



## ***Oakland Raiders Transcript***

### **Head Coach Jon Gruden**

**Opening statement:** "Great day. Family Day. A lot of family out here [and] fans. It's really a pretty good practice. We sat down about 15 or 16 players. Wanted to take a good look at some of our first-year guys, young guys that needed to see where they are. I'm glad we did what we did. I'll answer any questions that I can."

**Q: What was it like bring out Peyton Manning, Charles Woodson and Ike Taylor this week? What did it mean to have them here?**

**Coach Gruden:** "I just like their presences. Mike Scifres is a great punter for the Chargers, was here for the last few days. They're just great resources. There's a lot of free time. There's a lot of time in the hotel. Sometimes the mental approach to the game, getting on a schedule, a professional schedule during the season. Sometimes you can tweak your schedule to get a little bit better. They're as good of players as there is at their positions. To have them as resources is a great thing. I've always tried to do that."

**Q: What lead you guys to letting Giorgio Tavecchio go before any preseason games?**

**Coach Gruden:** "I think the young kid is really kicking the ball well and it's hard to get a right footed kicker and a left footed kicker and the holder in the operation tight enough. [Mike] Nugent is a guy we think we have a lot of familiarity with. I just think that the two right handed kickers is going to help the operation. The snapper, nobody talks about the snap and hold. Everyone thinks it's all the kicker. The operation will be much better. Tavecchio is a good kicker and we wanted to see if he could catch on with another team. We appreciate Giorgio. He's a pro. He did a lot of great things for us. We have a battle still at the kicking position."

**Q: What have you seen from P.J. Hall since he came off the PUP?**

**Coach Gruden:** "He's a hard guy to block. He's what we thought he was. He's a powerful guy. He doesn't look like the biggest defensive tackle in the league, but he's a powerful, stout, quick, penetrating inside presence that we need here. We have not had enough inside pass rush. Hopefully, we get to full strength on the outside and improve inside and we might have some."

**Q: What did you see in Ryan Switzer that made you want to get him?**

**Coach Gruden:** "I love Switzer. I think he's one of the best punt returners of college football, perhaps the history of college football. He's as good as I saw. I'm 54, I wasn't around to say I saw everybody, but hell of a returner. Very productive receiver. Incredible start and stop quickness, and he's courageous, though guy. He's a little guy, but he's not afraid of playing and going inside. I like that. He has the qualities that I'm looking for in a slot receiver."

**Q: We saw Marcell Ateman a couple days in a row go way up and make the catch. Today we saw him drop to his knees and make the catch. Is he farther along than you thought he was or no?**

**Coach Gruden:** "No, he's farther along. He's going to get on the field if he keeps playing. We had a personnel meeting the other night and everybody is talking about Ateman. We're going to play the best guys and right now he's earning the right to get on the field."

**Q: Does he have special teams possibilities?**

**Coach Gruden:** "Yeah he does. He's going to help on special teams. That's what you want in a young receiver, a guy that can be a gunner or a holdup guy that can compete on the coverage team and learn how to be an NFL receiver. He has put a lot of time in and again I just give [wide receivers coach] Edgar Bennett a lot of credit. Edgar Bennett, the Packers, have done an outstanding job as an organization at drafting and developing their own at that position. Edgar Bennett has a lot to say with the emerges of a lot of these young receivers. I like Saeed Blacknall also."



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**Q: With Ateman emerging, would you look to trade one of your receivers instead of cutting them?**

**Coach Gruden:** "It's too early to say that right now. We haven't even really broken a sweat yet. We have to play a couple of these preseason games and see how it all shakes out, but we do like what we've seen the first two weeks of camp."

**Q: What makes Switzer a good fit for your offense?**

**Coach Gruden:** "I think he fits any offense. He was in a tough position in Dallas with Cole Beasley as a slot. They obviously had a surplus and they went in a different direction with Tavon Austin. I don't know what they did. He fits what we need. He's a guy that can change the game, I think, on third down. He's a tough matchup. He's quick. He has vertical speed. He has special teams ability. We'll just see if he's strong enough to be a durable player and last 16 weeks."

**Q: What have you learned from Martavis Bryant? What have you seen from him?**

**Coach Gruden:** "He has to get out here and play better. He has to get out here. He's in a competitive situation and right now, a lot of the other receivers have had a nice camp. He has to learn the offense. He has to stay out here. He's had some illnesses. He has to get on the field. He has to master the offense and become more versatile. That's the key to making this team better."

**Q: What do you attest to him being behind in learning the offense?**

**Coach Gruden:** "I'm not saying he's behind. I'm saying he has to be more versatile. I'm not going to say any more than that. He's in a competitive situation. Nothing is going to be given to anybody. It doesn't matter how you got here or what your history card says, we need everybody to understand the best players are going to play. He has to be more consistent. I'm confident he will."

**Q: How is Derek Carr looking to you right now? Is he everything you thought?**

**Coach Gruden:** "He's doing really well. He's doing really well. He's doing really well. If coach doesn't screw him up, we have a chance to have a heck of a quarterback."

**Q: Has he thrown an interception yet in camp?**

**Coach Gruden:** "I don't think we've thrown any interceptions other than the one we had the first day here. Bruce Irvin surprised us dropping in coverage. I think Connor Cook and EJ Manuel have also done well, but it all starts with No. 4. He has set a real tone here behind the scenes in terms of his desire. He is working. He's working. He's all business. He has a cannon and he understands what he's doing. There's not a lot we can't do systematically with him. We have to make sure Kolton Miller, the young receivers, the new tight ends, everybody is up to the same speed. I think they're excited about the possibilities with Derek Carr having some freedom at the line of scrimmage."

**Q: With Gareon Conley you didn't really have a timetable earlier, but do you know more now?**

**Coach Gruden:** "I saw him out here yesterday in the walk thru. I was really encouraged by that. You just keep that timetable as is, it'll be a couple of weeks. We'll see what happens. We'll update you when we know something, but he was out here at the walk thru and that's a real good sign, yesterday."

**Q: What's Gabe Jackson's status right now?**

**Coach Gruden:** "He got knocked around. Like I said, we sat down 17 guys. I think Gabe will be back on Monday. In the time being, we're really pleased with [Jon] Feliciano. He's played center for us. He's really hung in there and has done a nice job at right guard. [Offensive line coach Tom] Cable has made a difference here. These guys are buying into the system. They came back a lot lighter. Gabe is going to be fine, but we sure need him."



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**Q: How do you guys view Feliciano?**

**Coach Gruden:** "It's going to be hard to start at center or either guard here. I don't care who you are. We have, we think, the best that there is at these positions. It's a long season and you never know. If you have a guy here that's capable of going in and playing and making all the calls, then if Kelechi [Osemele] needs to miss some time, we have a guy that can go play left guard. If Gabe needs some time, he's stepping in like he's done the last two days. [Jordan] Simmons and Feliciano have stepped up inside for us."

**Q: What does it do for Johnny Townsend to only have to hold on one side now?**

**Coach Gruden:** "I think it's big. I think it's big. I think it's big for the snapper, too. Everything is different. The hold, I was a holder in college. That's about all I could do. I was a backup player. Most of the time I was holding. It's a tough job. Some kickers want the ball upright. Some kickers want it angled a certain way. You have to spin the laces. You have to handle a bad snap. It's important that you have some consistency in terms of how you put the ball down."

**Q: With Donald Penn possibly coming back, have you thought about moving Kolton Miller to right tackle?**

**Coach Gruden:** "Not yet. Donald Penn is going to have to come back out on the field here and obviously get himself going. It'll take a little time. We love what Kolton Miller is doing. We'll address that situation when it happens, but it's a good situation to have."

**Q: What have you seen from the secondary?**

**Coach Gruden:** "We have a long way to go to see who the starters are going to be. Obviously Conley's injury has open up the door for everything. Erik Harris broke his finger, he's been out the last few days. It's wide open at the safety position. The Lions coming in here, dealing with Matt Stafford and these Lion receivers will be a great test. We'll formulate our depth chart after the Lions weekend."

**Q: When do you expect Harris to be back?**

**Coach Gruden:** "He should be back on the field Monday."

**Q: Do you have an update on Penn?**

**Coach Gruden:** "Not yet. He's getting close."

**Q: How much has Miller improved?**

**Coach Gruden:** "Unbelievable. Not only is he having to block some really good players. He has to adjust on the fly a lot because we're changing speeds, we're going no huddle, we're changing plays at the line of scrimmage. It's not an easy thing to do, but he's done an excellent job."