



## ***Oakland Raiders Transcript***

### **Assistant Head Coach/Special Teams Coordinator Rich Bisaccia**

#### **Q: What is the importance of linking Johnny Townsend with Mike Scifres together?**

**Bisaccia:** "I was fortunate enough to be with Mike for a couple years in San Diego. Since he's been done over the last couple of years, I brought him to Dallas for two or three days and wanted to get him here for two or three days as well. He's got great knowledge. He's got a great way of getting things across. He can see some things that possible I don't. we've been together watching film together, he and I, and watched our holder, punter and kicker and today he got a chance to talk to Johnny a little bit. He's a great resource for us. I really appreciate him coming out and appreciate Coach Gruden for letting him come out."

#### **Q: What development have you seen from Johnny Townsend?**

**Bisaccia:** "He's improving every day. He's working on his direction. He's working on his drop. He's holding for a lefty, holding for a righty. He's working on everything possible to become a great player. There's going to be some peaks and valleys, but today I thought he had a good day. Only really one miss on the 11-play punt set, so he's getting better every day."

#### **Q: Has Ryan Switzer been as advertised?**

**Bisaccia:** "I don't know what they advertised. We know a lot about Ryan. He scored in college, he scored in the NFL and he's competing his rear end off at wide receiver. All those guys are really doing a good job of competing at the end of practice, working on their catches and their hands and their body positions. We're excited about preseason starting."

#### **Q: What made him someone you wanted to go after?**

**Bisaccia:** "I think he's had production, as a rookie player. Coach [Gruden] did a lot of work on him when he was coming out when Coach was still doing the TV gig and doing the draft and those things. He knew a lot about him and saw him play in the National Football League. Somehow, they worked it out that he became available and Reggie [McKenzie] ended up getting it done. We're glad he's here."

#### **Q: Do you have Johnny do as much as he can at the return man?**

**Bisaccia:** "I think all of the above. He's got a lot of clubs in his bag and we're going to try to use them all, depending on where we are on the field. I think that's what he's learning the most now. Where am I and what can I use where I am on the field? What's the wind doing? Who is the returner back there and how dangerous is that guy? What can we do to help our coverage with the punt? For our return guys to kind of figure out, is he going all the way across his body, is he going towards the sideline? Is he going to try to get a hang? It's kind of a chess match to some degree. They're doing good on the returning and he's doing really well punting."

#### **Q: What does it mean to have someone who has directional punt ability in this conference?**

**Bisaccia:** "Our background is that we've been a directional punt team. We're trying to do it all. We'd like to have the ability to go to the field when we want, we'd like the ability to stay in the boundary when we want, we'd love the ability to get a fair catch when we want. But I've seen those bumper stickers that say 'bleep' happens, so we're still trying to work on every punt we possibly have. Every year these guys get more and more creative with what they can do with the football. We're going to lean on him a little bit to call his pitches and learn where he is on the field and what is most advantageous to punt at that time."

#### **Q: Are either of your kickers gaining an edge in the competition?**

**Bisaccia:** "I'd say it's just a daily grind to be the kicker. It's a daily grind. Nice try, though."

#### **Q: Does it mean more to you to have a punter that can boom his punts with hang time or a punter that can place them?**



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**Bisaccia:** "I think those great golfers have to be able to drive and putt. We're in different places on the field. He's working really hard in the redzone and we're working in the field. We want to try to put every punt, if we can, to our advantage. Give our coverage a chance to cover it or pin him in the boundary and try to get a hang. The more variation he has to his punts, the better off we can be. We're going to not to give that guy the same catch every time if we can help it."

**Q: Last year, this team had two very capable gunners in Johnny Holton and Cordarrelle Patterson on the other. How is it looking in terms of your gunners now?**

**Bisaccia:** "Certainly we went and got Dwayne Harris, and if you look at the last five years in the National Football League, Dwayne has always been in the top five in double-digit tackles, not only on kickoff but at the fire position. We had a lot of respect for Johnny getting ready to play against him last year. We have a lot of receivers out there working, a lot of the corners out there working. Obi's [Melifonwu] been working out there at flyer so, we got a bunch of guys out there competing to be the flyers for us."

**Q: Has anyone stood out to you this week?**

**Bisaccia:** "I'd say the one young guy in [Dallin] Leavitt. We're putting him in a lot of positions and he's doing a lot of good things for us as a young player. Arden Key has kind of moved around on the punt and doing a good job. And then, I call him 'Big Shaq', 91 [Shilique Calhoun], been putting him in a lot of different positions and he's responded really well also."

**Q: How important is it for a guy like Jason Cabinda and other young guys on the team to show that they can contribute on special teams? What does the preseason mean for a guy like that?**

**Bisaccia:** "I think, again, all of it's vital. Cabinda is a guy that we're playing him on both sides of the punt team and he's responded well. He's real smart, real physical. For us, it all starts in punt. We're trying to find the best box players. Those six guys that can play guard, tackle and wing for us on punt, it's kind of the all-trust team, to be able to protect the punter. We've played him on both sides now, he's responded well to that. I think the preseason game's going to show a lot. A lot of those young guys are going to play a lot of football for us in the kicking game, and they're going to play on offense and they're going to play on defense. It turns into a high school game to some degree. They kind of show us a lot about their will when the preseason games start."

**Q: What's made Ryan Switzer such a good returner?**

**Bisaccia:** "Switz just has the ability to make people miss in space and those guys that have been really good at it. I think he's got seven career return touchdowns in college football and he hit one last year in pro football. Some of those guys that can score, they have a sixth sense to them. Usually if they can make the first one miss and they understand the return, they can get themselves back and help out the block. They're in control of really, all the blocks as well, bringing all of the blocks to them and then setting them up. He just has a sixth sense for it. He's done it a long time and he's scored a lot of touchdowns."

**Q: How much of a role has Erik Harris had on special teams this year and how long do you expect to be without him?**

**Bisaccia:** "I don't know how long we're without him. That's not my deal. He actually practiced through yesterday with the hand. He's vital for us right now. He's another guy that we were playing against last year that we respected and we were worried about. We had to have a plan for him, he wore 41 last year and right now he's our person protector on the punt team and he's playing on every phase. I know he's working his butt off on defense and he's climbing the charts over there as well. So, he's vital for us. Depending on what his status ends up on defense will be how much we use him and where we use him. He's really had a great camp."