

# NFL International Series

## Falcons vs Jets

Sunday, 10 October 2021

### Atlanta Falcons

## Matt Ryan

### Postgame Press Conference

Falcons 27, Jets 20

THE MODERATOR: Matt Ryan.

**Q. Matt, take me through the last drive there.**

MATT RYAN: Yeah, I thought a great play call by Art to start that drive. You got some (indiscernible) type coverage where guys were getting down low to stop some of our intermediate play-action pass game.

To slip Kyle back there was a really good call. Great play by Kyle. It really was the jump-start for us on the last drive, got us going. Wasn't perfect on that last drive, but we made the plays we needed to make. Great to get Mike in the end zone at the end of the game.

**Q. (No microphone.)**

MATT RYAN: I just told him right before I came in here I'm proud of him. I think there's going to be a lot of those in the future for him. He's done a great job of focusing on growth and development day in, day out, just trying to get better.

There's a lot of noise both positive and negative that can distract you from that. He's been as good of a young guy of being able to just focus in on working hard every day and getting better. I think he's done that for the five games we've had.

I expect him to continue that. I think it's showing that he is really a talented player, can be a great player in this league.

**Q. Was it a conscious thing to lean on the tight ends? Highly productive in the first half.**

MATT RYAN: Absolutely. I think coming into the game we felt like we wanted to get those guys going. You never know how it's going to shake out. Coverage can take you to different spots. But we got some man-to-man coverage looks and our guys won.

I thought Hayden played really well for us today. I



thought Kyle did an excellent job. Lee Smith, the big fellow was out there making some plays for us during the passing game.

As a group, I thought their entire group played well.

**Q. Is that a career high for the league?**

MATT RYAN: I don't know if it's a career high. He might be on pace for a season high. He seems like he's getting a catch or two every week.

**Q. Another milestone for you today, five thousand completions. That's a lot. Any thoughts on that?**

MATT RYAN: Yeah, I'm proud of that. I've completed the ball to a lot of great players in those five thousand completions. I certainly wouldn't still be in this position if I wasn't surrounded by an incredible supporting cast.

I'm very proud to still be doing it and feel like I'm doing it at a high level. I certainly have had a lot of help along the way, so I'm appreciative of that.

**Q. Passed Eli Manning. Up next Dan Marino. Think you're getting old?**

MATT RYAN: I feel pretty good. I feel pretty good.

It's one of those things, you don't think about it as a player. You focus every week on trying to get yourself ready to play the best you possibly can that week. I think having tried to stay in that mindset for the duration of my career has allowed me to kind of stack some of those accomplishments.

I won't change. I'm proud of what I've accomplished, but I'm focused on trying to help this team win as we move forward.

**Q. You played in a lot of epic stadiums. What was it like today?**

MATT RYAN: It was incredible. This stadium is beautiful. It's amazing. The atmosphere was really cool. Probably one of the best fly-overs I've ever seen. Those planes were tight to the stadium. That got my juices going before the game.

I've done this twice. I've been able to come over here and play here twice. It's always a special event. A huge thank you to everybody over here in the UK who makes it



such a special event for us.

**Q. How does it compare to Wembley seven years ago?**

MATT RYAN: It feels better, we left here with a win this time (laughter). I'm a fan of this stadium.

But even Wembley, the history of that stadium, what it means to this country and the games that have been played, the magnitude of those games. It's not lost on us coming over here to play in Wembley as well.

I've really enjoyed both of my experiences over here.

**Q. A few minutes ago Mike Davis was in here and described the journey to London as a long-ass flight. How difficult is it for you and your teammates to make the journey to London and also adjusting to the time difference?**

MATT RYAN: It is a long-ass flight, there's no question about that. We got a long-ass flight going home tonight, too.

I thought our support staff and coaching staff did a great job of getting us ready to play this week, whether that was preparing early in the morning back in Atlanta before we came over Thursday night, to everything our operations department had planned for us while we were here. We didn't want for anything.

We were given great advice on how to get ourselves and our bodies and minds adjusted. I thought guys did a good job of being professional about it and getting themselves ready to go.

**Q. Even though it's seven years since you last played in England, have you seen an evolution here? Or is London is just another game, hard to look back and look at the differences?**

MATT RYAN: I mean, it is another game on the schedule, but it's definitely different. I mean, the routine of the week is much different when you play back in the States. It's shorter flights, easier travel.

I think you got to embrace the different week, the different routine, try to do it as well as you can. I don't think it's just another game. I think it definitely feels different. It's got a different feel to it.

But I thought for the most part we did a great job of embracing that difference all week. We're happy to come away with a win today.

**Q. Potentially next week or the week after the NFL will announce maybe going to Germany, expand the series even further. Something that excites you?**

**Where would you like to see the game go?**

MATT RYAN: Yeah, I think it's great to expose pretty much an American game to different places. You see that you get great support. There are fans over here. You can feel that.

I'm sure with what NFL Europe did during its time here, from guys that I played with at the beginning a long time ago, some of those guys played over here. They mentioned the atmospheres in Germany were incredible.

I don't know anything about it, of what they're going to do. If it takes five other seven more years for the Falcons to play over here, hope I'm still playing, come back and enjoy that experience as well.

**Q. Is the bye week coming at a wrong time or after the long-ass flight...**

MATT RYAN: It's coming at the right time. No doubt about it.

A little bit of my message to the team afterwards is that we're building as a team, we're getting better. We need to approach this bye week with the right mindset to get ourselves mentally fresh, our bodies fresh so that we can come back in the next stretch of five or six games before we play on a Thursday night, then have an extended period off, we can get ourselves back in the mix.

That's got to be the mindset for us.

**Q. (No microphone.)**

MATT RYAN: I don't know if fatigue was or not. I had a lot of confidence in our guys coming in, that they would get the job done. I was pleasantly surprised with some of the separation. I just tried to give them opportunities to make plays.

I really thought it was an opportunity for a number of our wide receivers to step up and make plays, to have more playing time than they normally have.

I thought Olamide Zacchaeus, to Jay Sharp, Christian Blake, I thought those three guys did an amazing job for us today.

**Q. How good was the protection for you today?**

MATT RYAN: I thought the O-line did a great job. I understand that the Jets are 1-4, but their defensive line is very strong. A very good group. I thought our offensive line did a great job today of stepping up to that challenge. They fight. They really do. They fight hard. I appreciate that. They give it everything they've got. I thought they did a pretty good job today.

**Q. (Question about Cordarrelle.)**

MATT RYAN: I think he's an incredibly versatile player. You mentioned he runs the ball. Physical, hard. Has the ability to come out the back end at any time. Then was drafted as a wide receiver in this league. You can put him out there and he can go do what wide receivers do. Not many people on this planet have that versatility. He certainly has been tough for defenses to adjust to where he's going to be in the first five weeks of the season for us.

We need to continue to try and get him touches and find ways to get him the ball because he's a play-maker.

**Q. On the long pass to Kyle on the final drive, was that a gamble throw?**

MATT RYAN: Yeah, corners type coverage, which we talk about, low safety. I thought it was a great call by Arthur Smith. At a time they were coming down, trying to be aggressive, our offensive line did a good job of holding the line off to throw down the field.

Kyle got behind the defense. He has incredible speed for a tight end player. That's not a thing most guys can do. I thought that was a great play by Kyle and a really good call by Arthur Smith.

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