

# Atlanta Falcons Media Conference

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Atlanta, Georgia, USA

## Arthur Smith

### Postgame Press Conference



Falcons 13, Bengals 13

**Q. Talk about what you saw from the first team on offense and defense.**

ARTHUR SMITH: Yeah, I mean, obviously you have a long drive like that, having to overcome a couple penalties isn't going to please you as a coach. Those are things that we have to clean up and we will.

Overall some of the stuff we needed to see, playing in the pocket, operating in some of those situations, that's why we need to play. But I thought Des spread the ball around. Again, you don't want to see a ball tip up and get picked on in a red zone off a really long drive, but that's what happened.

We got a lot of stuff we can coach off of. Good getting those guys off there. Same thing defensively. Got a stop. Took up the whole first quarter.

The quarterbacks, all three of them, threw the ball pretty well.

**Q. The third downs, being able to convert...**

ARTHUR SMITH: Yeah, that's the thing, playing from the pocket, you guys have heard me talk about that, the pressure of it. But when you can extend plays, that's such a big advantage in this league. The rush plans you'll get. Des is a fast guy. He's got a feel for that. You saw it a little bit last year at the end and you saw it a little bit tonight. It changes, like I said, some of the calls they'll make and how they have to try to contain you.

So it was good to see.

**Q. (Question about Bijan.)**

ARTHUR SMITH: Thought he handled it really well. It was unfortunate. I thought that flag got on the field late, challenge flag. But what do I know. Had a good play,

trying to operate quick.

Drake made a heck of a play on the sideline. I thought Bijan, he operated fast. Certainly didn't look too big for him.

**Q. (No microphone.)**

ARTHUR SMITH: Ankle. He was behind me the whole time. Again, you know how it goes. Seemed in good spirits behind me.

The other one was Penny. They looked at him, so I don't know. They called down, looking at the concussion. I don't know about that one yet.

**Q. (No microphone.)**

ARTHUR SMITH: Just went our normal concepts. You guys have been at practice every day. We brand pretty vanilla personnel packages. Wanted to see us operate. Thought he carried the ball pretty decent. I thought he protected well.

**Q. (No microphone.)**

ARTHUR SMITH: Ask me Sunday after practice. The thing I wasn't happy about is the pre-snap stuff. That's not who we want to be, self-inflicted wounds. In terms of moving the ball, yeah, I thought that was clean. 'Clean' is not the right word. We were effective, I guess. But we got to come away with more points when you have that many yards, we didn't score enough points.

**Q. (Question about officiating.)**

ARTHUR SMITH: If you think I'm going to criticize the officials in pre-season... C'mon, Mike (laughter).

There's a lot of factors, playing a lot of different guys. In all honesty, when you're playing multiple quarterbacks, the rhythm, the cadence, sometimes that shouldn't be -- I mean, we practice every day. Just sometimes that can have an effect, different guys mixing and matching. That shouldn't happen.



**Q. Is there more concern on the first drive with the starters?**

ARTHUR SMITH: Here is the way I look at it. The pre-snap stuff, that's in our control. Once the whistle blows, we have to look at it. Those are subjective calls, maybe they're not. I haven't seen them. Those are kind of the penalties of aggression that we got to look at them.

The stuff we can control pre-snap, that's 100% on us. That is not an excuse. If you got bad technique, obvious holds, that's bad football. We got to clean that up. I got to see those. Either way, didn't matter at the time, they called them.

Like I said, if we can carry over what we did last year, we weren't penalized, we were the least in the league, we got to continue to coach that and play the right technique.

**Q. DeMarco Hellams came down with his second interception. What can you say about what he's been doing so far?**

ARTHUR SMITH: He shows up when the lights are on. Just like he did at Alabama. Continues to find the football. He's a good football player. We're going to continue to work on some other things. But it's a good pattern to have two weeks in a row, going and getting the ball.

**Q. Secondary as a whole seems to be playing a little nasty.**

ARTHUR SMITH: It's the whole team, all three phases. It's how we want to play. It's good to see. Good to carry over. The way we run the ball with the ball in our hands, the passing game, that's what we want to do. Fourth down on special teams, that's how we want to play.

**Q. Logan Woodside on the last drive...**

ARTHUR SMITH: That's what I said, I thought it gave him a chance at the end. You get in there, obviously not playing for ties. That's the good thing about these pre-season games, there's a lot of situations with these young guys that we can coach off of that happen every week, every Sunday, in the NFL.

It was good to find a pressure situation. Obviously wanted a touchdown out there. Good to put Koo out there and make him kick, pre-season, a pressure kick. I thought Logan operated well on the two-minute drive.

**Q. (No microphone.)**

ARTHUR SMITH: For all those guys. All those rookies. Even the second-year guys. It's good for Kyle to get back out there. Hadn't played in a while. Good to get him going. Get tackled again, feel the speed of the game.

So if you use the pre-season right, that's what it's for, to ramp up. And everybody needs it.

All right. Thank you.

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