



## ***Oakland Raiders Transcript***

### **Head Coach Jack Del Rio**

**Opening Statement:** “I thought yesterday was an example of all three phases really contributing throughout the ball game. Offensively, I really liked the way we finished the first half. We got the touchdown, got the ball back on defense, and then a little bit of time left, went down and took that clock and scored that touchdown. That was a great way to the finish the half. We’ve been purposeful about that, closing the half properly, not giving them an opportunity to score and score ourselves. That was big for us. Obviously, we don’t want to kick that many field goals. We ended up kicking four on the day. We’d like to convert more of those to touchdowns. It was great that special teams went out [and] when we lined up for points, we got points. A couple of things happened on special teams with Marquette [King] punting very well. [Had] a plus 50-yard net average and forcing that turnover that Andre [Holmes] picked up for us. That was big for us there. I thought all three phases, again, defensively Perry Riley [Jr.] started the game and played the whole game, did a nice job for us. We were good on third down again. Let a couple of plays get away from us, which I thought the great thing about it was guys owned up right away, what it was and we didn’t blink and kept going. The guys kept positive energy going. All three phases throughout kept positive energy and kept fighting. I thought it was a good solid win. Anytime you win on the road, it’s tough. You win on the road by double digits, it was a good solid victory for us. Really happy about that. Now we’re here and need to have a really good week of preparation. Get ready to play a good Tampa Bay team and take care of business and get our next victory.”

### **Q: Is it a good place to be with a 5-2 record and guys saying they still have work to do?**

**Coach Del Rio:** “Yeah, I like that part. I like the fact that we recognize it. I’m certainly going to point it out. There are things that we have to do better. I think it’s healthy. I think you should enjoy the wins. You should feel good about the success. Take pride in it. We worked hard for it, but to have a healthy respect for what’s coming and the need to play better and the need to continue to grow as a football team as we go throughout the year. That’s a mature way to look at it, and I’m very pleased about that with a younger team.”

### **Q: Did you see improvement on defense on tape?**

**Coach Del Rio:** “Yeah. What I keep saying is the work is there, is being put in. The care is there. I mean our guys care. We’re staying together, I really see it. Throughout the staff, with the players, everybody is hanging onto the rope. Everybody is pulling the rope in the same direction. We’re going to make improvements with that approach. We’ve got good people that care. If you have good people that care to stick together, then good things are going to happen.”

### **Q: Can you feel the confidence level of this team increasing?**

**Coach Del Rio:** “I think you earn that. You can’t fake confidence. I think you earn that by playing well, playing together, by the work you put in, by the preparation that you have. I think that gives you confidence going into any situation, that you can execute. Then when you do execute, I think it kind of builds on itself. It’s all about the work and all about the preparation and all about the attention to detail and that’s what our guys giving us right now.”

### **Q: Is it noticeable when the confidence builds during a game?**

**Coach Del Rio:** “Yeah, I think whenever those plays are made or whenever they occur, I think, obviously, it’s kind of justification. Yeah, I’m doing my part, he’s doing his. We do it together. We do it fast. Good things happen. That’s in all three phases, really.”

### **Q: What do you like about Perry Riley Jr. and Malcolm Smith playing together?**

**Coach Del Rio:** “Well they’re veterans. Those guys have a lot of skins on the wall, so to speak. They’ve been through a lot of battles. So the experience is there. We really like Cory [James]. Cory is a good, young player, but to have those two guys and the experience that they have and the number of battles that they’ve been in, they communicated well together. The idea going into the game was we’re going to play all three, but the way we



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started, we started well and those two guys played well. We just basically left them, let them go. Cory participated primarily on special teams.”

**Q: Does Michael Crabtree need to stop doing his celebration or is that something the referees are missing?**

**Coach Del Rio:** “We want to avoid the penalty, but there was no slash. I’m not sure what they saw to make the call. I didn’t speak with the league yet, but it was something that was seen by somebody that was considered offensive. I didn’t see it on any view I’ve had thus far. But, we definitely want to play smart football. We definitely want to eliminate as many of those types of things as possible. We know we’re going to have a hold or something that occurs through physical competition and just the nature of the game. There’s going to be things that come up and we don’t want to avoid those because you have to be aggressive when you play this game and when you are, you might have a couple. But, the things like that that are very avoidable – celebration penalties, pre-snap penalties – those are the kind of things we absolutely don’t have any tolerance for.”

**Q: With almost half of the season gone, have things generally worked out how you envisioned?**

**Coach Del Rio:** “I just take it one week at a time. So here we are, chapter seven is in the books. We get a chance to write the next chapter. As soon as we’re done here, we’ll go turn our full attention to Tampa Bay and the things they do and the strengths of their roster, the areas we need to focus on and we’ll dig in with our game planning. I like the way the team’s working, I like the way the process is going. I think we have a healthy process and we just want to stay the course with the work that we put in.”

**Q: What are your thoughts about the Buccaneers’ victory in San Francisco yesterday?**

**Coach Del Rio:** “Yeah, they played well out in our part of the country. They did a nice job yesterday. They’ve got a good football team. Obviously, we’re just putting the last one to rest and then we’re moving on as soon as we’re done here.”

**Q: Have you seen your pass rush improve recently?**

**Coach Del Rio:** “Yeah, we feel like we’ve got a couple guys that can really get there. We’re still looking for a little more interior push and I think as we get that, I think it’ll make the entire rush look a lot better. But, we’re getting good energy, good effort from those guys.”

**Q: What have you seen in particular from the rookies and specifically Shilique Calhoun and Jihad Ward?**

**Coach Del Rio:** “They’re all playing. ‘Hoddy’ [Jihad Ward] is an effort-filled guy. I think for us I’m waiting for him to kind of recognize how athletic he is. He’s a lot more athletic than some of the linemen he’s allowing to actually get their hands on him. So, as he gains that experience and recognizes that more and more, I think we’ll cut him loose more and more. So, we’re looking for that, but I love the way he competes and all of the young guys are developing. Karl’s [Joseph] played well, continues to play well. Shilique [Calhoun] has gone in kind of spelling whether it was Bruce [Irvin] or Khalil [Mack]. He’s been solid, not as productive as I’d like to see. I think he’s got more there and again, those are young guys that are going to continue to develop as we go through the year. They’re gaining experience, they’re getting playing time and so, we expect them to continue to grow as we go.”

**Q: Jihad Ward says that the coaches always tell him to not be a robot. What is the message behind that?**

**Coach Del Rio:** “The message is, don’t be so rigid. Yeah, you have the B-gap, you can whip that guy and go make a play in the A or B or C or somewhere else in the backfield. Sometimes young guys are so conscientious on being exactly where they have to be that they just don’t play football. So, we want our guys to express themselves, want them to let it flow and just trust their instincts to help play football.”

**Q: How much of this game can you enjoy before moving onto the Buccaneers?**

**Coach Del Rio:** “I’m pretty consistent. Hopefully you guys figure that out as we go. But, I’m not going to be a whole lot different whether it’s win or lose. You get about 24 hours to enjoy it or agonize over it and then we move forward. So, real shortly here we’ll turn our attention to full speed ahead getting ready for the next opportunity.



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It's all about what you do next. This league is about putting the last one behind you and growing and going forward, and that's what we are. So, I'm proud of what our guys did yesterday, it's not easy to travel to the East Coast and play in the early time slot. Our guys have gotten comfortable doing what needs to be done to get that accomplished and now we'll spend the week here, and our preparation has to be outstanding getting ready for a good football team."

**Q: Did you have the same mindset when you were a player?**

**Coach Del Rio:** "My mindset has always been about competing no matter what we're doing. We can play a game of chess after we're done here (*laughter*), it'd be the same thing."

**Q: Is there any possibility Mario Edwards Jr. does some practicing this week?**

**Coach Del Rio:** "Everything will be on the side until he's cleared to do more. There's nothing more."

**Q: Is he here?**

**Coach Del Rio:** "Not yet."

**Q: Is there an update on Stacy McGee?**

**Coach Del Rio:** "No, nothing more than he was injured yesterday and did not re-enter the game. I think everybody else that got nicked up or whatever came back. I think he was the one that was out?"

**Q: Was Kelechi Osemele OK after he tweaked his knee?**

**Coach Del Rio:** "Yeah, yeah. He just tweaked it a little bit and everything settled down. He was fine to go."

**Q: Do you have any concerns with the run defense?**

**Coach Del Rio:** "I think it's really coming together and getting close to being really, really good. I don't like to see any runs go through us. We'll continue to work where we need to. The attention to detail, the physicality of the guys in the trenches, we have the right people to be really good up front."

**Q: Will it be nice to see your son Luke play on this trip?**

**Coach Del Rio:** "Yeah, that will be one little addition to the trip. Beyond that, it will be really on point with business as usual. It will be pretty cool to get that opportunity to go back to the stadium that we just played in. This is the same field that he was by my side for nine years, throwing the ball in pregame warmups and things like that. It'll be really awesome to go back and watch him play. He was on the sideline with me as a young man and now he's grown into a guy who has a chance to lead a program like Florida in a stadium where we grew up watching Jaguars and Gators play. Very thrilled for him."

**Q: Do you get stressed watching your son play?**

**Coach Del Rio:** "That's harder than anything I do. (*laughing*) There's no question about it. That's the hardest thing I do. Coaching, playing, no problem, but watching your kid, that's tough."