



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Head Coach Jack Del Rio

Opening Statement: "A little lighter day today, intentionally. We had two really long, tough practices the last two days and we'll have two more coming in the next two days going forward. But, this being the middle of the week of a five day week, we elected to lighten it up a little bit, took them out of pads, put on the light shells and shortened things up quite a bit. So, still very important time for us, being together getting to some full speed work and I thought we handled it pretty well today."

Q: When was the decision to practice a day without pads decided?

Coach Del Rio: "Back in April, maybe May."

Q: Was Karl Joseph and Clive Walford not practicing yesterday just precautionary?

Coach Del Rio: "Well, yeah. Things that were doing are by design in terms of dealing with them, much like we did things last year with Charles Woodson. We work hard to make sure that we're working smart, doing the right things with our guys so that they can be at their best. Just continue to strengthen and just kind of preventative and make sure we don't have issues. We'll push plenty, but there are times when you need to pull back a little bit, and with individuals, it may be wise to do so. And, when that's the case, we'll do that. That's probably all I'm going to say on that. I don't like to spend a lot of time discussing our strategies and dealing with different things. But, I'm not going to lay it out there. It's pretty clear."

Q: What are your impressions of Shilique Calhoun with his new responsibilities?

Coach Del Rio: "Our guys, we try and cross train them to do multiple roles so that we have flexibility when the fall gets here. Shilique's done a nice job of being able to be a guy that can play when they're behind Khalil [Mack] or he can play in there behind Bruce [Irvin]. They're going to do both. We like them coming forward a lot, but they do have coverage responsibilities from time to time and so Shilique is learning, much like they're learning how to do both."

Q: What have you seen from Gabe Holmes' progress from last year?

Coach Del Rio: "He's a big, athletic guy, continues to develop. So, I think we're early in camp right now. I see a guy that's eager to grow, he's working hard at it. He's got soft hands, he's a big body guy, he's a smooth route runner. We think he has an upside, but it's about him and the work he puts in here and how far can he come and how fast can he get there."

Q: Would you say that Holmes was a raw product upon his arrival?

Coach Del Rio: "Yeah, I think any tight end coming in the league, especially nowadays the way there's so many spread offenses and things, they don't spend a lot of time in line blocking. That's probably the biggest thing they'd have to learn, different combination blocks, pass blocking responsibilities. Things like that, where as in college a lot of the tight ends are used almost as a fourth wide receiver and they're spread out and they're running routes. In the NFL you're going to be asked to block and do some things. He's done well with that role. He's learning that and making big progress."

Q: How does it make you feel to see Ken Stabler inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame?

Coach Del Rio: "Very, very proud for the family. Very happy, very pleased for the Raider Nation. He's one of the all-time greats to play here. He did it and then he led this team, there were great teams. I think it's long overdue and I'm just happy that it did occur. It would have sure been nice for him to be there in person, but I know the family will be able to honor him and Raider Nation will be able to honor him. We're all obviously very proud, those of us that got a chance to see him play. It was special."



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Q: Do you have any memory of an interaction with him?

Coach Del Rio: "Well I was at a fundraiser in Alabama where I bought a print of his and signed the back of it for me and he actually knew who I was, which kind of blew my mind. [I thought] 'Wait a minute, you don't know who I am?' (*laughing*). To me, just watching 'Snake' and Coach [John] Madden on the sideline, they were just so cool and calm and collected. They would talk things through on the sideline. It was just the two of them. Now it's like everybody huddles around now and is a part of it. It was just those two guys and they'd sit and kind of talk things out and then 'Snake' would go out and lead a comeback. It was just special to be able to see those things. Different era. Yeah, he was telling Kenny what plays he might want to call because Kenny was calling them. It was an altogether different era."

Q: What are your thoughts on the potential of this receiving core and the chemistry that's continuing to develop with Derek Carr?

Coach Del Rio: "Well, I love the way they're working at it. I think the communication level has gone to another level, the communication. We're really thrilled with returning that group. Seth [Roberts] took a step forward last year. 'Crab' [Michael Crabtree] reinvented himself and showed people what he's really all about. Amari [Cooper] burst on the scene and Andre [Holmes], really happy that we were able to get him back. That was a big signing. So we returned the four key guys that Derek throws to in the receiving corps. I think it's a really good group. We all expect it, with them knowing each other and the subtleties of the route running, the things they need to do that we can take advantage of it and have a big year."

WR Amari Cooper

Q: Do you feel fresher this offseason heading into camp compared to last year?

Cooper: "Yeah, I feel a lot more fresh. I was just able to focus on football and things I need to work on in the offseason, so it was a great feeling."

Q: Is route running something that you continue to focus on all the time?

Cooper: "Yeah, yeah. I'm always trying to work on my craft and perfecting my routes, just make sure I'm still quick. I'm always running routes."

Q: How is it going along being roommates with Derek Carr at camp? Do you see things translating onto the field now?

Cooper: "I mean we have a lot more time together. We have time to talk about things, talk about what we want to accomplish when we come out for practice. We have time to talk about the script because every practice is scripted. How he wants me to run certain routes. That's the biggest thing. We have more time to talk about things I would say."

Q: What's unique about him as a roommate?

Cooper: "Nah, he's a great roommate."

Q: Do you guys cook together? Eat together?

Cooper: "Yeah, sometimes. Sometimes we eat together."

Q: What do you think is the potential of this receiving corps?

Cooper: "I think the sky is the limit. We're out here working, especially against our DBs. They're giving us some good work out there on the field. I think we're getting better every day. I think the sky is the limit."



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Q: What have you learned about Carr during this time together?

Cooper: "I learned more about his family. His life outside of football. Just things like he has two dogs. Learned stuff about his kids. We talk and communicate on things outside of football."

Q: Are you someone who leads more by example?

Cooper: "I really don't try to vocalize things unless I think it's really important. If I see a player probably making the same mistake or even a mistake that I used to make or I still make, I try to help him out. But I really try to lead by example."