

# NFL International Series

## Vikings vs Saints

Sunday, 2 October 2022

### Minnesota Vikings

### Kirk Cousins

#### Postgame Press Conference



Minnesota Vikings 28

New Orleans Saints 25

**KIRK COUSINS:** First of all, my thoughts are with right now Lewis Cine. Didn't realize how serious it was.

Just a typical NFL game, back and forth. What was atypical was playing it here. It was just a tremendous environment in the stadium, first time playing here in the stadium. Just tremendous. Great facility. It's just a great experience all the way around. The hotel we stayed at, the practice we had on Friday, just a really, really positive experience.

I thought our staff did a great job getting us ready, helping us transition, be ready for kickoff. So it's great to leave here with a win. A lot of people put a lot of work into this week to make sure we were at our best.

As far as the game itself, we don't want to kick five field goals. We want to score touchdowns. I think that more success in the red zone would have enabled us to pull away a little bit. That was a disappointment.

The field position all game I thought was really favorable, which says a lot our special teams and defense, getting us stops, getting us the ball in shorter fields.

There's just a lot to clean up still, similar to coming away after the Lions game with a win. You feel great about the win, but you also feel there's a lot you leave out there. We've got to get better. I've got better. That's where our focus is.

It's tremendous to be 3-1, to leave here with a win.

Take any questions you have.

**Q. The final deep throw, looks like you were prepared to throw that before you knew Jefferson was open. Is that something you're prepared to do based off the leverage and coverage?**

**KIRK COUSINS:** I think that's kind of just you got to

anticipate. Like you say, based off coverage... You just got to go. I think if you wait, let guys get open in this league, they're waiting too long. That's why you want to get great players who can win. You trust 'em, put the ball out there for 'em.

**Q. Can you feel that rhythm heating up with Justin? You could see it watching it. Do you start to feel that in game, then realize you've got to get the ball to him?**

**KIRK COUSINS:** I think sometimes it's also defensively what are they doing. I mean, on the first third down of the game, I think it was the first third down, played man coverage. Got great separation from the guy in man on him. But the free safety dropped down to double him, was standing right where Justin was going.

Justin is winning, doing his part, but they're doubling him. They happen to be doubling him from a position where they can leverage. Then you progress to Irv, and he did a great job, got the first down.

My point is that defenses will still try to do things to take him away. A couple other cases we went to Adam, K.J. Certainly when we get one on one, time in the pocket is important on some of these third downs where they're rushing hard, but it's a huge asset to be able to work him.

**Q. What was the problem in the red zone today?**

**KIRK COUSINS:** I think it's a combination of factors. I think they run together a little bit. The one we had the third-and-short that we didn't connect on, if you look at it, I got to take the guy who is open for the first down, but you'd love to pump it, work Adam on the corner.

Then we get the ball back after the turnover that our defense caused. Again, they're running together. But that one again I thought when I checked it down to J.J. that maybe I pump that one, get the guy flat-footed, go to K.J. for the touchdown. There's plays where I could be greedy, try to pump it, get a touchdown there, maybe we're not kicking field goals.

There was one series the third quarter I thought was the most disappointing one. The delay of game, which is on me. Twice I think Justin was open for touchdowns and we didn't connect. Checked it down to Adam once. I

thought the corner was sinking, and he wasn't. The other, threw it earlier than I wanted to, didn't see Justin put his foot on the ground. He ended up separating. I think if I just let him more, it's a touchdown.

The plays are there to make and we didn't connect. That's disappointing.

**Q. Only one overtime game here in the London games, the one you and Andy played in. Seemed to joy entertaining the fans.**

KIRK COUSINS: Would have loved to have pulled away. As I said to somebody on the field after the game, It's a great product. I mean, if you're a fan, we gave you something to watch today. Keep it close, entertaining.

Yeah, it's crazy. I was thinking how six years ago it was Andy and I playing. It was overtime. I was fully expecting we're going to make that kick, go to overtime again. I didn't expect it to end in a tie or draw again.

Grateful we won. Great to get on an eight-hour flight to get back, knowing we're 3-1. You also think about all the things you got to do better.

**Q. Do you think the NFL is doing enough to protect its players?**

KIRK COUSINS: I think every year it keeps getting better and better. I think they keep improving it every single year. There's always going to be risk.

**Q. Looked like you got hit in the helmet a couple times, not called.**

KIRK COUSINS: I didn't notice the helmet. I got it in the ribs pretty good once. They're allowed to hit me there, so...

Yeah, you just got to stand in there and deliver, keep doing that.

**Q. What are you liking about the early resilience of this team?**

KIRK COUSINS: Well, I think it's going to be games like this going forward. It going to be like this. If you can make the Playoffs, get in January football, it's how it's going to be.

You have to find ways to just be gritty and grind things out, respond when things don't go your way. We're certainly getting experience with that early. We'll probably be experiencing it middle and late because that's the way this league is.

Certainly we think we can play better, too, maybe give ourselves a better chance as well.

**Q. Something has come up again in the last couple weeks, is natural grass and synthetic grass. Do you have any thoughts on that?**

KIRK COUSINS: I'm a natural grass guy. College, played on natural grass at home. Loved it. As long as it's well-kept, you can't beat natural grass.

That being said, sometimes it's unrealistic, you do what you can. My understanding was we were tearing up the pitch pretty good. Messing it up for the soccer guys. I think there's an awareness of what's realistic.

**Q. What do you think to play in other countries in the future?**

KIRK COUSINS: I have been over here now in the off-season a few times, too, to help promote our game, our product.

It's tremendous to see the growth. I think the atmosphere today was just outstanding. It would be great to see what else is out there, what more we can do, see where it goes from here.

But I would like to think the momentum's going the right direction. It's just going to keep building.

**Q. At 3-1, this is the best start for the Vikings in five or six years through four games. What is the upside for the team, the potential?**

KIRK COUSINS: Yeah, it's hard to even look down the road. I think it's just one week at a time. Each game is its own stage in this journey. Whether you win or lose, you kind of flush it, just move to the next one.

I don't know. We'll see. We're just one game at a time, keep battling, try to have more points than the other team when we're done each week. We also have to keep improving each week and play better football.

Thank you.

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