

## : Quinn confirmed speci

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The Detroit Lions bolstered their backup options at quarterback and wide receiver.

Detroit signed Matt Cassel on Monday Youth Derek Grant Jersey , adding depth behind Matthew Stafford. The Lions also re-signed restricted free agent TJ Jones, giving Stafford another target in the passing game.

Cassel played sparingly the past two seasons in Tennessee and the Titans released him earlier this year, making him an unrestricted free agent. The 13-year veteran also has played for Dallas, Buffalo, Minnesota, Kansas City and New England.

He started 15 games with the Patriots in 2008 when Lions general manager Bob Quinn and coach Matt Patricia worked for the franchise. Cassel has started 81 games in his career, completing 59 percent of his passes for 17 Victor Mete Jersey ,449 yards with 104 touchdowns and 81 interceptions.

Jake Rudock, drafted by Detroit in the sixth round two years ago, and Cassel are expecting to compete to be Stafford's backup.

Jones had career highs with 30 receptions and 399 yards receiving last season and caught a touchdown pass. Detroit drafted him in the sixth round in 2014. He has 45 career receptions for 624 yards and two TDs.

Steve Sarkisian will return as the Atlanta Falcons offensive coordinator despite a decline in production in his debut 2017 season.

Sarkisian has been the target of criticism as the Falcons, who lost at Philadelphia in the divisional round of the playoffs last week, fell short of a return trip to the Super Bowl.

Coach Dan Quinn announced Thursday that Sarkisian will return in 2018.

After leading the league in scoring in 2016, the Falcons fell to 15th this season . Quinn said Sarkisian doesn t deserve the full blame for the offense s struggles.

To be clear with you, if this was about one person Brent Burns Jersey , that decision already would have been made, Quinn said, adding he has no issue with making changes, no problem with that but I have no interest in making change just for the sake of change.

The Falcons finished 10-6 in the regular season and won a wild card game at the Los Angeles Rams before the 15-10 loss to the Eagles . The Falcons were scoreless in the second half. Sarkisian s play-calling was second-guessed when Atlanta couldn t score after having a first down at the Eagles 9. A fourth-and-2 pass from Matt Ryan to Julio Jones was incomplete.

Sarkisian was hired from Alabama after Kyle Shanahan was hired as San Francisco s coach. Quinn offered the reminder that Shanahan also faced harsh criticism following is first season leading the offense in 2015. Atlanta led the league with 33.8 points per game in 2016.

A number of people wanted his head after the 2015 season, Quinn said. What has stayed the same and what I learned during that process is what you re doing in order to build consistency, you better be consistent.

Quinn said the struggles on offense were not an indication of one play-caller or one player. It s on all of us.

Meanwhile, Falcons general manager Thomas Dimitroff said reaching an agreement on a contract extension with Ryan will be the number one focus of the offseason.

Ryan is entering the final year of his six-year Ray Nitschke Jersey , \$103.75 million contract. He will be 33 next season but is still seen as the team s long-term starter who, like New England s Tom Brady, can play to or beyond the age of 40.

Personally that is my feeling, Dimitroff said. He s a guy who takes care of his body both on and off the field properly. & And of course we re fortunate with the way the rules are set up in the league, they re going to preserve our quarterback, hopefully. Again, we want him to be part of this organization for a long time coming.

Dimitroff expressed optimism an agreement on Ryan s contract extension could come quickly.

I think it s not going to be that difficult of a negotiation J'Marcus Webb Jersey , quite honestly, he said. I think we re going to be in a good spot with it.

NOTES: Quinn confirmed special teams coach Keith Armstrong will have a second interview in Arizona s search for a coach . Quinn said Armstrong is terrifically qualified to lead a team. & Quinn said he is in the middle of his search to replace quarterbacks coach Bush Hamdan, who left to become the offensive coordinator at University of Washington. Among the candidates are longtime NFL assistant coach Greg Knapp, the Falcons former offensive coordinator under Jim Mora, and Jedd Fisch, who was UCLA s offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach last season.

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