



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Head Coach Jack Del Rio

Opening Statement: “Good afternoon. OK, we obviously went through the corrections. We’ll get with our players tomorrow. Good, hard-fought victory and really proud of the effort. I think the guys fought hard. Went in there with a good plan and executed well for most of the ball game, many portions of the ball game. Did enough to come out of there with a hard fought victory. Questions?”

Q: How much did the suspension influence your decision to let Marcel Reece go?

Coach Del Rio: “Don’t know that the suspension played a big part in the decision.”

Q: Did it play any part?

Coach Del Rio: “Really other than to allow the guys that played... The backfield that we have, we’re using all those guys. They’re all doing a nice job in the roles that they have. We feel like it’s a good group, and we don’t want to disrupt it.”

Q: Can you talk about Reece and what he’s meant to this team?

Coach Del Rio: “Well, I think I pretty much laid it out in the statement. I have a lot of respect for him as man and a lot of respect for him as a player. I appreciate the effort that he gave here for the Raider organization. Wish him nothing but the best going forward. Difficult decisions like this come along in this business. It’s important for [General Manger] Reggie [McKenzie] and I to do things that we think are in the best interest of the organization as we go forward. It’s one of those tough decisions that’s been made. Obviously, we have a lot of admiration for the young man, a lot of respect for what he brought to this organization for a number of years. We feel like we have a really good group there. So we’re making this decision.”

Q: Did you talk to him?

Coach Del Rio: “I didn’t get a chance to talk to him. I know Reggie did, but I was in and out of meetings and did not get a chance to visit with him personally.”

Q: If someone had told you that in the third game of the season you would be playing nine rookies, would you have been surprised?

Coach Del Rio: “Not as we came out of camp, no. No, I think we knew. The number of undrafted [rookies] might be high because I know several of those guys are undrafted guys. We felt good about the draft class, the draft picks, the guys we brought in. That’s a good sign for us that those guys are helping us win on the road.”

Q: What did you think of Vadal Alexander specifically?

Coach Del Rio: “He really did a nice job. He graded out very well. He went in played good football for us yesterday.”

Q: What is Menelik Watson’s situation?

Coach Del Rio: “I don’t know that at this point.”

Q: What about Austin Howard’s situation?

Coach Del Rio: “Don’t have that at this point.”

“So, a couple of things; I’ll hit on a couple of things. It started well. We started fast. Offensively, went down in the opening drive. We did a good job controlling the ball at the end of the first half and getting that touchdown. Then obviously they tried to do something late and we had a potential opportunity for a field goal that they ended up not allowing us to make that attempt there. I thought we punted it really well. Marquette [King] flipped the field. We started them at the 10 or inside three different times after we punted which was excellent. ‘Seabass’ [Sebastian Janikowski] broke the historical record for 50-plus yarders, so that was awesome. Our corners played



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really well. They've been taking a lot of heat and obviously, they played much better yesterday. Both of the corners did. I thought overall our secondary was a whole lot sharper. Forced three turnovers on defense – that was good stuff. Only allowed two out of 12 on third downs, and we talked all week about, 'Hey when it's warm out or if you're dealing with heat, the best thing to do is be sitting on the sideline and sipping on Gatorade.' Get yourself off the field when on third down. That was one of the keys going in. Then a lot of things, you guys brought up most of them – you might have a few more before we're done here. We'll make those corrections and move on to Baltimore. Move onto next."

Q: Should Reggie Nelson have looked to get out of bounds quicker on his interception?

Coach Del Rio: "I think he was looking to score, you know? I think he wanted to score. You can turn those into scores there, so I was all for him continuing to try and score. No problem with that. I kind of laid it out there yesterday. The clock did not start on time. It's almost one of those things you'd like to say, 'Hey, you're at home. If you don't start it, that's your own problem.' But, the league did what, as I said yesterday, I think is the right thing. I think they recognized the error and they rectified it."

Q: With weeks where the offense has been good and other weeks where the defense has been good, is that a good sign of what the team can be when both of those phases are playing well?

Coach Del Rio: "Well, I think the good news is we've shown signs of those two phases, and there's a third phase, special teams, that we'd like to get rolling as well to be impactful. And, the idea is to get all three phases really working together and playing complementary football. So yeah, we work hard at all three phases. I'm very invested and very into the details of all three units and making sure that they're operating at a high level."

Q: Is it encouraging to see what this team can do when all phases are put together?

Coach Del Rio: "Well, that's what you have to do. That's what we're working towards. Every game has different challenges and there'll be different defenses that are tougher to do things on and different offenses, but it's a team. We're going in it as a team, we're preparing to do all that we can, really seeking to win two of those three phases. I mean, that's something I talk about a lot. The matchups week to week change, and the strengths and weaknesses of an opponent change, how you matchup and all of those things and health. All those things go into it; it's all part of playing. What we have is a really, really I think a focused group of young men that really want to be good, that are willing to be accountable when things don't go well and take ownership and willing to bust their butt and sacrifice for each other to help things go well. So, I think it's a good mix right now."

Q: Did you feel good enough with the distance Marquette King had on his last punt or did you think about taking a five-yard penalty to give him more room?

Coach Del Rio: "Yeah, we felt fine at that distance. We've been pretty good at executing that and pinning people down. I referred to the three that we did get pinned down at the 10 or inside. So, yeah he just caught a little too much of that one."

Q: How did you think Cory James and Karl Joseph played?

Coach Del Rio: "I think they did a nice job, as I suspected. There are plenty of things we'll clean up with it. Karl [Joseph] was good, he was good. He came up and hit people and communicated well, did the right things showing up. He was part of that secondary that played very well. Cory [James] made a couple of rookie mistakes, but he's a tough kid. He finds the football and I thought they both played pretty well for their first opportunity to start."

Q: DJ Hayden made a couple of nice tackles.

Coach Del Rio: "He made a couple really good tackles. We call those jackhammers, by the way."

Q: How did Hayden play overall?

Coach Del Rio: "He played pretty well for the most part. He had a couple errors, couple leverage issues, but overall, pretty solid. I thought the secondary was pretty solid."



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Q: Was Hayden dehydrated at the end of the game when TJ Carrie was in?

Coach Del Rio: "Yeah, it looked to me like DJ needed a break. So, TJ [Carrie] stepped in, he's well prepared, a veteran guy and stepped in there and did a nice job for us."

Q: What do you do to get Khalil Mack going?

Coach Del Rio: "He'll get his numbers. I think he just keeps doing what he does, keep playing ball. It's not about Khalil [Mack]. It's about us. What he did was he was a part of a pass defense that allowed 2-of-12 on third down that came up with three interceptions, or two interceptions and a fumble, three takeaways. There's more to playing in football than getting sacks and there's more that he's involved in. He's directly involved in everything that we're doing and he's a fine football player and he's busting his butt and doing a nice job for us. Just keep playing. I don't want him to start pressing for numbers. It's not about numbers. It's about us making the plays we need to make to win games."

Q: You had a few offensive line penalties, which you hadn't seen throughout the first couple of games. Holds are sometimes tricky to judge...

Coach Del Rio: "Yeah, they're tricky to judge. (*laughing*) Some are like, you kind of scratch your head. But that's the way it goes. They're judgement calls. They're tough. I think as a veteran pass rusher, I think Brian Orakpo baited the ref into one, on that touchdown that got called back. I really feel like he baited him into that. Donald [Penn] played along by lifting his arms up, it's almost like saying, 'I'm guilty,' when you do that. I think the guys are fighting hard. We're working very hard, diligently. We're a disciplined football team. We compete, we play hard. I think that number will continue to go down as we go through the year. I believe it will. It has, a little bit, and it will continue to trend downward."

Q: There were a few dropped passes yesterday. Is that just a matter of focus?

Coach Del Rio: "Absolutely. Yeah, focus. A couple of them were tough. I think there were five that went down probably as drops and I would say two of them were contested catches, right to the ground. Three were legitimate drops. One is too many. Our guys take pride in catching the ball and doing things with it. A couple of them came on third down so they were critical. Obviously those are concentration issues that we've got to tighten up."

Q: Seems like when a guy drops a pass, Derek Carr almost seems to want to go back to that guy pretty quickly after. Is that something he likes to do or just the flow of the game?

Coach Del Rio: "I think it's how the game flowed. I don't know. I'm not inside his brain, so I can't tell you for sure, but I think that's just the way the game unfolded."

Q: Michael Crabtree made some real big plays yesterday. Has his level of play been pretty consistent since he's been here?

Coach Del Rio: "He's been tremendous. He's come in here from Day 1 and been a great teammate. He's a leader in the locker room. He's a tough guy. He showed us last year in Chicago when he was banged up. He and [Charles] Woodson, battling through injuries like they did. He'll play when he's nicked up, banged up. Love the competitor. He's really a terrific competitor."

Q: Here's a guy that before he got here, he missed a lot of practice time. Here it doesn't seem like he does.

Coach Del Rio: "He's got a fresh start, fresh opportunity here to show us what he's about and that he loves football. That's all I've seen. I see a guy that loves football. Like I said, he's a great teammate. He's been a treat to be around."



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Q: What does it say about your running game that they bottled up Latavius Murray pretty well and you still put up 123 yards and five yards per carry? What does it say about the options there?

Coach Del Rio: "I feel good about the start we have with the running game and the versatility of the backfield, and the way our linemen have been able to plug in and play. That was our fifth guy at right tackle yesterday and we continue to be able to do things and move the ball and function as an offense with that being the case. That's good stuff. They're all getting opportunities to carry it. I think last year I got a lot of questions about, are we going to develop a guy that can carry the ball behind Latavius, and I think you see we worked hard at that and we have a couple guys that can do that."