

Atlanta Falcons Media Conference

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Drake London Draft Press Conference



Q. What's the last 12, 14 hours been like since we talked to you last?

DRAKE LONDON: My life has changed for the better, my family's life has changed for the better. Honestly I'm just living out a dream right now and soaking it all in.

Q. There was a video of you watching stuff with your family. You got pretty emotional there. What was that like? Seemed like you didn't know that was coming.

DRAKE LONDON: Yeah, no, I didn't know it was coming. I was trying to hold those in all day and they just put me in a room and was like, watch. I was like, all right. They did that, and once I seen my mom and my dad and then my sister, too, it just all went downhill from there. It just goes to show how close we are as a family.

Q. Have you heard from Drake yet?

DRAKE LONDON: Have I heard from Drake yet? No, I'm thinking about sending a tweet out and telling him you're welcome.

Q. You just mentioned your family. Could you elaborate on what they've meant to you and how they've supported you and helped you get here?

DRAKE LONDON: Yeah, everything. I wouldn't be in the position I am today without them. From the early morning, long nights, traveling with me, whether it was AAU basketball or football, and just being in my corner at all times, whether it was right or wrong. They were always there for me, and that's why I love them so much.

Q. I wonder if you've heard from Trae Young yet.

DRAKE LONDON: Yeah, I actually seen that he shouted me out, which was pretty crazy. Actually Big O on the Hawks, I used to play with him on my freshman team for basketball, so I got a little connection there, and definitely want to go see some games.

Q. Did you guys stay in touch after he left?

DRAKE LONDON: Yes, actually literally just texted him right now and he just texted me, so we've been chopping it up back and forth and so he's welcomed me into the A.

Q. Eighth grade Drake would have picked the NBA or the NFL?

DRAKE LONDON: NFL. I was pretty short then, so I don't know if I could have played basketball. But NFL for sure.

Q. How was it suffering the injury this year? You were on your way to a mega season. How tough was that and just doing the rehab to put things back together for yourself?

DRAKE LONDON: Yeah, you know, it was tough. That was the first time I had dealt with something like that, especially breaking a bone, and having to go through a rigorous rehab, a quick one at that, to try to get back.

But again, back to the family, I had people in my corner who supported me and loved me and wanted to see me succeed at the end of the day, and I couldn't let them down.

Q. What was it like working out with T.J. and then maybe a little bit on the Falcons private workout with you.

DRAKE LONDON: Oh, it was great. I mean, T.J. has been a blessing to me. He showed me that -- he's shown me the ropes. He's teaching me everything he knows, and I'm just like a big sponge. I'm trying to soak in everything I possibly can.

Q. And the workout with the Falcons, how did that go for you? I know you've been through a lot of workouts.

DRAKE LONDON: Yeah, it went really, really well. They understood my situation and they just wanted to see how I moved. I'm sitting here today, so I think they liked it.

Q. What's the difference between coming to a team that you know is rebuilding and trying to put things together versus coming to a team that's already at a competitive level?

DRAKE LONDON: I think I would have the same mindset either way. I came here to win, and that's the end goal. I came here to contribute in any way I possibly can. At the end of the day, we're trying to build a winning culture at the end of the day. Yeah, I would come in with the same mindset regardless.

Q. Do you know much about Arthur Smith's offensive philosophy?

DRAKE LONDON: Yeah, a little bit. But at the same time, I'm just trying to come in and contribute in any way I can. I could care less what type of system or scheme they're running. Wherever Coach puts me I'm going to try to be my best and really do what I do best.

Q. You just mentioned a winning culture. What do you bring to a culture, and do you consider yourself a leader?

DRAKE LONDON: I would say intensity.

Would I consider myself a leader? Yes, but at the same time I am a rookie. I have to go through all the ropes. Probably going to be carrying shoulder pads and helmets all the time, rookie dinner, things like that. I would definitely say in the future I would like to be a leader.

Q. You used the word a couple times yesterday when asked to describe yourself "fearless." Can you talk a little bit more about that side of you?

DRAKE LONDON: Yeah, I would say I'm a fearless player in the way that I go attack the ball. I could care less who's trying to hit me. It's football at the end of the day. I know I'm going to get hit. I just look at it as it's modern day gladiators out there. That's how I view it, and you can't be fearless on the field. If you are, then that's how bad things happen.

Q. You follow a good succession of wide receivers here. Tell us about what you want to do to build on to that tradition and the success of that position.

DRAKE LONDON: Yeah, going back to SC, that's why I went to SC is the tradition of great receivers, so if I can come here and add to that, I think that would be great.

Q. Both Terry and Arthur talk a lot about makeup and

culture. I'm sure they talked with you about that as part of that process; is that right?

DRAKE LONDON: Yeah, a little bit, yeah.

Q. How do you think they tried to determine what your makeup was? I think Arthur said you were wired the right way. How do you think they tried to figure that out?

DRAKE LONDON: Just my play on the field, how I impose my will on other defenders. I mean, outside the white lines, I think you guys can tell I am pretty laid back and just kind of chill.

But in between those white lines, I think something comes out of me at the end of the day, and as you're saying "wired right," you've got to have that in order to play football, especially at a high level.

Q. On the field have you always been wired like that, or do you remember a point growing up when it transitioned?

DRAKE LONDON: Yeah, I think in middle school I didn't really like getting put on my back. I didn't like that at all, so the only other choice was to put somebody else on their back, and after you do that, you feel good.

Q. Do you remember the first time it happened? Do you remember was there a moment that sticks out to you, a kid that you got after he got you?

DRAKE LONDON: You know, it wasn't even tackle football, it was flag football. You're not really supposed to hit. That was the last season I played because of it.

But yeah, I hit a kid pretty hard and it was just like a good feeling.

Q. Did you get ejected from the game or the league? Like you couldn't play flag football anymore?

DRAKE LONDON: No, I didn't get ejected from the league, but I had to sit out a couple plays that game definitely for that.

Q. Who did you watch growing up as far as receivers? I know you talked about Mike Evans, but were there other guys where you said, okay, this is who I'm watching, this is who I'm patterning myself after?

DRAKE LONDON: I would say I started watching Mike Evans when he was at A&M. From a young kid standpoint, I would say Calvin Johnson, Megatron, was somebody who

I looked up to. To me he's the best receiver to ever play. If he could play longer, he would be the best.

Q. What was it about Calvin's game that really made you say, okay, that's what it was?

DRAKE LONDON: He had every single tangible that you could think of in a wide receiver. He would blow right past you. He'll jump over you. He'll catch it on an intermediate route and go score. Honestly, he'd just manhandle you at the end of the day. That's what I think I'm trying to emulate and I'm trying to get to.

Q. Were you a Madden guy? Did you use him in Madden all the time?

DRAKE LONDON: No, I wasn't a Madden guy when I was younger. I didn't really have an Xbox console or anything like that. I was always outside with friends and doing little kid things and just having fun.

Q. Have you looked at AJ Brown and what he did in the Tennessee offense?

DRAKE LONDON: Yes.

Q. What did you take from that study?

DRAKE LONDON: It's electric. I mean, he was doing his job, and he was putting up great numbers. That's just a testament to Coach Smith.

Q. Obviously there's the jokes about the Twin Towers thing, but being able to play alongside Kyle Pitts in this offense and having two big targets like that for this offense going forward, do you think you're going to be able to bring that?

DRAKE LONDON: I think it's going to be fun. It's going to be something special. I think once I meet him and we get to know each other, I think we're going to elevate each other in great ways.

Q. You've been a California guy your whole life; what do you know really, if anything, about Atlanta and the South?

DRAKE LONDON: Not much, but when I was outside that weather felt great, I'll tell you that. So I'm not mad at it at all.

Q. It gets hotter.

DRAKE LONDON: I'm used to the dry heat out there, but we'll see.

Q. Have any of your new teammates reached out since you've been drafted?

DRAKE LONDON: Honestly, I'm not going to lie, my phone is on fire right now. After I get done with everything here, I'm going to go back and just thank everybody, and if they have reached out to me I would definitely be more than willing to talk to them.

Q. Your 40 time seemed to be a hot topic during this whole process. How do you respond to people who have questions about your speed?

DRAKE LONDON: At the end of the day, you could say I'm covered. It's really not the case. I'll go over the top of somebody, but at the same time go watch tape, definitely have blown past a couple people. Yeah, so that's all I've got to say about that.

Q. This is new, No. 5. Would you have worn that at Southern Cal if Reggie didn't have it before?

DRAKE LONDON: That's kind of hard to say. I don't know if I want to follow up on somebody like that. Reggie, that's kind of big shoes to fill.

But no, I was just given 15 when I got to SC, and I kind of just made it my own. I wore No. 2 in high school. That was a big thing. So I kind of just canceled out the 1, flipped the 2 upside down, and that's how it rocks.

Q. How aware are you or how much did you follow Marcus Mariota when he was at Oregon more so even when you were a kid? Do you remember his career there?

DRAKE LONDON: Yeah, Kenjon Barner, LaMichael, right? De'Anthony, all them. That was the team to be, and Marcus was the one who was leading them. I tell people, I'm so excited to just be in a room with him, and I know he's a down-to-earth person and somebody who I can learn from in all aspects of the game, even just being a man. So I'm really, really excited.

Q. Do you think you're the best basketball player on this team already?

DRAKE LONDON: If I'm the best basketball player on the team already? I think I'm top 3 right now without looking at anybody, yeah. (Laughter.)

Q. Was there a point during this pre-draft process, maybe something that somebody said to you that really kind of keyed you in like Atlanta wants me at 8?

Was there something during your interaction with Coach or with Terry where you keyed in --

DRAKE LONDON: Honestly I think it was just the vibe and me and all the coaches had when we met for the first time. I think it's just people who I wanted to be surrounded by, people who understand me for me, and just having that is special in its own. I think they're going to allow me to elevate my game to the highest level it can possibly be.

Q. What was your best 40 time?

DRAKE LONDON: Best 40 time? I probably ran that in -- I don't know when, but it was a 4.5.

Q. Going back to basketball for a minute, when you were looking at kind of how you play, how much do you think basketball translates or some of those basketball skills translate to some of the things that you do?

DRAKE LONDON: I mean, you can see it everywhere on the field, especially in my play, just how I was saying, going up top on somebody, using crossovers at the line of scrimmage, and the biggest one honestly is just spatial awareness, understanding just where you're at, the zones, everything. In basketball you've got to have a very good self-conscious of that, and I think I do have that a lot. That's why I'm able to play in the slot and be pretty successful in there.

Q. Having covered Keary Colbert at Carolina, tell me what he helped you with in preparing you to be a route runner and how he helped you with your game.

DRAKE LONDON: Everything. I mean, I was his project for three years in a sense. It's not the final product yet. He just helped me get to a certain point, and I couldn't thank him enough for that. But KC has helped me become a better man, a better player, all across the board from A to Z he's just been extreme help to me. That's why he was there with me on draft night.

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