



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Head Coach Jack Del Rio

Opening Statement: “Physical, tough game last night, or yesterday. Certainly was exciting. It was physical, but it was highly entertaining. It had to be. I think one of the things I really love about the NFL is the extreme highs and lows and we got a good dose of those yesterday. Always best when you finish with a win, when you get more points than the other guy and you get to feel good about the day’s work and all that went into it. Just so proud of our guys. We continue to find ways to win and that’s what it’s all about. It comes down to winning football games. We’re stacking up wins right now and we need to continue to do that going forward. Really, really proud of our guys. Questions?”

Q: Did you get a vibe from the crowd?

Coach Del Rio: “I absolutely did. Preparing for the game and talking with the production crew, I was asked about that because as you get going and the crowd knows that you’re getting it going, they know you’re having that kind of year, the roar kind of picks up. Right now, there’s a definite roar there at home for us and it’s awesome. The crowd has been awesome all along. The last two years, the two years I’ve been here, they’ve been great. It’s really picking up now. They’re really into it. They can sense we have a good team and we’re doing good things and the guys are playing hard and playing tough and I think they appreciate it and we appreciate them.”

Q: Has ‘by any means’ become and unofficial moto of the team?

Coach Del Rio: “Yeah, we’ve got a couple, you know? Whatever it takes and by any means. I think that’s Khalil’s [Mack] favorite. I’ve even borrowed it a couple of times. It rubs off. You like it, right? It makes sense because whatever we have to do, by any means. It’s awesome. That’s really been what we’ve been about. We’ve been very diligent, very purposeful. Guys are battling to the end and finding a way. They’re making plays.”

Q: Do you see that you’re better in the fourth quarter because the team is making good adjustments late in games?

Coach Del Rio: “Well, I think that’s all part of the process that we go through. I think it’s really healthy, really strong. I think the relationship that Derek [Carr] has with [quarterbacks coach] Todd [Downing] and with [offensive coordinator] Bill [Musgrave] and the way they’ve put it together and take his input and gather information as we go through the game. Having a veteran like ‘Crab’ [Michael Crabtree], he sees things. He’ll relate that information to us. A coach like [offensive line coach] Mike Tice, that helps keep him protected, it all adds up into it, but yeah. I do believe that’s an advantage for us to do it well and do it better. That’s one of the areas where we’ve grown from last year to this year. I think it’s smoother and maybe more confident. I think there’s a level of trust that’s been built and that is a part of what we do.”

Q: How do you teach learning how to win?

Coach Del Rio: “I think you do the things that we’ve been doing, which is you want to teach situational awareness. You want to make sure that we have the basic fundamentals that we’re going to need to rely on and we harp on those, that we have the plays that we need to get to and that we’ve been able to take reps at them and understand the things they’re going to do and how they’d counter it and what our answers are. It’s really about having answers and then it’s about the execution when you get to that moment. I think having the turns in the system and having the repetitions, practicing it and perfecting it, I think that really goes a long way.”

Q: What does Derek Carr returning and playing injured do for his reputation in the locker room?

Coach Del Rio: “Probably just adds to it. I don’t think there’s any question, really, about his willingness to work and prepare and sacrifice and to give it up for his team. I think much like ‘Crab’ last year in a couple of games where he fought his way back into the game with an ankle or whatever it is. [Charles] Woodson last year kind of showed the guys what it looked like to fight through pain and whatever it takes to help the team. It was awesome. I think the team really got a lift from it. That’s all good stuff. To comeback like that, put the glove on and lead us down and get a big win like that, that was good stuff.”



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Q: Did you know Derek Carr was OK when he ripped a pass to Clive Walford upon his return?

Coach Del Rio: "Yeah, you were wondering how it was going to go, you know, when he first got back out there and he settled in and started firing away."

Q: Was it a dislocation?

Coach Del Rio: "I'm not a medical guy. I know that he had banged it pretty good and he went in and made sure it wasn't broken. So, he was able to return and we elected to go from shotgun the rest of the day, which made taking the kneel-down a little tough, giving up four or five yards a crack. I think he's going to be OK. He was able to come and finish, which was big and I think he's going to be fine. So, we'll see how the week goes."

Q: Did being in shotgun contribute to passing on the last scoring drive?

Coach Del Rio: "Not really, no. We were playing aggressively to get a touchdown. You only get second-guessed when things don't go well. We hit it there and it's going to be aggressively going and getting a score, but you don't, you're going to face that kind of question about, 'Why didn't you run it there?' Well, we chose to pass it there, that's why. (*laughter*) Bottom line is we held them, we get the win and we did it aggressively in every way you could."

Q: Was it nice to see Walford come up big in a big moment?

Coach Del Rio: "Yeah, yeah he did a nice job. I thought that third-down catch was really good and that window was a little tighter than we would like it to be, but he made a great catch on that, concentrated on that ball there on third down that was big and then the very next play, hooked up in the end zone. Nice play, it was awesome."

Q: Have you seen strides of improvement from Walford throughout the season?

Coach Del Rio: "Yeah, I mean Clive's gaining confidence. Derek's gaining confidence in him. I think you see the number of people that Derek uses. He builds that confidence during the week in the way they practice. I think guys recognize that, run a little harder, get open, protect him during the week, I think it leads to opportunities during the ball game for them. I think they understand that."

Q: How can what they're doing now late in games help contribute when the games become bigger down the road and the playoffs approach?

Coach Del Rio: "I think the biggest thing from that standpoint is to continue to do what we do. What that is really, is you take it game by game, day by day with that process that you go through. And so right now, today, this is the day that guys are banged up will come in, we begin to recover from the game, the staff will turn our attention forwards, start game planning and dial in the preparation and then you do it again. That's what you do, and that's where all of our energy has to go. It's great for the fans out there and I know you're talking to the fans for us, which is great, but for us as a team, coaching and playing and what we have to do is just get back to the nuts and bolts of the preparation, who's coming in next, what they're good at, strengths and weaknesses and all those things. And really, immerse ourselves in the game plan and get our bodies ready to go. There's going to be a few guys banged up late in the year and you're going to have to shuffle the lineup some – we did yesterday – and then go compete. That's what allows you to have a chance to be good each and every week and that's what we're after."

Q: You mentioned last week that during the bye, you started prepping for Carolina. Was there also some prep work done for this stretch, with three of the last five games being on the road with a divisional opponent?

Coach Del Rio: "We've mapped out the season. We have a plan on how we're going about it. I don't know if I just slipped up a little bit and gave you more information than I intended, but we've got a plan for how we're going to attack all of our opponents, how we're going to prepare for them, where we're going to allocate time and energy. We did spend a little bit of extra time, prior to the short week, on Carolina, knowing we were going to have a short week. That probably lends itself to maybe that occurred on another team that we may face on a short week. But



Oakland Raiders Transcript

right now, everything we're doing is all about Buffalo. From here on, it's all about Buffalo leading up to this weekend."

Q: I know you have to wait for the medical people to clear him, but do you still expect Mario Edwards Jr. back this season?

Coach Del Rio: "Yeah, I do. But, until he gets cleared it's just kind of wait and see."

Q: You have talked before about how when you were in Jacksonville, your penalty total was miniscule. Now you're 9-2 and have a lot of them. How much do they matter?

Coach Del Rio: "They matter. We work on it. We believe it's important. But we're not going to stress out about it. Part of that is, it might take a while for the league and the referees to understand that what you grew up watching and some of the rule-breaking that this franchise was proud of at one point, that's not how we're doing things. We are a disciplined team. We like the toughness part and the physicality, and the free spirits and all those kinds of things. We want people to be themselves, but we're going to have discipline. We do. We have a good group of guys and they care and I think as people continue to see us play and play well and be a good football team and do things the right way, I think that will be what we're known for and those things will disappear."

Q: How do you approach a guy like DJ Hayden, who is a better player this year because he's more aggressive but he's getting more penalties because he's aggressive? How do you straddle that line with him?

Coach Del Rio: "Yeah, keep being aggressive. We want him to be aggressive and compete. I think he's done that and he's had a pretty solid year for us."

Q: Any updates on his hamstring? Is that going to keep him out awhile?

Coach Del Rio: "I'm not going to speculate on it."

Q: Khalil Mack played every snap...

Coach Del Rio: "He and Bruce [Irvin] both."

Q: To have those guys be productive late in games, why do you think they've been able to weather such a heavy snap count and deal with the extra attention?

Coach Del Rio: "I think their conditioning, the work they put in has been a large part of that. I think, ideally, I'd like to see us substitute them a little bit throughout the game. Yesterday, actually, there were a couple of occasions I asked for it, and they were like, 'We're not coming out, coach. We're good, and we're going to win this game.' So, I was like, 'Alright.' And then they were effective. I think that's the biggest thing – as long as they remain effective. They're tolerating the workload. We'd like to have our best players on the field every snap. Later in the year, when the weather is not a big factor, I think you can play a little bit longer than you can when you're coming out early fall, late summer when it's really, really hot out there. I think you have to spell guys in the trenches. I think you have a chance to play a little bit longer as the weather cools."

Q: On that last play, it seemed like Carolina had three guys assigned to Khalil Mack. What did you see on that last play?

Coach Del Rio: "Great desire. He just collapsed that tackle, really nullified the chip just by powering that guy and took the ball away and then recovered it. It was a great play. That was a great play right before halftime when he reached up. It was like the reflexes, like a tiger playing with a ball. Somebody threw a ball, he just snatched it and goes in and scores and jumps rather easily. I know I couldn't get halfway up that wall. He jumped into The Black Hole. That was pretty cool."

Q: Was David Amerson a game-time thing?

Coach Del Rio: "We were hoping he'd be able to go. There was a question there and we just elected to give him a little more rest and hopefully get him back this week."