

Atlanta Falcons Media Conference

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Desmond Ridder

Postgame Press Conference



Q. Desmond, how did you feel things went in your first NFL start?

DESMOND RIDDER: Yeah, obviously off the bat wasn't the hottest start you could have, but no, I felt it went well. We went out there, our goal was to go out there and execute, dominate the line of scrimmage, and that we did, and just keep the ball moving.

We still had little issues here and there, when it comes to just getting the plays going and everything, but we'll clean that up. And I think it went well.

Q. The 15 and the 14-play drives, first one you had the three third down conversions, and then just what were some of the keys for you all staying up there on those drives like that?

DESMOND RIDDER: Like I said, it's just really keeping the ball moving forward any way possible to do that. Whether it's running the ball, whether it's throwing the ball, there's a screen, it doesn't matter, we want to keep the ball moving forward. So in that situation we were able to do that.

We train to have those long drives and train to grind down the other team more than we're tired, and that's what we did.

Q. Coach on the interception said somebody went the wrong way and then one mistake turned into two. What was your breakdown of that play?

DESMOND RIDDER: On the first one or the second one?

Q. The first one. He took credit for the second one, said he just wanted to throw it up on that one.

DESMOND RIDDER: No, those are both on me. I'm out there on the field. No, but yeah, on the first one, I think we had something go wrong with the line, so I had a guy in my face. I still thought I could have made the throw. Throwing late over the middle probably isn't the best option, and

obviously you know the first play of the game, like I said, we want to get things going.

So learning from that, next time just throwing it away probably a better option. Like you said, things sometimes just build on top of build when things go wrong. So once one thing goes wrong, our job as a quarterback is to not make it any worse than it already is. So obviously that's what I need to do better.

Q. How did Neuzil and his guys do up front for you?

DESMOND RIDDER: They did great, all five of them that were in there. We obviously have been with a lot of them since rookie mini camp, so it's been great that we were all able to get out there, and they did a heck of a job. Those are my boys so --

Q. Going back to what you were talking about before in terms of, if something breaks down, just as a quarterback continuing to move forward, I think that's something you should reinforce in preseason games. Can you talk a little more about your mindset. When things break down, it's like I have to go out there and perform like nothing happened, what kind of goes through your head at that moment?

DESMOND RIDDER: Just play the next play. I think that's been instilled in me since probably my high school days and maybe even younger, but mostly high school. As a quarterback, you've got to play the next play. No matter what happens on the next one, what happened on the drive before, the first half, it doesn't matter. Go out there and play the next play. It's a new play, and there's new opportunities to be made.

Q. Arthur Smith has talked a lot over the course of the last week of not waiting around for you to develop. He's talking more along the lines of I'm not going to coach him like a rookie, I'm going to coach him like he's been here. For you, what does that make you feel, and why is that something that you want your coach to do for you?

DESMOND RIDDER: Yeah, that makes me feel good



because, one, I know he cares. He knows what player I can be, and you know he sees the potential that I have. So he's just trying to get everything out of me, and I love that as a coach.

I don't care whether it's hard coaching, soft coaching, whatever it may be. Sometimes it is tough when he gives it to me, and that's fine. I'm going to take it and kind of to your last question, but onto the next play. So you remember these things and you remember these moments, but they're all for the better of not only myself, but the team as well.

Q. This is your first preseason in the NFL. In what ways do you feel like you have grown as a player and as a quarterback in general over the course of the last month and a half?

DESMOND RIDDER: I would definitely say my overall knowledge of the game, just when it comes situationally, and also just when it comes as the offensive scheme-wise. Just having the past three, four months, whatever it may be, just consumed with knowledge, it's been fun for me.

So I'm excited to continue this journey and keep continuing to learn.

Q. You talk about moving on to the next play, but how do you do that when obviously you come out here probably pretty pumped up, you're first preseason start in the NFL, and probably throw that pick? It's easy to say go on to the next play, but how do you do that and not let yourself get down and feel like, gosh, I'm ruining things here right off the bat?

DESMOND RIDDER: You know, what I always say is you can't -- you got to be neutral through everything. So yes, it was my first preseason start, first game at home, first start at home. I stayed calm through warmups, through the beginning, through the end.

So not making a big deal of what it may be, just making it another deal and what you've got to go handle, that's what I kind of pride myself on is just kind of going to do the next thing.

Q. Whether it be before the game or after the game today, did you take a second to yourself to reflect that probably a dream that you've been dreaming since you were a kid actually got accomplished today?

DESMOND RIDDER: No, I have not. Right there at the end, we kind of just had a little group of silence, moment of silence, just to pray for injuries and everything. So I did take a little time just to thank God that I'm here, made it

with no injuries, and we're onto tomorrow. So I'm blessed for that.

Q. Desmond, what did you think about your bounce back factor from the offensive line? After the turnover in the first quarter, you guys went for a pretty long drive. And then the drives that you were able to punch in for touchdowns overall. Just talk about that and your offensive line play.

DESMOND RIDDER: I thought our offensive line did a great job today. I know -- I think we had a couple of false starts, whatever it may be, and miscommunication, that's on me as well. So not all of that is on them.

Other than that, they dominated the line of scrimmage. That's how you win games is up front, both on the O-line and the D-line. Both sides of our ball dominated and special teams. So that's where you win games.

Everyone on the same page to accomplish the mission, accomplish the goal. That's what we came out here to do, and that's what we did. No, like I said, the O-line did a great job. The boys love running behind them. So it was great.

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