



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Head Coach Jack Del Rio

Opening Statement: “Alright, ready to roll. It’s obviously opening game, opening weekend; very exciting time in the league [for] each team. You go through the offseason and you look for ways to make your football team better. Opening days are always very exciting. Great opportunity to go out and express who we are and what we stand for, what we believe in and how we’re going to play football in 2016. We got an obvious reminder of last year when despite all those intentions, we went out and didn’t really play well to start the year. We collected ourselves and we had a solid year, but clearly we’d like to start 2016 a little better than we did 2015. Anyways, questions?”

Q: Sounds like you reminded the players of how you opened last year.

Coach Del Rio: “No, not really. I didn’t really focus on it. We’re really all about us and now. It’s just a little talking point for you.” *(laughing)*

Q: Reggie Nelson is a team captain in his first year. What kind of impact has he had on this locker room so far?

Coach Del Rio: “I think really if you look at our group there, it’s four guys that are all young. Khalil [Mack] and Derek [Carr] have been playing well, but they’re still really young players. Then Rodney [Hudson], it’s his second year with the team and Reggie’s first year. I think what you’re seeing in our team is that, it’s team vote, the players vote on it. I think they recognize the consistency, the professionalism that those guys have exhibited. A little tongue tied there. *(laughing)* The bottom line is, it’s exactly what we’re looking for is leadership to take a strong step forward and show the way and do it not only with your actions but also lead and lead other people. I think all of those guys have done that where they’ve done it themselves professionally and they’ve also touched teammates and helped them be better. I think in Reggie’s case, as a senior guy in the secondary, he has a calming demeanor about him. Really professional in the meetings and practices and taking charge and making guys accountable, making guys want to communicate with each other. I think those are real positive things for us.”

Q: With the way Reggie Nelson has been playing so far, is he good to go on Sunday?

Coach Del Rio: “Yeah. Yeah.”

Q: What’s the dynamic like starting the season on the road and dealing with the road noise?

Coach Del Rio: “Well, dynamic is that all the hype kind of goes away after that first time that you hit somebody. For us, we just want to settle in and play good football. We’re completing our preparation. We’ve been working on this game for a while, as I’m sure they have. Both teams come into opening day with a lot of preparation. You just want to settle in and start playing really good football. Play one would be just fine for me.”

Q: Is there something psychology with it being the first game and wanting to get it under your belt?

Coach Del Rio: “There can be. There can be. At the end of the day, it is one game, but I think there can be. Certainly, football is a very emotional sport. I think teams can get hot and get feeling good about the way they’re doing things and it can go the other. I think that’s what you... You want to build a team that’s very consistent in its approach and kind of flatten out those things and not really try to play on pure emotion, but try to play on preparation and effort and go out there and compete every play.”

Q: Can this be one of those “let’s see where we stand” type of games going against a tough Saints team that plays well at home?

Coach Del Rio: “Well there’s no question that each team this weekend, all across the league, it’s going to be, ‘Let’s see where we stand after one week.’ The idea is to be standing with a victory after one week. That’s why these opening days are so exciting. Everybody has a kind of a clean slate, a fresh start and an opportunity to make this season what they’re all about.”



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Q: Have you had to speak to your players about how to handle the talk about where the franchise's future and where it might be going and how to set that aside or address it?

Coach Del Rio: "No."

Q: How are you handling it?

Coach Del Rio: "The way I handle it is I say the same thing that I've said all of last year and I'll say it again this year, we're focused on the here and now. We're going to be present. Let's kind of be where our feet are. Let's control the things we control. I think that's how I've approached it. So, we don't spend a lot of time talking about anything outside of the New Orleans Saints. These are the things they like. These are the players and their strengths and weaknesses. Alright, this is our football team. We're going to play this football team and that's what it's all about."

Q: So the topic never comes up in coaches meeting? What would you do if it did come up?

Coach Del Rio: "I would say what I'm saying right now. Not much. There's not much to talk about."

Q: What are the tangible benefits you see of having the entire coaching staff return for its second year?

Coach Del Rio: "When you return a staff, you have cohesiveness, you have a group that worked together for a year. We went through the end of the season kind of, 'Hey, these are things that we can do better next year.' In our relations, in how we communicate with one another and how we utilize a talent that we know we have, that we've uncovered him this year. It's an ongoing process. It's a people business. I think the time and the relationships are important. We work hard at the relationships and I think having that and having that with our staff and having this staff with the players, I think there is value in it. Now we just want to see that reflected in the win total at the end of the year. I do believe there's value in it."

Q: What factored into the decision to put Nate Allen at the top of the depth chart?

Coach Del Rio: "Obviously, that's a natural question, a depth chart question, especially at the start of the year. I think for us, it's all about competition. Guys competing and then you basically get what you earn. We like the way Karl [Joseph] is working. Anybody that's not starting right now that's on our team, we like the way they're working. We're going to play guys. We're going to play a lot of people. So, everybody's prepared. Everybody is ready to play. We'll just let it unfold. [Senior Director of Media Relations] Will [Kiss] makes me. I mean, heck, [Saints Head Coach] Sean [Payton] doesn't even have a depth chart out yet and Will has got me having one out, so we're going to talk about it today. *(laughing)* Sean's not talking about it at his press conference right now because he doesn't have one." *(laughing)*

Q: With the Saints having a guy like Drew Brees, does it help having Nate Allen, who's been in that position already and maybe thinks a little bit quicker?

Coach Del Rio: "Well, look we had a good offseason. We're prepared. I wouldn't put it on any one player. As a football team, we'll get ready to slow down their football team. Obviously, we know it's a great challenge. [They're] a prolific offense, one of the top, one of the elite quarterbacks in the league. We know we've got our work cut out for us, but we'll see who we have up this week."

Q: Do you have any personal memories in the Superdome?

Coach Del Rio: "I remember spiking the ball so hard after I scored a touchdown that I fell back. *(laughing)* It was a great moment and then it was an embarrassing moment."

Q: Fumble recovery or interception?

Coach Del Rio: "It was a fumble recovery that I scooped and scored a touchdown on. I slammed it down and couldn't keep my balance. [I] went down on both knees and just went, 'Yeah!'"



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Q: How unique is that place in terms of a home field advantage?

Coach Del Rio: "It gets rocking. Really all home crowds are as loud as the visiting team lets them be. It's a challenge to go in and play in crowd noise. The better we play, the less crowd noise we'll have to face. It's on us to go in and play good football and try to get them to not be as loud."

Q: Is there any urgency to add that 53rd man? Or are you just being patient with that?

Coach Del Rio: "Yeah, [General Manager] Reggie [McKenzie] and I have talked about that. We have a plan and we just have to let it unfold."

Q: What did you like about Antonio Hamilton?

Coach Del Rio: "Good size, good speed, strength, competitiveness, intelligence. I think, we're going to talk about injuries now, he strained a hamstring at a pivotal point in camp, but we really felt like he was coming along and really felt like he was a young player that deserved a spot. That's why he's here."

Q: What's Taiwan Jones' role going forward?

Coach Del Rio: "Well, we know what we have in Taiwan and we're anxious to let him do his thing. He's a special teams ace. He's a gifted return guy. He's an explosive weapon for us on offense. We like Taiwan. We know what we have there. We really spent more time kind of learning about some of our young backs and other players and less time with Taiwan."

Q: What went into the decision to put Mario Edwards Jr. on IR?

Coach Del Rio: "Well, it's just a matter of timing. The best thing for him is to be completely healed when we get him back. There's a chance that a month and a half from now he's going to be saying, 'Hey, I'm ready to go.' There might be a game or two that he might have been ready, but it was the decision we felt was sound and solid."

QB Derek Carr

Q: How do you feel about the chess match between you and defensive coordinator Dennis Allen?

Carr: "First of all, I'm so thankful for [defensive coordinator] coach [Dennis] Allen, because he gave me my first chance. Obviously, he's not going to be rooting for me this week, but I just wanted to say that, that I was thankful. And he knows that, I've expressed it to him, how thankful I am that he not only gave me a chance to play in the NFL but give me a chance to start and trust in me for that. For that, I appreciate him very much, but I don't think we're going to be rooting for each other this week. Anytime but this week, I think the world of him. But as a coach, he's very smart. He's obviously going to bring some exotic stuff and all those things. You try and prepare for things that maybe he hasn't even shown. I know him, he loves his defense. It's his baby. I know that he'll try and maybe do some unscouted look, you never know. So you have to prepare for everything, while at the same time just preparing your normal way throughout the week."

Q: Is it weird preparing against a guy who knows your weaknesses as well as your strengths?

Carr: "Of course, yeah. Two years makes a lot of difference. I had some definite weaknesses my rookie year that I had to work on and hopefully I've gotten better at those. But, you know, like you said, he did give me my chance. For that, I am grateful and I'm very thankful for him. I root for him all the time, just not this week."

Q: Does it help that you know some of his tendencies?

Carr: "You know, you try and remember things, but two years it a long time. He knows that we were all around each other for a long time. Again, it's a big chess game. It really is. You just go out there, you know your rules, you know what the coaches are telling you and you just try and perform to what your coaches are telling you to the best of your abilities."



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Q: How do you keep the magnitude for this game from being too big?

Carr: "It's easy man, because last year [it was] the same thing. There's starting to get a little excitement, there's starting to be this [and that]. We got so excited and ready to play and we just got, I don't know if over the top is the right word, but we did in that first game. I just remember we came back after that game, turned the film on and we just had to take a deep breath. This year, it's just like we're all going to work. It feels like the feeling preparing for this game is like a feeling we had during last year midseason. That's how it feels. We're preparing, we know that we have a great test ahead of us in New Orleans. They're a Super Bowl team not too long ago, my goodness. They have a Hall of Fame quarterback, they have great young players on defense. So, you know what they have, now we're just preparing for them. It's not like, 'We have to do this and...' It's none of that. We're just playing football, man. We're preparing the way our coaches have taught us and we just want to go out there and play clean, solid football."

Q: With Drew Brees being a quarterback you watched growing up, how much of an influence was he on you?

Carr: "Yeah, oh yeah. Especially you know, because [Jaguars offensive coordinator Greg Olson] 'Oly' was with him, then I had 'Oly' my rookie year. So, I've seen plenty of cut ups on Drew Brees and things like that. 'Oly' and Drew are very tight with their time together. So, I definitely have seen him. [I'm a] huge fan, huge fan of Drew Brees. He's a Hall of Famer. He's one of the top five most accurate quarterbacks of all-time. Some of the balls that he has thrown, those are throws you dream of and he does it almost every week. I have nothing but respect for him. I think that he's definitely one of the best to ever play this game."

Q: What's it been like having Reggie Nelson around to learn from and practice against?

Carr: "If you had to replace Charles Woodson, he's the guy you'd want to do it with. He's someone who's a leader on and off the field. He has no problem getting into anybody's face on the field, while at the same time two seconds later those same guys will listen to him and joke with him. That's a fine line that's hard to get and he has it. He has that about him. On top of all that, he's a really good football player. I think he led the league, maybe, in interceptions, or he was up there at least. We all know his talents. I joked with him just like I did with 'C-Wood,' I said, 'Hey man, back in the day I was a big fan of yours back in college.' (*laughter*) He laughs. I give him a hard time, but he's a great player. But not only that, he's a great person. Add that he's a teammate of mine and not chasing me around like he did Week 1 last year."

Q: How has the continuity between you and the same coaching staff helped you?

Carr: "When you can do that, it makes the world of a difference. I've talked to people that are in systems for their whole careers and they say like out of just the people they play, all the things, they say one of the most things they're thankful for is being in the same system all those years. I see why, I see why having the same coaches around, I see why being in the same system means so much. This is the first time I'm getting to do that. You know, there was a time in 12 months I had three head coaches. Now, it's nice to have the same system, same terminology. Now we can grow off of that in the offseason. But, there's not a number you can put on that, because as a player it just gives us so much familiarity that we can just go out there on the football field and just play. You don't have to think too much. You're just out there playing and that makes it really nice."

Q: How has the team's possible move come into your life?

Carr: "Not at all."

Q: Your family must talk about it...

Carr: "No, my wife doesn't talk about it."

Q: Have you instructed your family not to bring it up?

Carr: "No, I don't tell them what to do. She tells me what to do, she just doesn't talk about it." (*laughing*)



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Q: When's the last time you have been to Las Vegas?

Carr: "I don't even know. Maybe the bowl game my senior year. Yeah."

Q: From a quarterback's perspective, do you enjoy playing in loud environments such as the Superdome?

Carr: "Oh yeah, I was just talking about this, I love playing with the noise. I really do, because then you don't have to hear anything else. There's not all these side conversations or this or that. You're just in your own zone, you're going through your own process. I really, I love it. I love it. I enjoy the heck out of playing in other people's stadiums because there's so much noise and so much going on, the only thing that hinders is obviously communication. But you have ways to get around that and ways you go about that. But, besides that, I honestly love playing, the louder the better, because I really like enjoying just having that 'you're there by yourself' mentality when you have all of that noise."

Q: Is there anything more satisfying than quieting one of those crowds?

Carr: "No, that's always good. That's always good. You hope to do that, but it's going to be a tough task in New Orleans."

Q: Does it help to have wide outs that you've worked with for a couple years when you're not able to verbally communicate inside the noisy stadiums?

Carr: "Oh yes, yeah. Absolutely. To answer it the easiest way, yes. Yeah, you're exactly right. You said it better than I could. *(laughter)* You're exactly right. It helps so much. Like today, we had a little noise for the walk-through and all of that, and I can look at even Donald Penn, and I'm making a check at the line and I am just look at him and kind of nod and he knows what I'm already saying. It's things like that, not only just with the system, but with the same players, it really helps."

Q: When were you able to develop that type of chemistry with Amari Cooper and Michael Crabtree?

Carr: "Yeah, there was a time last year. Man, I'm trying to think, I don't really remember the week, there's so many of them. *(laughter)* But, there was a time when we're like, 'Man, we're starting to get each other.' There was a ball I threw to 'Crab' [Michael Crabtree] that we had been working on so much, and it worked and it finally clicked for us. Then there was one I threw to Amari [Cooper] and that clicked. Then, obviously having the offseason which is kind of nice that I was able to do it this year, it was nice to work on things, especially in the preseason. Now that that's over with, yeah, there were things we were just trying to do. Seeing if we could maybe fit a ball in there, try this, try that. That's a good time to do it. Sometimes it would work out and you're like, 'If we can do that, that's kind of nice.' Sometimes it didn't. But, to be able to go there with it was really nice."

Q: How important is it for the offense to go out in Week 1 and have a strong performance?

Carr: "Yeah, it's very important. Very important. We want to go out there and we've worked too hard, and so are they so they're saying the same thing. But, you work so hard and you want to go out there and put your best foot forward. But, at the same time to be completely honest with you, I don't care how it goes or how the season ends up, I just want to win. It doesn't matter about No. 4, I just want the Raiders to win."



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Saints Head Coach Sean Payton

Q: What are your impressions of the Raiders? They've gotten some offseason attention for their moves and the type of team they might have this year.

Coach Payton: "The first thing is anytime you're playing in the opening weekend of the season, you're looking at last year's team, but also the preseason games because there's been personnel changes. I think Jack [Del Rio], Reggie [McKenzie] and those guys have done a great job because you see size, you see speed, and they've got some really, really good playmakers on offense. I think the quarterback is playing awfully well. Defensively, they've added some real key pieces to what they're wanting to do. Part of the challenge in Week 1 is quickly getting acclimated to the style of play. You see enough in the preseason and yet there's always a little bit of a change and some adjustments that you have to make, especially with these early opponents."

Q: What has Dennis Allen brought to your defense? What do you think the emotions are for him, leading into this game?

Coach Payton: "I think Dennis is someone that was with us beginning in 2006 when we first got here. He obviously went on to become the head coach there in Oakland. I think the focus is really more... When you're putting together a plan during the regular season, your opening week, there are so many things that go through your mind as far as attention to detail. He's very organized. There are a lot of things that you have to be prepared for, defensively. I think really when you look at games now, you can find players from former teams, coaches from former teams and I don't think that's as big of a deal as maybe it's made out to be."

Q: Do you guys have an edge because Dennis knows Derek Carr pretty well?

Coach Payton: "I think that would be very overrated. I think hopefully we know Derek based on all the film study and all the games, just like they would know Drew [Brees]. When you get the whole season in its entirety and the preseason, you're able to see strengths and weaknesses. You're able to see arm strength, decision making, his ability to run. You're able to see a lot of those things. I don't think that factors in, really. At times, personnel overall might, when you're dealing with an entire roster but I don't think specifically, especially at starting quarterback."

Q: What are your impressions of Khalil Mack? Will it be harder to deal with him, given that they have Bruce Irvin on the other side?

Coach Payton: "Those are real good pass rushers, obviously. There's a whole body of work with Khalil in Oakland and Bruce in Seattle. We played the Seahawks a handful of times in the last four or five years. Both present issues and challenges. Both do a good job on the edge of the defense. There's no set place that you can account for, one or the other, so you have to be prepared with your plan to know that they can be on either side in the base or in the nickel."

Q: What problems does Sean Smith present to you guys?

Coach Payton: "Well, he's long. He's physical. Both of those corners, watching the tape now, are guys that really fit what they're trying to do by scheme. They've got length. There's a confidence that they have. The ball skills, all those traits that you're looking for at that corner position. They do a good job up in press coverage and challenge the receivers right off the line of scrimmage."

Q: Drew Brees has continued to put up stats year after year. Why do you think he's been able to sustain such a high level of play?

Coach Payton: "Well, he's extremely talented. His preparation, his work week, he's very detailed. He's also someone that does a great job taking care of his body, both in the offseason and in season. The nutrition, the sleep, all of the elements that go into playing that position at a high level can be challenging, especially during the length of our seasons. He's someone that pays great attention to detail."



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Q: There was a lot made of Coby Fleener and the troubles he was having. How's he doing through camp and the preseason?

Coach Payton: "He's doing well. I think anytime there's an adjustment or a change to a system... He's a guy that has exceptional speed and length. He presents a real big target for the quarterback, as someone who's pretty sudden in his routes. You try to move him around and try to create some matchups to your advantage. I think he's gotten acclimated fairly quickly, especially in the last half part of the training camp."

Saints QB Drew Brees

Q: Congratulations on the extension.

Brees: "Yeah, that was great news."

Q: What are your impressions of the Raiders with many players coming into their first year playing together?

Brees: "That's the way it is in a lot of places. Every year, teams retool in different areas. I know we had some of that going on as well. So, you spend the offseason and preseason trying to build chemistry and all of those things. From what I've seen from last year and this year, I think it's a talented group. I think that they do some things very, very well. Obviously, [defensive coordinator] Ken Norton, Jr. coming over and having his stamp on the defensive scheme and then [Head Coach] Jack Del Rio's been in the league for a long time as a defensive coach, so I think they bring a lot of expertise and having played the game as well, have a certain level of toughness. You can see that in the way the Raiders' defense plays. They've got some standout players as well. Obviously, Khalil Mack is one of the best in the business at what he does."

Q: What does Khalil Mack do that jumps out on tape when you watch him?

Brees: "He's disruptive, you know? Like, every team has to plan for him, and yet he still kind of finds ways to be around the quarterback, be around the ball. He looks like a tremendous athlete who's got great instincts and great power, just great athleticism. So, he seems to be the total package."

Q: How much of a home field advantage is it playing at the Superdome and do you think it's one of the best in the league?

Brees: "Well, I hope so. (*laughter*) I hope so on Sunday. I mean, I think we pride ourselves on that. I think our fan base prides themselves on that as well. The Who Dat Nation can get pretty loud and ruckus in the Superdome, especially when we're rolling, so, hopefully we give them a reason to celebrate."

Q: What do you see out of Derek Carr?

Brees: "I think he's extremely talented. I can't say I've seen a ton of film, but over the last two years we have had some similar opponents and so I've had a chance to watch him a little bit. I think he's, no doubt, he's as they come. He can make all the throws. He seems like a guy who loves football and loves to compete. He's played very well in some high-pressure situations. I think he's one of those guys that I look at and say, of all the young quarterbacks, he probably has the opportunity to be one of the best."

Q: What does adding Reggie Nelson do for the Raiders?

Brees: "He's played at a high level for a long time. I think he had, what nine interceptions last year? Honestly, he's played a lot of football. He's played at a high level for a long time. He led the league in interceptions last year. He's kind of a ball hawk. Just one of these guys that has great instincts and good feel for the game. So, he makes a lot of plays."