



LOS ANGELES RAMS

Raiders Head Coach Jon Gruden – Conference Call – September 5, 2018

(On what he saw in Rams Head Coach Sean McVay when he first met him, what his first impressions where and what gave him the idea that McVay could be what he became)

"I've known (Head Coach) Sean (McVay) since he was a kid, a little kid. Our families, the McVay and Gruden families go way back to 1970. If you know the McVay family they're all the same. They're all class, they're all football people, they're all hardworking. As good a brand of people as you'll ever find. John McVay, who was the GM of the (San Francisco) 49ers, helped my dad at Dayton and with the 49ers and it was my time to help a McVay and I wanted to give Sean an opportunity to be a coach. Wouldn't you know, two or three years later he's at the top of the profession. It's a real tribute to him."

(On if he could tell McVay was cut from a different cloth early on in his career and if he could tell that he was willing to do whatever it took to get to where he got)

"Yeah, we had a lot of good young coaches. My brother (Redskins Head Coach Jay Gruden) and (49ers Head Coach) Kyle Shanahan and Sean McVay were all quality control coaches. You could see right away his ability to take something from the chalkboard, from the meeting room, out on the grass and coach it. He earned the respect of players right away because they knew he could help him. He's just enthusiastic, knowledgeable, hardworking and driven to be great. He's a chip off the old block. He's a chip off his grandfather that's for sure."

(On what his first thought was when he saw the Raiders would be playing McVay and the Rams in Week 1)

"I really didn't think about Sean McVay that much. I thought that's a hell of an opportunity for us to play a team everybody's talking about. We'll see exactly where we are in a great stage – Monday Night Football. I look forward to competing with everybody with the NFL, I'm sure he feels the same."

(On if he ever sees himself in McVay's mannerisms)

"Yeah, I do. I think he's better than (comedian and impressionist) Frank Caliendo really."

(On what he thinks the similarities and differences between him and McVay are)

"Well, I think the similarities are, number one, we have a healthy respect for the profession. We've been able to see this business at close range. Our fathers have been hired and fired and hired and fired again, and they've seen great success. We both have a healthy respect for the profession of coaching. It's being mentally tough, it's teaching, it's continuing to work and try to find ways to help your team, it's being a competitor. Going out there and competing for 60 minutes. Being a people person – you're trying to hire great coaches, you're trying to acquire and develop players. It's a relentless yearly, daily grind. I think those are the similarities and that we're both offensive guys, both call plays, both enjoy being around a quarterback. So, we could talk about the similarities probably endlessly. He's just a lot younger and better looking."

(On if too much is made about how much the game or people have changed since he last coached in the NFL)

"I don't know what people make of it, really. All I do is I just come in here and work at it every day. It's very similar to when I was here the last time. We have not had a lot of success. We've got to turn this team around. We've got to get this team built back to where we can compete for championships. It was that way in 1998 and it's that way 20 years later. We've got to put this train back on the track and we've tried to assemble the right guys to get us started. We'll see where we are on Monday night."

(On if QB Jared Goff is on track with where he expected to him to be when he hosted Goff on his Gruden's QB Camp show)

"I think he's done great. One thing that always impressed me about (QB Jared) Goff was how tough he was. If you go back and watch him play as a true freshman at Cal, you would be surprised that he's even still playing football. He got destroyed. He got beat up repeatedly. I don't even know if they won a game. He helped bring that team to respectability and put them in a bowl game with great toughness. He has an incredible pocket presence. I mean this kid can stand in there and make great throws under serious pressure. I think he's earned the respect of his teammates and they've surrounded him with quite a system of football and some really talented players."

(On how important it is to have great synergy between a head coach and quarterback)

"Well, it's got to be there between whoever is calling the plays and the quarterback. You see that with (Sean) McVay because he's one of the coaches in the NFL that's actually calling plays. You don't see it because you don't see the coordinator on all these other teams that's got that synergy with the quarterback. I think that's what's unique about the Rams. It's something that I think a lot of the great teams that I've been around have had. They've had the play-caller and the quarterback on the field working the situations, the adjustments together. Not two people are doing it much better than Sean McVay and (QB) Jared Goff."

(On how that relationship is developing between himself and Raiders QB Derek Carr)

"Well, I think it's going pretty good. I try not to over-coach him. He is a blast to be around. He is extremely talented. He's a great worker. We're trying to give him a system that he can sink his teeth into and take control of when the game starts. He's got tremendous leadership and style. But, I think we're making progress. I can't speak for him, but I sure enjoy coming in here and working with him every day."

(On what he thinks the kind of impact it'll have on QB Jared Goff going into the season with no preseason snaps)

"Well, I hope it has a terrible impact on him, honestly (laughs). I hope it does not have a positive impact on him, kiddingly. I just think it's uncommon. But, when you look at our quarterback, I think he only played 11 snaps in four games. Strange schedule – I mean the second preseason game the Rams and Raiders are playing and we play each other in the first game of the year. So, you wouldn't be smart to put your starters out there and show the other team your hand signals, let them feel your snap count and some of the subtleties that might help them in 10 days or two weeks. But, I can't say that I remember watching a team in a first game where none of the players played and they really didn't play many of their players on defense either. So, it'll be interesting, for sure, what tricks they have up their sleeves and how ready everybody is because nobody in the NFL is really playing like they used to."

(On if he had to talk to his players to trust the process of the trade with DE Khalil Mack)

"No, I had talked to our players. I did tell our players after we made the trade. My door is always open, if they want to come up and talk about why we did what we did. Everything we do here is for the betterment of the Oakland Raiders. Last time I was here, we traded (Former Raiders DT) Chester McGlockton, our best defensive lineman to the Kansas City Chiefs for crying out loud – people thought we were nuts. Then, the next year, I think we let go (Former Raiders QB) Jeff George who won an AFC passing title and we brought in (Former Raiders QB) Rich Gannon, a backup and people thought we were nuts. We did what we felt was in the best interest of the Raiders and putting this team back together and getting it ready for the future. No decisions are ever easy – that was a tough one. We didn't want to lose him, but we had our reasons and here we are today."