



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Defensive Coordinator Paul Guenther

Q: What excited you the most about your defense's performance on Monday Night?

Coach Guenther: "I asked them to play inspired football. That's the last game in that stadium. We talked about that a lot the night before the game and really hit it up throughout the week. Just come out and play consistent. We had a chance to get up on the lead at halftime and I reminded them when we were in Denver in Week 2, it's kind of the similar situation that we got to go out and close the game out when it needs to be closed. I think they answered the bell."

Q: There were a few big hits from the safeties last game and one was penalized. How much more complicated is it to teach guys tackling with the new rules?

Coach Guenther: "I just think both of them were really what I thought were in a good target area, there wasn't a lot of helmet involved or head-to-head collisions. Karl [Joseph] was going up for the ball, trying to dislodge the ball from the man. You just got to keep teaching target areas and do the best you can to do it. That's just the nature of the game and where we are at right now. It's not what it used to be where you can unload on guys, and we aren't teaching that. There's two good plays where the guys are right at the point of attack of a catch and they are just trying to get the ball off a guy's body."

Q: Have you found that gradually the league and the players are adjusting to the rules?

Coach Guenther: "I think so. I think they have to adjust. It's the rules, otherwise you are going to get penalties like the one penalty we got the other night. We just got to continue to educate them and I think we've done a pretty good job with that throughout the course of the year on those guys understanding how to do it the right way."

Q: How do you feel Nick Nelson did on the outside feeling in for the injured corners?

Coach Guenther: "He did good. We had both starting corners out and Nick is playing a lot in the slot for us. Having him go outside and [Bene] Benwikere played some out there. We were a little bit short on corner, so I think those guys- all of them - really did a good job for us."

Q: Arden Key has been more disruptive over the last few weeks, is he a guy that can have a big leap next year in terms of the sacks?

Coach Guenther: "I think so. I think Arden, he should have about eight sacks right now if he could just get the guy to the ground. He's got his hands on the guy and tends to fall off. The one in Pittsburgh where we thought it was a fumble, so he has had plenty of opportunities. I think he's understanding what it's like in there. He's getting chips on him, he's getting the protection slid to him some and we are using just about everybody we could in the pass rush. We used [Kyle] Wilber out there. I had some DB's ready to go in case those guys were ready. That type of a two-score game put some fast guys out on the edge and let them run. Arden has been doing a tremendous job and to his credit we drafted Arden as a nickel rusher, to go in there on third down and he's played first, second and third down, and he's lasted through the season doing it. It not only was a great educational year for him, now he understands like what is in there every down."

Q: How does he [Arden Key] improve on finishing plays? How much of that is off-season strengthening?

Coach Guenther: "He needs to get stronger. We addressed that with him. Obviously, you get into the season and it's tough to build strength when you are on the kind of schedule we are. As soon as the



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season is over he's going to take a little bit of a break, a short break, and then get back here in the weight room. I think we have a plan for that. That's the most important thing for him right now is to get stronger."

Q: Karl Joseph wasn't playing a lot earlier in the year, was that kind of necessary for his growth?

Coach Guenther: "I think so. In the beginning of the year he got hurt in the Miami game and was shelved through the Seattle game and then he came back. Typically, when you have your team assembled and it's what you want and your drafting guys, those guys take time. You don't just throw them in there right away. It was a thing where he started to understand it more and more, and when the light came on for him you can really start seeing him make plays now. It's a credit to him. He studied, he's paid attention in meetings, he's good on the practice field and it's showing on Sunday."

Q: What do you make of the season you saw from Daryl Worley and can he be a piece going forward?

Coach Guenther: "I think so. Daryl is a good pro. He understands there are some things he needs to clean up, particularly in the red zone area with him. He's a guy that came in here kind of late in the process and he's been a big asset for us. He's a big, tall corner and I like the guys long out there on the outside. They are hard to find."

Offensive Coordinator Greg Olson

Q: How were Kolton Miller and Brandon Parker able to be successful against Denver's edge rushers on Monday?

Coach Olson: "They spent a lot of time in preparation. It's a collective effort by everybody. I think the line upfront, the running backs, the tight ends and the chips, the wide receivers and the route running and Derek [Carr] on the decision making. So, a lot of things going into it but I think a good week of preparation by all, obviously helped in that area."

Q: How about just being able to run more than pass?

Coach Olson: "I think any time that you can set the tempo and you can establish a run game, that certainly sets up a lot of the other things that go along with it. I think we did a nice job running the football, and again, a lot of people are involved in that. Happy to see Doug Martin reach the 100-yard mark, that was important. It's important to be able to run the football. We pressed upon our guys that going forward, you want to be a team that can run the football in December. We were able to do that."

Q: How much does the lead at halftime change your game plan?

Coach Olson: "Game management is critical all of the time throughout the course of a game, but certainly at halftime. We try to keep the routine the same in what we're doing on a week-to-week basis and when we come in at half time one of the things we discuss is we talk about protections, are we sound in what we're doing protection wise. That's one of the first things that we talk about. And then, again, different ways how we're going to attack them and win the football game, whether we slow the game down or speed the game up, whatever we need to do to make sure that you give yourself the best opportunity to win."

Q: Despite having three turnovers in your last game against the Chiefs, the game was very close. Does that give the offense some confidence going into this week?

Coach Olson: "Yeah, we point out ball security every week. On our side of the football, it's obviously about taking care of the football. We were able to do that last weekend and that was a big reason for our



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success offensively. We pointed out early in the week this week that we actually had four fumbles and we lost three of them. Take care of the football, good things will happen.”

Q: What strides have you seen Parker make this year?

Coach Olson: “Every week it’s a learning opportunity for him. It’s more experience against quality pass rushers in this division and in this league. We certainly have real quality pass rushers in this division. His ability to go out there as a rookie and have the experience that he’s had, it’s invaluable and again it will carry on over into the offseason and OTAs against the pass rushers that we’ll have here and continue to develop here, the ones that we have on our team and we may bring in draft wise or free agency wise to help those guys. Any time we have great edge rushers, it’s just going to prepare them for this division and for this league.”

Q: Have you seen opposing defenses make it a point to take away Jared Cook as the season has gone on?

Coach Olson: “Yeah, we’ve seen that and he merits that really, especially as a receiver on this football team right now and what he’s done for this football team. We always expect to see their best coverage plan against the tight end, whether it be him in a single one-by-three set, or him to the three-by-one set. Certainly as we talked about earlier, we’re going to have the number of targets set for Jared Cook in every game plan. If they take those away then we’ll work to No. 2 and 3 in the progression. But, we’re always going to have him as one of our top progression guys in any passing concept that we have.”

Q: What was it like on Monday night for you?

Coach Olson: “Exciting, again it’s a great Coliseum. We talked about it as a quarter, for Derek [Carr] to go out and play for yourself, play for your family, but play for all the other quarterbacks that have left a lot of blood, sweat and tears on this football field. The [Daryle] Lamonica’s, the Ken Stabler’s, the Rich Gannon’s, a lot of guys have played there in his shoes before him. I think collectively as a group, we spoke about that Sunday night before the game. It possibly could be the last game, make the predecessors before you proud of the way you play.”

Q: Do you want Brando Parker and Kolton Miller to gain physical mass in the offseason?

Coach Olson: “Yeah, it’s important for everyone, but certainly for offense and defensive lines, that strength gain that they have. Work in the weight room is critical for those positions. I think any of the good organizations, it’s about drafting and developing players. For all of our rookies it’ll be an offseason of development. Speed and muscle, but just the offseason development is critical. The more players that you can draft and develop, and then with the addition of free agents that you bring in, we think the better the organization, the better the team that you’ll have. It’s been a big emphasis that Jon [Gruden] has made. Make sure that we’re developing our players, even throughout the season. As late as it is now, as we’re getting into late December, continuing to develop the young players.”

Q: What do you think the relationship between Derek Carr and Jordy Nelson has been so efficient this past month?

Coach Olson: “I think healthy, really. Jordy went through a period there where he hurt his knee in the middle of the season. He’s healthy now. Like you said, his legs are back. That’s a big part of it. Then I just think on a week-to-week basis, those two working together. It takes some time at times with quarterbacks and wide receivers to develop that timing and rhythm. I think they’re in a good place right now.”

Q: Have you seen he Jon Gruden mic’d up feature yet?

Coach Olson: “I haven’t seen it yet, but I’m a part of it. I live it every game (*laughing*). It’s pretty good.”