



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Head Coach Jack Del Rio

Opening Statement: “Good afternoon. We’ve turned our attention full speed ahead, getting prepared for Indy this weekend. So, questions?”

Q: Did you come out of yesterday’s game healthy?

Coach Del Rio: “We did.”

Q: What are some of the things you really have to guard against with the Colts?

Coach Del Rio: “Well, we’re digging in on the preparation right now for it, but obviously, Andrew Luck is a terrific quarterback. Frank Gore is a heck of a back. They have some speed at wide receiver and some tight ends that can hurt you. They have a good group. It looks like they played really, really well yesterday. They played very well on defense as well.”

Q: What factors besides Derek Carr help lead to seven fourth-quarter comebacks?

Coach Del Rio: “It’s been a collective effort, I think. The guys have stayed in the fight, and we’ve made plays at the end to give ourselves an opportunity, and in some cases, actually win the game.”

Q: What’s been the key with the defense doing so well at protecting the lead late in games?

Coach Del Rio: “Anytime you’re playing good pass defense, it’s a combination of the rush and the coverage. I think that they’ve really kind of stepped up in critical moments. The coverage has been a little better and the rush has been a little better. You add it up and it’s been able to help us come up with some key stops.”

Q: Do you focus on the offense this week after struggling against San Diego?

Coach Del Rio: “We keep rolling, but one of the things we do is look back at the past week and learn what we need to learn. Certainly, it ends up being 1-for-7 in the red zone, but in reality it’s 1-for-6. The last one being a kneel down that we’d be happy to take. But 1-for-6, we started the year scoring on 10 of our first 11, scored touchdowns on 10 of our first 11. So, we know how to do it. We know what it looks like to do it the right way. We just need to make sure that we’re executing the game plan. I’m not sure that we were able to get that done yesterday the way we want to. We’ll go back to the drawing board on that, make the corrections and then move on.”

Q: How far from a finished product is this team?

Coach Del Rio: “You’re never finished.” *(laughing)*

Q: How close is it to being a finished product?

Coach Del Rio: “We’ve seen glimpses of what we’re capable of. We want to be in constant pursuit of a perfect performance. The perfection is not really in the end result. The perfection is in the effort that you give. We’re just looking to give tremendous effort, clean up what we can, be very competitive and continue to win situations and games.”

Q: What do you think about Bruce Irvin’s overall game?

Coach Del Rio: “I saw a quote of his that said, ‘You’ve asked me about Khalil [Mack] more than you’ve asked me about me.’ He’s a proud guy. He’s brought toughness and athleticism and speed to our defense. He played great yesterday. Really stepped up in some key moments and made some big time plays for us.”

Q: How nice was it to see DeAndré Washington get back involved?

Coach Del Rio: “It was. It was good to see. He practiced really, really well and the numbers worked out where we could get him active. It carried over into the game. I thought he gave us some juice there. I think he was eager to get back out there.”



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Q: What do players with playoff experience on your roster add to the team?

Coach Del Rio: "I think guys that have been there just have that experience. They're able to share with some of the younger guys of what it's really like, how the intensity picks up, the importance of each possession picks up, but it's still a game. I think that's what they'll be able to remind them. For us, we just want to play the game. We want to be as prepared as possible in the next two opportunities in the regular season to determine what the final seeding will be. But, for us, it's one at a time. It's not going to change. We've got Indy coming in, good football team and I know they need to win and we need to win. So, it's two good teams that need to win and should be a great game."

Q: Is it easy to temper the enthusiasm because of what still lies ahead?

Coach Del Rio: "Yeah, I mean I honestly, I'm excited for the fans. To be in the playoffs, and there's been a drought here. We got here two years ago and talked about winning the division and being in the playoffs. So, the being in the playoffs part is there, the win the division is yet to be determined. So, we need to continue to work on that, let the fans enjoy the other part, but as a team, we've got to get back to work and that's really how it is whether you win or lose. You get ready for the next opportunity and that's the part we can control, that's the part we need to focus on."

Q: How have you kept the atmosphere in the locker room so calm with this much excitement outside of the building?

Coach Del Rio: "Well, what I do is I just point out the tape, you know? I refer to years of experience in this league. Every team has really talented players and coaches that have pride that are going to be putting together a plan to try and ruin your Sunday. So, I think it's so important to respect that, respect the work that goes in, respect the game and we get this opportunity to go compete and understand that we're going to get their very best. So, we prepare for that and understand that. We look at the tape, we break down the opponent the way we do each and every game. I think when you approach it that way, it gives you a much better chance to play, kind of flattened out, not have the extreme highs and lows but flatten out your performance and have solid performances."

Q: Have you heard from a lot of fans recently?

Coach Del Rio: "I did hear quite a bit. I've not been able to answer many yet because the attention has turned towards Indy already. So, I've got a little work to do later to say thank you to a bunch of people."

Q: Were you startled by the number of Raiders fans in San Diego yesterday?

Coach Del Rio: "I wasn't startled by the number that I saw yesterday only because we kind of had a little bit of a hint ahead of time that it was trending that way and there were reports that I was aware of that it was going to be close to 70% Silver and Black. So, it was awesome to see, to take over a stadium like that and a great environment for our guys to play in."

Q: You've been around the NFL a long time. Have you ever been in a situation like this in any stadium with any other team?

Coach Del Rio: "Not seen it like that, no. I think our fans travel as well as any team out there. There are some that travel well, but that was pretty impressive by the Raider Nation."

Q: Derek Carr knows the drill in terms of not discussing what is hurting him or not hurting him, but when you're taking victory formation in the shotgun snap, it seems apparent that there are still issues with that finger. Is that important to get under center at some point between now and the end of the season?

Coach Del Rio: "No, and I wouldn't draw too many conclusions from that. I think we're doing what we think is right for us and it's not that we can't or haven't, it's just that we're choosing to proceed the way we are."



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Q: Have you heard anything new about Aldon Smith?

Coach Del Rio: "Nothing new."

Q: Considering that great catch by Michael Crabtree and Derek Carr's run, you might not have won this game without replay reviews. Have you always been a fan of them?

Coach Del Rio: "I have. I believe in getting it right when you can. I'd like to see it expanded to any call that you think is important enough for your team. I've got good people that help with that decision making. We've been fortunate to be on the right side of a bunch of those."

Q: You've talked about goals, especially winning the division, since you got here. What was it that you saw when you took this job that made you believe that could happen?

Coach Del Rio: "It wasn't anything that I saw. It wasn't anything that I saw. We had a lot of work to do. It's a belief that anything is possible when you get a group of men to believe in each other and buy in and work hard. We've done that. We've added to the talent base and embraced the message and we are, I think, a very selfless team. I think the guys legitimately are most concerned with helping each other play good football and win games, and less concerned with individual playing time or individual stats."

Q: Was it a belief in Reggie McKenzie's vision?

Coach Del Rio: "A unified front gives you a chance. Having people that are on the same page is so important. That's a great place to start. From there, it was a lot of work and a lot of belief. We're not there yet. We're working on it. We're closer. That is the number one goal and the biggest reason that is the number one goal is because it guarantees you a spot in the postseason tournament. You get into that playoff tournament and anything is possible. You want to make sure you put yourself in the position to get there by winning your division first."

Q: How much would it mean to get the first-round bye?

Coach Del Rio: "For right now, honestly, it's always better to be one step closer to the ultimate goal of a championship, but right now it's about Indy. I don't want to get too far down the road of talking about two, three, four weeks from now. Let's talk about Indy. We've got Indy coming up this week. It's a good football team, well-coached, great quarterback. We'll be ready for them."

Q: Regarding the pass to Mychal Rivera where the refs ultimately decided that was an incompleteness, did that seem like a strange call to you?

Coach Del Rio: "It seems strange from my childhood days, maybe your childhood days. We played in the park, that was a catch all day. But in today's NFL, that's become an incomplete. If you're going to the ground, which he went to the ground, come up with the ball. That's really the rule as I know it. So, anytime you see a guy headed to the ground and he doesn't come up with it... Like 'Coop' had one, right? Very similar. He took a couple of steps and he actually reached out and the ball came out. You just don't get those. Those are going to be incompletes."

Q: Speaking of Amari Cooper, do you need to get him a little bit more involved, get him some more balls?

Coach Del Rio: "It'd be nice to get him a few more balls, but I think at the end of day, we want to stack up wins. I think that's most important, but I think getting your premier players involved is usually a good thing."

Q: A couple of premier college running backs have opted not to play their bowl games, one that you know. Do you have any thoughts on that at all when you're looking at players? Would that affect the way you look at somebody?

Coach Del Rio: "I have a ton of thoughts on that and [Senior Director of Media Relations] Will [Kiss] told me that you were going to ask this question today. He didn't say you specifically, and I said, 'There is no way we're going to talk about the draft right now. There is no way, Will.' So, Will, you're right. I'm wrong. *(laughter)* But I would just say that we cannot talk about underclassmen guys. I don't think we can. I'm trying to follow league protocol. How about this, if I hide behind it like this: I'll just say each young man has to make a decision of what's best for him."