



PRESS RELEASE



FALCONS RETURN TO PLAYOFFS FOR FIRST TIME SINCE 1998

Atlanta makes its first postseason trip since advancing to Super Bowl XXXIII following the 1998 season. Under the guise of new owner, Arthur M. Blank, the Falcons improve on their 7-9 campaign on 2001 to capture a wild card spot in the newly formed NFC South.

The Falcons postseason trip comes despite dropping their season finale in Cleveland last week.

NFC SOUTH STANDINGS

Team	W-L	Win Pct.	PF	PA	PD
Tampa Bay*	12-4	.750	346	196	150
Atlanta+	9-6-1	.594	402	314	88
New Orleans	9-7	.563	432	388	44
Carolina	7-9	.438	258	302	-44

*- division winner

+ - wild card

PLAYOFF SCHEDULE

Sat., January 4

Atlanta @ Green Bay

Indianapolis @ NY Jets

Sun., January 5

Cleveland @ Pittsburgh

NY Giants @ San Francisco

SCHEDULE & RESULTS (9-6-1)

Sept. 8	@ Green Bay	L, 37-34
Sept. 15	CHICAGO	L, 14-13
Sept. 22	CINCINNATI	W, 30-3
Sept. 29	Bye Week	
Oct. 6	TAMPA BAY	L, 20-6
Oct. 13	@ New York Giants	W, 17-10
Oct. 20	CAROLINA	W, 30-0
Oct. 27	@ New Orleans	W, 37-35
Nov. 3	BALTIMORE	W, 20-17
Nov. 10	@ Pittsburgh	T, 34-34
Nov. 17	NEW ORLEANS	W, 24-17
Nov. 24	@ Carolina	W, 41-0
Dec. 1	@ Minnesota	W, 30-24
Dec. 8	@ Tampa Bay	L, 34-10
Dec. 15	SEATTLE	L, 30-24
Dec. 22	DETROIT	W, 36-15
Dec. 29	@ Cleveland	L, 24-16

ATLANTA FALCONS (9-6-1)

AT

GREEN BAY PACKERS (12-4)

GAME INFORMATION

Date: Saturday, January 4, 2003

Kickoff: 8:08 p.m. ET

Site: Lambeau Field

Television: ABC (WSB-TV Locally)

Play-by-Play/Color: Al Michaels/John Madden

Sideline Reporter: Melissa Stark

Weather Forecast: 31 degrees (F), falling temps, chance of flurries

WHAT TO LOOK FOR THIS WEEK

***Despite closing out the regular season with a 24-16, loss to the Cleveland Browns, Atlanta advanced to the NFC Wild Card playoff round by virtue of New Orleans' loss to Carolina in the final week of the regular season. The Falcons travel to Green Bay as the Packers narrowly missed out on earning a postseason bye due to their Week 17 loss to the New York Jets. **Green Bay has never lost a game at home in the playoffs, posting a 13-0 record at the frozen tundra of Lambeau Field.**

***For the second time in six seasons as head coach, Dan Reeves has led the Falcons to the postseason. This marks the club's first playoff berth since 1998 when Atlanta upset the Minnesota Vikings to win the NFC title before falling to the Denver Broncos in Super Bowl XXXIII.

***Second-year quarterback Michael Vick completed his first season as a full-time starter, throwing for 2,936 yards and 16 touchdowns for a passer rating of 81.6. The dynamic signal-caller showed that he possesses the same dual-threat ability that made him the no. 1 overall selection in the 2001 NFL Draft. Vick ran for 777 yards on 113 carries, averaging 6.9 yards per rush and scoring eight touchdowns.

*****Vick's 777 rushing yards are the third-most by a quarterback in NFL history, trailing Bobby Douglas, who logged 968 yards in 1972 and Randall Cunningham, who posted 942 yards in 1990.**

***Vick combined with running backs Warrick Dunn and T.J. Duckett to give Atlanta the fourth best rushing attack in the NFL this season.

***The Falcons bring the fifth-ranked scoring offense in the NFL into tonight's game. Atlanta averaged 25.1 points per game and tallied 402 total points.

***Defensively, Atlanta boasts the eighth-ranked scoring defense in the NFL, allowing 19.6 points per game. The Falcons ranked second in the league with 39 takeaways, including 24 interceptions. **Keith Brooking will make his second-straight trip to Hawaii for the Pro Bowl after leading the team with 140 tackles (111 solo).** He also added a pair of interceptions, one forced fumble, and two fumble recoveries.

***Patrick Kerney led the team with 10.5 sacks, his second-consecutive season with double-digit sacks after totaling a career-best 12 sacks last season.

THE LAST GAME: Game #16: Cleveland 24, FALCONS 16 -- at Cleveland, December 29, 2002

The Falcons entered the final game of 2002 regular season in a precarious position. On one hand they controlled their own fate as a win over the Cleveland Browns would give them a postseason berth while a loss and a win by the New Orleans Saints would leave them on the outside looking in. On the other side of the field, Cleveland entered the game needing a win and some help from the New York Jets to secure a Wild Card ticket over Miami and New England.

The Browns jumped out to the lead with Phil Dawson converting a 40-yard field goal and William Green scoring on a 21-yard touchdown run to make it 10-0 early in the second quarter. The Falcons would answer with Michael Vick hitting Brian Finneran for a 15-yard touchdown to make it a three-point game going into half time. Falcons kicker Jay Feely scored the next nine points, connecting on field goals from 42, 49, and 30 yards push Atlanta to a 16-10 lead at the end of the third.

Cleveland regained the lead when Kelly Holcomb tossed a 15-yard touchdown pass to Kevin Johnson. The Browns would push their lead to eight with just under four-minutes to play after Green ripped off a 64-yard touchdown run. With their post-season hopes hanging in the balance, Vick directed the Falcons offense down to the Brown four-yard line, hitting Quentin McCord for a 22-yard gain, Alge Crumpler for 18 yards, and Trevor Gaylor for another 12 yards.

Warrick Dunn picked up three yards on first-and-goal to set the Falcons up with three shots from the one. Vick was unable to connect with Crumpler on second down and the Browns stonewalled Dunn on third- and fourth-down runs seemingly ending Atlanta's playoff chances. Upon leaving the field, the Falcons learned they got the help they needed as Carolina defeated New Orleans, pushing Atlanta into the sixth and final playoff spot with a 9-6-1 record.

Vick had a tough day at the office, completing 17 of 40 pass attempts for 240 yards with touchdown and one interception, while adding 38 yards on six carries. Dunn logged 20 carries but managed just 67 yards and Finneran led the team with 77 yards on three catches, including one score. Atlanta defense held the Browns to just 154 passing yards between Kelly Holcomb and Tim Couch but Green racked up 178 yards and two scores on a whopping 27 carries to lead the Browns to victory.

SCORING SUMMARY

Quarter	Time	Team	Detail	ATL	CLE
1	8:12	Browns	Phil Dawson 40 yard field goal	0	3
2	9:18	Browns	William Green 21 yard rush (Phil Dawson kick)	0	10
	3:42	Falcons	Brian Finneran 15 yard pass from Michael Vick (Jay Feely kick)	7	10
3	9:41	Falcons	Jay Feely 42 yard field goal	10	10
	5:17	Falcons	Jay Feely 49 yard field goal	13	10
	1:28	Falcons	Jay Feely 30 yard field goal	16	10
4	6:58	Browns	Kevin Johnson 15 yard pass from Kelly Holcomb (Phil Dawson kick)	16	17
	3:53	Browns	William Green 64 yard rush (Phil Dawson kick)	16	24

PASSING

Player	Att	Cmp	Yards	Cmp Pct.	TD	INT	Rate
Michael Vick, Atl	17	40	240	42.5	1	1	60.4
Kelly Holcomb, Cle	7	14	86	50	1	2	53.6
Tim Couch, Cle	7	11	68	63.6	0	1	43

DEFENSE

	Comb	Solo	Sk	TFL	Int
Keith Brooking, Atl	9	5	0	1	1
Matt Stewart, Atl	9	9	1	2	0
Chris Draft, Atl	7	7	0	2	1
Ed Jasper, Atl	3	2	1	1	0
Gerald McBurrows, Atl	2	2	0	0	1
Earl Holmes, Cle	8	8	0	0	0
Robert Griffith, Cle	6	5	0	0	1
Earl Little, Cle	6	6	0	1	0
Kevin Bentley, Cle	5	2	0	0	0
Kenard Lang, Cle	4	2	1	0	0

RUSHING

	Att	Yards	Yds/Att	TD	Long
Warrick Dunn, Atl	20	67	3.4	0	11
William Green, Atl	27	178	6.6	2	64t

RECEIVING

	Rec	Yards	Yds/Rec	TD	Long
Brian Finneran, Atl	3	77	25.7	1	47
Quentin McCord, Atl	3	65	21.7	0	31
Alge Crumpler, Atl	2	34	17	0	18
Andre' Davis, Cle	2	36	18	0	22
Kevin Johnson, Cle	3	32	10.7	1	15
Quincy Morgan, Cle	2	32	16	0	24

	1	2	3	4	Final
Falcons	0	7	9	0	16
Browns	3	7	0	14	24

GAME NOTES

PASSING

Player	Att	Cmp	Yards	Cmp Pct.	TD	INT	Rate
<i>Michael Vick, Atl</i>	421	231	2,936	54.9%	16	8	81.6
<i>Doug Johnson, Atl</i>	57	37	448	64.9%	2	3	78.7
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Brett Favre, GB	551	341	3658	61.90%	27	16	85.5
Doug Pederson, GB	28	19	134	67.90%	1	0	90.5

RUSHING

	Att	Yards	Yds/Att	TD	Long
<i>Warrick Dunn, Atl</i>	230	927	4	7	59t
<i>Michael Vick, Atl</i>	113	777	6.9	8	46t
<i>T.J. Duckett, Atl</i>	130	507	3.9	4	33
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Ahman Green, GB	286	1240	4.3	7	43
Tony Fisher, GB	70	283	4	2	28

RECEIVING

	Rec	Yards	Yds/Rec	TD	Long
<i>Brian Finneran, Atl</i>	56	838	15	6	47
<i>Warrick Dunn, Atl</i>	50	377	7.5	2	31t
<i>Alge Crumpler, Atl</i>	36	455	12.6	5	33
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Donald Driver, GB	70	1064	15.2	9	85t
Ahman Green, GB	57	393	6.9	2	23t
Terry Glenn, GB	56	817	14.6	2	49

DEFENSE

	Comb	Solo	Sk	TFL	Int
<i>Keith Brooking, Atl</i>	140	111	0	2	2
<i>Chris Draft, Atl</i>	69	53	3.5	8	2
<i>Matt Stewart, Atl</i>	61	56	3	8	0
<i>Gerald McBurrows, Atl</i>	59	48	0.5	1	2
<i>Patrick Kerney, Atl</i>	58	45	10.5	13	0
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Nate Wayne, GB	111	69	2.5	3	3
Hardy Nickerson, GB	86	49	1.5	4	0
Na'il Diggs, GB	85	66	3	12	2
Tyrone Williams, GB	69	60	1	1	1
Darren Sharper, GB	68	51	0	2	7

MATCH-UP

Atlanta	-	Green Bay
345.9 (14)	Tot. Off.	347.5 (12)
148.0 (4)	Rush Off.	120.8 (12)
197.9 (23)	Pass Off.	226.7 (100)
25.1 (5)	Scoring Off.	24.9 (6)
41.9 (11)	3rd Down	38.7 (21)
333.4 (19)	Tot. Def.	311.6 (12)
127.9 (23)	Rush Def.	124.9 (21)
205.4 (16)	Pass Def.	186.7 (3)
19.6 (8)	Scoring Def.	20.5 (12)
39.7 (20)	3rd Down	33.9 (5)
33:17 (2)	TOP	32:09 (5)

SCORING OFFENSE

Team	Pts	Pts/G
Kansas City	467	29.2
Oakland	450	28.1
New Orleans	432	27
Philadelphia	415	25.9
<i>Atlanta</i>	402	25.1

RUSHING OFFENSE

Team	Yards
Minnesota	2,507
Miami	2,502
Kansas City	2,378
<i>Atlanta</i>	2,368
Denver	2,266

RUSH YARDS - QB

Player	Year	Yards
Bobby Douglass, Chi	1972	968
Randall Cunningham, Phi	1990	942
<i>Michael Vick, Atl</i>	2002	777
Steve McNair, Ten	1997	674
Donovan McNabb, Phi	2000	629

SCRIMMAGE YARDS - ATLANTA

Player	Rush	Rec.	Tot.
Warrick Dunn	927	377	1304
Brian Finneran	0	838	838
Michael Vick	16	777	793
T.J. Duckett	61	507	568

TIME OF POSSESSION

Team	Yards
Pittsburgh	33:32
<i>Atlanta</i>	33:17
Tennessee	33:06
San Francisco	32:39
Green Bay	32:09

TACKLE LEADERS

Player	Comb	Solo	Ast
Zach Thomas, Mia	156	100	56
Brian Urlacher, Chi	153	117	36
London Fletcher, Buf	149	98	51
Ed Hartwell, Bal	144	105	39
Jay Foreman, Hou	143	107	36
<i>Keith Brooking, Atl</i>	140	111	29

TAKEAWAY POINTS

Team	Take	Pts
New Orleans	38	123
Tampa Bay	38	123
<i>Atlanta</i>	39	121
Oakland	31	121
Green Bay	45	111