

# Las Vegas Raiders Media Conference

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Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

## Antonio Pierce

Press Conference



Raiders 19, Jaguars 14

### Q. How are you feeling about this win afterwards?

ANTONIO PIERCE: Long overdue. Good. Good to see all those smiling faces from our players, our staff, everybody involved in the organization. Obviously you don't want to go through what we went through over the last 10 weeks, but that's behind us. I thought it was a great win, great job by our home crowd. I thought they were very loud, active. That was positive. For our defense especially in certain situations, I thought it was very efficient by our team.

Very proud of this group, being resilient, blocking out the outside noise and playing for one another.

### Q. Whether it was rookies like Brock or Wiley veterans like Ameer, everybody was involved, and this was quite a team win. Would you discuss that part of it, please?

ANTONIO PIERCE: Yeah, I'm glad you said that. I thought this was a -- again, we've had the win in Baltimore, and I thought that was a big win. But from a team standpoint where you needed everybody in every aspect to really step up, don't matter if it's their first game being active, Aidan coming back, all these guys poured their hearts into it.

What I loved about it, throughout the ups and downs of the game, just very positive, man, and you could see them celebrating with one another. The joy they have just watching one another, that's what it's always been about, and it was good to put it on display with the win.

### Q. All that said, Brock Bowers is a guy that you dialed into him big time today, especially down the stretch. To have a rookie that's able to respond in that way when you say we're going to put it on your shoulders here for a little bit and he's able to respond and do that, what does that say about him?

ANTONIO PIERCE: Yeah, I've said it from the jump. He's all ball. He's all business. He doesn't blink. He doesn't flinch. He wants to win. Whatever it takes to win, if it's throwing him the ball or him blocking, he'll do whatever it takes.

Again, I'm just proud of his effort. I'm proud of our team effort. Everybody just understanding whatever it takes to win, we need to do it.

### Q. Antonio, Ameer Abdullah, a 10-year vet, been playing really well the last couple weeks. He's also stepped up in the locker room, talking to the offense. This is his most rushing yards since 2017. How much has he meant to the team as of late?

ANTONIO PIERCE: I'll just say this, man. You come in as a special teams player, you're older, you've got a young team, and you kind of get lost in the shuffle. One thing he's done is made the most of his opportunities, and with the season the way it's gone with the running backs in and out, I thought he came up huge tonight for us.

It's just not on offense. You look at what he does on special teams. With a team that's not loaded with a bunch of veterans, to have that presence, to have somebody that's unselfish and sometimes has to take a step back and then when his name is called on to make the plays like he did tonight was huge. Again, just like when Hondo asked earlier all three men were needed tonight.

### Q. Aidan made some plays with his legs today. What did you see from Aidan as far as his capability?

ANTONIO PIERCE: I was shocked just like you. It was good to see. I'd like to see more of it.

### Q. McMahon and his special teams responded so well from what happened. Will you just talk about his coaching and how this team responded to that this week?

ANTONIO PIERCE: Yeah, it started on Wednesday when I went into the team meeting and I just told those guys



we're better than that. Understanding I believe in him, he's a great coach, we've got some great specialists in Daniel and AJ and those guys that play special teams.

You put that behind us, you move forward, young guys learn from it, make some personnel decisions, some changes, and guys go out there and battle, and it's a new week. I thought they did a good job of responding.

**Q. I know that you do not like to make things about you, but tonight you were running up and down the sidelines with Jenk and other guys. For you personally, just the man, what did this win mean to AP?**

ANTONIO PIERCE: Yeah, it was good just to stop talking about losing. It's all about winning. That was the song we were playing when we walked through the locker room. It's always a good feeling because you put in all this work, and to have repeated losses and then put that to the side and just watch the team's victory. What these guys are playing for, all this BS noise on the outside, like I told those gentlemen in there, it's all about us. It doesn't matter about the outside noise.

**Q. For the part of Raider Nation that is focused on the first overall draft pick conversation, what is your response to them?**

ANTONIO PIERCE: Talk to Thompson. Let's go.

**Q. Pola-Mao had two forced fumbles. What did you see from your defense? A lot of guys have come back and bounced back.**

ANTONIO PIERCE: Yeah, Isaiah has been just -- since he stepped in for Marcus, I think he's done an outstanding job, one, with the communication, picking that up, understanding his role, and then to be honest, last several weeks just making plays. I thought today just the physicality. None of those were punch-outs. He put his hat on the ball, right, the physicality, the way we talked about playing here, ill intent, violence. That showed up today. I thought our team, our defense really rallied around it. I thought really good job in the running game, being stout, making them one-dimensional, and then obviously putting it in the quarterback's hands which we thought would play in our favor.

**Q. No part of your team has been hurt more than the defensive line, but this is kind of the second straight week where despite it all, they still come to play.**

ANTONIO PIERCE: Yeah, Robby Leonard, Andre Carter has done an outstanding job with that group. A lot of pride

and professionalism in that group. KC, again, almost had an interception again. These guys, Tyree Wilson coming up with a big pressure down the road, and all those young D-tackles that we got, they're just constantly stepping up each and every week, working, grinding, and like we've talked about before, taking advantage of opportunities.

**Q. What was your initial message to your team after this win?**

ANTONIO PIERCE: Just a big smile.

**Q. You talked about Aidan's willingness and ability to extend plays tonight. How big was that 3rd and 3 where he escaped pressure and lofted it up to Ameer and was able to get down with the 1st down?**

ANTONIO PIERCE: Yeah, I don't know what got into Aidan tonight, but whatever he ate, Wheaties or cereal or whatever little snack he had, he needs to do it again. He was moving way more than I've ever seen. I think you guys can attest to that, as well.

I think that's just the determination that this guy and his team had today to get a win.

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