



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Head Coach Jack Del Rio

Opening Statement: “Alright, we had a good week of practice and we’re excited to go. Look forward to playing in front of our fans. This is a really good team, and we had a good week of practice getting ready for them, so we’re ready to go. Questions?”

Q: Do you expect Mario Edwards Jr. to play on Saturday?

Coach Del Rio: “We’ll work through that. We had a good week of practice. Obviously, you have to make a move to get him active before we can activate him and play him. I think he’s had a good week.”

Q: Does your team’s ability to play complementary football get better late in games?

Coach Del Rio: “I would suppose that the urgency picks up. We’re looking to play complementary football throughout 60 minutes, all three phases, but I think the key is to make the plays you need to make. Have situational awareness and make the plays you need to make in order to win the game. I feel like we’ve embraced that and have been successful with that.”

Defensive Coordinator Ken Norton, Jr.

Q: What’s been the biggest thing you’ve seen in the defense’s improvement these past few weeks?

Coach Norton, Jr.: “Just the hard work. The guys have really put in a lot of hard work. They really are prideful about their performance. I think going in, everyone had really high expectations. Now that things are coming together, they feel good about the direction they’re going. They feel good about their growth. The work that they’re doing is able to transfer on the field and they’re getting better at the right time.”

Q: What is it about the fourth quarter that’s allowed you guys to do so well?

Coach Norton, Jr.: “Well again, they practice well. The players really practice well. I think that the conditioning, the whole staff has done a great job of having the guys ready to finish strong. There’s a rotation that they’re on to make sure that their legs are really good toward the end of the game. The guys are really working well together as far as different guys playing. Then at the same time, execution; guys wanting to win, really putting it together and playing well as a team. I think the execution part of it, the communication part of it, guys really putting their will together to really finish strong has really been impressive.”

Q: Bruce Irvin has talked about wanting to get 10 sacks. Do you like when a guy is really pushing for something like that?

Coach Norton, Jr.: “No question. Bruce has been trying to get there for a long time now. I think his rookie year he might have had 8.5. He’s really been trying to get to that point. To his value, he does so much. Everybody likes sacks, but Bruce, he’s our spy. He’s our cover guy. He’s the guy on the other side of Khalil [Mack]. He’s the guy who re-routes the receivers well. He’s one of our fastest, best athletes. He’s a guy who shows up early and studies late. He’s one of the team leaders. You see the way he comes. He might not have a lot of sacks, but he has a lot of quarterback hits. It reminds me of a guy I played with, Charles Haley, back in the day. He didn’t get a lot of sacks, but he always disrupted the quarterback, got him off spot, and he’s a guy who everyone knew where he was.”

Q: What does Mario Edwards Jr. bring to this defense?

Coach Norton, Jr.: “Just his versatility. He’s a guy that really plays hard, really good, athletic person. Mario is very impactful. When he’s in the game, you’re going to know it. He’s an impact player.”