

Week 7



- Moss and Hightower go down, adding to injury woes on offense. **R2**
- Beck receives support from receivers after 'great job' in first start. **R3**

# Panthers 33, Redskins 20

MONDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2011 ☆

The Washington Times

washingtontimes.com/sports/football SECTION R



ASSOCIATED PRESS PHOTOGRAPHS

Carolina Panthers quarterback Cam Newton races 16 yards into the end zone for a third-quarter touchdown that gave his team a 16-6 lead over the Redskins. Plenty of Redskins on both sides of the ball praised Newton, who was 18 of 23 for 256 yards and a touchdown and ran for 59 yards and another score. Through seven games, Newton already has tied Vince Young's rookie record with seven rushing touchdowns.

## NEWTON LAYS DOWN LAW

### Rookie QB was the show, running and throwing team to victory

By RICH CAMPBELL  
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

**CHARLOTTE, N.C.** | Cam Newton stood in the corner of the end zone and pantomimed ripping open the chest of his shirt while fans showered him with cheers. It's his trademark touchdown celebration, one that NFL teams are quickly getting used to seeing from the league's most dynamic rookie. Newton mimics how Clark Kent reveals the Superman costume, with that unforgettable "S," under his dress shirt.

Newton might not have been a superhero on Sunday, but he looked darn close against the Washington Redskins' defense. He made Bank of America Stadium his phone booth, accounting for two touchdowns and

**"The kid is a pretty Ferrari. He can run. He can throw. He's the total package. He's going to be a player in this league for a long time."**

— DeAngelo Hall, speaking of Carolina rookie quarterback Cam Newton

315 yards of offense in the Carolina Panthers' 33-20 win.

The afternoon was supposed to be about new Washington quarterback John Beck. Instead, Newton showed the Redskins how exciting a bona fide franchise quarterback prospect can be.

"The kid is a pretty Ferrari," cornerback DeAngelo Hall said. "He can run. He can throw. He's the total package. He's going to be a player in this league for a long time."

Beck's debut as the Redskins'

starter became secondary in a loss that sends them reeling. Washington (3-3) lost for the second straight week and for the third time in its last four games. The Redskins' 3-1 start seems like it happened in a different season. The Panthers won for only the second time this year, but Washington was the team that seemed to be languishing in last place.

"It [stinks], but sometimes that's what you need," receiver Jabar Gaffney said. "It'll humble us a little bit and help us work a little bit harder

to get back to doing things the way we should be doing things."

What began as a dull field-goal battle turned into a showcase for the progress Newton has made since the Panthers drafted him first overall in April. And the reigning Heisman Trophy winner did it against a defense that entered the day ranked sixth in the NFL in yards allowed per game.

Carolina scored touchdowns on its first three possessions of the second half and turned a 9-6 halftime lead into a comfortable win. Newton

was the catalyst.

It actually started on the game's third play from scrimmage. All 6-foot-5 and 248 pounds of Newton dropped back to pass. When the Redskins pressured him, he took off running. He broke four tackles on the 25-yard gain.

That play accounted for almost half of his 59 rushing yards. He got 16 more on his touchdown in the third quarter, the one that prompted his Superman celebration.

Newton, operating out of the shotgun, faked a handoff to the running back on his left and kept the ball. He ran to the left, following his tight end and surging through a sizeable opening in Washington's defense.

» see **REDSKINS** | **R3**

## Beck simply pales in comparison



DAN DALY

**CHARLOTTE, N.C.** The Washington Redskins had it rubbed in their faces Sunday. Anything their quarterback could do, the Carolina Panthers' rookie QB could do better.

John Beck can complete 59.5 percent of his passes? Cam Newton can complete 78.3.

Beck can run 4 yards for a touchdown? Newton can run 16.

Newton also can execute a nifty option pitch and, because he's 6-

foot-5, 248 pounds, catapult his body in the direction of the end zone from the 5-yard line. Beck would love to be 6-5, 248, and tries his damndest to be, but the best he can do, unless he stands on his tiptoes, is 6-2, 215.

There were lots of reasons the Redskins lost 33-20 to previously 1-5 Carolina at Bank of America Stadium, but none was bigger than the difference between the two quarterbacks — or rather, the difference between where the two franchises are in solving every team's QB Issue. The Panthers, blessed with the first pick in the 2011 draft because of their total wretchedness last season, had Newton, the Heisman Trophy winner from Auburn, land in their laps. The Redskins, meanwhile, are still

scuffing along with retreats like Rex Grossman and now Beck, who, when he took the field against Carolina, hadn't started an NFL game in four years.

Beck didn't do too many things Sunday that should make Mike Shanahan want to howl at the moon. He threw for a touchdown. He scored on a scramble. He had a 80.8 passer rating — which is thoroughly average but better than Grossman has been managing lately. All in all, it wasn't the worst debut you'll ever see, especially given the injuries in the offensive line and loss of Santana Moss (broken hand) and Tim Hightower (knee) during the game.

» see **DALY** | **R2**



Quarterback John Beck had a passer rating of 80.8 in his debut as the Redskins starter Sunday. The problem was, Carolina's Cam Newton's number was 127.5 and the rookie from Auburn was the difference in the game's outcome.

EXPANDED REDSKINS COVERAGE: [WASHINGTONTIMES.COM/SPORTS/FOOTBALL](http://WASHINGTONTIMES.COM/SPORTS/FOOTBALL)

## TEAM LOYALTY



ASSOCIATED PRESS

A Washington Redskins fan was ready for John Beck's first start Sunday against the Carolina Panthers in Charlotte, N.C. Beck and the Redskins lost, 33-20, though Beck did throw for a score and run for another.

## DALY

From page R1

It's just that he wasn't Cam Newton. Newton, you see, is no mere mortal. He's a force of nature. Seven games into his career, the only question seems to be: Can he stay in one piece until the Panthers accumulate more talent?

Shanahan was impressed not only with Newton's ability to run the option — which kept the Redskins "off balance," he said — but with the kid's passing accuracy. The latter is the scary part. After all, it sometimes takes young quarterbacks a while to put up the kind of numbers in the pros that they did in college. But Cam is already hitting 60.3 percent of his throws, while still doing a nice job of getting the ball downfield (8.3 yards per attempt).

"He's a great quarterback," said Brian Orakpo, who sacked Newton once but could only wave at him a number of other times. "We knew that from what we saw of him on film."

He also has something else Beck doesn't have: an elite receiver like Steve Smith. Smith was the only wideout the Redskins had to worry about, but he still caught seven balls for a game-high 143 yards. His longest reception was a backbreaker, a 36-yard gain to the Washington 1 that helped give Carolina a 30-13 cushion. The Redskins haven't had nearly enough plays like that this year. In fact, their longest completion is 45 yards.

And now Moss, their most reliable option, is out for at least the short term. Still, he said, whether he's in the lineup or not, "We're still a football team. You go through these lumps. It's a long season."

Yes, it is a long season. And for the Redskins, it's getting lumpier.

Kory Lichtensteiger, Trent Williams and Chris Cooley all fell by the wayside last week — the last two will be back at some point — and Sunday there were more casualties on offense. That just makes it tougher on Beck, who isn't exactly the type of quarterback who can do it alone. (Newton, on the other hand, pretty much is the type of quarterback who can do it alone.)

To his credit, Beck didn't throw an interception until the late going, when the outcome was already decided, and it was the result of a "miscommunication" with rookie Leonard Hankerson, who was playing in his first NFL game. He also lost a fumble on a sack, giving him two turnovers on the afternoon — more than you'd prefer, but nothing like the Great Grossman Giveaway against Philadelphia.

Shanahan and his play-calling son Kyle were very protective of Beck in the first half, though. They didn't ask him to do much more than hand off to Hightower (whose 78 rushing yards in the first two quarters topped Beck's 53 passing). Also, Carolina penalties figured prominently in the Redskins' first two scoring drives.

The coaches took the handcuffs off Beck in the second half, but it was out of necessity as much as anything: The Redskins kept falling further and further behind. (And toward the end, Beck was operating against a prevent defense, so his final stats were a tad padded.)

The Shanahans probably won't be able to get away with such conservatism in the weeks ahead. They'll have to ask Beck to shoulder more of the load, as all quarterbacks must. If they don't, they'll simply be advertising to the whole world that they don't think their QB is up to the task. But then, we already know that, don't we?

## PANTHERS 33, REDSKINS 20

## Offensive injury woes continue as Moss and Hightower go down

By NATHAN FENNO

THE WASHINGTON TIMES

**CHARLOTTE, N.C.** | The way offensive starters have been dropping for the Washington Redskins, the remaining healthy members may want to consider encasing themselves in bubble wrap.

After three starters went down in last week's loss to the Philadelphia Eagles — including guard Kory Lichtensteiger being sidelined for the season — receiver Santana Moss and running back Tim Hightower left Sunday's loss to the Carolina Panthers because of injury and didn't return.

"Those are two big blows," tight end Logan Paulsen said.

Moss said he broke a bone in his left hand, cradling it under his sport coat after the game. He doesn't know how long he'll be sidelined.

A knee injury left Hightower on crutches with a bulky wrap on his left leg. The extent of the problem wasn't clear, but Hightower said X-rays were negative. An MRI is scheduled for Monday. Coach Mike Shanahan hoped Hightower didn't injure his anterior cruciate ligament.

"It's not excruciating pain, it's just uncomfortable," Hightower said. "I've never really been hurt so I don't know what stuff is supposed to feel like."

Moss didn't play in the second half, leaving quarterback John Beck without the sure-handed receiver who has pulled in 25 balls for 301 yards this season.

Hightower's injury interrupted his return from a shoulder problem and, at the time, looked serious. The running back didn't play in the Eagles game because of the shoulder and was limited the week before against the St. Louis Rams.

But Hightower got the start Sunday and quickly rolled up 88 yards on 17 carries as the Redskins established the run and took pressure off Beck. But 4½ minutes into the third quarter, Hightower zipped up the middle for a 4-yard gain and fell to the ground in pain.

Two teammates had to help Hightower off the field after an attempt to hobble by himself petered out after a few yards.

"I'm very passionate about what I do," Hightower said. "You feel helpless and you feel you're not able to help your team. You're not able to do what you were brought here to do. It's a terrible feeling. I was a little frustrated. I was a little stubborn. But I'll be back."



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Redskins running back Tim Hightower is helped off the field in the third quarter Sunday after suffering an injury to his left knee. Hightower compiled 88 yards on 17 carries before exiting.

**"I'm very passionate about what I do. You feel helpless and you feel you're not able to help your team. You're not able to do what you were brought here to do. It's a terrible feeling."**

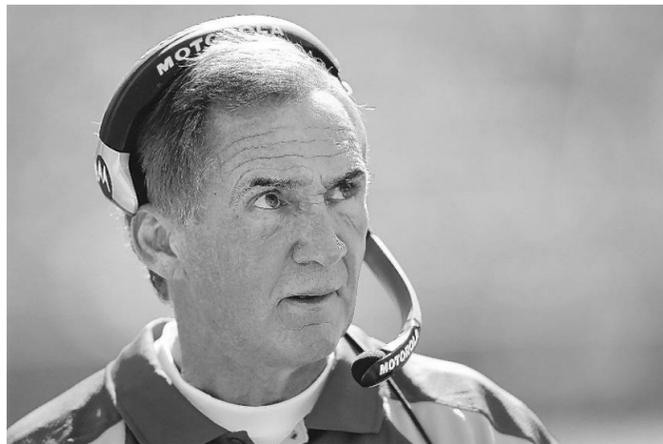
— Tim Hightower

Ryan Torain and Roy Helu replaced Hightower. But the Redskins ran only twice more the rest of the game, as Panthers quarterback Cam Newton took charge and Washington had to play catch-up.

But the painful, bandage-wrapped reality remained: Early in the second half, the Redskins were without two

linemen, a tight end, a receiver and a running back. The offense from two weeks ago looked completely different, and that's before you start with Beck taking over at quarterback.

"I don't like missing nothing," Moss said. "At the end of the day, you don't know why it happened. But everything happens for a reason."



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Head coach Mike Shanahan was protective of quarterback John Beck in the first half with his playcalling. After halftime, he opened up the offense a bit.

PANTHERS 33, REDSKINS 20

# Moss says Beck 'did a great job' in first start

## QB found his rhythm in second half, rushing for TD, passing for another

By NATHAN FENNO  
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

**CHARLOTTE, N.C.** | The last time John Beck started a regular-season NFL game was 2007, when he was a strong-armed 26-year-old rookie from BYU with the Miami Dolphins.

In the lonely years since, Beck threw 15 passes and played in one game. That came in the Washington Redskins' loss to the Philadelphia Eagles last week, when he replaced the ineffective and interception-prone Rex Grossman.

And Sunday at Carolina, Beck joined the Redskins' starting quarterback merry-go-round. But the fourth starter 22 games into coach Mike Shanahan's stint with the Redskins couldn't ignite the team's offense.

"Winning is the only thing that really matters," Beck said, after finishing 22-for-37 for 279 yards. "That's the only thing I really wanted to do today. I wasn't trying to go out there and be too perfect."

Expecting a savior? Instead, you saw an up-and-down performance, where Beck flashed the mobility that helped win the job — at least this week — as well as rust from the extended time on the sideline. Playing much of the game at Bank of America Stadium without five injured offensive starters didn't help.

"It's kind of hard for John to come in and do what he did today," receiver Santana Moss said. "But he did a great job. All he could do is keep going to the drawing board like we have been doing and we'll pull it out."

There was bad Beck: Three passes tipped at the line of scrimmage. Two near-interceptions dropped by Panthers defenders. Three sacks. An intentional grounding call. And a fumble the Panthers recovered after one of those sacks.

But Beck transformed to a different quarterback in the second half, as the Panthers built a lead and the Redskins were forced to abandon the run. Beck threw for 226 yards in the half and found a rhythm for the offense despite Moss and running back Tim Hightower watching from the sideline with injuries.

Also hurting Beck were five dropped passes. Same with rookie receiver Leonard Hankerson, making his NFL debut, who appeared to run a different route than Beck expected on the quarterback's lone interception.

But teammates noted Beck's calm and poise in the huddle, though the Panthers' stadium gashed with empty blue seats wasn't exactly deafening.

"We'll have to look at the tape," receiver Jabar Gaffney said of Beck's outing. "We didn't get the win, but I thought for the most part he did a good job out



ASSOCIATED PRESS PHOTOGRAPHS

In his first Redskins start, John Beck flashed the mobility that helped win the job as well as rust from the extended time on the sideline — fumbling in the first quarter (above) but also completing 22 of 37 passes for 279 yards and a touchdown.

there."

The endorsement of Gaffney and Moss was meaningful, as both lobbied last week for Grossman to remain the starter.

Beck's mobility brought a different dimension to the offense. He doesn't have the smooth, powerful strides of Panthers rookie Cam Newton. But on

third-and-goal in the third quarter, Beck dropped back, looked right and, seeing his receivers covered, scrambled four yards and dove head-first into the end zone.

An enthusiastic — and somewhat awkward — spike of the football followed.

"He's always going to have some

growing pains," Shanahan said. "That's the nature of the business when you just start playing, but I think you could see his athleticism, his quick release."

Added tight end Fred Davis, who caught a touchdown pass: "John came in and did his part when he had to. He'll continue to get better as he keeps playing."



ASSOCIATED PRESS PHOTOGRAPHS

The Carolina Panthers' Cam Newton (above) threw for 256 yards in Sunday's 33-20 victory over the Redskins. The rookie quarterback's favorite target was veteran Steve Smith (below), who caught seven Newton passes for 143 yards.



## REDSKINS

From page R1

It's a zone-read run that is extremely common in the college game these days but isn't prevalent in the NFL because of defenders' speed. But Newton is a rare athlete who can make pro defenses respect it.

When he saw linebackers Brian Orakpo and London Fletcher get sucked inside on the run fake, he kept it for an easy score.

"I'm going to play my job," Orakpo said. "I can't control two people. My job is to go for the dive, go for the running back, and be late on the quarterback. It's very tough on a defense when everybody is not sound as far as when the zone read is coming."

The Redskins stopped that play at times, but it was an integral part of a rushing attack that amassed 175 yards.

"I guess we weren't gap sound," Orakpo said. "They were moving guys around in different formations trying to get us thinking and out of our gaps, and that's what kind of translated into them making those big runs."

Carolina hurt the Redskins just as badly through the air. Newton threw for 256 yards and posted a career-high passer rating of 127.5. He threw only five incompletions in 23 attempts. Four-time Pro Bowl receiver Steve Smith was the main beneficiary, with 143 yards on seven catches.

Newton began the day with an NFL-high nine interceptions, but the Redskins couldn't coax one out of him.

"Today he made plays where he didn't force [the ball] into windows," Fletcher said. "Guys were open. He made plays for them. He's a good player, a lot better than you would expect a guy to be at such a young age and with no offseason workouts."

All of Carolina's offensive firepower kept the Redskins' defense on the field for long stretches. The Panthers had an 11-minute advantage in time of possession. One of their second-half scoring drives lasted a whopping 8 minutes, 26 seconds, and two field goal drives in the first lasted longer than 7 minutes.

Heck, even when Newton got sacked he made a big play. Orakpo crushed him on a blindside sack at the

### PANTHERS 33, REDSKINS 20

Washington	0	6	7	7	20
Carolina	3	6	14	10	33

#### First quarter

Car-FG Mare 20, 7:31.

#### Second quarter

Was-FG Gano 31, 12:24.

Car-FG Mare 45, 5:02.

Was-FG Gano 49, 1:02.

Car-FG Mare 45, :02.

#### Third quarter

Car-Newton 16 run (Mare kick), 12:17.

Was-Beck 4 run (Gano kick), 8:14.

Car-Stewart 2 run (Mare kick), 2:17.

#### Fourth quarter

Car-LaFell 2 pass from Newton (Mare kick), 8:13.

Was-Davis 7 pass from Beck (Gano kick), 5:05.

Car-FG Mare 40, 1:56.

A-73,245.

	Was	Car
First downs	22	20
Total net yards	353	407
Rushes-yards	23-92	37-175
Passing	261	232
Punt returns	1(-4)	0-0
Kickoff returns	2-25	1-15
Interceptions ret.	0-0	1-19
Comp-att-int	22-37-1	18-23-0
Sacked-yards lost	3-18	4-24
Punts	1-37.0	3-38.7
Fumbles-lost	2-2	1-0
Penalties-yards	3-26	13-105
Time of possession	24:30	35:30

#### Leaders

**RUSHING**—Washington, Hightower 17-88, Beck 3-10, Helu 1(-minus 1), Torain 2(-minus 5). Carolina, Stewart 14-68, Newton 10-59, D.Williams 10-35, Felton 2-7, Smith 1-6.

**PASSING**—Washington, Beck 22-37-1-279. Carolina, Newton 18-23-0-256.

**RECEIVING**—Washington, Davis 6-80, Gaffney 4-68, Austin 3-26, Paulsen 2-48, Paul 2-25, Moss 2-17, Helu 2-6, Armstrong 1-9. Carolina, Smith 7-143, Shockey 4-32, Naanee 3-21, LaFell 2-39, Felton 1-17, Olsen 1-4.

**MISSED FIELD GOALS**—None.

THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Redskins' 18-yard line after rushing unblocked, but Newton held onto the ball and preserved a field goal.

"He's a big dude, man," Orakpo said. "I'm very surprised it didn't come out."

It left the Redskins searching for Kryptonite, while Newton, in the end, soaked in the adoration.

"That," he said, "is the fun part — celebrating."

**"Today he made plays where he didn't force [the ball] into windows. Guys were open. He made plays for them. He's a good player, a lot better than you would expect a guy to be at such a young age and with no offseason workouts."**

—London Fletcher

**REDSKINS SCHEDULE**

**WEEK 1**



vs. Giants  
W, 28-14

**WEEK 2**



vs. Cardinals  
W, 22-21

**WEEK 3**



at Cowboys  
L, 18-16

**WEEK 4**



at Rams  
W, 17-10

**WEEK 6**



vs. Eagles  
L, 20-13

**WEEK 7**



at Panthers  
L, 33-20

**WEEK 8**



at Bills (Toronto)  
Sun., Oct. 30

**WEEK 9**



vs. 49ers  
Sun., Nov. 6

**WEEK 10**



at Dolphins  
Sun., Nov. 13

**WEEK 11**



vs. Cowboys  
Sun., Nov. 20

**WEEK 12**



at Seahawks  
Sun., Nov. 27

**WEEK 13**



vs. Jets  
Sun., Dec. 4

**WEEK 14**



vs. Patriots  
Sun., Dec. 11

**WEEK 15**



at Giants  
Sun., Dec. 18

**WEEK 16**



vs. Vikings  
Sat., Dec. 24

**WEEK 17**



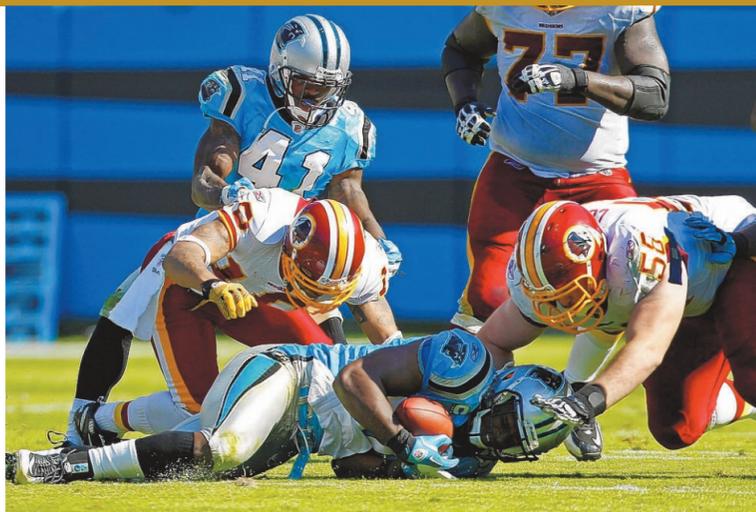
at Eagles  
Sun., Jan. 1

**PANTHERS 33, REDSKINS 20: QUARTER-BY-QUARTER**



ASSOCIATED PRESS

**FIRST QUARTER:** Carolina quarterback Cam Newton scrambled from Washington's Barry Cofield Sunday during the Panthers' opening drive of the game, which ended in a field goal.



ASSOCIATED PRESS

**SECOND QUARTER:** Carolina's James Anderson recovered a fumble by Washington wide receiver Jabar Gaffney late in the second quarter to set up a go-ahead field goal.



ASSOCIATED PRESS

**THIRD QUARTER:** Washington quarterback John Beck dived into the end zone for the Redskins' first touchdown of the game, which closed the gap to 16-13.



ASSOCIATED PRESS

**FOURTH QUARTER:** A John Beck-to-Fred Davis touchdown with 5:05 left in the game cut the Panthers' lead to 10, 30-20, but the Redskins failed to recover the ensuing onside kick.

**1** Containing Cam Newton was the Redskins' primary defensive concern heading into the game, and it looked early on that Washington might be in for a long afternoon. The rookie put together a highlight-film run out of the gate, then directed Carolina down the field on a 12-play opening drive that ate up nearly half the quarter. But Washington kept Newton out of the end zone, with London Fletcher popping the airborne QB out of bounds on third down near the goal line to force the Panthers to settle for a field goal. From there, it was Tim Hightower stealing the show. Back in the lineup after missing last week's game, Hightower appeared energized as he slashed through holes and built up a head of steam heading downfield. With 67 yards in the opening quarter, he kept the pressure off John Beck as the Redskins tried to settle in offensively.

**2** Both offenses continued to sputter in the second period, leaving kickers Olindo Mare and Graham Gano to handle the scoring load. In fact, perhaps the most suspenseful sequence of the second 15 minutes was Mare making, in a matter of minutes, field goals from 30, 40 and 45 yards — and getting only three points out of the deal thanks to penalties on his first two successful attempts. The Panthers had been penalized nine times for 70 yards by halftime, which went a good way toward balancing out the two turnovers they had forced on defense. The latter of those, a fumble by Jabar Gaffney with 21 seconds remaining in the half, allowed Mare the opportunity to give Carolina a 9-6 lead heading into the break. That the deficit wasn't worse could be attributed to the pressure Washington managed against Newton, sacking him four times in the opening half.

**KEY PLAY**

The Redskins trailed by a manageable 10 points with about 11 minutes to play and had Carolina in a second and 17 at the Washington 37 after yet another Panthers penalty. It would have been a nice time for the defense to step up, but Cam Newton and Steve Smith ended up doing the honors. Newton lofted a deep ball down the left sideline that glided between two defenders and into Smith's arms, putting Carolina on the 1-yard line. Three plays later, the Panthers scored the TD that iced the game.

**3** Newton and Beck finally got their arms going after halftime, with the Carolina QB holding the upper hand by relying on the kind of weapon his Washington counterpart didn't have. After Beck was sacked on fourth-and-2 early in the quarter, Newton took over and rolled his team down the short field, first with his arm and then on a quarterback draw for the first touchdown of the game. The ensuing drive saw Hightower go down with a knee injury, leaving the entire burden of moving the Redskins to Beck — who already was without the injured Santana Moss. But Beck was up to the challenge initially, hitting Logan Paulsen twice and driving Washington into the end zone for the first time to close the deficit to 16-13. The next drive, though, saw Newton lean on star wideout Steve Smith for a couple of big catches before Carolina punched it in again.

**4** The Panthers haven't had much experience protecting leads this season, but Newton and his mates certainly did the job in the final quarter. A drive that began late in the third ate up a total of 8 minutes, 26 seconds and ended in a short TD pass from Newton to Brandon LaFell that gave Carolina what proved to be an insurmountable 30-13 lead. Circumstances and lack of a go-to running back left Washington's hopes entirely on Beck's shoulders at that point, and though he managed to lead an immediate scoring drive, hooking up with Fred Davis for a 7-yard score with 5:05 remaining, the ensuing onside kick was poorly executed and landed safely in the Panthers' hands. Beck did get another shot and was moving the ball down the field before Chris Gamble picked him off (his only interception of the game) on a play in which rookie receiver Leonard Hankerson appeared to run the wrong route.

**REDSKINS NOTES**

**For receiver Gaffney, two misplays to forget**

By RICH CAMPBELL AND NATHAN FENNO  
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

**BY THE NUMBERS**

**1,393:** Days between NFL touchdown passes for John Beck, whose last (and only previous) passing TD was to Dolphins teammate Derek Hagan on Dec. 30, 2007 against the Bengals

**143:** Receiving yards for Carolina's Steve Smith, his fourth game with at least that many yards this season. His biggest game last season was 85 yards.

**-6:** Combined rushing yards for Redskins backups Ryan Torain and Roy Helu on three attempts

**7:** Rushing touchdowns this year for Cam Newton after his score in the first quarter, which tied Vince Young's 2006 output for the most by a rookie QB since the AFL-NFL merger in 1970

**CHARLOTTE, N.C.** | Receiver Jabar Gaffney had two plays to forget in the final 36 seconds of the first half. What began with the Redskins' attempt to try to salvage a tiebreaking field goal before time expired ended with them going to the locker room trailing by three points.

The first was a drop. On first-and-10 from the Redskins' 31-yard line and the game tied at 6, John Beck targeted Gaffney down the left sideline. Cornerback Darius Butler initially had inside position on Gaffney, but Gaffney worked inside him. He dropped the ball, though, around the Panthers' 35.

"John gave me a chance," Gaffney said. "I should've went up for it instead of letting it come down and letting the defensive back come in."

The next play was worse. Gaffney caught a pass from Beck underneath, but he fumbled after the hit from safety Captain Munnerlyn. The Panthers recovered at Washington's 34. Olindo Mare converted a 45-yard field goal 19 seconds later for a 9-6 lead.

"It was tough," Gaffney said. "They just wanted it more than we did in the second half."

**Line gets mixed reviews**

Will Montgomery believed the patchwork left side of the Redskins'

offensive line played OK. Washington filled three-fifths of its line with new starters — tackle Sean Locklear, Montgomery at left guard and center Erik Cook — because of injuries.

The team ran for 83 yards in the first half but finished with only 92 after having to pass to try to erase a growing second-half deficit.

"I feel like we could run on these guys," Montgomery said. "Whether it was just a guy here or a guy there, it was one of those cases where 10 guys were doing their job and one guy wasn't. Everybody took a couple turns at it. It felt like we were moving the ball productively, and then, for whatever reason, would hit a roadblock every once in a while." Montgomery thought he played well with the exception of three or four plays.

Cook was beaten for a sack in the second quarter. Nose tackle Ronald Fields lined up over him and faked a pass rush immediately after the snap. That caught Cook's attention.

But then Fields dropped in coverage and middle linebacker James Anderson blitzed up the middle instead. Cook did not recover in time, and Anderson got to John Beck.

Locklear was flagged twice for holding.

**Hightower stays positive**

Injured running back Tim Hightower delivered a motivational speech to his teammates inside the

locker room immediately after the loss.

"What I remind the guys is that we came into the season with one goal," he later told reporters. "We want to focus. Whether we were 6-0 at this point or whether we were 1-and-whatever, we're still in the hunt right now."

"We're going to come back. I don't think it's time for anyone to get discouraged. I think it's time for us to stay motivated and stay hungry, and to just go back to work."

"Regardless of what happens outside the locker room, I know every guy in this locker room still believes in what we can do, in the team that we can be. We've got to show it."

**Extra points**

Backup quarterback Rex Grossman was active but spent the entire game inside the locker room with pneumonia, coach Mike Shanahan said. Grossman had a 103-degree temperature, and the Redskins wanted to keep him out of the sun. He could have played if John Beck went down. Receiver Terrence Austin would have taken snaps in an emergency, Shanahan said.

•Rookie receiver Leonard Hankerson was active for the first time in his career. He was the intended target of Beck's pass that was intercepted in the final minutes. Hankerson appeared to run a different route than Beck expected.

**WEEK 8  
REDSKINS VS. BILLS  
(IN TORONTO)**



**Kickoff:** 4:05 p.m. **TV:** Fox  
**Radio:** AM-980, FM-92.7, FM-94.3

**What to watch:** The Redskins are the fourth team to face Buffalo in a regular-season game as part of the team's Toronto series, a five-year arrangement to help expand the club's presence north of the border.

- Buffalo, which had a bye Sunday, has one of the best offenses in the NFL. Quarterback Ryan Fitzpatrick, a seventh-round pick out of Harvard by St. Louis in 2005, has provided some stability for the franchise. The Bills average 6.1 yards per play, sixth-best in the league entering Week 7.
- The Bills' defense is porous, though. They allow 420 yards per game, but have a league-high nine takeaways.

**Ryan Fitzpatrick**

