

Atlanta Falcons Media Conference

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Atlanta, Georgia, USA

Kirk Cousins

Postgame Press Conference



Panthers 30 - Falcons 27

KIRK COUSINS: Guys played hard in all three phases. There was great effort. Guys competed, and it's just always difficult to fall short, especially the way we did. But now we just have to get back to work and pick ourselves up and do the only thing we can do or know to do, and that's to keep working. I can take any questions you have.

Q. Kirk, we saw when Mike was out you started grabbing the iPad or some stuff in front of the blue stuff as you were getting ready and preparing. What happens when that light goes out that, hey, I'm going to have to get out there and do this?

KIRK COUSINS: Your heart starts beating a little faster, but other than that, you just kind of get loose. And, basically, much of what you would be doing anyway, talking to D.J. about calls they're thinking for the next drive and kind of where they see the game going from there, which are usually conversations you're kind of just sitting in and listening, and now it's, I guess, a little more directed at you, but not too different.

Q. How do teams pull out of slumps like this and how often have you seen it happen?

KIRK COUSINS: There's no magic formula. You just get back to work and trust your training, and you gotta stay the course, believe tough times don't last and tough people do, and that's all you can do.

Q. How do you feel like you played today?

KIRK COUSINS: It's hard to assess myself until I go watch the tape. I think that will give me a much better understanding. Never as good as you think, never as bad as you think.

Q. Kirk, are you looking forward to New Orleans next week?

KIRK COUSINS: Yeah. We don't know where this will go, but kind of day to day, and we'll see where we end up.

Q. To piggyback on that last question, you've been in a lot of locker rooms in your lifetime. How do you keep the situation, again, from spiraling out of control? And would you -- as a veteran player, would you say something to your teammates or would somebody else say something? How is that normally handled in this type of situation?

KIRK COUSINS: There's no normal. I think you just go back to work and understand the job you gotta do, understand how close you are. It's a game of inches, and we felt that today, and it takes a whole team effort to find a way to win, and we've just gotta find those inches.

Q. How would you describe the atmosphere in the locker room, just in general? Not just today, but just the last few weeks overall?

KIRK COUSINS: It's been a positive atmosphere in the sense that guys are working hard. Guys love football. Guys love each other. I think that's a credit or a reflection of the quality of the locker room and the character.

There hasn't been a dip of any kind, and I think that speaks volumes about the group we have. And it's also, I think, why there would be belief that we can get back going in the right direction, because I think it is a group with a lot of character.

Q. Kirk, when you do get to work next week, you've been around this game for a long time, what do you think are the top priorities to get this offense clicking again?

KIRK COUSINS: Well, I think it's possession by possession really. I mean you have three straight possessions, I believe, with touchdowns in the first half. I'm not sure. Again, it all happened so fast it's hard to know exactly what took place, but there are so many positives.

The red zone offense has been really effective as of late. I



think our last -- again, I don't quite know if this is true or not, maybe the last 11 trips to the red zone have resulted in touchdowns. Those are a lot of positives there, and you just keep going back to the things that you gotta be better at, how do we get better being on the details and believing that if you stay the course, and again, as a team all come together and make plays and good things will happen.

Q. Kirk, that third down shot late in the fourth quarter to Drake on the left side, was that a matchup that you liked presnap or was that about giving a great player a chance to make a play? What did you see there?

KIRK COUSINS: I thought it was a great call by Zac to give us a chance to do exactly what you're saying, which is to work one of our best players one on one if they were to give us that opportunity. They did, based on what I saw in real time, and then felt like gotta give him a chance there to go make a play.

You always go back and like I'm talking about watching the film and being hard on yourself tomorrow the conversation at 10 am when we watch the tape is going to be can I put more air on that ball, do I back shoulder him, does it need to be a ball that's -- you know, we're going to analyze it and be maniacal about where can that ball be placed so that we convert, get down there, have a chance to win the game.

Those are the kinds of things when I talk about watching tape and working through details. It's not going to be a discussion of the ball was good enough. It's the opposite. It's the ball may have been good; how can it be great? How do we get that ball to be perfect? And those are conversations with Drake. Those are conversations with my quarterback coach. But that's the only way I know to get better and to find ways to win is to be maniacal about those kinds of things so that the next time it is perfect and we do find a way to win.

Q. When you were warming up, before you went in, it looked like you said a quick word to Michael. What did you tell him?

KIRK COUSINS: He went straight to the blue tent. So I just wanted to touch base with him and understand how are you feeling, are you in a lot of pain, that kind of thing, just trying to hear where he's coming from.

Q. Quick followup on Ra says, it starts with me. I take the blame. He's always a glass-half-full guy, right?

KIRK COUSINS: Oh, yeah.

Q. Have you seen through this five-game stretch a

little hit in his step, in his communication to you guys in terms of keeping he that positive activity knowing that he's going to be taking the blame for this?

KIRK COUSINS: No. I think this five-game stretch he's been his true colors, which is who he is. He's resilient. He's built for this. He is a glass-half-full type of person, and I think it makes it a positive place to come into work. And he's a coach that you want to win for, you want to play well for, because you feel like he's in your corner and he's giving you what you need to be successful.

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