



## ***Oakland Raiders Transcript***

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

**Opening Statement:** "I just wanted to make a quick statement since I did elect to become a little more current. I did launch the Twitter [account] today, so I joined that, did it in front of the team first. That's why I talked to the guys. Just an opportunity to I guess be a little more current and share a little insight. Give you a little peak into what we're doing here and how hard we're working. Be purposeful, building for this season and how excited we are for it. Just a little opportunity."

#### **Q: Is it just your name?**

**Coach Del Rio:** "Yeah, it's @coachdelrio. That's my handle, right? That's what I've been told. First time I knew what that was. I'm learning, but anyway I'm having a little fun with it. Today we brought the guys in. Had a good mental day. Backed it down a little bit, third day of the week. We'll go tomorrow, be full speed tomorrow, but we elected to do that for training purposes and working the guys and where we are with the program. Good work. We have to learn how to practice in shorts and sometimes with taking the helmets off and lightening it up. We have to be a team that understands what it looks like to maintain that mental intensity and back it down physically. We'll do that in training camp. It's just an opportunity for us to show them what it looks like. Anyway, questions?"

#### **Q: Did you get the results you wanted out of practice today?**

**Coach Del Rio:** "Oh yeah. We did. We worked a couple situations. We worked a couple different special teams units. We worked some backed-up situations, worked some red zone. We're able to get the mental work in, but just back it down a little bit. With this being a four-day week, back it down on the third day and crank it back up tomorrow."

#### **Q: Is Sean Smith going to allow you to do things differently because of his skill set?**

**Coach Del Rio:** "We're growing our package, things that we want to be and having a player like Sean, having good players, helps a lot of design come to life. Having guys like Bruce Irvin and Sean Smith and Reggie Nelson, those guys that are veterans, that have been there, that know what it looks like to compete at the highest level. Having those guys being a part of what we're doing right now along with the players we're developing that are here, that remain here, that are returning. We're hard at work getting ready, but certainly having a guy like Sean, having that veteran presence and that understanding allows you to take things to another level."

**Closing Statement:** "Before you go, since I have you here. Somebody handed me my phone. I have to be able to get something here. I'll just get the shot of you all here. I appreciate it. Thanks guys. I'll post you guys on Twitter. *[laughing]* Thank you."

### **Defensive Coordinator Ken Norton, Jr.**

#### **Q: What have the new guys like Bruce Irvin and Sean Smith brought to the team and what do you expect from them?**

**Coach Norton, Jr.:** "We expect... They're really good football players. Anytime you add really good football players to your team, you get better. They have a way of making everybody else around them better. They've played a lot of football and had a lot of success. They are veterans and they know how to work. They know how to make the group better. They know how to study. I think those are areas that we needed to improve in. Just having them on the campus, having other players look at them, we are already better right now than we were when we finished."

#### **Q: You guys improved a lot during the year, defensively. Have you seen the carryover from that?**

**Coach Norton, Jr.:** "No question. Having the second year in a system, the players are smarter, the coaches are better coaches. The players are a little bit older. Like you said, we added a few new players. Guys who have won



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and won well. They're not rookies. They have some experience about them. They know exactly what it takes to be a competitive team."

**Q: I know you haven't seen him on the field yet, but what do you see out of Karl Joseph?**

**Coach Norton, Jr.:** "You see in the film, the guy is explosive. He loves ball. He's around the football a lot. He's a pack of dynamite. He's a really good football player. The more good football players you get on the team, the better you get. Anytime you have a first-round draft pick, you expect an impact player. We expect him to be that."

**Q: David Amerson came in and had a great year for you guys last year. Now you team him up with Sean Smith. What do you see from that cornerback duo?**

**Coach Norton, Jr.:** "We see a real good backfield. We're improving. We're coaching better. They're playing better. We want to make sure we add our rush, combined with our coverage. Those two are connected and they work together. They're doing a fantastic job of understanding what we have. We have guys that can cover and we have guys that can rush. That should work out to be pretty good for us."

**Q: What's the next step for Khalil Mack?**

**Coach Norton, Jr.:** "Consistency. We expect him to play at that level all the time. The really good players know how to make players around them better. It can't just be Khalil. It has to be Bruce, it has to be all the guys up front. The group, as a whole, has to take the same leap that Khalil does. Khalil has to learn how to bring everybody with him."

**Q: Have you allowed yourself to think about what you're going to be able to do when you get Aldon Smith back in there?**

**Coach Norton, Jr.:** "I haven't gotten that far yet. We're trying to work on what we have. We can only play with what we have. The guys here are showing up every day. They're working really hard. They're really committed and really dedicated. Coach Del Rio has put together a really competitive group. We really love coaching them."

**Q: Who do you see filling the leadership role?**

**Coach Norton, Jr.:** "We have a lot of veterans. We brought in Sean and Bruce. Khalil is older now. If you look at the group, they're all a year older, a year smarter. They're really good football players. They're all policing each other. As a group, together, they're all going to rise to that high level of competitiveness that we expect."

**Q: There might be a little pressure taken off of DJ Hayden now that you've got Sean and Amerson back there. Do you think he will thrive when he doesn't have to be the number one?**

**Coach Norton, Jr.:** "Roles are good, but at the same time, it's competition. There's no spot that's already given. It's a matter of competing. Coming out here every day and working really hard to show what you have. We've surrounded all the players with really good football players. They can look to the side, look around the room, they see every day guys showing up, playing and competing. It's important that the group sees their growth, how they're improving every day, and knowing the tools that we have."

### **WR Michael Crabtree**

**Q: What are your reactions to seeing the way this team is getting built this offseason?**

**Crabtree:** "Just trying to build a championship team, doing the most we can do to win and build a winning team. I like what we're doing."

**Q: What does it do when you bring in veterans to go with the young nucleus?**

**Crabtree:** "I think we help each other, you know, the young guys helping the old guys, the old guys helping the young guys. That's what a team is. Building a team, building a championship team, like I said, and it's really



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competitive. It's really [competitive]. The young cornerbacks competing with Sean [Smith]. Me and 'Coop' [Amari Cooper] competing and just building a team and making this team that much better."

**Q: How much does the continuity help you guys this year and adding on to what you did last year?**

**Crabtree:** "I think that's very important in football, having the same coaches, same quarterback, same receivers. We know each other and we're just going to feed off of each other and get better, really just taking that step up from last year."

**Q: How have you seen Derek Carr grow as a quarterback since you got here?**

**Crabtree:** "I've seen him grow. My first year with him, last year... The guy is amazing. He's got talent. Like I said, we talk all the time on ways to get better on the field and I feel like he has taken that step, taken control of the offense, doing more managing of the game at the end and the beginning. I feel like that gunslinger, he is always going to be a gunslinger and I love that. That's the old Brett Favre-type of quarterback, but really managing Brett Favre. Brett Favre is one of the greatest players to ever play."

**Q: When you have a quarterback who is in charge of the offense the way he is, in what ways does that benefit the offense?**

**Crabtree:** "It's football. The quarterback runs the team. If I had to pick any guy, it would be Derek Carr. I'm just ready to go out there and show the world."

**Q: You were talking about the young guys helping the old guys and the old guys helping the young guys. Where do you fit on that scale now?**

**Crabtree:** "Like I said, me and 'Coop,' Seth Roberts, Andre Holmes, I feel like we compete every day. I give them what I know and those guys teach me about the new day. It's a new day now in the NFL. I just capitalize on it and have fun with it."

**Q: What do you think about what Amari Cooper learned in his first year and what he will be better at heading into his second year?**

**Crabtree:** "It's one year and every year adds experience. It's one of those things when you have talent like that you just build off of it, really the knowledge of the game. You're getting smarter and different situations on the field, and I feel like he is doing that. I can't wait to get out there with him and do our thing. Like I said, we've got 'Coop,' we've got Seth Roberts. He's young and I feel like he is going to be real good. Andre Holmes, he's tough, a taller guy. I feel like we have some weapons."

**Q: Can you talk about your camp this weekend?**

**Crabtree:** "My camp is in Texas, in Dallas, the Cotton Bowl. The city gave me the Cotton Bowl. There are over like 900 kids coming out for free and I have like 25-30 athletes in the NFL and we're going to have fun out there."

**Q: What does that mean for so many guys to give their time to come to your camp and help you out?**

**Crabtree:** "It's big because I do the same for everybody else in the eight years I've played. I feel like it's big to give back to those kids. When I was young, I didn't have a camp to go to that was free. Everybody was charging \$100, \$50. I didn't have that. So for the city of Dallas to give me the Cotton Bowl and show guys what we're doing, it's going to be exciting."

### **DE Khalil Mack**

**Q: Are you at the point in the year where you're starting to get antsy?**

**Mack:** "Yeah. Very antsy, man, very antsy. Can't go all the way there. We're looking forward to training camp, but we're grinding right now."



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**Q: How is this defense going to be different this year than it was last year?**

**Mack:** "Obviously, we want to get better. We want to start off strong and finish strong. You can say it's going to be different because we added different pieces, but at the end of the day, it's all about getting better and improving what we did last year."

**Q: What early impressions do you have of rookies like Shilique Calhoun and Jihad Ward?**

**Mack:** "The early impressions of those guys, Shilique and Jihad and all the other rookie guys, especially on the defensive side of the ball, [I'm] very impressed. Seeing the guys work with their hands and seeing the hustle and the pursuit that they have to the ball. Just knowing all those different things that coach Ken Norton, [Jr.] preaches. They came in and have been doing it immediately. That's great to see."

**Q: From a pass rusher standpoint, how excited are you about the improvements they made in the secondary?**

**Mack:** "Very excited, man, very excited, but it's all about, like you said, rush and coverage working together. We want to be good enough for those guys as well knowing that you added pieces like Sean Smith. Then we have big 42 [Karl Joseph] back there. He's not on the field with us yet, but we're just excited to see what he's going to be able to do for us as well. So yeah, very excited."

**Q: Like you said, it works hand in hand.**

**Mack:** "They work hand in hand. Pass rusher and coverage work hand in hand. We're doing all we can now in the D-line room to make sure we're ready. Make sure we're oiled and well-prepared for those guys."

**Q: Do you agree that the next step for you is being more consistent?**

**Mack:** "Oh yeah, most definitely. Being more consistent in the pass and the run, doing all I can to help my teammates, just being a great teammate."

**Q: Do you see yourself and Bruce Irvin as a good blend both on and off the field?**

**Mack:** "Most definitely, man. Bruce is a funny dude. He's not afraid to say what's on his mind at any point of time. It's good to have him in the room to have that different kind of mentality and different mindset."

**Q: Have you talked to Ken Norton, Jr. about the passing of Muhammad Ali?**

**Mack:** "Most definitely. He shared a few brief stories about him and how much he helped the development of his family. It's very touching and very, very, very sad moment for the sports world, period, and the world in general knowing the affect that he had on a lot of different people. He will be missed."