

Atlanta Falcons Media Conference

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Atlanta, Georgia, USA

Kirk Cousins

Postgame Press Conference



Steelers 18, Falcons 10

KIRK COUSINS: Disappointing to lose, certainly. It always is. Need to do play better. That's the bottom line.

I thought our defense played very well. I thought our special teams played very well, and we didn't complement that enough on offense.

You start with the turnovers, and then some untimely penalties where we had a drive going and then it got kind of set back.

We did some positive things. Had a strong first drive, but just didn't sustain enough drives, and it felt like a lot of that or some of that was self-inflicted.

So now we have to flush it and understand that it's a loss. It's disappointing, but you have to move forward and treat every game as its own entity. That's where you go really after a win or a loss. That's where your mind has to go.

I can take any questions you have.

Q. What was kind of the disconnect between first half production and then kind of the lack thereof of the second half for you?

KIRK COUSINS: Yeah, I haven't really gone back and thought through it all quite yet, so I don't have a great answer for you, but I would argue that, first and foremost, just those drives stalled.

I think we had the fumble snap was one drive that I thought we were moving the football well. We had a great chance, had great field position. Then that ended that drive.

Then we had the third down conversion to Kyle Pitts, but we had a penalty that then set us back. That kind of nullified that play.

Had another completion to Bijan on a series where he got

us a first down, thought we were moving, and then they called that one back with a penalty that then put us in long yardage.

I felt like we had the chances to get going, and it just was a flag or the turnover, whatever it may have been, to kind of wipe out the opportunity. Then we ended up in a lot of third and longs. When we were third and manageable, it was a pretty productive situation for us, but the minute it was third and really long, it was much harder.

Q. When you look at the two interceptions, kind of what did you see and how quickly guys like T.J. Watt were kind of getting to you in those moments?

KIRK COUSINS: Yeah, I was really trying to avoid the sack on the first one and throwing it away. I knew Drake was breaking in there. I did see color, but I was trying to basically put it out there way out in front of him, but the safety was there and made a good play.

In hindsight, I have to go back and watch it to really give you a good answer, but either just throw it away lower or you take the sack, whatever it's got to be to avoid the outcome there.

Then the second one, just couldn't get anything on the ball. That's where, again, I'll go back and watch it and be critical and say, Hey, you know, maybe you eat it or you progress or you dirt it, whatever you have to do to avoid the critical error of the interception.

Q. You mentioned at the top that you need to play better. What does that mean specifically for you in terms of preparation for Philadelphia?

KIRK COUSINS: Yeah, your preparation I think is pretty much similar, but you've got to -- you know, we have to avoid critical errors. We always say that, but we have to do it.

I think if we do that and keep ourselves in manageable down in distances, I think today showed it, you know, we can be a productive offense. But when we hurt ourselves, it's tough to overcome.



Q. Were you surprised by the offense today? Were you surprised it didn't look cleaner, didn't go cleaner?

KIRK COUSINS: I was disappointed. Certainly disappointed. You always go out there with an expectation that you are going to play at a high level. We didn't play up to our standards today.

Q. You never looked like you were comfortable in the pocket. Maybe that's just the way it looked. How did you feel in the pocket?

KIRK COUSINS: Yeah, I have to go back and watch it to give you a better answer. I think at times I was working through progressions and was -- like the touchdown was basically just working all the way across the field, getting to really No. 4, No. 5 in the progression. A couple of other times kind of working across, getting to Bijan late in the progression.

So at times clicked through it, and then other times just was trying to play fast and didn't get the outcome we wanted.

Q. Given this team's offseason, will your approach this week be, Okay, guys, I know it wasn't what we started, to kind of boost them back up, or will your approach be we're just going back and work and sticking with what we've been saying all offseason long?

KIRK COUSINS: I think you always come in new week. Win or loss, you come in, Hey, new week. We have to have some great energy. We have to be ready to go. We have to work hard.

First of all, Monday you have to go back and watch it and be critical and say, How can we be better and what can we do? I haven't done that yet to be able to give you better answers. That's really where it starts.

Then, yeah, when you have things that happened that you didn't like, you have to say, Okay, how do we prevent those from happening again, and be strategic with those answers and that's the process of every week, yeah.

Q. Would preseason games have helped more, or is that a nonfactor?

KIRK COUSINS: I think it's hard to say. I think the key is that we're healthy for Week 1, and that was really a focus.

There's never excuses. You have to be ready to go when your number is called regardless. That was certainly no

different today.

Q. What is your post-game ritual, so to speak? Will you go home and have dinner and kind of take your mind off the game, or do you go home and dive right into the tape, or is that something you leave for Monday? What is your process?

KIRK COUSINS: I'll watch it pretty quick here to try to start to unpack what took place. Probably send a couple of voice memos to coaches just to kind of give some thoughts that I have off the cuff after I watch it. Maybe they converse back, and we just kind of start to begin that analysis.

But it's a process that will go through tomorrow. I never really sleep great after games regardless, win or loss. You just have to move forward now, and that's the mental, physical, emotional toughness of playing in the NFL you have to have. You have to move forward and play your best football next week regardless of what happened today.

Q. I was talking to Chris Lindstrom in the locker room, and he said, We need to be better for Kirk, talking about the offensive line unit as a whole. I'm just kind of curious what steps you feel like that group needs to make to do what Chris says?

KIRK COUSINS: No, it's a great group. They just battled all day, and they were great in the huddle, getting to the line of scrimmage. Chris has great awareness... Drew does too... of play clock and situations and just really smart.

Until I watch the film, I really can't answer that question. I think that they're battling their butts off. I'm grateful to be able to play with them. It's a great group that I think we'll be able to do a lot of good things up ahead.

Again, if we don't stub our toe or kind of hurt ourselves on some of these drives, I think we saw what we can be, but it's got to be every play.

Q. Can you just go through what happened on the fumbled snap that hit Dwelley?

KIRK COUSINS: Yeah, the timing was off. It's my fault of sending the motion and asking for the ball, and the timing was off. So it's something that you have to bat 1.000, and you can't have the mistake, and we paid for it today.

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