



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Head Coach Jack Del Rio

Opening Statement: “Back at work. Back in pads. It was great to see Bruce [Irvin] and Mario [Edwards Jr.]. I guess the answer to the other day, you asked me about [Amari Cooper] ‘Coop,’ was yes. There you go. It was a good practice, working some situations, I think you saw that. Some moving the ball, little bit of two-minute, things we’ll hit on throughout camp. Much better day today. I thought coming back from an off day, I thought the guys were focused, zeroed in and a whole lot better. That’s the way we need to work to be a good football team.”

Q: How much of being crisp today has to do with the players being in football shape?

Coach Del Rio: “There’s a lot of different things you can talk about, but to me it’s what we want to see. Just pushing forward, being sure that we’ve set a standard that we’re going to come out here and put in really good work to become a really good football team. Much better today.”

Q: Is it nice to see the defense push back some today against the offense?

Coach Del Rio: “Training camp football, one side or the other, when you’re a team, the Raiders are going to be good either way, but yeah it’s good to see. We got an offense that’s probably ahead in terms of cohesiveness and healthy players out there. But, I think our defense is going to be pretty good this year. I think you’re seeing some of those signs. There are a lot of positives in-between and to me, I like the way the group’s working. There’s good competition but we’re learning how to practice against each other. It’s tough because you don’t play the Raiders on Sunday. But there’s a lot of work you have to get in, a lot of things that need to be sorted out, so you have to challenge each other, you have to compete at the highest level, yet pull back and take care of your teammates.”

Q: Do you gauge yourself based on where the team was at this point last season?

Coach Del Rio: “No, I come out every day and try to get everything I can out of our guys. Then we’ll go in and recover. Then come back and do it again tomorrow. That gives us a chance to grow. So it’s a process. It’s like climbing a mountain. A lot of different ways it’s been described. When you start a season, you start at the bottom of the mountain. It’s the beginning of a marathon race. It’s a long climb, it’s a long race. We just have to be the team that comes out and takes care of business consistently, day in and day out. That’s how you really make growth. That’s how you really make progress. Those are the types of things that we’re striving to have happen here.”

Q: As it sits now with tackle rotation reps, it seems like certain guys who might just work with the ones are working with the threes, a guy who might be working with the twos, working with the threes to fill out the reps at that spot because of the situation.

Coach Del Rio: “I’ve adjusted and cut out some of the third-team reps. Whether it was maybe a little short where the second guys is going to take the second and the third group. We’re managing that the best we can. This is a time of year when you can really do that. What we’re able to do right now is look at a lot of different combinations, which helps our depth develop and our versatility with guys being able to cross train at different positions. That’s all part of what we’re doing right now.”

Q: What do you like about Cory James on the outside versus the inside?

Coach Del Rio: “He’s played the two inside spots, whether it’s Mike or Will, he’s played both of those spots all of last year and all throughout the spring. It’s not really anything unusual for him. He’s been reping at it. He’s learned both. He knows both. I like Cory.”



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Q: Do you like him better at one or the other?

Coach Del Rio: "I like the way he's developing. You know he was a guy that in college, played all over the place and played on the end of the line a lot. He's really learning how to be an inside linebacker and the reads and the keys and the fundamentals to play that position. I think he's doing a nice job with his development there."

Q: Do you anticipate this group of tight ends being more active in the passing game?

Coach Del Rio: "Well, certainly I feel like the tight end position for the first couple of years, we had a hard time slowing down the other guys' tight end. Then we haven't really got our tight end position going as much as I'd like. I think we've really addressed that. I think you're going to see a team that can utilize the tight end position more in their offensive plan and attack. I think Jared Cook opens up a lot of possibilities and Clive [Walford] being in much better shape and healthier than he's been, probably in a while, helps. Adding a guy like Obi [Melifonwu] to the mix and the length he has and his ability to cover, we feel like we now have a weapon at tight end as well and we have a guy that can help us cover those tight ends a little bit. That's what you're trying to do is grow as a team and be a little better as a team. I feel like that's a scenario that we've addressed."

Q: Elijah Hood seems like a guy who's been getting a little more physical at practice. What have you seen from him so far?

Coach Del Rio: "He's a young man that gives everything he has. He's a bright guy. He'll learn to get behind his pads a little bit but he should be a physical player. We'll see. It's early in camp, but there are some good things."

Q: Do you have any initial impressions of EJ Manuel and Connor Cook thus far?

Coach Del Rio: "I think both guys are developing. It's a really good competition. I think our offensive staff has done a real good job of managing that whole process. There's really nothing to report on right now. They're both getting a lot of reps and alternating who is with the twos and who is with the threes. Obviously at some point we'll need to settle on that, but right now we are just sharing the work and they're both doing well. They're both showing signs of doing the things that we need them to do."

Q: Is it good to see the physicality of David Sharpe, where he left practice for a little bit and was able to reenter?

Coach Del Rio: "No question, because when you're in the trenches, you're going to have some bumps and bruises. That's part of playing in the National Football League. It was good to see. He bounced back and was able to finish and get some good work in right there at the end. Definitely happy to see that."

DE Mario Edwards Jr.

Q: How did it feel to be back out there?

Edwards Jr.: "It felt good, felt good being back out there."

Q: How important for you is it to string together practices right now?

Edwards Jr.: "It's big. Staying healthy is pretty big for me, but I am back, so I am ready to play."

Q: You seem like you're in tune with your body and when you're ready to go, right?

Edwards Jr.: "[Yeah]."

Q: What are the keys for you, knowing when you're physically ready to take the grind?

Edwards Jr.: "It's just like anybody. You know when you're ready to go, you know how you feel. When I'm ready to go, I'm ready."



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Q: How frustrating was it to not be out here on the first day of camp?

Edwards Jr.: "Not too frustrating. I knew I wasn't going before I got here, so I was just going with the process and doing what I needed to do to get back 100 percent ready."

Q: You knew that it was going to be a short break?

Edwards Jr.: "[Yeah]."

Q: How tough has it been for you because of all the expectations and it seems like there is always some hurdle for you?

Edwards Jr.: "I don't get it too high with the high, too low with the low. I stay pretty even-stein. It's an obstacle, but I'll get over it. I'm ready to go."

Q: There are a lot of people on this team that say that you will make this a better defense. Is that something that you believe?

Edwards Jr.: "Definitely. I believe that. We have a great guys that we drafted this year as well, so the great thing about it is you don't just pinpoint Bruce [Irvin], [Khalil] Mack, me or any of the guys. We have new guys that we can rotate. I agree with what the coach is saying, but we also have guys that can rotate in as well."

Q: Have you seen anything from Eddie Vanderdoes?

Edwards Jr.: "Oh, yeah. He's a hell of a player. He's really strong, has good hands. He is going to make some noise this year."

Q: What did you miss most about football when you were off the field?

Edwards Jr.: "Just camaraderie, really. Just being around the players. I knew I'd be back, so it was just more so being around my teammates."

Q: Is there a spark with you and Bruce Irvin returning to practice today at the same time?

Edwards Jr.: "We talked a little trash coming on the field today, but we knew that we would be back. It was fun."

Q: It seems like the Raiders are going to move you inside more in passing situations this year. How do you like that and how does that fit into your game?

Edwards Jr.: "I'm a defensive lineman. I don't pinpoint myself at one particular position. I feel like you can put me wherever you want me to play, and I can make it happen."