



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Head Coach Jon Gruden

Q: What's Jordy's status?

Gruden: "He's got a bone bruise on his knee. I think we're going to list him as questionable for the game. He won't practice today. It's getting better but we're concerned obviously. Martavis Bryant is out. Marcell Ateman will get a chance to take his share of the reps today and we're going to activate Saeed Blacknall from the practice squad. If we need to play Saeed, we'll use him. We signed two men to our practice squad: Stewart and Davis. Two receivers to help us get through practice."

Q: How much can you actually use guys that just walk in off the street like that?

Gruden: "The practice squad players? They'll run the Arizona plays. They'll run the service squad plays. Edgar Bennett, our receivers coach, will try to fast track them as much as possible. The two men we just signed, we're not counting on them playing in this game. We're counting on them being on the show team to help our defense get ready for Arizona's offense."

Q: Is there a timeline on Martavis?

Gruden: "I don't think so. It could be a couple weeks, could be a little bit longer. Could be quicker depending on how these guys heal. I never know."

Q: You guys break down everything that the quarterbacks do. I'm curious how you'd assess Derek's decision making this year?

Gruden: "I'm not going to stand up here publicly and go through any player's grades. He's done some really good things under some really difficult circumstances. He's going to continue to get better and better as we get better around him. I'll just leave it at that."

Q: How has the air quality affected preparation this week?

Gruden: "I really don't think it has affected us very much. I think maybe a couple of players on our team on Sunday had some oxygen issues, but none that really inhibited their ability to go out and play. We rely on our trainers to give us information and I just hope the fires end soon."

Q: What do you see on tape from Arizona?

Gruden: "They still have a very good defense, especially at home in the noise. Chandler Jones will be a problem for anybody. Marcus Goldman is getting healthy again. He's had double digit sacks. I think hasaan Reddick is an up-and-coming player. Patrick Peterson is still highly decorated as a shut-down corner. They have the ingredients on all three levels to be a good defensive team and get after you. Josh Rosen has had his rookie moments. He's also had some 'wow' moments where you can see why they went up and got him. It will be a great challenge for us and we're looking forward to it."

Q: Did you like Rosen coming out?

Gruden: "Yes. I did like Rosen. I liked the other UCLA Bruin a little more. We felt we had a quarterback, so we spent a lot of time studying UCLA tape and obviously have a lot of respect for Josh Rosen."

Q: What are your thoughts on Derek being nominated for the sportsmanship award?

Gruden: "You can't ask for any more. It's been disappointing, obviously, the circumstances that he's had to play through next year. We've struggled in some areas. I've not helped him as much as I had hoped. He's a special guy. He's a special person and a great quarterback."



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QB Derek Carr

Q: What goes into preparation with Marcell Ateman and Saeed Blacknall likely to play?

Carr: “Thank goodness we had those guys in training camp, because there’s always a time where, we go in early – you guys remember the quarterbacks come in early with the rookies – so that’s all I got to throw to. So, we have a lot of time on task there. When guys have been banged up at practice they are the ones filling in, taking all the reps. And I said this before, they’re two rookies, that obviously they haven’t done it yet on the field, but from what I’ve seen at practice they are really smart. Plugging them in, no mental errors, that kind of thing, you’re not worried about that kind of stuff. Now, they have to go out there and win on their routes and catch the ball, so we’ll see how that goes, but I think that mentally and all of those kinds of things physically, they have the talent. It will be fun to see what they can do.”

Q: How comforting is it to know that Ateman was making plays for you in training camp?

Carr: “Yeah, I’m glad you brought it up because he did. Goodness, against starters, you know? To let coach put him in there with the ones, especially in camp when the vets get there, it’s all fight for every rep kind of a thing. For coach to put him in with the ones, he kept making those plays. So, we’ve built a little chemistry and he’s someone that I talk to often and I really like him. He’s a good dude and a good kid. I’m looking forward to seeing what he does here today at practice and seeing how he competes, getting some more reps.”

Q: How have you seen him progress throughout the year?

Carr: “He’s really grown up and just become a pro, and that’s every rookie. They need to figure out – they don’t even know where to lineup for stretch half of the time, you know? Let alone acting like a pro during games and that kind of thing. So, one thing that really stuck out is during games, he’ll come up to me and ask questions, not in a bothersome way or anything like that just, ‘Hey, what did you see here? What if they ran the route like this?’ So, I can tell that he’s not just here taking a redshirt year, enjoying his time wearing the team colors, he’s really put in a lot of work and it means something to him. He’s shown that, so hopefully he just goes out there and cuts it loose, because he’s done all the right things, now he’s just got to go play?”

Q: You don’t mind that during the game?

Carr: “Not at all, because we have AJ [McCarron], he talks to guys all of the time for me. I got something that I got to talk to coach and then Coach Gruden is grabbing me. A lot of that stuff goes on, so it’s nothing like it’s out from left field or anything like that.”

Q: Are there ever times when reviewing film that you wonder why you made a specific play instead of something else?

Carr: “There’s always about two, even completions. I think we talked about one that kept coming up when [Amari Cooper] ‘Coop’ won on a route verses the Rams, but we threw it to Jared for a first down. And you sit there like, oh dang. That’s one of those times where it’s a bigger play if we hit this one. And there’s other times where if you work a different side of the field, it’s pick a side, coach designs it to pick a side and you drop back verses something you thought and then you have to check it down. And you’re like, ‘Oh, but the other side won.’ It happens more than you know. Probably two or three times, not every game because sometimes it’s just rolling. But there’s probably like two a game, even some completions, even some big plays, even the one we threw to Doug [Martin], Seth [Roberts] won on his route on the little wide route where he ended up getting about 20-something yards. There’s stuff like that that happens, I don’t want to say all of the time, but it definitely comes up.”

Q: Is it harder to make correct decisions when systems change from one year to the next?

Carr: “Oh yeah, no doubt. It obviously doesn’t make it easier, but on the whole season there’s probably been four or five plays where you’re just like this is completely wrong, we need to read it this way. That



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kind of thing. Those were early one where I'm trying to figure things out on the fly. For the most part, it's really just little stuff like, this matchup, that matchup, you could have worked this one, you could have done it that way."

Q: Looking back on the fourth down play, is that still the same play you would make?

Carr: "I mean, obviously, you wish you could make 54 [Melvin Ingram] miss like ai tried to earlier in the game and try to find somebody else who really isn't looking for the ball. We designed that for him to get open a certain way and there wasn't a lot of time to try and make something happen. There's been times where I've tried to run around and do things, there was a time earlier in the game where I tried to break a tackle and do something more. I wish the outcome was different, everybody does. You watch everybody's reaction, we all feel the same way. I ripped my chin strap off. I said some things. Everyone wishes it was different, but it is what it is. I wish I could explain it in a better way, but it sucks."

Q: Is it surprising that you have not been as productive lately on offense as you were in the first part of the season while learning a new offense?

Carr: "Absolutely. It gets frustrating because I know how hard some of our guys work and you expect it to continue to go this way. But this league, it's tough man, and it'll humble some guys really quick, it will check yourself and really make sure that if all 11 guys aren't doing their job, if all 11 guys aren't on the same page how quickly it can turn like that. Not saying that someone is just doing it on purpose. When you turn the film on it's like, dang, if I just had that, or if I just would have checked to this or done this. You can sit there and second guess it all the time, but the only thing that we have the opportunity to do is do our best right when it's in front of us. So, that's what we have to do better, we all have to play better. Coach puts us in great positions, we just have to play better."

Q: What's been the value of Brandon LaFell's versatility?

Carr: "He's an ultimate pro. He's always coming up to me, coming up asking about the route. 'Hey, I'm going to do it this way or that.' He can play at all the spots. That kind of value, it speaks for itself. To have a guy that can play all spots. It's not easy to do, especially in this offense. The different formations, adjustments on routes, it's different for each position. Each route concept, there's so much detail. For him to be able to do that, as a quarterback, myself, AJ [McCarron], quarterback coaches who have to know all the little details. For [LaFell] to think that way and see it the same way is really impressive."

Q: What do you see from the Cardinals defense on tape. Guys like Chandler Jones can really get to the quarterback.

Carr: "Oh yeah, great players. They have a really good defense. I don't know what their record is, I usually don't know what people's record is when we play them. I turn the film on and I let that speak for itself. They are a good football team defensively. I haven't watched one snap of offense, so I couldn't tell you. Defensively, they're a really good football team. We have our work cut out for us, there's no doubt about that."

Q: What have you seen from Kolton Miller through his first season?

Carr: "Obviously, every rookie is going to have struggles. Especially when they're playing at one of the toughest positions, physically, that there is in the game. He's going against most team's very best player. That's how this thing works. For him to do while he's hurt, for him to do while he's getting scrutinized...As an offensive lineman, your quarterback gets hit, it's not going to be pleasant for him. It's going to be tough for him. He's a young guy. I don't know if he checks Twitter or anything like that, it's probably not going to be fun for him. As a young guy, he's trying to figure things out and all that kinds of stuff. To see him continually just keep the same look on his face, continue to work, continue to come out here braced up if he has to just to practice, that says a lot about who he is. I'm very excited that we have him."



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Q: Mark Davis said you're taking a lot of grief that he said is unfair because you don't have weapons and the offensive line is beat up. What does that tell you when the owner comes out and supports you like that?

Carr: "It's nice. It's stuff that they've said to me, that I'm not going to speak for them. If they say it to you, it's nice for him to do that. It just is what it is. It's nice words. He's just telling the truth, man. He's not one to sugar coat things. It hasn't been easy, but there's no excuse. I still hold myself to a standard. Whether he calls me and tells me those things, I still say, 'But I could've done this or this. I could keep doing this.' He keeps having my back. Keeps telling what everyone keeps telling me inside. I just go by what they say. For him to say that, it feels good. It's nice, but at the same time I just want to win. The words are nice and it means a lot. I don't want to take anything away from that. But at the end of the day I wake up early, I work my tail off, grind myself to sleep until tonight because I just want to win. It feels good, but winning is definitely better."

Q: How difficult is it to resist the temptation to force throws that you might not normally take?

Carr: "Because I did it early on. We had some turnovers and things like that. Turning the ball over is worse for our team than me checking the ball down if it's not completely open. There was a couple of times, also, in the game, there's been a couple of weeks now where we've had some open shots and we go to throw them and for whatever reason we weren't able to get to them. You just try to think, 'Maybe I could've thrown it earlier? Maybe I could've done something else.' I don't know, you just try to figure it out yourself. We definitely have some looks and those are things Coach Gruden and I keep talking about. Look, we're going to figure things out, get it all right. We're just going to keep trusting the process and seeing that yeah, this stuff is working. When it clicks, it's going to be real nice."

Q: Do you take pride in being named the Art Rooney nominee?

Carr: "I just literally found out within seconds. It's not something I think about where I'm like, 'Oh man, I hope I get this thing.' I've told you guys 100 times, I try to be the same all the time. Obviously, there's a little ups and a little downs here and there. I just try to be the same guy. For people to see that in me, that's really cool. I want people to talk about my character and who I am as a man way more than they talk about me as a football player. Hopefully we get that right, too."

Arizona Cardinals Head Coach Steve Wilks - Conference Call

Q: What issues do the Raiders present on Sunday?

Coach Wilks: "Well, number one, they are well coached. I know those guys on that staff. I know they are going to be prepared. They are going to be ready. On the defensive side of the ball I think their front seven is pretty good. I think they do a great job disrupting timing, coming off the ball and getting to the quarterback. Offensively, they are just like us. Showing some flashes of doing some things well. A little inconsistent, but I think [Derek] Carr is a great quarterback. You look at [Jared] Cook, the tight end, and he is dynamic. You look at the running backs that they have. I went against [Doug] Martin in Tampa Bay when I was at Carolina. They have some pieces in place and we got to be well prepared and ready to play."

Q: Have you picked Josh Rosen's brain about Kolton Miller since they were teammates at UCLA?

Coach Wilks: "Not at all. I'm sure some of the defensive guys probably have talked to him about that and some of the things he may be susceptible to with different moves and what not, but myself per se, no."

Q: In what areas do you think Josh [Rosen] has made strides?

Coach Wilks: "I think just really his overall leadership is phenomenal. Being in tough situations, going all the way back to Minnesota last week and then Kansas City and the two-minute drive against the 49ers. I think each week he's learning, he's growing and he's getting better."



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Q: How comfortable or not comfortable has Derek [Carr] looked in the offense through the first half of the season?

Coach Wilks: "I think he's looked pretty good. Again, there is some inconsistency there just like with us, and a lot of it falls around protection. I think over the years just watching and competing against him I think he is a real good quarterback."

Q: Do you think you have a real advantage when you look at [Arizona DE] Chandler Jones versus this offensive line?

Coach Wilks: "I don't think there is no real advantage when you start talking about going against different NFL teams and I told my guys that, 'you can sit here and take their record and put it out the window.' Just like last week, we didn't have a chance and we went up there and we gave ourselves a chance in Kansas City. It doesn't matter about the record. The Raiders are going to come in here ready to play. They are looking for a win and we got to be ready."

Q: Do you feel like your offense is still evolving after the change at offensive coordinator?

Coach Wilks: "I think Byron [Leftwich] is definitely putting us in the right position. You can see some of the things we have been able to do the last couple of weeks. Just spreading the ball around a little bit, trying to put guys in a position to be successful. David [Johnson] has performed well doing some things, not only from the backfield, but outside at the receiver position as well. I'm excited about the direction we are going on the offensive side of the ball."

Q: What does a guy like Larry Fitzgerald do for the rest of your roster, as far as setting an example?

Coach Wilks: "Well, I'll tell you what, you aren't going to find a better pro than Larry and I've been around some good ones. In Chicago with [Brian] Urlacher, etc., but Larry, he's definitely a true pro. Definitely someone that I love having in that locker room, an extending voice of the coaches. The way he comes to work each and every day. He goes 100 miles an hour, giving 100 percent, so it's exciting to see him out there and doing the things he is doing."

Q: What have you seen from the Raiders secondary?

Coach Wilks: "Number one, when you look at [Karl] Joseph, I liked him out of college. A West Virginia guy, physical as you know what. Those are my kind of players. Good tackler. And of course, I know [Daryl] Worley, coached him and I think he is definitely a smart guy. You look at [Gareon] Conley. Those guys have been doing some good things back there, but it always goes hand-in-hand. The front half will complement the secondary, as well as, the secondary has to compliment the front. I think they are doing some good things."

Q: Having spent time together, how close are you and [Daryl] Worley?

Coach Wilks: "I would say we have a pretty close relationship. I'm real big on getting to know my guys outside football and it was great to see him get another opportunity because he definitely is a good person. I know some of the things he may have been subject to recently, but that is not indicative to who he is as a person."

Q: He is still a fairly young player, but does Worley seem mature beyond his years, in just a football sense?

Coach Wilks: "I would say yes. You got to understand he came out early, so from an age standpoint yes, but maturity wise he is extremely smart. He understands the game. I think he really puts himself in a position because he studies, and he carries that to the field, and from the practice field to the game. I can see what they are saying in regard to that, but he is still a young player."