

# Atlanta Falcons Media Conference

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Atlanta, Georgia, USA

## Marcus Ardel Taulauniu Mariota

Postgame Press Conference

New Orleans Saints 27 - Atlanta Falcons 26.

**Q. Missed opportunities. Three-quarters you guys were down, in the last half quarter things kind of slipped away. What did you see? What was the difference?**

MARCUS ARDEL TAULAUNIUMARIOTA: I would say the biggest difference was just finishing in the red zone. We had opportunities -- multiple opportunities to go in there and score touchdowns and kind of put the game away. We allowed them as an offense to stick around and that's something we have to get back and look at and correct.

**Q. The fumble as you were going toward the inside there, what happened there?**

MARCUS ARDEL TAULAUNIUMARIOTA: Yeah, honestly I just lost track of where I was. I thought I needed a few more for first down. So I put my head down. I realized I already had it. Looking back in that situation I wish I would have just gone down and protected the ball and we would have had another chance to score points.

**Q. If you were to hear that you had 201 yards rushing as a team and lost, would you believe it?**

MARCUS ARDEL TAULAUNIUMARIOTA: No. I don't -- yeah, that's tough. Right? I think if you ever run the football as well as we did, make plays in the passing game, obviously we just gotta find ways to score more points. I think we did a great job of moving the ball. Guys up front did an unbelievable job all game of controlling the line of scrimmage and when it comes down to it in this league if you're not scoring points in the red zone you leave the door open and you gotta give credit to the Saints. They found a way at the end to win the game.

**Q. What happened on the exchange?**



MARCUS ARDEL TAULAUNIUMARIOTA: Yeah, that was 100 percent on me. Unfortunately, I was trying to we had a great look for the play that we called. And I tried to cheat it and get back a little quicker so I would have an opportunity to read it a little bit better. And it's something that you take for granted. Unfortunately, it kind of got away from us, and that's completely on me.

**Q. What were your impressions of Drake's first game in the NFL?**

MARCUS ARDEL TAULAUNIUMARIOTA: I thought he had a great day. For us it's no surprise. We've seen that throughout camp. We've seen that in OTAs. So I think it's a great stepping stone, but that's the expectation. That's the standard that we're going to hold him to. But I love playing with these guys. They continue to find ways to get open and you just gotta find ways to get it to them.

**Q. This may be a question for later in the week, but when it comes to breaking this game down do you look at it collectively or do you break it down and you're like, we played really well for three-quarters and then let's go through the fourth quarter and what went wrong? How do you kind of look at it when you're going through it?**

MARCUS ARDEL TAULAUNIUMARIOTA: I take it as a whole, because I do think there was missed opportunities throughout the entire course of the game. And it's part of week one, right? You kind of iron some things out. This is the full first game that we got to play together. With that being said, I'm not going to look at it specifically, you know, one quarter or another. I really believe if you look at it as a whole, there's ways that we can improve and find ways to score more points and hopefully win the game.

**Q. Marcus, you looked real good out there, almost vintage Oregon. I thought maybe you had a green jersey under there. You looked real good running the ball getting up and down, north and south, not so much east and west. Is that something that you want to do more of during the season to give the team a different look?**



MARCUS ARDEL TAULAUNI MARIOTA: Well, yeah. I think it just kind of depends on what they're doing defensively. The Saints basically were allowing me to pull some of those end zone reads, giving me opportunities to get north and south. But we'll have to see week to week. And that's what's fun about this offense, we can do a lot of different things. And we're not one-dimensional. We can kind of do a lot of things, and we've got a bunch of guys that are very versatile. So if it calls for it, yes. If not, you know, I'll do whatever I can to help this team out.

**Q. You've been in this league for a while now. How hard is it to let go of losses like this?**

MARCUS ARDEL TAULAUNI MARIOTA: Yeah. It is tough. But I think as an older player and I think we've got some older vets in this locker room, they understand the nature of the beast. It's one of 17. There's 16 more of these. There's a lot of good on the tape. There's a lot of things we can get better at. But I don't think you gotta hang your head at all. It's early in the season. We'll find ways to improve. This team will continue to come together, and I love playing with these guys. I think we have a chance to be good.

**Q. What you guys were able to do today, is that what you envisioned it would look like?**

MARCUS ARDEL TAULAUNI MARIOTA: It's kind of hard to say, because I do think we're so versatile in a lot of things that we do that it just kind of depends week to week. But I guess today was one of those days where up front we were doing a great job and we were able to run the football. So, yes, I think we are on the right track, but we just have to be better in red zone and some of these third down situations.

**Q. You mentioned red zone again. What happened there on the fumble?**

MARCUS ARDEL TAULAUNI MARIOTA: Yeah. I just lost track of where I was. I thought I needed a few more yards. I put my head down to get what I thought was a first down. Just unfortunately one of those things. Looking back on it, if I can understand where I'm at, I would love to get down, give us another chance to get some points.

**Q. You made mention and coach made mention this it's 17 games and this is the first. Because it's the first time we're looking at 17 games and the importance of Game 1 in a 17-game season, trying to just look forward to it?**

MARCUS ARDEL TAULAUNI MARIOTA: Yeah. What's really cool about this team and what's really cool about the

culture that they're building here is it's just one day at a time. We're doing our best to stay present, finding ways to improve on what is going on in that moment. I think if you look too far ahead or if you're looking too far back, you get yourself in trouble. So as a team, we're going to find ways to get better from this and we're just going to take it one day at a time. And when things are rolling and we pick our heads up in December, I think we'll like where we're at.

**Q. And 17 games gives you that latitude?**

MARCUS ARDEL TAULAUNI MARIOTA: Absolutely. There's more opportunities, right? With 17 games there's more chances to win games and find yourself in a playoff run.