

# Atlanta Falcons Media Conference

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Atlanta, Georgia, USA

## Marcus Mariota

### Postgame Press Conference



San Francisco 49ers 14 - Atlanta Falcons 28

**Q. Marcus, I know you were talking on Wednesday when we talked to you and you said I'm not worried about statistics. I've never been. That's not part of who I am, but to go 13 of 14 in the pass game today, what does that kind of mean to you in the over all flow of this game?**

MARCUS MARIOTA: We kind of expected that was going to be the case. It's a good defense, and just kind of gotta take what they give you. My goal was just to be efficient throughout the day and just try to give our guys opportunities to make plays, and knew that we were just going to have to slowly dig and dock our way down there to get points.

**Q. To that end, the run game was working today. How did you feel like the run game supplemented what you guys wanted and needed to do offensively?**

MARCUS MARIOTA: I truly believe when we're able to run the ball the way that we do, make some plays in the pass game, we're tough, we're tough to defend. So the more that we can do that, the more that we can show our versatility, and I think it's going to be beneficial for the rest of the year.

**Q. We talked to you on Wednesday and then also after the game last week about the need to be better on first and second down and getting positive yardage, even if it's two, three yards. How did you feel like the offense changed in comparison to where y'all were at this time last week in that regard?**

MARCUS MARIOTA: Yeah. I think just keeps you in rhythm. At the end of the day, if you're able just to -- even if it is just two, three yards, you're in third and manageable situations and you're more likely to convert. I think we obviously improved. There are some things. We got some penalties, a couple of negative plays that stole drives but for the most part, when we're able to get in a rhythm and

do well on first and second down, we're able to score points.

**Q. If you could, please talk about the belief in that locker room because there was some outside the locker room before the season started there probably were low expectations from the media and fans and things like that, but here we are six games in, three and three, tied for the division lead right now. Just talk about the belief in that locker room?**

MARCUS MARIOTA: We got a great group of guys that truly believe in what the culture that's being built here. And that's fun to be a part of. When I was a free agent I was looking at places to play. I knew Art here was going to build that type of locker room, and when you have a bunch of good guys that enjoy coming to work that want to put in their best effort for each other and not just really themselves, you're going to find ways to win games and be successful. So we've just got a great group of guys, and I look forward to continue to play with them.

**Q. Coach Smith said that you're one of the most genuine leaders of this team and that's what makes you so great as a leader. In talking to some of your teammates, they all say the same. Where have you seen your leadership grown even throughout the years of your career or even through just these past six games?**

MARCUS MARIOTA: I really try to be myself. I think when you try to put up a front or a persona, guys, especially at this level, they can read into that. So I never try to be any different than who I am. I was raised in the middle of the Pacific ocean. You know, ten hours away from here. So that is something that I carry with me every single day. And as long as I stay true to myself, I really believe that that allows guys to feel comfortable and confident. And I'll never change that.

**Q. Marcus, I know it's only six games in, but with what you went through the last two and a half years, how rewarding or fulfilling is this to kind of -- you've gotta feel like I'm getting my career back on track. This is what I knew I could do when I was drafted No. 2**



overall.

MARCUS MARIOTA: Well, it comes down to just being able to have the opportunity. I'm forever grateful for this organization to allow me to have that chance. You look across the league a lot of guys in my situation don't really get a second chance, and for them to call me in and give me this opportunity to be a part of a young team means the world to me. So as long as we can continue just to stack these days, focus on the present, don't get too far ahead, don't look in the past, you know, this team has got a lot of potential, and I'm excited to be a part of it.

**Q. Marcus, they tied it up 14-14, but you can you discuss that next drive? I couple of key plays. Keith picked up a first down. You broke free on a scramble. That 11-play, 75-yard drive kind of put your foot down when they got back in it. What was going on on the field during that drive?**

MARCUS MARIOTA: Well, we talk about it all the time. We try to be complementary in all phases of the game. And when we're able to do that, we can pick up the defense. Defense played outstanding throughout the day, creating turnovers. We knew we had opportunities to go score points. So as long as we can complement each other, we're a good team.

**Q. And the scramble, when did you make the decision, hey, I better get out of here? And you got 13 yards.**

MARCUS MARIOTA: It was one of those plays that just kind of happened within the flow of the game. I saw a lane. I tried to crease it and felt that I got enough and tried to get down.

**Q. Marcus, was there a point today where you started to think, I'm really reading things well, whether it's your reads and progressions passing or the decisions in the RPO? Was there a point that you really started to feel that today?**

MARCUS MARIOTA: Honestly, I feel like I've kind of gotten to that point through the first five games. I think every game that I've played in this year I've gotten more and more comfortable. It's tough, coming off a couple of years where you're not getting a lot of game time, and truly the only experience that you get is being out there. So as the season continues to progress, I think we're all getting a good feel of what is expected of us and how we can be efficient. So I think all in all, I've really gotten to a point where I feel really comfortable in this scheme.

**Q. You talked Wednesday about confidence a little bit. Is that what you showed today? Is that the**

**manifestation of that in some ways?**

MARCUS MARIOTA: Yeah, it's a long journey, right? Three years ago I was benched in this week. And you go through a process of kind of looking within and reflecting, and throughout that journey for me, you know, I kind of knew that I had to find my confidence to be able to play at a high level. So when you get your confidence taken away from you, it is tough as an athlete, because I think that's truly your only mental weapon that you have. So to be able to build myself back up through the Raiders organization, through the Atlanta organization, through these teams and my teammates and the quarterback rooms that I've been a part of has been very important for me and critical in my career.

**Q. You mentioned three years ago this week. Does that come up through your head or your thought process at all?**

MARCUS MARIOTA: Well, today it did, a little bit. Yeah, you look back on it, right? And at that point in time in my career you feel like you're part of a good team, part of a good organization, thought that if you had the ball rolling, you'd be there for a long time. And just one thing led to another. But at the end of the day, I'm truly grateful for what had happened to me, because I'm here because of it. I've gotten this opportunity. I'm back with Arthur. I'm back with this team. I'm able to help this young group. So I'll never take any of that for granted, and you know what, it's in the past and just continue to learn from it.

**Q. Marcus, could you with Cordarrelle being banged up, could you talk about the running back room and how different the yards are coming from more folks now, including you, and do you feel more inclined to perhaps maybe run it a little more? But just talk about the running back room.**

MARCUS MARIOTA: Well, first and foremost, when you have a guy like CP, he does so many different things for you. Like he's a great receiver out of the back field. He's a great runner. So really it takes kind of a group of guys to be able to fill that position when he's done. And our young backs have done an unbelievable job. Finding ways to get tough yardage, and you know what, today was one of those days where the defense presented an opportunity for me to run a little bit. It's going to change week to week. We understand that. But I'll do whatever I can to help this team.

**Q. You mentioned the ding on your confidence three years ago. Given that that situation involved Arthur, when you came here was him being here a reason you wanted to come here? Did part of you think maybe I**

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

**want a fresher start during this journey?**

MARCUS MARIOTA: A lot of it I think when I look back on it was, yeah, I wanted to redeem myself. You know, I really believe in what Arthur is doing. I really believe in the scheme. I didn't play well enough. And I wanted to have an opportunity to redeem myself to be able to show that I can play in this system. And like I said, I'm grateful for this opportunity. But, yeah, I mean that's definitely part of the motivation and determination for me.

**Q. Was there a specific moment this season that you found that confidence again or did it come in the off season? When did that belief start to come back for you?**

MARCUS MARIOTA: It really started probably when I was in Vegas. And, again, like I said, I was a part of a really good quarterback room with Derek and Nate Peterman. And to be around those guys and to just work and to just kind of enjoy playing the game again, I could kind of feel that confidence building. And obviously, I really believe in hard work, and you know, through all my off-season preparations, I always tried to put my best foot forward in that sense, and I think that in return builds confidence. So it's a combination of a couple of things. But to be able to go through off seasons and to be a part of a good quarterback room, I think ultimately led me to get my confidence back.

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