

Autor: liny195 - 2018/10/09 08:41

The Atlanta Falcons will open their mandatory minicamp without Julio Jones
<http://www.washingtonredskinsteamonline.com/ryan-anderson-jersey> , one of their most important playmakers.

Falcons general manager Thomas Dimitroff said the team was informed Monday that Jones will not be present when the three-day minicamp opens on Tuesday.

Jones, under contract through 2020, apparently is seeking a new deal as he has fallen behind other top NFL receivers in average earnings.

"We have been in contact with Julio and his representation," Dimitroff said in a statement released by the team.

"We will not discuss those conversations publicly except to say we feel they have been productive and constructive. We understand the concerns and thoughts from their perspective. Although not ideal, Julio informed us today he would not be attending minicamp.

"We have much respect for him and what he means to our team, our city and our fans."

Jones' absence is a big surprise. Before Monday Reggie White Jersey , coach Dan Quinn and others had said they were confident Jones would attend the minicamp despite missing the voluntary offseason program.

Jones, 29, still has three seasons remaining on his five-year, \$71.3 million deal with \$47 million in guaranteed money. He is due to earn \$10.5 million this season, \$12.5 million in 2019 and \$11.4 million in 2020.

Jones' salary cap figure of \$12.9 million for 2018 ranks seventh among NFL receivers, well behind recent deals signed by Tampa Bay's Mike Evans (\$18.252 million in 2018) and Cleveland's Jarvis Landry (\$15.5 million).

Jones' holdout comes in a summer the Falcons made quarterback Matt Ryan the NFL's highest-paid player. Ryan's new deal could average out to as much as \$30 million annually over five seasons.

Jones' value to the team is unquestioned. He earned his fourth straight Pro Bowl berth Ramon Humber Jersey , and fifth overall, in 2017, when he had 88 catches for 1,444 yards. It was his fourth straight season with at least 80 receptions and 1,400 receiving yards.

Jones had only three touchdown catches last season as the Falcons' offense failed to match the standards set in 2016, when Atlanta led the league in scoring and advanced to the Super Bowl.

Jones' absence in the minicamp will leave more opportunity for another former Alabama receiver <http://www.greenbaypackersteamonline.com/lance-kendricks-jersey> , rookie Calvin Ridley, to have more work with Ryan. Ridley, a first-round pick, is expected to earn a role behind Jones and Mohamed Sanu on the depth chart.

The Detroit Lions have holes to fills on defense.

The Lions may look to address needs at defensive tackle, end and linebacker when the NFL draft resumes Friday night.

Detroit took care of a void in the first round, selecting Arkansas center Frank Ragnow with the No. 20 overall pick.

Detroit has second- and third-round picks along with slots in the fourth Leonard Floyd Jersey , fifth and seventh rounds as the draft stretches into its final day Saturday. The Lions went into the draft without a sixth-round selection, giving it up last year to acquire offensive tackle Greg Robinson from the Los Angeles Rams. Robinson started six games and was released in November.

The Lions are desperately hoping to improve their lackluster running game and protect franchise quarterback Matthew Stafford.

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