



## ***Oakland Raiders Transcript***

### **Offensive Coordinator Greg Olson**

#### **Q: How has the offense been preparing for the Rams secondary?**

**Coach Olson:** "Well we think we gathered a pretty good secondary here ourselves, so we've had good practice throughout training camp. We've been tested somewhat every day in practice. I think our guys are up for the challenge. They've obviously gone up against Aqib Talib in Denver, so they've had a chance to face him. Some of our players here and some of our new players are looking forward to the challenge."

#### **Q: How does that familiarity help?**

**Coach Olson:** "I think it certainly helps. I think experience. I think you'd ask any player that had a chance to go against another player in the league that having that experience of going up against them would play to their advantage. We've had a chance. They've seen both of these guys, [Marcus] Peters and Talib, in the division. They've had a chance to go against them. Again, they're looking forward to the challenge."

#### **Q: What makes Aaron Donald so special?**

**Coach Olson:** "He's a powerful player. He has excellent work ethic, excellent teammate. Great leader upfront. Just a real powerful player that possess great quickness. Rare combination of strength and speed to go with that power."

#### **Q: What kind of matchup with it be between your interior offensive line and Aaron Donald?**

**Coach Olson:** "Yeah, I think it's going to be a great matchup. Our guys are looking forward to it. I'm sure the Rams are as well. I think anytime you get a chance to compete against the best at your position in the league...It's no different than our wide receivers that get to go against a very talented secondary, I think they relish the challenge. Most people on the outside would look at the two rosters and say certainly the three inside guys have been labeled as our strength and their two inside guys now with [Ndamukong] Suh there and Donald will be considered their strength upfront. We're looking forward to a real competitive matchup there. It'll be exciting to watch."

#### **Q: How similar is it being on Sean McVay's staff to being on Jon Gruden's staff?**

**Coach Olson:** "I used to say Sean used to use a lot of Gruden-isms. How he spoke to the team and his message and mannerisms. I think there were a lot of similarities there that Sean had picked up. Certainly, they're two different coaches, two different people. When I first got to Sean's staff I thought that was entertaining to say the least on some of the mannerism that he used."

#### **Q: You first met him when you guys coached at Tampa Bay together.**

**Coach Olson:** "Yes, first met him when Jon brought him on in Tampa there to work on offense. He worked with the wide receivers. He helped Richard Mann with the wide receivers and did a lot of the preparation work there. Very bright at that time. Knew he was very bright. Very bright coach. Hard worker and good person to be around."

#### **Q: Has Kolton Miller lived up to what you expected when you drafted him?**

**Coach Olson:** "We're excited. Obviously, it's a 16-game schedule ahead of us, but what we've seen so far is everything we thought. Again, scouting department did a fantastic job and the coaches in



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evaluating that player. He's everything that everyone had penned on paper as to who they thought he was. I wouldn't say exceeded our expectations because we had high expectations when we brought him in here. He's done a great job thus far."

### **Q: What similarities do you see in Derek Carr and Jared Goff?**

**Coach Olson:** "They're both accurate, very accurate passers. To compare them, they're just both intelligent, accurate passers. They make great decisions with the football. They've done that from Day 1. I just think they have great quarterback instincts that you recognize at an early age. Both Jared as a second-year player and I thought Derek as a rookie and Derek now has certainly matured. Both have QB instincts and they're good decision makers. But they're both very accurate with the football."

### **Q: Carr took only 11 snaps in the preseason and Goff didn't take any. Is that the new trend with the preseason?**

**Coach Olson:** "We'll see if that's how it plays out. I would say if the Raiders and Rams had a lot of success this season with very few injuries, then that would definitely be the wave. So time will tell, but I certainly think our players are fresh. I would bet that the Rams players would say they feel fresh going into regular season. Anyone that's ever been a part of a team that's lost key players in the preseason, it's just not worth it. When you look back and see what the injuries were. If you're fortunate enough to get through the preseason and get a lot of good work against a number of different quality opponents and get through injury free, then that's an advantage as well. We just felt we wanted our players to be fresh and we wanted our best players to be on the field when the regular season started."

### **Q: What were your thoughts on AJ McCarron coming in?**

**Coach Olson:** "Really like AJ McCarron. I think our scouting department, we kind of had our eye on him. Had been evaluating him through the preseason with the thought that maybe there might be an opportunity for some of those quarterbacks or one of those quarterbacks on that team to become available. We had some intel on AJ from other coaches that had worked with him. But we liked the player. We're happy to get him. He's been good since he's been here. He's been a quick study in terms of picking up the offense. He's been in the building from dawn to dusk every day. Just a real pleasure to have him right now. Everything we thought he was, too."

## **Defensive Coordinator Paul Guenther**

### **Q: Jon tells you 'we are going to trade Khalil Mack.' What are your first thoughts and were you prepared for it already?**

**Guenther:** "I said, 'Are you kidding me?' (*laughter*) No, he's a fantastic player. Obviously, we all know that, but you know we have been here for six months trying to build this thing the right way. We brought a lot of guys in in the offseason. Shoot, I think the other night we played Green Bay, the starting defense we had one guy run out in the starting lineup that was here last year. We are trying to build this program the right way and the organization we made the decision to go in that direction because if you keep one player around you are going to lose seven others. So we thought, in the best interest for the team, to make the move and to be honest with you the guys we have in that room are working their ass off, working hard, studying, doing things the right way. I'm pleased with where we are at."



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**Q: Not many guys on your defense have played with him. Does it make that adjustment easier?**

**Guenther:** "Yeah, I mean, I think I saw the guy in a restaurant in March one time (laughter). My kids pointed it out to me, 'hey, its Khalil Mack. He's got the new Jordans on.' You know, I wouldn't know. With as many new players we brought in, new coaching staff we just kind of got use to him not being here and operating with what we got so we are going to move along that way."

**Q: Right after you got hired you said your idea of a blitz was getting Khalil Mack one-on-one. Now that you don't have that sort of singular presence, does that change the way you are trying to bring pressure?**

**Guenther:** "I mean the plan obviously changes when you have a guy like that. It's like having a great receiver or quarterback you know? Your plans change with what you got. You got to try and put the players you have in the best position to succeed. That's what I get paid to do so I'll try to do that with the guys we have here come Monday night."

**Q: Do you think Bruce [Irvin] is ready to handle the extra attention that may be paid towards him?**

**Guenther:** "I haven't even really thought about it that way. I mean we have some other guys that can rush here too. And we brought some young guys in during the draft that I think are going to surprise some people. So if Bruce happens to get double-teamed more we will make note of it. We are going to move along with how we've been progressing through the spring with the guys that have been here, the guys in training camp that have been working hard. I like our group."

**Q: Cornerback has been a revolving door around here for years, different starters in and out. How do you feel about the guys you have now?**

**Guenther:** "Like you said, it's been a work in progress since we've been here. Having him [Gareon Conley] out here has been great. We got [Rashaan] Melvin out there and Nick Nelson. And [Dominique] Rodgers-Cromartie out there. Leon Hall has been playing some nickel for us at outside corner so the group's come along. It may be throughout the course of the season, I told the players I am going to utilize every guy in uniform so don't think because you are in the starting lineup or are on the two deep as a starter you are not going to play in games. I am going to utilize as many, what 24 or 25 guys, whatever the give me every Sunday."

**Q: As Gareon has been able to stack practices together for the first time since he's been here have you seen his level of play increase just because of that?**

**Guenther:** "No doubt because he's got a better understanding of the ins and outs of the system, the adjustments, the coverage adjustments, some of the other things we do. So he is progressing nicely."

**Q: [Rams Head Coach Sean] McVay has gotten a lot of praise for how innovative, creative his offenses are. Have you gone up against him before?**

**Guenther:** "Yeah. I got a lot of respect for Sean, what he does, the program he runs. They are very innovative on offense. Obviously, they are the number one offense in the NFL so it will be a great challenge for us Monday Night. I went up against him, actually we played a game over in London. We went all the way over there and we tied the game. So after the game we shook hands and we flew all the way over here for a tie. (laughter) It's like a soccer match, you know what I mean. In Wembley Stadium. No, he's good at what he does and it's a challenge and I respect what he does."



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### **Q: What does [Brandin] Cooks add to their offense?**

**Guenther:** "He's, like I said, the only guy, I think they had 10 of the 11 starters back and they added him. He's the explosive guy and can get the ball down the field. Obviously, you look back at some of the games he played against the Raiders. He's done some damage here so we are going to try and limit some of the damage he can do on Monday Night."

### **Q: What do you see of Cooper Kupp and I suppose of your defense's ability in the slot?**

**Guenther:** "I mean he's impressive. He makes tough catches. He's good run after the catch so we will have a plan for him. They got a lot of guys. They got [Brandin] Cooks and [Todd] Gurley is really good out of the backfield, catching screens and different plays like that. I think [Robert] Woods is a great player. They got a lot of weapons in there to take care of but we will have a plan."

### **Q: Is [Dominique] Rodgers-Cromartie someone whose workload will have to build over the course of this season given he's fairly new or because he's a veteran you can just insert in and plug away?**

**Guenther:** "He's picked up the system very well so we are going to get him in there. Like I said, we may rotate safeties, we may rotate corners, linebackers, d-line. We always rotate those guys so it's going to be a work in progress as we work through the season and eventually, like I said, after the third week of the season on Sunday Night when you put your head on the pillow you have an idea of what kind of team you got."

### **Q: What did you think of Fadol Brown and Shilique [Calhoun] during the preseason?**

**Guenther:** "I thought they did great. They made the team. Shilique I think got cut last year and Fadol Brown was sitting around here on the practice squad. To me they are two really good rushers for our system and they show what they can do during the preseason, that's why we kept them around here. I'm looking for them to come in and do some great things for us."

### **Q: Jon was talking about Marquel Lee's emergence being one of the good stories of this summer. In what ways have you seen him improve since you guys have been able to get your hands on him?**

**Guenther:** "Well, first of all Marquel brings a lot of energy to practice. He's a good leader. He's taken the system and grabbed it by the horns, and really is understanding of what his job is, to set the defense and make the calls. He's a physical guy in there. He's a big, thumping linebacker which we need and he's just had a tremendous camp and continuing to get better every day."

### **Q: What has struck you about Leon Hall? He's 33 years old, you've worked with him quite a bit in the past. His ability at this stage in his career he seems like he's running around really well out there.**

**Guenther:** "Yeah, he's doing good. He probably looks better now than he did in my last year with him in Cincinnati. That's when he was coming off a couple Achilles but he moves around good. He understands all the ins and outs. I just got to look at Leon. If he makes a little mistake in practice he goes, 'I got you.' I don't even have to tell him so it's good to have a guy like that around."