



## Oakland Raiders Transcript

### Interim Head Coach Tony Sparano

**Opening Statement:** "Today in practice: Larry Asante was limited today with a shoulder; TJ Carrie was limited today with an ankle; Jonathan Dowling, he was limited today with a back; Gabe Jackson limited today with a knee; [Brian] Leonhardt was full today with a concussion; Latavius [Murray] was limited today as well; Carlos Rogers did not practice today; and Neiko Thorpe did not practice today."

**Q: Does Latavius Murray still have one more step to go through?**

**Coach Sparano:** "He still has one step to go, we're not there yet."

**Q: Brian Leonhardt has been cleared?**

**Coach Sparano:** "Leonhardt is fine."

**Q: Other than good special teams, what are some of the other hallmarks of a Jeff Fisher coached football team?**

**Coach Sparano:** "I mean they are just really well coached. Defensively they're a team that gets after you, that gets after the quarterback. They always have been. When he was in Tennessee, played him a bunch of times there. They get after the quarterback. He's got guys that can fly around pretty good that way. Always has a good front. But, not afraid to take chances, do those type of things during the course of ball games and fundamentally really sound."

**Q: They've had some changes at quarterback. What does Shaun Hill bring to the table?**

**Coach Sparano:** "I would say veteran leadership is one of the things he brings to the table. I think he's a really sound guy, makes good decisions with the football. He's a veteran type of a player that handles the game really well that way. I don't think any situational stuff gets to him or any of those type of things. He's seen a lot of stuff, there's no question about that and I think there's huge value to that."

**Q: Can yourself giving a guy who is cleared with a concussion another week off or once he's cleared, he's cleared?**

**Coach Sparano:** "I don't really know that yet. I have no idea. It depends on how the guy feels and where we are at that point, but I really don't have an idea of that."

**Q: Are you getting close to deciding whether or not Gabe Jackson will start this week?**

**Coach Sparano:** "No, not a whole lot closer right now. I mean, he practiced again today. I had seen some things yesterday during practice that were really good, I had seen some things yesterday in practice that weren't quite where I think they needed to be, but we'll watch the film today and see where he is. It's whether or not he starts, plays or is not active. Those are all still possibilities."

**Q: How big of an impact has Gabe Jackson made for you guys this year?**

**Coach Sparano:** "I think Gabe [Jackson] has made a huge impact. I would argue strongly to the way that he's played. In other words, I know there are some other guards out there that are getting a lot of accolades and a lot of things like that, but this guy has played pretty darn good against some good people. I've watched it and those people know it and for where we found this player in the draft and where we were able to get Gabe in that situation, I think it was a tremendous job by [General Manager] Reggie [McKenzie] and people up there. I really do think this kid is playing well and will be a good player here for a really long time."

**Q: Does the situation not look good for Neiko Thorpe with him not practicing this week?**

**Coach Sparano:** "Obviously he hasn't practice and when I usually have said that to you guys it's been truth, so it doesn't look great in that scenario. We've still got a little bit more time here, but it doesn't look great and that one would hurt because of the special teams contribution that he makes each and every week. He's been huge that way, plus he's played. I think that the team that we're playing, with their special teams, we have to have good



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answers there in those situations. We've made contingency plans if he can't play and obviously those guys are ready to go here and they'll have to step up if he can't play."

### **Q: What's your cutup like of their trick plays and their special teams stuff?**

**Coach Sparano:** "It's kind of interesting to watch. If you really go way back, you'll see everything. Obviously, he was involved in one of the biggest special teams plays I think that there was out there in a pretty big game. When you're watching it, there's a lot of trick stuff there. There's a lot of chances taken in those situations and I think that's a good thing. It motivates his team and he's done it and they've succeeded doing it. Obviously, it gives us something to work on."

### **Q: You talked about responding to adversity in the middle of ball games. Against the Chiefs, the team didn't hang their heads and went down and won the game. How important was it to learn that lesson, to bounce back from a moment in a game like that?**

**Coach Sparano:** "I think it was really important, no question about it. I think that you keep talking a lot about the fact that our team's gotten into this end of the pool a bunch. We've been able to get there and not finish the football game for whatever the reason. We just keep talking about putting ourselves back in that position and learning how to do that, learning how to win in those situations. It's a good lesson, because when you put the film on and you get a chance to show them the reasons why they won the football game in those scenarios, it's very, very clear when they watch it. They can see themselves having success. They can see the momentum being on our side in those situations. They can see us doing it better fundamentally, doing it harder, executing better in those situations. All those things are sitting there on tape for them, so there's good validation to that."