



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Head Coach Jack Del Rio

Q: What have you seen in the last two practices with the pads?

Coach Del Rio: "It's good to be in the pads. We don't have a ton of padded practices before we leave here. I think it's less than a dozen. It's really important work for us. If we're going to be a physical football team, there's a certain amount of physical work that has to go in. I feel like two really solid days are in the book right now."

Q: What's your take on having a couple of guys getting into at practice?

Coach Del Rio: "We're looking to practice like we play, so we're looking to have self-control. I think for the most part we have. The guys are doing a pretty good job of taking care of business. I think for the most part it's been minimal."

Q: Are you guys going to be similar defensively to last year's team or are you looking to add more?

Coach Del Rio: "Well, we'll let our opponents figure that out in the fall. I mean obviously, your second year, whether it's offense, defense or special teams, I think in all three phases as a returning staff, with core players returning, I think there's a certain amount of carryover that you can expect where you feel like you can do things and sharpen it up and do them even better. A little clarity in terms of what I'm looking for and as a staff, what we're looking for. I think with that, you should expect to see improvement. We know there's a lot of work ahead of us. This is just four days into training camp, but I feel like we have four really good days that are behind us. Now we get a little bit of a break, and we'll be back at it. Then next week have a big week."

Q: How is the offensive line coming together?

Coach Del Rio: "I think it's going to be a really good group, but it takes time to come together. In particular with the offensive line, we're talking about that fist. You don't want individual fingers, you want a fist to be strong, to be solidified on the same page with communication, combination blocks. All those things take time. Protection, protection calls, all the little nuances of being really good. We have a collection of big, strong men that are athletic and that have the kind of temperament that we're looking for. [Offensive line coach] Mike Tice is really pleased with the way the guys are working."

Q: Do you like what you've seen from Menelik Watson so far?

Coach Del Rio: "Menelik? Yeah. We're happy he's healthy. [He's] doing a good job and yeah, I would agree with you. I think he's done a nice job to start camp."

Q: Is your offensive line your main concern or is it where you feel at ease?

Coach Del Rio: "I would just say there are a lot of different areas on our football team that have my attention, will continue to get my attention. Being physical in the trenches is where a lot of what we do starts. Really determined to insure that we have good, physical offensive and defensive line play and I think that's the foundation of everything that you want to do as a football team."

Q: How is Connor Cook's development coming?

Coach Del Rio: "Good. It's good to have him back. There was a death with a close friend and he was away yesterday, but he got back last night and joined us today and he's doing fine."

Q: What are your thoughts on Jalen Richard so far? Has he impressed you?

Coach Del Rio: "Yeah. We have a lot of opportunities, a lot of reps in camp. A lot of different guys get opportunities. Yeah, I would say he's done a nice job with the looks he's gotten so far."



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Q: Has it been difficult to get a gauge on the offensive line with Kelechi Osemele missing a few practices?

Coach Del Rio: "No. I mean he missed yesterday, but he's back today. I think we'll get a pretty good gauge on the kind of group. I mean it's a short amount of time, we've been in pads for two days, but I think you can see signs of what we're looking for. It's encouraging to start that way, but we understand there's a lot of work in front of us."

Q: What have you seen from Jon Feliciano? Do you feel like it's good to get him in there?

Coach Del Rio: "Oh sure. Nah, it's great. As you go through the season, you always have to have versatility. Jon taking snaps at guard, center. He's matured, his body, he's matured in terms of strength and fitness and understanding what we're doing. I think Jon's off to a nice start with camp. Anytime somebody is nicked or anything happens where he misses time, other guys get opportunity. That's usually good for you. Good for the team, good for the guy that gets that opportunity to take advantage of it."

Q: Are DeAndré Washington and Latavius Murray vastly different from one another?

Coach Del Rio: "We really have come into it wanting to learn as much as we can about our guys. As a staff, one of the number one things that I stress with our guys is let's determine the things our guys can do and then it's our job to put them in position to do those things. If there are things that they can't do, then let's just make sure we're doing as little of that as possible. It's what coaching is all about. With the case of DeAndré and Jalen [Richard], some of the younger guys, we're really learning about our younger guys, even K.O. [Kelechi Osemele]. He's a player that's a veteran player, played at a high level in this league, but we're learning about him. We're learning about these guys that are new to us. So as coaches, we want to make sure that we're really thorough with them, that we give them an opportunity to express who they are, let them compete, and then learn. We're taking notes and we're sharing the information. As a football team, we want to make sure we take advantage of the individual talents that we have."

Q: What are your thoughts on Max McCaffrey so far?

Coach Del Rio: "Well, I'm a big fan of the family. I do know the dad and the mom. They're both good athletes in their own right. They have a great family. My son and his brother, Christian, played high school football together, so I've been around the McCaffrey family a while. I think he's doing a good job, coming in, competing his tail off. It's fun to watch those young guys, see how camp goes, see how it progresses for them. He's definitely coming to camp in shape [and] doing a great job."

Q: What have you learned so far about Johnny Holton?

Coach Del Rio: "Kind of the same; young guy getting an opportunity. We'll learn more as we go. I haven't really focused on him or Max, some of the younger receivers. I've spent a little more time with Amari [Cooper] and all those guys, 'Crab' [Michael Crabtree] and those guys, but they'll get a chance. They're going to get reps. Everybody here is going to get a lot of reps and we'll see how it plays out."

Q: When the fans react to rookies making a big play, does that kind of turn your head?

Coach Del Rio: "Yeah. Yeah, and then not only what you see out here, but then we go in to tape and talk about it as a staff, you find out maybe he's doing a little extra, find out he's spending extra time in meetings. He's doing everything right in the weight room; all the different factors that add up. Usually you start getting a lot of positive feedback from your staff, throughout the building and those are the kind of guys that end up finding a way to stick."

Q: Is Dan Williams doing everything he needs to be doing right now or is he behind?

Coach Del Rio: "Yeah, no. Dan is doing good, working hard. He's doing everything he needs to do."



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Q: How do you see Mychal Rivera stepping up?

Coach Del Rio: "Yeah, I think Mychal has done a good job of competing. I know he comes into this season and would like his role to be even bigger. We'll let guys determine that through their efforts here in camp and through the preseason games and whatnot. We have a good group. Gabe Holmes, a young guy we invested time in last year, is also in the mix. We'll let those guys work it out through competition."

Q: Is there an open competition between Justin Ellis and Dan Williams?

Coach Del Rio: "It's pretty much open competition everywhere and we really like the idea of playing the guy who's performing the best and who's going to help us win on Sundays. Thus far, we as a staff think that 'Jelly' [Justin Ellis] is ahead of Dan, but we're a long way from lining it up in September. 'Jelly' is off to a great start. Dan's a good football player. Competition brings out the best. Right now as we're stacking up our practices, 'Jelly' is a little bit ahead of Dan. Like I said, it's way too early to be worrying about where it ends up. I think clearly you're looking at competition. They're all going to play. It's just a matter of who gets to trot out first, but they're all going to play. We're going to use all of our guys. We're going to use all of the talent we have and we like to play all of our guys. Keep them fresh. We're going to count on both of those guys to play big for us this year and play a lot for us this year, but who rolls out first, we'll see. It's competitive."