room to kind of digest it?**

**Carr:** "It has because we are back to work. I think that has helped. Obviously, we had the day off that day so that made it harder because I'm just sitting there thinking about it all day. Whereas now I have a job to do. Once we showed up and got to work, coach addressed it to the team. He said what he said, invited in anyone who needed to talk to him, open door. He understood a lot of us are close to him. He was very open. Just told us everything, all those kinds of things. Once we got back to work it didn't go away because he's your buddy, but at the same time it went away because we have a game to get ready for."

**Q: You guys have talked so much over the years about ushering in a new era of Raiders football together and now without your partner in doing that, does that make it more difficult?**

**Carr:** "You know it's weird because we planned everything. When we first came in we planned the next 10 to 15 years of our life sitting there at the same lockers. I think that's the weirdest part. It's a little bit of a different chapter now. We both have kind of the same goals. I just don't want him to win the Super Bowl and all those kinds of things. I felt like when we showed up here we wanted to change the culture and show people what it meant to work and I think we did that. I feel good about that, you know, I feel like we did change the dynamic of how things are done. From the people in the locker room I believe that 100 percent that we changed that. It makes it feel a little bit better knowing that we accomplished that together because that is what we wanted. We wanted to make this a place where free agents wanted to come. I think we did that. We got people to show up, obviously, it wasn't just us two it takes everybody. Our whole class. It's just one of those things, we won't be able to win a ring together. I think that's the only thing left on our list that won't happen but I wish him the best besides when he plays us."

**Q: What do you think about the economic reality of this sport, that Jon Gruden sort of confirmed it yesterday, that they couldn't accommodate both of you guys?**

**Carr:** "You know I think that's what makes it hard because we all knew. Me, Gabe [Gabe Jackson], Khalil, Jelly [Justin Ellis]. We all saw it coming and it's one of those things you just hope it can work out. We all did our best, I'll say it that way, we all did our best to make sure it could but it just didn't work out that way. Honestly, it hurts because we did try and we were always open. I was open with Khalil, Gabe was



## **Oakland Raiders Transcript**

open with us and Khalil. Always talking and open about everything we were doing because we had plans together you know. So I think it just makes it tough.”

**Q: Where is your concern with the locker room. I know you said coach addressed it and you have to move on but is there any concern in any talk to other players in the locker room? What’s the vibe like in there?**

**Carr:** “I’ve talked to a lot of players immediately after it happened. I talked to a lot of guys the next day here at the facility and honestly, I don’t have any concerns now. Obviously, when it first happened I’m like hold on, I am going to have to talk to some guys and things like that. To be completely honest, I had a lot of guys reach out to me before I even had to reach out to some guys and say, ‘we’re good man. It’s one of those situations, it sucks we lost our friend, we lost our brother but you know we have games to win. We got a job to do.’ I think that’s the mark of Mr. [Reggie] McKenzie and Coach [Jon] Gruden bringing in the right kind of people. When things like this happen and when decisions are made we have guys in our locker room who know how to handle it like men. We don’t have to like or agree with everything. We don’t get paid for that. We get paid to come in here, come together as a team, and win together. It’s hard because we lost him but I can promise you we are going to be ready to play.”

**Q: What’s your preparation been like?**

**Carr:** “Going back in my notes a lot. I’ve played Aqib [Talib]. I’ve played Marcus [Peters]. Talked to them both. The know how I feel about them. I think they’re two of the best corners in the NFL. [Ndamukong] Suh, I talked to him, obviously. Aaron [Donald], we came out at the same time. I’ve talked to these guys. They’re all great players. They have a great team, great defense. Great challenge they present us. Then [defensive coordinator] Coach [Wade] Phillips calling it. I’ve gone against him a number of times. He does his stuff, man, and he’s really good at it. It’s going to be a good challenge for us. I can sit here and talk good things about all those guys. They know how I feel about them, they’re great players.”

**Q: How much are you taking it upon yourself to get AJ McCarron up to speed before Monday?**

**Carr:** “Well, I’m here to answer questions. I’m here to help him, that’s for sure. I love AJ. We came out the same time. We spent time together on draft visits and at the combine and all those kinds of things. We’ve always kind of kept in touch a little bit since then. So, when he came...he’s a good friend. I’m here to answer and help. I think that’s the coaches responsibility to get him caught up because there’s so much demanded on me to make sure I’m running the offense and doing what Coach Gruden needs. But at the same time, I’m 100 percent open to whatever AJ needs me to help him. He’s here to compete with me every single day. That’s what we did with Connor [Cook] and EJ [Manuel]. We competed every day. Beat me in the drill. Throw a better pass than me. Do the feet better, all those kinds of things. We’ll do those same things, but at the same time if he has any questions, any help, if he doesn’t know where to go for lunch, that’s what I’m here for.”

**Q: Does getting the contract extension last year put more pressure on you now that Khalil Mack isn’t here?**

**Carr:** “No, honestly forever, since Day 1, I’m so focused. It sounds funny, but since Day 1 I’m so focused. There’s so much at the quarterback spot to do. Not just out on the field, but in the locker room. With the coaches, the extra meetings, putting plans together, making cutups so guys who are watching...there’s just so much to do that I really have never felt the pressure of playing alongside of him. Sometimes you feel, you hear guys say, ‘Do you feel pressure playing alongside great players?’ He’s



## ***Oakland Raiders Transcript***

one of the best. He'll be one of the best to ever do it. It was never any pressure because just being a quarterback, there's so much to handle that that alone is enough. Now with him gone, if you stand back and look at it like, 'Well what do you have to do now?' I still have to do my job. So, I don't feel any different, but I understand what you're saying."

### **Q: You're taking over another new offense, you have a new team, you're doing different things in terms of being under center more, do you feel ready?**

**Carr:** "Oh yeah, 100 percent ready. Like I said, I've said this from the beginning. I knew when Coach Gruden came in, the demand. I knew the differences that there were going to be. Obviously, you see our team changing. As the quarterback you sit there on your couch, and it keeps popping up on your phone – who's coming, who's going. You sit there and everything is against you. Everything is saying, 'It's going to be hard.' Everything is saying, 'You can't do it.' I think it makes me even more determined and motivated. I think from the beginning I just sat and was like, 'When we go out there, I want it to look like Coach Gruden and I have been together for 10 years.' That was my goal. Hopefully, obviously, there's going to be bumps because we're new at this. But hopefully not too many because I do feel 1,000 percent ready to play a game. The way that the coaches teach. The way they install. The way we walk through. The way we practice. You can ask any of our players, if they don't feel ready to play since April, the guys that have been here, then there's something to worry about. The way we do things, guys should be ready to play."

### **Q: How do you keep the expectations here, having lost Mack, from being lower inside the building?**

**Carr:** "I think it started back in April when he wasn't here. I think any coach, no matter what, says, 'Hey, we're going to coach the guys that are here.' So, the mindset was we're doing all this work with the guys that are here saying, 'Alright, we have a job to do.' We have goals and plans and things we want to do. We're going to go forward with that. Obviously, when he got traded it was a punch to the stomach because he was your friend, but all the work that we put in and all the time, reps that guys have gotten, you sit there and thing, 'Well man, we've put the work. Let's go. It's time to play.' My expectation never changes. I don't care if I'm out there with my two sons, five- and two-years-old playing receiver. I expect us to be excellent. I expect them to know what to do. I expect us to do it. Thankfully we have a really talented group and team of not only players but coaches as well. It's going to be good."

### **Q: Do you expect your relationship with Mack to be a lifelong one?**

**Carr:** "Oh absolutely. We've said things to each other in text just these past couple days. I can promise you, it's a lifelong thing. We're here for each other no matter what. I'm still going to dunk on him when he comes back to my house in the offseason. He can expect that. There's no ill-will. I look forward to Sunday, that day when we play each other. That'll probably be one of the most fun times for me. You think I'm crazy for saying that, but it'll be fun."