



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Defensive Coordinator Ken Norton, Jr.

Q: How much more comfortable are you in Year 2?

Coach Norton, Jr.: "Yes, I don't think there's any question that everybody is more familiar with what's expected of them. I think anytime you're in Year 2, they understand the concepts, understand the defensive scheme a whole lot better. At the same time, we have a lot of good football players. We've assembled some really good football players, created a lot of competition. We're really excited about what we can do."

Q: Are you more comfortable in your role coming into Year 2?

Coach Norton, Jr.: "Of course. I think we all have high expectations, but at the same time, we have to be great teachers, they have to be really good players and understand the scheme and things that we're teaching them, and we all have to work together on it. We're in it together. I think it's very clear that we're all in and the guys are really putting it out there for them. The coaching staff is really giving it to them."

Q: What went into Ben Heeney being the signal caller?

Coach Norton, Jr.: "Well, he's the middle linebacker. The middle linebacker is the one that has the dot and calls the defenses. That's just kind of traditional for the guy in the middle to be able to call the signals."

Q: Is Heeney a prime example of players developing as they become more familiar in Year 2?

Coach Norton, Jr.: "I think everybody in Year 2 is getting better. I think everybody is familiar, the players are familiar with themselves. There's nothing new. Last year, everything was new to them, now it's the same thing they've been seeing all spring and all last year. They're playing well together, they all like each other and they all love playing ball. We've assembled a team that really plays hard and loves, passionately, about football. When you put those guys together, only good things can happen."

Q: Has Heeney utilized his athletic ability at the middle linebacker spot to make up for a little bit of his lack of size?

Coach Norton, Jr.: "Absolutely, he's smart, he's fast, and he's relentless. He has a nose for the ball, very instinctive. Ben is going to be a very good football player. He cares a lot, he's always getting better. You can't get him out of the film room, asking all the right questions, and we have a lot of confidence in him."

Q: Do you have to pull Heeney in sometimes, as he has admitted he gets overaggressive at times?

Coach Norton, Jr.: "Ben's a young player. So, he's getting better every day. I think all of the team, not just Ben, has different angles, different indicators, different ways, different growth patterns that we have. But Ben, I'm very, very happy with him."

Q: How is DJ Hayden's growth now in terms of where he was last year?

Coach Norton, Jr.: "Just like everyone else, familiarity with the concepts, understanding what I'm asking. His confidence is really high. He's really excited to be here, and he loves what he's doing. So, you see we have competition across the board and he's a competitor. He's fitting right in and competing every day."

Q: What makes you believe he will be able to have success as a slot corner?

Coach Norton, Jr.: "Well, it's a practice first. We have to see guys come out here, today was our first day in pads, getting everybody together, seeing everything full speed just like it would be in a game and we have a lot of film, lot of evaluating but he's a really good football player and he really wants to be good. So, there's nothing really stopping him."



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Q: Is there anything skillset wise that makes him better inside as opposed to being outside?

Coach Norton, Jr.: "No, the outside guys, we expect the outside guys to be able to play inside. It's not just you play outside or inside, you have to play both. You never know if your outside receiver might move inside, so you have to have the ability, obviously, to play both. But, he's a guy that we really see as a guy that's really going to excel this year."

Q: What differences do you see in Bruce Irvin's role compared to when he was in Seattle?

Coach Norton, Jr.: "Not many differences. I think everybody gets better, more mature. He really loves being here, he really understands and loves the way we're going to use him. And, he's always been passionate about football. Any good football player, no matter where you put him, is going to be good wherever he goes. So, he's another good football player we brought in to be really good here. So, we're expecting a lot of him."

Q: How good is it to see Karl Joseph out there and what are your initial thoughts?

Coach Norton, Jr.: "Very, very happy. It's really good to see him in the game as opposed to watching as we did all spring. But, again, just like the rest of them, he's very passionate, very smart, loves playing ball and always is trying to find ways to better his game. We paired him with Reggie Nelson. It's been a fantastic experience and veteran for him and they've connected very well."

Q: Has Khalil Mack stepped forward as a leader with the absence of Charles Woodson?

Coach Norton, Jr.: "Well, we don't expect one guy to do it all. We have a fantastic coaching staff as leaders. Obviously, Bruce is here, we have Malcolm Smith, there's Reggie Nelson. There's lots of guys, all of us are involved in different aspects of leadership, so it doesn't fall on one person. The group, it takes all of us to carry this thing to the place we want it to be."

Q: With the players more familiar this year, can the coaches do more?

Coach Norton, Jr.: "We're [doing] the same stuff. Again, the guys are really taking to it well. Today's our first day in pads, so there's a lot of competition, so we have a lot of evaluations to do, but we've put together a team that's highly competitive, highly passionate. We're excited about what we're doing."

Q: How would you assess the first day in pads?

Coach Norton, Jr.: "Physical, fun, enthusiastic. A lot of good film, we're going to learn a lot from it. But, the first day, it's a great place to start."

LB Bruce Irvin

Q: Is there more expected of you coming into this camp with the Raiders?

Irvin: "You could say that, coming in from another team. I've been in the league for five years now. I've been to two Super Bowls, so I've got a pretty nice deal. So, there's always expectations. I've always had expectations for myself. I'm just continuing to work hard every day and go out there and do what I do."

Q: Do you see similar characteristics in the Raiders' defense compared to the Seahawks' defense?

Irvin: "Yeah, it's pretty much the same. You look at Seattle, we weren't always the Seattle team that you see right now. We started as a bunch of young guys, like we are right here. I think as long as we continue to work hard, everybody believe in one thing and that's playing for each other, then I think we're going to turn this thing around and be a pretty good team this year."



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Q: Do you want to keep that energy high even during the summer?

Irvin: "That's always important. You have to make this job fun because it's a grind. We wake up at 8:00 in the morning. We don't get out... We're not done with our day until 9:30 at night. So, it's a grind and you have to make the best of it. If you come out here and are dragging around, it's just going to make it terrible and boring. I try to get these guys to try to have fun with it because there's plenty of people out here who would love to be in this position and you have to make the best of the situation in this short time and opportunity that we get to play football."

Q: What have you seen from Ben Heeney so far?

Irvin: "Ben Heeney is a dog. Like you said, he's not the biggest guy, but he plays bigger than what he is. The guy leaves it out there for me. It's just practice, so I can only image what he does for me in a game. He's a team guy. That's the biggest thing, having a bunch of team guys who are willing to leave it out there for each other. I can already tell Ben is one of those guys."

Q: What's the connection like with you and Khalil Mack? Does having the attention go to him free you up?

Irvin: "I hope all the attention goes to him. Fifteen and a half sacks, I hope they put three or four people on him and just let me run free. Khalil is great guy. The biggest thing about him, when a guy has had as much success as he's had in the first two years of his career, some guys seem to not take advice or seem to not work hard, but he comes to work every day. He takes advice from me. I take advice from him. I've said it before and I'll continue to say it, I really think this was meant to be, to be teamed up with him. We're going to continue to push each other each and every day and we're going to really make it happen this year."

Q: Do you see similarities with how some of the guys line up here compared to Michael Bennett, specifically Mario Edwards Jr.?

Irvin: "Michael Bennett is one of a kind."

Q: Just in terms of the versatility?

Irvin: "Yeah, Mario's versatile. He's versatile. The biggest thing about Mike Bennett, he was a film junkie. He always had his head in the books, in that film. Mario Edwards, he's going to be a great player as long as he continues to work hard and as long as he's continuing and willing to get better and put in the work. They don't really remind me of each other a lot, but Mario is going to be a really good player also."

Q: Is there any motivating factor with Seattle letting you go?

Irvin: "It is what it is. You can't pay everybody. I knew that when they started paying Russell [Wilson] and they started paying Bobby [Wagner]. Those guys deserved their deals, so I would never take that from them. It's only so much. Football has a salary cap and you can't pay everybody. When you win and when you win a lot of games, you win Super Bowls, guys are going to leave. Guys are going to go to a new system. Teams are going to come get your guys and try to see what they have going on up there. I understand the business side of it. I appreciate Seattle for the opportunity they gave me the last four years, but I'm in Oakland now and I couldn't have been put in a better situation."

Q: Ideally that process would begin here.

Irvin: "Yes, sir. I'm real happy to be here."

Q: Do you feel like it's a good fit with the Raiders and that you made the right choice coming here?

Irvin: "Absolutely. Ken Norton, Jr. was here, that played a big factor in me deciding to come here, and we run pretty much the same scheme. They're going to use me more going forward. They're going to use my skill set more than Seattle did. Like I said, I've been put in a great situation and I think I made the best decision for me, my wife and my son, and we're happy to be here."



Oakland Raiders Transcript

RB DeAndré Washington

Q: A lot of rookies say the speed is a lot different in the NFL. Is that the case for you?

Washington: "Definitely. I think in college when you run some of your plays, guys tend to get a little fatigued. Out here, guys are playing with a purpose. Families to feed, mouths to feed, so it's definitely 100 percent each and every day."

Q: Do you think having a different style from Latavius Murray is going to help the team?

Washington: "Definitely. We both bring different skill sets to the table, so I think it makes it a little bit harder to game plan for opposing teams. I'm looking forward to working with him and making plays with him."

Q: Does your numbers from last year give you confidence to produce this year?

Washington: "Yeah, I think what that boils down to is what you do behind the scenes. Take care of your body. Especially as a running back, definitely have to do a lot of work behind the scenes to keep yourself going and take care of your body for the long haul."

Q: Do you like getting into this physical part of camp? What changes for a running back when you get the pads on?

Washington: "A lot of those arm tackles that the defense thinks they're getting without pads. You definitely can see... You get a chance just to finish your runs. You can't play as fast when you don't have pads on. Just being able to fly around and compete, I think that's the biggest thing."

Q: Have you been compared to Maurice Jones Drew?

Washington: "I've heard it a few times. Yeah."

Q: Is he a running back that you like to watch?

Washington: "Yeah, he's a great back. I actually got a chance to talk to him at the combine. He gave me a lot of great advice. Definitely have a lot of respect for him."

Q: What veterans at camp have you been able to bounce things off of and get ready for camp with?

Washington: "A lot of them. Especially a lot of running backs, of course. D.C. [Derek Carr], I actually know from way back in the Houston area. [Michael] Crabtree, another Texas Tech guy. Most of my O-line, I'm pretty close with most of those guys. Those guys are characters so it's been good to kind of just rub elbows with those guys."

Q: What does it do for you to have such a massive offensive line?

Washington: "Being a smaller guy works in my favor. Being behind those big guys, especially when you put those pads on, makes it kind of hard to see me. It's definitely a good feeling when I can hide and do my thing behind those guys."

Q: How much interaction did you have with Derek Carr when you were in Houston?

Washington: "We actually didn't talk. I knew of him. He left and ended up moving back to Cali. We played in the same district in high school, but he ended up moving back. We worked out with the same trainer, so that's kind of how we got connected."