



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Defensive Coordinator Paul Guenther

Q: What do you think about Nick Nelson's progression so far this season now that he is healthy?

Coach Guenther: "I think he's doing a good job. He probably played the most snaps of the season last week. I thought he did a good job in there. So, we'll continue to get him snaps and get him some experience in the slot."

Q: How do you build on the quarterback pressure you got last week?

Coach Guenther: "Just keep stressing the rush, if we call a blitz – the entries of it – understanding what the formations are, what could come out of it. Just keep building off of it. We'll continue to mix things up in there and everything kind of works in conjunction, whether it's the rush or the coverage or a blitz in the coverage in behind it. So, we have to continue to work on those things and keep putting those things into play."

Q: Is it encouraging to see some improvement?

Coach Guenther: "Yeah. I keep saying every week, I just want to see progression as we go through week by week. That's all you can really ask for at this point. Some of these young guys, I think with [Gareon] Conley in there, he really didn't play much (in his rookie season), at one point in the game we had six rookies out there if you count Conley as a rookie with Nick Nelson and [Jason] Cabinda and the three d-lineman and Conley. So, it's good to see that."

Q: What was the cause for the decline in snap count for Clinton McDonald last week?

Coach Guenther: "You know, there were 11 guys out there. You can only get so many guys. I know you guys are big on snap counts, but every week we play a different opponent, it's going to cause for different personnel groupings and that. We can only get 11 out there. We tried to even out the snaps each and every week, some weeks it may be this guy not getting a lot and that guy's getting more and vice versa. So, there's no rhyme or reason for it, it's just the nature of the opponent."

Q: Why was it an appropriate time for Rashaan Melvin to join the rotation last week?

Coach Guenther: "He's earned his right to play. He's done a good job on the practice field. The more we can keep those guys in there, it's no different than the d-lineman. I always say as long as I've been doing this, you people make a big deal about the rotation of the d-line, well, we rotate the linebackers and the corners and the safeties all the same way. If we feel like a guy deserves to be in there to play, to see what he can do, we're going to put him in there. We'll just kind of even out the snaps as we go."

Q: Did you come away feeling pretty good about the way you played defensively?

Coach Guenther: "You know, like I said, my expectations are high. Again, in my vision of what it should look like, I thought we did some really good things. Obviously, the long play, we can't let that get out of there. The one right before half, it was a ball that shouldn't have been completed based upon the leverage of the coverage. So, there's probably less snaps in this game that I was unhappy about than some others, but they're a good offense. They're balanced. We probably should have held them to 10 or 13 points in there and they got 20 on us. They're tough to defend because they can run the ball, they got a lot of good weapons on the outside and Philip can get them in and out of good plays. You have to mix it up with that guy."

Q: Are you looking forward to seeing a little more of Nicholas Morrow?

Coach Guenther: "Yeah, Nick has done good. He's done real good. He's earned his play in there and when he's got his opportunity, he's done a pretty good job. We had a couple of errors in the game the other day. We have to clean those up. I like Nick a lot."



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Q: What have you seen from Josh Rosen?

Coach Guenther: "He has a good, live arm. Can throw it down the field. Pretty accurate. He has good weapons around him. Back's good. Obviously, Larry [Fitzgerald] has been doing it at a high level for a long time. He's a talented guy. Like I said, it's not so much who we're playing anymore, it's what we do. That's what I keep trying to tell the players. It's what we do. If we can eliminate as much error mentally on the field. Obviously if we're off a little bit here or there, the margin of error is thin for us. We have to make sure we're on things. Like I said, it's more about how we're playing, but Rosen is a talented guy for sure."

Q: How do you think Karl Joseph played on Sunday?

Coach Guenther: "I thought he did a good job. Same thing, he did a good job in there. Had some nice hits, some good blitz pass. Did a good job in coverage for the most part. He's a guy who will continue to progress and I think he's coming along right where we want him."

Q: Is there anything in particular you're looking to see from him through the rest of the season?

Coach Guenther: "Consistency. I keep telling the guys, you can't be bored with consistency in this game. Whether it's the coverage or playing the three-technique or six-technique or linebacker, never be bored with consistency. In any sport golf, pitching, tennis, whatever it is, consistency is the key to success. That's really what I'm looking for out of him."

Q: Did Marquel Lee play more strong side than normal?

Coach Guenther: "Yeah he did. He did a good job. He did a good job. Marquel has played a lot in the middle. We wanted to give [Jason] Cabinda a chance in there. Cabinda is a live guy. He's smart. He doesn't act like a rookie. He's a leader, Cabinda. I've been around guys like this before. He brings a lot of energy. His knowledge of the game for young player is tremendous. We felt like to get Marquel in there and keep him going, we taught him the SAM linebacker so Cabinda could slide into the MIKE. He did a really good job in there for us. He's going to continue to play in that role and see how we go with it."

Q: Is Maurice Hurst one of your future leaders?

Coach Guenther: "No question. No question. That's what we got, we got young guys who are leading, which is good for the future. These guys are being thrown into the fire. Sometimes you have to dance fast when you're in the fire and they're learning how to dance fast right now. Those guys have been tremendous. Particularly Mo has been a real vocal guy in there. He's played the most out of all the guys anyways."

Q: Do you like his effort and his motor?

Coach Guenther: "Tremendous effort. He'll chase the screens down. Chase on the backside. That's how we practice, really, at the end of the day. We're running. A lot of times in practice, a lot of the coaching that goes on, goes on in the meeting rooms because we're running to the ball and we're getting to the huddle and getting in and out of the next play. We're coaching on the run because they're flying to the ball. If we don't make that point right there on the spot, which I usually like to do, we make sure they get it in the meeting rooms. Mo is the guy, really all of our guys have done a good job with that I think."

Offensive Coordinator Greg Olson

Q: When you go back to that fourth-and-five play, Derek says he only has one option, but do you want to see him keep that play alive?

Olson: "Especially in that situation, the fourth down situation, you try to keep the play alive as long as you can. You sprint out and scramble and try to get it with your feet or reverse direction but try to put the ball in play to somebody."



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Q: The turnover has been amazing with receivers. How do you get everybody on the same page?

Olson: "I think fortunately the personnel department did a nice job of bringing these players in that are intelligent players. They've been able to pick up the offense quickly, although they've been on the practice squad for much of the season. In meetings, they've paid attention. I think the preparation has been as if they are a starter. I think Edgar Bennett does an excellent job with all of those players, including the practice squad players. Each week, they continue to have to learn our game plan, whether they are playing or not. A credit to the players."

Q: What do you see from Saeed Blacknall?

Olson: "I think more confidence than when we first saw him. He has tremendous speed. We liked his speed, that's part of the reason why we brought him in here. That was a redeeming quality that we liked about him. Speed and playing in a big-time program. More than anything, his confidence."

Q: What's the balance for Derek between taking a chance and just throwing a checkdown?

Olson: "We always want him to remain aggressive. Let's be aggressive with the football, but let's not be careless. We want to maintain the aggressiveness but there is a fine line there and we'll continue to find that. There are a number of things around him and we've all got to get better from the playcalling to the protections up front. We need everybody's involvement, running backs, offensive line, the route running, the execution at the quarterback position and I think we can all get better. We still want him to maintain the aggressive behavior."

Q: Do you want him to be more aggressive?

Olson: "I just think there is a fine line but yeah, we just don't want him to lose that quality. He throws a very good ball. He's proven in the past that he can make a lot of those deep throws. More comfortable he gets within the system, the more we'd like to see aggressiveness."

Q: Kolton Miller was listed on the injury report as full yesterday. How much did his knee injury hamper him?

Olson: "We like his toughness. It's really been a full year of what he's used to now. He's gone 13 games now with the four preseason games. He's getting a taste of what the NFL is like and getting and understanding of playing with pain. There's a difference between pain and injury. I think he's realizing that. He has done a nice job in that regard. He has played with nicks throughout the season, his elbow, his knee, a number of different things that he's experienced since he's been here, knowing that he still has half a season left. He's getting a real taste of what the NFL is like and the pain you have to pay with."

Q: The Chargers have struggled this season against stopping teams on the goal line, so was it execution or a bad look on the fourth-and-goal play where you were stopped short?

Coach Olson: "It was execution. They lined up and sometimes when you have those, I won't call them trick plays, quick formations with people displaced. They lined up incorrectly and at the last second one of their defenders tried to run to get lined up correctly and that's where our lack of execution occurred, because of that. They had three men, we anticipated two men to be to the side, there was a third defender there and right as the snap cadence was going on he turned to go to the other side and it confused the count up front."

Q: At some point, do you want to give DeAndre [Washington] a look?

Coach Olson: "Yeah, I think that. We are not there yet. Obviously, there is a number of players that we want to make sure that we have a good chance to look at here before the season ends, him (DeAndre) being one of them. Obviously, that's as if we are looking to move forward but right now the focus is on winning this football game this weekend. Certainly, have a lot of games left but we are not there yet, where we are in that mindset."



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Q: How has it been adjusting to the air quality issues all week?

Coach Olson: "Well, first of all, our hearts go out to all the people who lost lives and property, and certainly to all the first responders. I think that's number one, all those people above everybody. For us, yeah, we are missing a practice. We are missing the ability to go outside, but for other people it's changing their lives or has changed their lives. It's very unfortunate, but again you put things in perspective. Nobody here on this team has lost lives or property, so we are fortunate in that regard. We always say, 'you got to be able to adjust', and we will adjust today. We will get our walk through done indoors and we will make the most of it."

Q: What kind of progress has [Marcell] Ateman made from the guy we saw in training camp?

Coach Olson: "I think when you look at our show team offense that goes against our defense, Marcell has been one of those guys that each week he still continues to make those plays. When you look at the rest of the players on the practice squad, he is somebody that has shown up every week, so that has been very encouraging for us. He still makes the contested catches, he's getting better as a route runner, very competitive player and obviously offers you the size that you are looking for. He's had a good Fall for us, in that role on the practice squad, and we are looking for big things from him."