



## ***Oakland Raiders Transcript***

### **Raiders Head Coach Jack Del Rio**

**Opening Statement:** “Good morning, guys. Alright, we’re ready to get started with our week of preparation. Getting ready for the Jets coming in here. Our motto is to basically respect every opponent, but fear nobody. I got asked by the New York media a little bit about their team and the spread. Those things mean nothing to us. It’s about playing the game. It’s about understanding the challenges that you face. It’s about recognizing the talent in front of you. Strengths and weaknesses and going after them and preparing accordingly. That’s what we’re all about. That’s how we’ll approach the week. We’re getting healthier. Hopefully we’ll get a full week out of [Gareon] Conley, we’ll see how that goes. That’s probably the biggest question that you want to know. We’ll see how the week goes with him and then we’ll know more as we get into the work week.”

### **Q: What are some of the challenges the Jets bring?**

**Coach Del Rio:** “Well, I think they probably have one of the better fronts in the league. Their defensive front is as talented as any that we’ll face. They’re very aggressive in their scheme. The two safeties they drafted, we think, are really good football players. I know I liked them both, grading them coming out of the draft. Good players. Offensively, they have two backs that are very good, very capable. Have a history of doing good things in this league. They have one receiver that’s a deep, deep guy. The other guy [Jermaine] Kearse they got from Seattle and he’s their top target. We’ve gone against [Josh] McCown before. This is a guy that put up a lot of numbers, a lot of yardage when we played him when he was in Cleveland. He has a lot of experience in the league. He’s a kind of guy that we have to make sure we don’t let get comfortable on us.”

### **Q: Can you talk about Giorgio Tavecchio?**

**Coach Del Rio:** “Well we’re trying to let him enjoy that, but at the same time it’s about going forward now. He got the award today. We’re happy for him. I think you see those individual awards, they tend to show up when the team wins. Really proud of him for the grit and the perseverance and staying the course and continuing to believe. Of course he’s really developed himself and is now getting a great opportunity. I’m super proud of him. I told him, ‘Great job. OK, now we’re going forward, next game.’”

### **Q: With Nicholas Morrow’s poise, is it easy to forget how small the program he came from was?**

**Coach Del Rio:** “Stories like that are an awesome part of our league. Guys come from different backgrounds, different experiences growing up. Obviously, he hadn’t even been in front of a 1,000 people much less 70,000. Tremendous jump there. Like everything, he’s worked hard with the opportunities that he’s had. He’s developed as a player. He’s created a little bit of a role for himself. He was called on to go in in a key moment and he didn’t blink. He made a play for us that ended up being a huge play in the game.”

### **Q: Was Amari Cooper’s touchdown on Sunday a testament of his hard work? When was the last time you saw a wide receiver make a catch like that?**

**Coach Del Rio:** “I don’t know. I’ve probably seen some bigger guys do that. Amari, he’s got a lot of desire. He has a lot of talent. He’s working really hard, wants to have a great year. I think he stayed up and made a great move there toward the end zone. He got a little bit of help from his teammates.”

### **Q: That kind of play is something you’re used to seeing Marshawn Lynch make. Do you see Lynch’s presence rubbing off on guys?**

**Coach Del Rio:** “Oh, I don’t know if I’d be ready to say anything like that. I think he definitely brings a certain physicality. I think ‘Coop’ is going to be known more for his ability to run and separate, not so much running people over.”

### **Q: How much was Gareon Conley chomping at the bit last week?**

**Coach Del Rio:** “He’s been chomping at the bit, so to speak. Last week he was a little disappointed that we weren’t going to play him, but I assured him that I thought it was imperative for us to do the right thing by him, and that



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when I felt he was ready, we'll play him. Until then, I want him to just do what he can, practice as hard as he can and prepare accordingly. We'll make the call when we think he's right."

### **Q: Why is a full practice so significant for a young player who has missed so much time?**

**Coach Del Rio:** "Well it's a little different than Donald Penn, right? Donald has over a decade of experience starting. He's been in our system. This is his third year now in our system, so it's a lot different than a guy coming in as a rookie and missing so much camp. I think we just need to see more from him in terms of on the field practicing full speed. The conditioning level so he can protect himself, and the effectiveness. We want him to play well. Those are all factors. He's doing everything he needs to do."

### **Q: How big a jump can Amari Cooper make this season?**

**Coach Del Rio:** "Well, I think he's been pretty good the last couple of years, alright? The biggest thing for him is just to continue growing. He's a young player. Like I mention all the time, we have you players that are really driven, that want to be special. They got to work at it. They have the work ethic. That's the biggest thing. Then it's just time. Time performing and playing at a high level."

### **Q: What does it do when Khalil Mack, Bruce Irvin and Eddie Vanderdoes can get after the quarterback and affect the passer?**

**Coach Del Rio:** "Obviously, if you can play coverage and still generate a tremendous rush, that's the optimal way. I think for us, without getting into a whole lot of strategy, I think you blitz when you want to, not because you have to."

### **Q: What about Todd Downing do you think will make him a good offensive coordinator?**

**Coach Del Rio:** "He has a good skill set. I think he has leadership qualities and he has organization. He has a good presence. I think he's done a nice job. He's had a nice start. He won against a real legend of the game with [Titans defensive coordinator Dick] LeBeau last week. It doesn't slow down. This week with [Jets Head Coach Todd] Bowles and what they do. A lot of stuff coming at you. There are challenges every week. As a staff and as a team we're just looking to prepare the best we can."

### **Q: How does the way your offense is built factor in when you're faced with a fourth-and-1 decision?**

**Coach Del Rio:** "Well, it's still there's a certain amount of risk involved. We'll make the decisions. I'll make the decisions that will make the most sense at that given time. I'm not going to make a proclamation because of the things you're talking about. I'm aware of some of those things. I'm also aware of the other team's abilities. We'll make decisions that make sense for us, then you live with them. Good or bad you move on."

## **Raiders QB Derek Carr**

### **Q: What do you think are some of the challenges that the Jets pose?**

**Carr:** "Obviously playing a Coach Bowles-coached team a couple of times, you see the pressures. You see the different coverages he likes to throw at you. They have really talented players. Their front is very active, a very physical front seven. On the back end, they've got two young guys but they don't play like it. They're really aggressive, intense, emotional players which is awesome. You love to see that in the young guys coming up. So many times nowadays you don't see that, so it's good to see. Their corners are super fast, super talented. They have a first round pick in that group and any time you're a first round pick, you are for a reason. They have talent everywhere and they're very well-coached."

### **Q: Why do you think Jared Cook is such a good fit for this offense?**

**Carr:** "I think with the guys that we have on the outside, any tight end would want to come play. I'm glad that we got Jared. Not only is he a great player, we all saw the catches and speed and he can block and all those things, but



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in that locker room he is one of the coolest people to sit by and talk to. That's the kind of people, as you guys have seen, that Mr. [Reggie] McKenzie and Coach [Jack] Del Rio have brought in. They're not only talented, but they're good dudes. They're fun to be around. I think that's where it started with Jared. He's a husband, he's a dad just like I am. We share that in common. Obviously those stories change daily, as all the dads and moms know. I think just being around him is where our connection really started."

### **Q: What does it do for the entire offense to see Marshawn Lynch running the way he did?**

**Carr:** "You saw us getting excited. That's football. You see your running back, you see a teammate, even on [Amari] Cooper's touchdown, you watch everyone getting excited. Everyone in this league is talented. Everybody, every team has talent. When you see an effort like that, when you see people going that extra mile... because, you see it in the practice field. So when it happens in a game, you're just excited for them. You see how hard they work and then you see how hard Cooper works to finish and all those things, then he does that. You see how hard Marshawn runs at practice, then when he does it in a game, it's not a surprise but at the same time you're excited because you see how hard he works to do it."

### **Q: You got a little taste of Marshawn in the preseason, but what do you think the Coliseum is going to be like this week when he gets the ball?**

**Carr:** "Loud. Hopefully we'll be able to be excited and then get quiet again real quick for the offense. I love our fans and I'm happy that they have someone that's homegrown that gets to play in front of them. Like him, like TJ [Carrie], a couple other guys. It's so cool for him coming home. I expect it to be loud."

### **Q: That Amari Cooper touchdown, did that surprise you to see him bowl his way in like that?**

**Carr:** "I'm always going to go to him. Obviously, we didn't hit on all of them that we wanted to hit on. Credit that to being the first game because we were just a little bit off, on my end, on his end, whoever it was. It doesn't matter. Our team didn't score on certain ones. The confidence will always be there, you guys know that. As we've talked about with some guys if they've dropped a couple, the confidence is always there and they know that. We're not worried about that. I'll never shy away, good or bad. Being able to throw the ball in front of the goal line as well as in the end zone is going to help us. If we can do that and score, and do that and score, it makes the defense have to pick."

### **Q: Can you describe what it's like for the home opener in front of Raider Nation?**

**Carr:** "It's rowdy. *(laughter)* I'm glad that I'm a Raider when I'm a part of it. It's exciting, it's an electric atmosphere. I haven't been able to play in one, but I'm pretty sure it's like a playoff game. I'm pretty sure it's that kind of feel. I think that our fans are the best in the world. Whenever we play at home, there's nothing like it. I've been able to play at some special places and this is definitely one of them."

### **Q: What do you think about the move Amari Cooper made to get into the end zone on Sunday and where do you think his game is at right now?**

**Carr:** "Well, I was very excited because we scored. It's always nice to throw an easy pass and let it go for a touchdown. Those are always fun, but I think the way that I feel about it, is I just feel comfortable throwing him any route, whether it's him coming in the middle, on the outside, deep, short, I think that he's worked his tail off in proving to myself that he can really do it all."

### **Q: What's it like from your vantage point seeing Giorgio Tavecchio's performance last week?**

**Carr:** "Absolutely amazing. Some of these things are like a movie, you know? All four years that I've been here, he's been around in OTAs, he's been around at camp, and then we cut him. Every time he comes back, it's like, 'Oh, what's up man!?' So, I'm glad that he's here to stay for a little bit. He's doing some really good things. Talk about a guy that deserves everything that's coming his way; just a good person, that's kind of the theme around here. He's a good dude and he works his tail off. Whether he had a good day or a bad day, in the four years that I've known him, he's always the same. I know as a kicker that's tough, but I think he's got a good head on his shoulders."



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**Q: What's it like being able to rotate your running backs in and out of the game and still be able to do what you want as an offense?**

**Carr:** "Yeah, it's cool. It was something that was a big emphasis for us going into the season. We didn't want to be limited by our personnel groupings. We talked about Lee [Smith] and all those things, how he's just a blocker... Well, that's not the case. He has some of the best hands we've ever been around. We need to incorporate those. Same thing with our backs, although Marshawn [Lynch] is our starter and sometimes he's not in there, those other guys come in and we're not going to change what we do. We're going to play football. We have to be able to do that if we want to be able to compete each and every week with all these good teams."

**Q: What do you see both Jalen Richard and DeAndré Washington provide for the offense?**

**Carr:** "Jalen and DeAndré, they're both explosive. We all know that. Really good hands, good route runners, they're really good in pass protection even though we had a little slip up on one. That didn't bother me at all. Again, I credit that to being the first week, getting your fundamentals back right kind of a deal. I think that with both of those guys in the game, they do similar things, but they give us two options. They give us two fresh bodies so to speak."

### **K Giorgio Tavecchio**

**Q: What does it mean to you to get named AFC Special Teams Player of the Week?**

**Tavecchio:** "Very special, but as I said after the game, for me it's about the team. Usually when an individual gets recognized, it's because the team did something special. For me, I rely so much on my teammates both to block for me or else things would go pretty poorly and to kind of hold me up when you're going through the tough times. When you're waiting for the call. When you're hoping to make it. We had a little meeting after the walk-through and everyone was congratulating me. I'm just grateful to be able to share it with them."

**Q: Were you surprised you kicked two 52-yard field goals?**

**Tavecchio:** "I don't want to say surprised. In the game you just kind of react to whatever situation presents itself. Got the opportunity to, and I'm grateful that I was able to contribute."

**Q: What have the last few days been like for you?**

**Tavecchio:** "I've had a ton of support. Just an out pouring of support from the community. Again, for me, as much of a personal journey as it is, I'd like to share it with as many people as possible. Especially those that have been with me every step of the way. A lot of those people live in this area. Campolindo High School, the Cal community, and to be able to see how happy they are for me, not just as a kicker in the professional light of this experience, but as a person, it means a lot to me. Again, to be able to share that with them after the impact that they've had on me, it's very special."

**Q: How close did you come to giving up football this past offseason?**

**Tavecchio:** "I'd rather not say, but it was pretty close. Pretty close."

**Q: Why did you give it another shot?**

**Tavecchio:** "You've got to look at it. I actually had a very long conversation with [Special Teams Coordinator] coach [Brad] Seely back in the spring. He said, 'I understand what you're thinking. I understand what you're feeling.' We kind of talked through the ping pong battle going on in my head and in my heart. You just have to kind of follow your heart. I knew what my heart wanted. Obviously, you want to make it. You want to succeed. You want to be able to be a part of something special, and this is a special place. You give a lot of yourself. When you're rejected so many times, it takes a lot to put yourself back out there. In the end, if you look back on this in 20 years, I didn't want to have any regrets. That ultimately helped kind of push me to making the decision to come back."



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### **Q: How would you say your time at Cal helped you get to where you are now?**

**Tavecchio:** “You experience a lot of good, a lot of bad, a lot of ugly and I had some great people in my life who supported me through it all. Again, I go back to that foundation. This isn’t as much about me as it is about the people that have helped me get to this point. Have supported me. Have sustained me. Everyone from the Raiders organization, the community, the Cal community, the coaches, the staff, my teammates there. They all have played a part in this time, in this journey.”

### **Q: What can you say about your coaches at Campolindo High School?**

**Tavecchio:** “Coach [Mike] Ahr was a great role model and still is in my mind. I showed up as a sophomore. Just wanted to hit a few kicks every now and then so I could go to the team barbeque because I heard the food was pretty good. He kind of took me under his wing. Taught me some of the basics of kicking. He was really a great role model for handling different life situations. I really respect him for the way he walks in his faith. To me it’s very important. That’s something that he and I share in common. I see how he serves the community and that’s something that I’ve always aspired to, to be able to give back like he has. Coach [Kevin] Macy is just a prototypical high school coach. He’s a man from a different generation. A man from the past. He chewed me out a couple of times in high school. Maybe that’s prepared me for being able to just soak it all up, again, the good, the bad and the ugly.”

### **Q: What have you been doing in between training camps?**

**Tavecchio:** “Trying to be responsible with an adult life. *(laughing)* I’ve always worked part time. I worked a little bit in real estate, was a tutor for a while, helped out with the Cal kickers. I was living in New York this past offseason on the Upper West of Manhattan working for a tech company. You try not to shirk your real world responsibilities while you chase this very elusive and wild and crazy dream.”

### **Q: What’s it like being at camp for six years with four different teams and dealing with constantly getting cut?**

**Tavecchio:** “Well some people would think it would get easier with getting cut, but it actually got harder. The further along you go, the more you grow, the more you believe in yourself, the more you love being around your teammates, your coaches. I consider myself very fortunate to have been called back four years in a row here. Whether it was good looking or left footed, I don’t know. *(laughing)* I hope it’s for the former. It’s hard to kind of devote yourself to the team and want to give and want to serve. You give yourself wholly and fully and then the business decides that it’s time for you to move on for at least the time being. So, it is difficult. That’s something why I keep going back to the great support I’ve had in my life. There were difficult times when you question can I keep giving myself in this way only to be dejected again. Shakespeare said, ‘It’s better to have loved and lost, than to have never loved at all.’ Sometimes I question that, but again right now, I’m grateful for that. In 20 years, hopefully I’ll look back and say, ‘Whatever happens, I gave it everything.’”

### **Q: Did you being left footed limit the teams you were able to compete for?**

**Tavecchio:** “I’ve heard that. Whether that’s an excuse or reality, I don’t know. As I’ve gone through this journey, I’ve always tried to take full responsibility. You never want to blame anybody else. If I didn’t make the team, it’s because I needed to do better. I needed to convince them and obviously I didn’t. Whether that was the reason or not, it’s out of my control.”

### **Q: Was it ever a hard decision to come back here having someone so established? Did you ever think of going somewhere else where you’d have a better chance?**

**Tavecchio:** “You think of those things, but there’s only one team calling. If you want to go back to football, there’s only one opportunity. Again, I say I’m grateful for them because what Coach Del Rio has done here, what this team is doing and what this team will do is special. To get to be a part of it, intermittently for a couple of years, hopefully moving forward for a long period of time after ‘SeaBass’ [Sebastian Janikowski]. I’m just grateful to have gotten a taste and gotten the chance to continue forward.”



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**Q: How many friends and family are you going to have at the game on Sunday?**

**Tavecchio:** "Not too many."

**Q: How overwhelming has it been having all of this newfound attention?**

**Tavecchio:** "It's been a challenge definitely because in my mind you go out on the field, you do your job and there's a subtle joy to it. I've talked to older kickers and they say you just have to stay even-keeled. Maybe my personality isn't necessarily cut from that cloth, but in this case I'm very pleased with how the game went. My mind was already thinking, how do I approach the next game like a pro. This time from the inside out, not from the outside in."

**Q: Brad Seely was with you at your first training camp. What does it mean to have his support all along?**

**Tavecchio:** "It's been absolutely unbelievable. He's been a wonderful mentor, kind of a role model as well. I think he's become attached to me and I've become very attached to him in that I use him as a resource. When I'm experiencing things. When I have some things I want to work on from a technical standpoint. When I'm curious about different situations and how they play out, how I should approach them. I'm very comfortable going to him. He's always been very honest. He's always been very straight forward with me. I feel like he's a great support for me."

**Q: You don't have a smartphone. How many times have you had to clean out your inbox?**

**Tavecchio:** "A few times, a few times. I'll say it again like I said the other day: If you've texted me congratulations or kind words of support and I haven't gotten back to you, I apologize. Know that the feeling is absolutely reciprocated. I'm so grateful for the outpouring of support. I hope to be able to share more moments with you."



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### **Jets Head Coach Todd Bowles Conference Call**

**Q: When you look at your defensive line, what jumps out to you that makes it a strength of your defense?**

**Coach Bowles:** "Right now, they're probably some of the older guys we have on the team. They play well together. They get to know each other. But we have to get better than last week. Last week, we didn't play as well as a group on defense, so for the most part those guys are mature and some of the leaders of the team and they work well together."

**Q: Do you think it will be a good matchup with your defensive front going up against the Raiders' offensive line?**

**Coach Bowles:** "I hope it's a good matchup. I know those guys are tough and huge up front. They're very tough and very smart players, so it'll be a good matchup."

**Q: What did you see out of Marshawn Lynch last week on film?**

**Coach Bowles:** "Unfortunately, the same things I saw in Arizona – him running well, him running hard, great feet, good vision. Like he never left."

**Q: There is a certain perception of where your roster is at today. Where do you feel your team is?**

**Coach Bowles:** "It doesn't matter whether they're young or old. We have to get better and play together. We have to win ballgames. That's our job. That's what we line up to do. We don't worry about perception like you said. We just worry about us in the building and getting ourselves better and go from there."

**Q: How much does Jared Cook add to the Raiders' offense?**

**Coach Bowles:** "He just brings another weapon among a team that already has a ton of weapons. He can run. He can catch the ball. He can run routes. He does a lot of things for them. It's almost like having four wide receivers if you want to have you want to have him out there, but at the same time, he can run block as well, so it brings another dimension for him."

**Q: What exactly do you see with the matchup against Khalil Mack?**

**Coach Bowles:** "It's going to be tough. You better bring your lunch every time you go up against him. Three wasn't enough. Maybe we'll try five or six. He's a tough player. He's All-Pro for a reason. We know how good he is. We just have to try to slow him down a little bit enough to try and make some plays."

**Q: It is tough to play another team's home opener? Does that create a disadvantage?**

**Coach Bowles:** "No, home openers don't matter. You play enough in this league where you go to every stadium. You just have to get yourself ready to play."