



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Defensive Coordinator Paul Guenther

Opening statement: "Alright guys, Happy Thanksgiving. A time to put life in perspective. A lot to be thankful for. Blessings to you guys. Happy Thanksgiving to Raider Nation. One thing I do want to say is that coming here for my first year is that the fans here are tremendous. We had a great showing in Arizona. The fans are loyal fans. You hear about Raider Nation, but you really don't feel it until you're here. It's tremendous."

Q: Do you sense it when you're away from here and away from the stadium?

Coach Guenther: "No doubt. No doubt. It's unbelievable. Obviously, we're not having the greatest of years, but our fans have been unbelievable. They show up on the road. You look up in the stands and see black and silver all over the stadium. It means a lot to us and it means a lot to our players."

Q: What are the difficulties this week in preparing for Lamar Jackson?

Coach Guenther: "Yeah, it's a little bit different. There's a lot of quarterback style runs in there, obviously. He carried the ball 27 times last week with some success. One thing I told our guys in the beginning of the week, we don't have a lot of marquee guys, a lot of big named guys. What we got are guys that study the game, love playing together. That's what this game is all about. It's about responsibilities, leverage, angles, all those types of things. Everybody has to do their part, all 11 on defense have to do their part to stop an offense like this which is unique. I think we have the right kind of guys in our room to do that. I'm enjoying the hell out of coaching these guys this week on the prep."

Q: How helpful is it to be the second team to face Jackson instead of the first team?

Coach Guenther: "It helps a little bit because structurally we're similar, obviously, with coming from Cincinnati. To see how they attack. They'll have something new up this week for this game. We'll just have to be ready to go and make the adjustments. Really within the structure of this defense, it's really you just have to follow your responsibilities. So, it's a lot like old option football really. We've been keen to that."

Q: When you study Jackson, do you go back to his college tape?

Coach Guenther: "We watched some of the tape from Louisville, some of the plays that he had ran and some of the stuff that he was used to, that they had in their system that we've seen either in the preseason. They've run him some with the two quarterback sets with [Joe] Flacco in there and he'd be taking the snap. We did our homework on it."

Q: Do you think Justin Ellis is close? What did you see?

Coach Guenther: "Yeah, he looks good. It'll be great to get him back. We haven't had him back since the first ball game. It's a big part of what we're doing here. He practiced yesterday, he had a little thing over there. But he looks good. He feels good. Hopefully he'll be up and running on Sunday."

Q: How do you think that Johnathan Hankins has filled in?

Coach Guenther: "He's done tremendous. He's been a big add for us. He's played great every game. He's a big body in there. He's pretty athletic for a big guy, too. He can move around. We're glad to have him. Hopefully we can keep him around for the future."

Q: When you get both of those options in there, does it increase the rotations?

Coach Guenther: "Changes. Totally changes. So you have two big bodies in there with stuff up the middle. They're not just slugs in there, they're athletes. They're big guys that can move. Having both of those guys available for the first time will be a big assets."



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Q: Has Maurice Hurst been a pleasant surprise or has this been what you expected out of him?

Coach Guenther: "We graded Mo as a high drafted player. Then he had the condition that he had and teams backed off. It was at that point in the draft in the fifth round, it was too good to pass up. He's the player we expected him to be. He's a perfect fit for what we do here defensively. He hasn't let us down a day. He's played really good for a rookie. There's not a lot of guys in there playing...There's not many rookie D-Linemen starting in the NFL, No. 1. Then you have him and P.J. [Hall] and Arden [Key] getting all these snaps, it's going to pay off down the road for sure."

Q: What has Frostee Rucker brought to the team?

Coach Guenther: "Just to be around a guy that's seen a lot of football. Studied a lot of football. Been in a lot of big games. Kind of lead these guys, he's a good leader that way. Some guys are loud on the field. Frostee isn't, it's more of he does it by example. He'll speak up when he needs to. The guy is battling, he's 35-years-old still playing ball at a high level. I think our guy is a good guy for our young guys to look at and learn from."

Q: Has there been an instance of when he's spoken up?

Coach Guenther: "No doubt. Every now and again...Typically the night before the game we'll have a half-hour meeting. Sometimes I'll just let the players run it. To me, as coaches, we get them ready Monday through Saturday. Then Sunday it's a players' game and it always will be. Those guys have to make the communication and he's part of that."

Q: What strides do you see Karl Joseph making over the last few weeks?

Coach Guenther: "He's done good. He's just really understood all the different techniques and schemes. The different adjustments we have to make based upon formations. He adds some juice for us back there. Both in the run and the pass. He's done really good. Hopefully he keeps on getting better."

Q: On Sundays you keep seeing the defense making strides. Is that encouraging for you?

Coach Guenther: "Yeah, particularly the young players. Those guys are just understanding that, 'Oh this shift may happen. This motion, these are the kinds of things that change on us.' You get a feel as a coach if you're staying the same or getting better, and the last few weeks I feel like we've gotten better. Big strides."

Q: How have Nick Nelson's previous snaps prepared him for future opportunities?

Coach Guenther: "Like I said, he played I don't know how many plays he had in nickel the other day. That's a unique position in nickel because you have to fit in the run. You're in blitzes. You have to cover routes that are different in the slot. So it's a real important position in our scheme. Hopefully, again just like some of the other young guys...I always said I'm counting Arden, P.J., Maurice, [Jason] Cabinda, [Gareon] Conley - to me is a rookie player because he really hasn't played much - and Nick, so you have six of your five guys out there are rookie players. Same thing with all of them, just keep getting better every week. Hopefully we see some of the things we're seeing show up on Sunday."

Offensive Coordinator Greg Olson

Q: What did you see from Marcell Ateman?

Olson: "It was good also from the competitive aspect of that game, the intense situations that came about in that game. Back and forth, it was good to see him compete and compete at a high level. He'll always be able to look back and say his first catch was against Patrick Peterson, at a big point in the game. He had a couple opportunities to go up against Patrick. It was good. He competed."



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Q: Have you seen Keon Hatcher just jump back in like he never left?

Olson: "He's a very intelligent player, we knew that when we released him. It was like riding a bike for him. He's done a nice job. Edgar Bennett has done a nice job getting him back up to speed and done some good things here the last couple days."

Q: For Derek Carr, the injuries and protection issues up front and at wide receiver, what has that difficulty brought for him?

Olson: "It's difficult for any quarterback, but also we still have very high expectations of Derek. That's part of playing that position, you've got to be able to roll with whoever is in there. Injuries are part of the game, as we've always said. He's had a number of different wide receivers and shuffled the offensive line, but we still continue to have expectations of him to get better every week. That's where we're at and that won't change."

Q: How has he been with those expectations?

Olson: "He's been good. I think in the meeting rooms and the preparation throughout the week, he's done a great job. Now we just, all of us, can be better every week."

Q: Coach Gruden said he thought Brandon Parker had his best game last week. What did you see?

Olson: "He bounced back. Just experience, that's so key for all of our young players, the experience they're able to gain right now. Certainly, win-loss record isn't anywhere where we want it to be or expected to be but we are gaining valuable experience for our young players. Our expectations of them, just like Derek, for those young players, they need to show they can improve every week and that they have a future here."

Q: What's the future hold for the X receiver now that Brandon LaFell is unavailable?

Olson: "It's really unfortunate because we really liked Brandon LaFell. He was really coming on and doing some good things for us. Great in the locker room, producing on the field, real professional. A great example for the young players on the football team. An unfortunate injury. Those things happen and we won't do anything in terms of evaluating where he's at until we see where he comes off this injury."

Q: How do you get DeAndre Washington more involved?

Olson: "We saw a little of it last week with those guys splitting the carries, between the three running backs. That will be somewhat the formula moving forward. We want to get him evaluated and get him some touches before the season ends. He deserves that, and we need to evaluate him. You can probably see him in a similar role that he was in last week."

Q: What does Washington give you that other guys don't?

Olson: "He's more like Doug [Martin]. They're all excellent and have excellent hands. We think Jalen [Richard] is the premier guy out of the backfield. We like a lot of things that he does in terms of receiving. Not a knock on those other two guys. They really all have similar qualities, but Washington is more in line with Doug Martin than he is Jalen. Good, strong runner."