



## ***Oakland Raiders Transcript***

### **Offensive Coordinator Bill Musgrave**

**Opening Statement:** “Good Thursday. Tough team coming in. They’ve been playing well, so we’ll need to really play well and put our foot forward against this group.”

**Q: Does it help having DeAndré Washington and Jalen Richard with Latavius Murray being injured?**

**Coach Musgrave:** “Yeah, we hope it helps. We definitely hope it helps because they’ve gotten some valuable experience, talking about the young guys. We’ll hope that ‘Tay’ [Latavius Murray] can get back by Sunday. I know he’s working extremely hard at it. They’re working with his shoes and things like that to help him in that regard. We’ll just have to wait and see.”

**Q: Why do you think you guys have been so effective in the red zone?**

**Coach Musgrave:** “Well our guys on the field are doing a terrific job. [Quarterbacks coach] Todd Downing heads up our red area presentations during the week. Comes up with a plan, presents it to the players and so they’ve been doing a fantastic job with that. It’s amazing.”

**Q: How has Vadal Alexander been?**

**Coach Musgrave:** “Well, we’re happy he’s doing as well as he has. He’s just very smart, bright. [He] has a lot of football background from both high school and college. He picks it up quick. There’s always going to be a transition period dealing with different defenders at this level.”

**Q: Has he done enough that if the rest of the offensive line got healthy, you would still consider him in the mix?**

**Coach Musgrave:** “I think that’s pretty hypothetical. We just have to cross that bridge when we get to it. We’re just happy that he’s on our team and he’s contributing like he is. We’re very pleased with him.”

**Q: With Lee Smith out, will you have to consider, as you get some tackles back, using those guys in a situation where they’re an extra offensive blocker?**

**Coach Musgrave:** “We may have to. That’s going to be a process that we’re going to have to figure out as we go along. Lee did a lot of those jobs. We need to find out who can and who’s willing to do those jobs moving forward.”

**Q: What did you learn about Ryan O’Malley during the spring and summer?**

**Coach Musgrave:** “Very tough kid. Got in there and battled. Put his face in the fan each and every day. We know we can count on him. He’ll go through the process of learning as well because it is going to be brand spanking new to him because he is a rookie.”

**Q: Is there something to you getting familiar with the people that you have and learning their strengths as you get more refined as a player caller?**

**Coach Musgrave:** “Well, I don’t know what to say to that. I know as a staff, we’re definitely better in Year 2 than we were in Year 1. We feel like we can teach the players better. I think all of us are learning from our experience. The players are just doing a terrific job. We have a great group of guys that care about each other. They’re team oriented. I think that shows.”

**Q: Derek Carr has said that he’s more comfortable leaning on the rest of the team more and not trying to make every play. Do you notice that?**

**Coach Musgrave:** “Yeah, I read that he said that as well. That made a lot of sense. We all want to do our part. We all want to trust everyone else to do their part in their respective roles. That mindset really helps us play smart, play tough, and make sure that we don’t beat ourselves in any games.”



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**Q: What do you see from Carr when he's orchestrating a comeback win?**

**Coach Musgrave:** "This is a guy that has played sports his whole life. He's not just a football player; played a lot of basketball, probably taken a lot of free throws at the end of games when he needed to make them. He's just a clutch guy. Those situations, he's very familiar in. He's got a lot of experience from which to draw upon because of his background growing up and being in athletics his whole life."

**Q: How much flexibility does have Richard and Washington give you?**

**Coach Musgrave:** "It's helped us immensely. They're so sharp in pass protection as well as when we get them in the passing game. We get them out, throw balls to them. Latavius is the smartest one we have in terms of pass protection. He really works at it. He's in there with the O-line, day in and day out, working [offensive line] coach [Mike] Tice. These young guys have really fallen in step with him, so we know we can trust them. You're right, that opens up a lot of great avenues for us."

**Q: How are they different despite having similar size?**

**Coach Musgrave:** "It's tough for us to answer that after four games. Believe me, we're looking at it with a very fine eye each and every day they're in the film room because we want to do things that are right and stick with their strengths. I don't think we're setting any limitations or putting them in any corner or any box right now. We're enjoying them being as productive as they are."

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

**Q: How much more comfortable did Cory James look this past week?**

**Coach Norton, Jr.:** "I think you can see his ability to run, his ability to decipher, understand and diagnose plays, his speed, his tackling ability. He's a pretty sure tackler. And, you can see his emergence and improvement every single game. Every time he goes to practice, you see him get better the very next practice. So, it's really good to see a young player like that learn and listen and be able to apply it to games."

**Q: Did you see any carryover in terms of mistakes he made in his first start?**

**Coach Norton, Jr.:** "Well, there's always going to be mistakes, but they're new mistakes. You don't like error repeaters; Cory's not an error repeater. He's a young player, he's going to see a lot of new looks a lot of the times but he plays smart, he really studies well and his mistakes and missed assignments are very low."

**Q: What are your first impressions of Perry Riley Jr. and how quickly can he adapt to your defensive unit?**

**Coach Norton, Jr.:** "Perry's smart, he's a veteran. He knows what he's doing. He looks the way a linebacker's supposed to look. He still runs very well, he's going to help us."

**Q: Why do you believe the edge rushers were so productive last week? Was it something they did right that they hadn't been doing previously?**

**Coach Norton, Jr.:** "Well, they always were right, they just played hard. The offense chipped them just like they usually do, but they just played hard. They play hard every week and some weeks they'll have better games and you'll feel them more than others, but at the same time, with Bruce [Irvin] and Khalil [Mack], those are two really good football players who really play hard all the time. So, they're always going to be out there, but you really felt them a lot more last week."

**Q: How big is it to win your first three road games?**

**Coach Norton, Jr.:** "There's no question, you always talk about road games and you have to win road games with your defense and your special teams and there's so many road games you think you have to win. Your home games are really important but when you put them together, there's no question, if you have a team that's really good on the road, that really helps you in the long run."



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**Q: What's the key to being successful on the road?**

**Coach Norton, Jr.:** "It's hard put a finger on it, but it's a combination of things. The team is flying away, they're alone. The team understands that there's nobody else, just the team and they come closer together. Everything is much more structured. The guys are walking around going to dinner and things together, so there's a lot of different things that are combined. But, so far it's worked for us this year."

**Q: Is this a game where the pass rush can have a big impact while going against Philip Rivers?**

**Coach Norton, Jr.:** "Oh yeah, well, that's why pass rushers get paid a lot of money. It's always important to have a good pass rush. But we've played, if you look at the last three or four weeks, we've played the top quarterbacks throwing the ball, scoring, around, and Philip Rivers is another one. Playing a top quarterback who gets rid of the ball really fast, still playing at a very high level, so we have a really big challenge ahead of us."

**Q: Was blitzing Karl Joseph something you foresaw with his skillset?**

**Coach Norton, Jr.:** "Oh, no question. He's a first-rounder. First-rounder's are impact players, so he has to be well-rounded. Great in coverage, great in man coverage, great in zone coverage, a great blitzzer, tackler, we expect that guy to do all of those things."