

# Atlanta Falcons Media Conference

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Atlanta, Georgia, USA

## Kirk Cousins

### Postgame Press Conference



Falcons 26, Saints 24

KIRK COUSINS: I'll start and THEN take any questions you have. It's great to find a way to win in this league. After kind of a week of feeling awful about not finding a way last week, it's great to do that this week.

There's a lot to fix. You come away saying I'm so glad we won. But I'm going to be voice-memoing on the way home to the coaches with some thoughts on how I've got to be better and how we've got to build on it. A lot easier to give those voice memos after a win.

I thought penalties were tough today to overcome at times on some drives where we were in the high red zone. Or in a place on the field we felt we had some momentum and then got in some long yardage situations. I thought Tyler Allgeier ran the ball really well, and his third down conversion was a big play in the game.

I was pleased that we were better on third down. At least it felt that way. I haven't [Zoom distortion] but it felt like we were better on third down overall as a unit. Even on some of the conversion that is we didn't have, we still -- completion getting close to the sticks and giving ourselves a chance.

Honestly I felt like the final drive was really not good enough by me, by our offense, but Koo made an unbelievable kick. We got the pass interference call and that was enough. But pleased with the complementary football that happened today to get us the win. Now we can have a great chance to build on it and can take any questions you have.

**Q. Kirk, on the throw to Mooney, what did you see on that play that ended up with the D-PI.**

KIRK COUSINS: It was a double move, and so I threw it pretty early. I felt I should have thrown the ball further. I felt Mooney could have run underneath and maybe it's a walk-off, if you will. There was a little time left.

I was disappointed in myself that the ball ended up being underthrown. And he did a good job of coming back to it, and we got the PI call. Great route by him. Would have liked to put the ball out there further for him to be able to run underneath it.

**Q. Is there a remedy for the penalties? Matthew said his hand got up high on the first --**

KIRK COUSINS: Until I can see them, it's hard. I wasn't sure on the touchdown they got called back what exactly happened. Because it didn't feel like it was anything too unique. But I don't get to see it until I can watch the film.

A remedy would just be once we see what took place, we just have to make sure we don't even give them that chance to call it.

**Q. Darnell said in the locker room at some point when that ball is in the air, he switches his mindset to "I'm going to try to get the PI here. I'm going to flash my hands early and force the issue."**

At what point do wide receivers do you think start picking up those types of tricks and how nice is it to have those guys out there?

KIRK COUSINS: Yeah, well, he's a total pro. I mean, he's at times -- he lockers next to me, and he's at times whether it's the spring or now, I'll ask a question, and when I hear his answers, I think, Whoa, the way you are taking care of your body, the way you're thinking through situations like a quarterback, like whoa.

At times he kind of keeps me on my toes because I think, man, if I don't know my stuff, Moon is going to expose me here because he does.

Not surprised that he would have an awareness of, hey, ball is underthrown. We have a chance at a D-PI here. That's the kind of player he is to be very aware.

I'll go back to my role. I just don't want to leave it in the ref's hands, and I want to hit that in a perfect strike. Like



we had the go ball earlier in the game in the third quarter, and that's why I want to watch it and see why the ball wasn't further.

**Q. You looked pretty frustrated. I wonder if you're often this frustrated after a win?**

KIRK COUSINS: I wouldn't be if I played really well, we played really well. But, yeah, I do dislike this about myself that I have a standard that's maybe unreachable and even after a win you feel like you've got to play better.

I'll still enjoy the win, believe me. Yeah, there's just a lot we left out there.

**Q. Kirk, the way you guys won today and the way you won against Philadelphia, do you feel like you guys are kind of like the team of destiny? The second question is, how difficult, if at all, is it to physically get ready for a game four days away as opposed to what you normally have to work with?**

KIRK COUSINS: It all depends on how beat up you are from going into the game or coming out of this game. I feel pretty good. It shouldn't be too bad for me. Each guy is maybe a little different. It helps -- you got to remember that post-game Thursday, we do have ten days. And so you kind of remind yourself to take the good with the bad too. The extra rest after this if we can get through Thursday physically, you get more time to get caught up for guys.

But I just find that in this league that's the way these games tend to go is it's just so close. It's a play here, a play there. And you got to find yourself on the winning side of as many of these as possible. But finding those inches is hard, but that's the way this league is designed to be.

**Q. To that point and going back to what you were saying before as well, how do you kind of weigh in your head? It's like, yes, 300 yards-plus of total offense. You win the game, but no touchdowns. How -- when are you in the back of your head going through it, what's kind of there? Kind of talking to yourself...**

KIRK COUSINS: I'll be pretty critical as I think through it. Just grateful to be able to have the critical evaluation after a win. So you're grateful for the win, the outcome. It's such an outcome-driven league. To have a win is a big deal. You never really stop going back and analyzing the performance and how to be better, win or lose.

**Q. I wanted to ask about Thursday. How big is that game knowing that there's a chance to go 2-0 in the division, and obviously over .500 as well with a win?**

KIRK COUSINS: It's a great opportunity for us. Home game, divisional opponent. Dug ourselves a hole starting 1-2. Now give ourselves a chance not to go into a long weekend above .500. We know what's out there for us. But so does our opponent.

I expect it to be a hard-fought game like they all have been so far.

**Q. You mentioned that a lot of NFL games come down to the end like this. I'm curious, before the game and even through the game, did you notice the intensity through this rivalry? I know this is your first game in this rivalry.**

KIRK COUSINS: I loved it. It was the fourth quarter we were a little bit backed up, and it was a TV time-out. And they were playing that song about swag and surf, and the whole stadium was moving. I looked around, like, this is pretty sweet. And the Nest especially -- I love the Nest. It may be my favorite thing about being a Falcon. It's awesome, the energy they bring.

Yeah, you felt it today. We need to win and play at a level that will keep it that way all year long and into January. I can't say enough about the environment today and the way our fans showed up. I was really, really pleased with the atmosphere we got to play in. It was a privilege.

**Q. Since week one it feels like the pass protection has taken a step forward. Does it feel that way from your perspective as well?**

KIRK COUSINS: Yeah, I think so. I didn't see how many attempts we had today, but usually whenever I felt anything, it was because I was going through a progression longer. So I thought they did a good job. There was a lot of times where it was kind of one-on-one across the board where they were rushing five.

I was really pleased. And even the sack fumble today was really me holding onto the ball too long. Jake did a really good job. I've been very pleased with them.

**Q. What's happening with Kyle Pitts' two targets? I didn't check -- I didn't update it after that, but is the progression being taken away from him? What's going on there?**

KIRK COUSINS: It's interesting. The under route I threw to him, I really shouldn't have. Lattimore drove it. I should have gone over his head to Ray-Ray. Then on the shallow cross to Kyle in man coverage and with the incidental contact. That was one where it's incomplete, but had a chance there if their feet don't get tripped up.

Then there are other ones like the third down at midfield in the second quarter I threw to Drake. It was incomplete. Looking back, I wish I had worked Kyle over his head on a deep corner route.

So there's some plays out there where I come to the sideline and say Hey, Kyle, I got to work you there. Then there's other ones where I did work him and say, Hey, I probably shouldn't have forced it to you.

It goes both ways, but just kind of always go where your reads take you. And sometimes it skews the number one way or the other, and sometimes it's balanced and you have to go where they take you.

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