



Oakland Raiders Transcript

General Manager Reggie McKenzie

Q: Take us through how this Khalil Mack trade came about and was this something you were on board with from the start or would you say it was more Jon Gruden's decision?

McKenzie: "No, we wanted ... all of us, Gru [Gruden], myself, everybody in the organization wanted Khalil to be a Raider. I mean, that's not, that was not an issue at all. We presented him with an offer and we got that counter back, it just...and talked about it with him — when I say him, I'm talking about his representatives — and it just, what they were demanding, it just wasn't going to work at that time. We were all on board to try to jump on it early and see if we can get this thing done. And it didn't work out in the end."

Q: When did you guys present that offer to Mack's representatives and how far apart were you?

McKenzie: "Well, we weren't close. We presented that prior to the start of the league year. So it was post the start of the combine, I know it was after the start of that, between that and the start of the league year. That's when the conversations were taking place."

Q: That counteroffer, how familiar did it look to the deal that Khalil ultimately signed today? I'm sure you've seen those numbers. Is that about right?

McKenzie: "You know what, I don't want to comment on what we offered and all of that, the numbers. But I'll just say Khalil got a great deal."

Q: How much did Aaron Donald's deal this week lead to this just in terms of where the bar was going to be set for Khalil? Was that a motivating factor at all?

McKenzie: "No. No, it wasn't the motivating factor. We were worried about just trying to do a deal with Khalil. What would he be willing to take. It wasn't about Aaron Donald. It was about Khalil Mack. I don't know what his representatives were focusing on, if it was more about trying to be comparable to Aaron, it really didn't matter. At that point, we wanted to try to see what we could do for Khalil. It was about what the Raiders could do."

Q: Was there any thought given to just simply trying to get him to come in on the last year of the fifth-year option and keeping control of him with the franchise tag the next year?

McKenzie: "We just wanted to make sure we could get him in here and try to work through it and see what could happen. Franchise tag is always available, but we were wanting to see if there was any kind of way that we could get the long-term deal. We were going through a lot of things internally, figure out how we could keep him. That was...you know, you always have the availability of the franchise tag after this fifth-year option, of course."

Q: You guys never made an offer after that first offer back before the league year?

McKenzie: "You know, that's the thing, again guys, you want us to talk about negotiating a player's contract. I really, you guys know we don't really talk about the negotiation process. The bottom line is we discussed in depth about presenting a great offer, initial offer to Khalil, in hopes we could get something worked out. But it didn't happen and the counter, it was some things that just wasn't meshing with the two proposals. That made it hard to go into details, so we were just trying to figure ways we could try to get it done, but it wasn't...going to look as what Khalil wanted to do. The bottom line is, he couldn't come in, so by him not coming in, it showed us that we probably have to see what in the world's going to happen if this continues."

Q: Was that realization just something in the last couple of days that you finally realized, trade is the best option? Or is that something you had been thinking about for a while?

McKenzie: "No, my whole thought process was how to get Khalil in here. Absolutely, it was here at the end, it was in the final hour that it kind of just, it hit and it hit hard and heavy. Yes, it was not the plan to trade him at all."



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Q: What's Chris Warren's injury and when did he get injury?

McKenzie: "He's got a knee. That thing's been kind of wearing on him for a minute, so then after the game, it was just taking its toll. And that was before this last game. He just sucked it up until after we got the MRIs and all that, we said we got to go ahead and get surgery on this, try to get him well. So that's what we're going to do."

Q: What went into the Martavis Bryant move?

McKenzie: "The bottom line with the competition we had, we feel like we've got some good players, man. With Martavis, he missed some practices, a lot of practice time really, with minor ailments and guys just came in and competed. At the end of the day, we rewarded the guys who came to work every day and made plays and seemed like is going to help us in these ballgames. We just didn't see it from him at the end of the day. It's not — it made it clear that he's not going to be one of the guys we were going to be able to count on."

Q: Are you able to comment on his league standing in regards to a looming suspension?

McKenzie: "No."

Q: How many teams reached out to you about the possibility of trading (Mack) and what made the Bears offer the best one for you?

McKenzie: "Well, quite a few. I mean. It was more than half the league. A lot of teams inquired, to say the least. I wanted the opportunity to hopefully pick just based on the history of the last couple of drafts, if we could pick a little early, that would be great. We kind of narrowed it down to some of those teams that we felt would be, they'd have the opportunity to pick early in next year's draft and in the future."

Q: Are you concerned about the perception league-wide among players and maybe even in your own locker room that the Raiders won't pay top dollar to keep their best players?

McKenzie: "We will pay top dollar. It's just ways that we couldn't get around to giving Khalil what he wanted. We'll pay top dollar to our top players. We just could not get it worked out with Khalil. That's just the way it is. That's the way it went. And when it seemed like it was going that way, we seized the opportunity to go ahead and make a move with the trade. That's what it came down to. But we will be able to attract players. And you know with the contract situations with players in the locker room, I think — it's going to sting with that. That's players protecting themselves and their teammates and that's the way it should be. They're going miss Khalil. I'm going to miss Khalil. We all will miss Khalil. Let's make that point known now. We all will miss him, but ... we will all move on also. We've got to. And we're going to find a way to continue to play good football and that's just the way it goes. We're not worried about the outside perception of free agency. We will get free agents in here when it's time to do that. And we will keep our own when it's time. Sometimes you can't keep them all. It's just the way it is. Can't keep them all."

Q: You look at the Rams signing Aaron Donald and they did so with a franchise quarterback who's still in his rookie contract. You see the Bears were able to offer what they are going to sign Khalil to and they do so with a franchise quarterback who also is in his rookie contract. How much influence did it have on this situation just having a quarterback who's not in his rookie contract, who's one of the top players at his position and if you guys were to give Khalil Mack the sort of counteroffer, you have would have a very high percentage of your cash and cap spending tied to two players. How much was that part of this situation?

McKenzie: "That didn't factor in. We knew we had two great players in that draft a long time ago. We knew that this thing was coming, and we were trying to plan for this. Sometimes it just doesn't work out. So, no, that scenario did not really weigh heavily to our decision."