

Week 15



- Fullback Young has ball scoring a touchdown. R2
- Grossman proves resilient after early mistake. R3



Redskins 23, Giants 10

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NO PASSING ZONE



ASSOCIATED PRESS PHOTOGRAPHS

Free safety Oshiomogho Atogwe (right) returns one of the Redskins' three interceptions as cornerback DeAngelo Hall provides an escort during the second quarter. Eli Manning (below) was just 23 of 40 for 257 yards.

Goal now should be sprint to the finish line



DAN DALY

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. It was never about the playoffs for the Washington Redskins this season. Not, certainly, after the decision was made to stand pat at the quarterback spot.

For the rebuilding Redskins, it was more about another p-word: progress. Would they be in a better place in January than they were September? In Year 2, would Mike Shanahan lay a little more of the foundation?

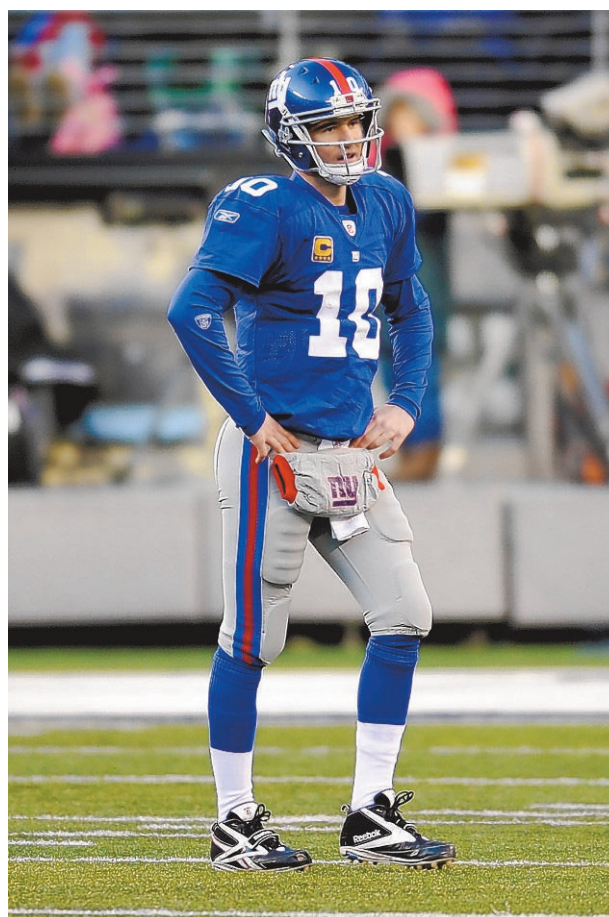
The team has gone through some tough times in the past 15 weeks, including a quarterback change that backfired, a six-game losing streak

and more injuries than you can shake a stethoscope at. But unlike so many other downward-trending clubs, the Redskins have come out the other end. In their past four games, they've won at Seattle, nearly knocked off New England and, Sunday at MetLife Stadium, handed the New York Giants a 23-10 beating, putting a serious crimp in the latter's postseason hopes.

If the Redskins can keep it going against Minnesota and Philadelphia — and turn 4-9 into 7-9 (or even 6-10) — they can take momentum into the offseason. Who would have imagined that a month ago, when their coach appeared to be standing knee-deep in rubble? It would have to be considered, under the circumstances, the Best Possible Outcome.

"We want to win out, set the tone

» see DALY | R2



Defense rattles Manning; a rare sweep complete

By NATHAN FENNO
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. | Hope is an unlikely thing to discover in the middle of the swamps and sprawl of the Meadowlands.

But that's what the Washington Redskins found Sunday in an unexpected turn for their lost season.

Hope looked like New York Giants quarterback Eli Manning dropping back to pass, as the Redskins flustered and flattened Manning and the NFL's fourth-ranked passing offense en route to a 23-10 victory.

"You practice all week and have high hopes," safety Oshiomogho Atogwe said of the first Redskins' sweep of the season series with the Giants since 1999, "but to be able to execute this well . . . you're kind of amazed by it."

Wind chill that dipped into the teens under the cloudless sky at MetLife Stadium didn't stiffen the fingers of the Redskins' secondary. The group intercepted Manning three

» see REDSKINS | R3

REDSKINS 23, GIANTS 10

Young has a ball scoring touchdown as a starter

By RICH CAMPBELL
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. Darrel Young kept the football from his first career NFL touchdown last season, and he made sure to get the one he carried into the end zone Sunday in the Washington Redskins' 23-10 win over the New York Giants.

"This is more meaningful because this is my first time starting," Young said. "I hope there's more to come."

There will be if Young's play this season is any indication. The second-year fullback has impressed coaches and teammates in his first season as the starter.

"He's got an opportunity to show us what he can do, and now that the running game is a little better, he's on the field a little bit more," coach Mike Shanahan said. "I think you'll see more of him as time goes on."

Young primarily has been a blocker this season. Entering Sunday's game, he had only one carry for 7 yards in Week 2 against Arizona. But his physical, violent blocking has helped the running game's resurgence in recent weeks.

"He's so consistent," tight end Logan Paulsen said. "There's never a week where you're like, 'Oh man, D.Y. could have played better.' He's playing at a really high level every week."

It wasn't all grunt work, though, for Young on Sunday against the Giants.

He had four carries for 14 yards. Three rushes resulted in first downs, and the other was a 6-yard touchdown.

Redskins coaches noticed that the



Redskins fullback Darrel Young, stopped here by New York Giants linebacker Michael Boley (59) and defensive tackle Linval Joseph, scored his first touchdown of the season in Washington's win.

Giants' defensive ends in past games prioritized penetrating off the edges, so they called several quick handoffs to Young.

"It's a copycat league. We just felt

we could capitalize in situations, and I think it worked out just OK today," Young said with a wily grin.

The most notable was his touchdown. The Redskins lined up in the

I-formation. The offensive line slanted to the right, mimicking a typical stretch play. Quarterback Rex Grossman quickly gave the ball to Young before selling a fake end-

"He's got an opportunity to show us what he can do, and now that the running game is a little better, he's on the field a little bit more. I think you'll see more of him as time goes on."

— Coach Mike Shanahan

around to receiver Terrence Austin.

Giants defensive end Jason Pierre-Paul bit so hard on the fake to Austin that he only touched Young with two hands before peeling off. He didn't realize Young had the ball.

Young did the rest by running through safety Antrel Rolle's tackle attempt.

"All I seen was this tall dude, and I don't know what happened after that," Young said. "Then I seen the safety, and then I was like, 'Oh, this is the goal line. I can't let them stop me here.'"

The afternoon was especially sweet for Young because he grew up a Giants fan in Amityville, N.Y., on Long Island. His parents weren't at the game, but Young knew they were watching.

"It's just a dream come true to play in Giants Stadium," he said. "I feel like I played my heart out today."

DALY

From page R1

for next season and be the team we want to be," said Barry Cofield, who's now 2-for-2 against his old club. Cofield's message to his mates afterward was along much the same lines. There's no reason why they can't play like this every week, he told them. "We [ve] got this in us. This wasn't a once-in-a-while thing."

We'll see about that. Talk, after all, is cheap at this time of year. But the Redskins definitely have pulled themselves together since Grossman returned to the lineup, even with an offensive line that's still a trivia question. (Willie Smith? Mo Hurt? Tyler Polumbus? Who are these guys?)

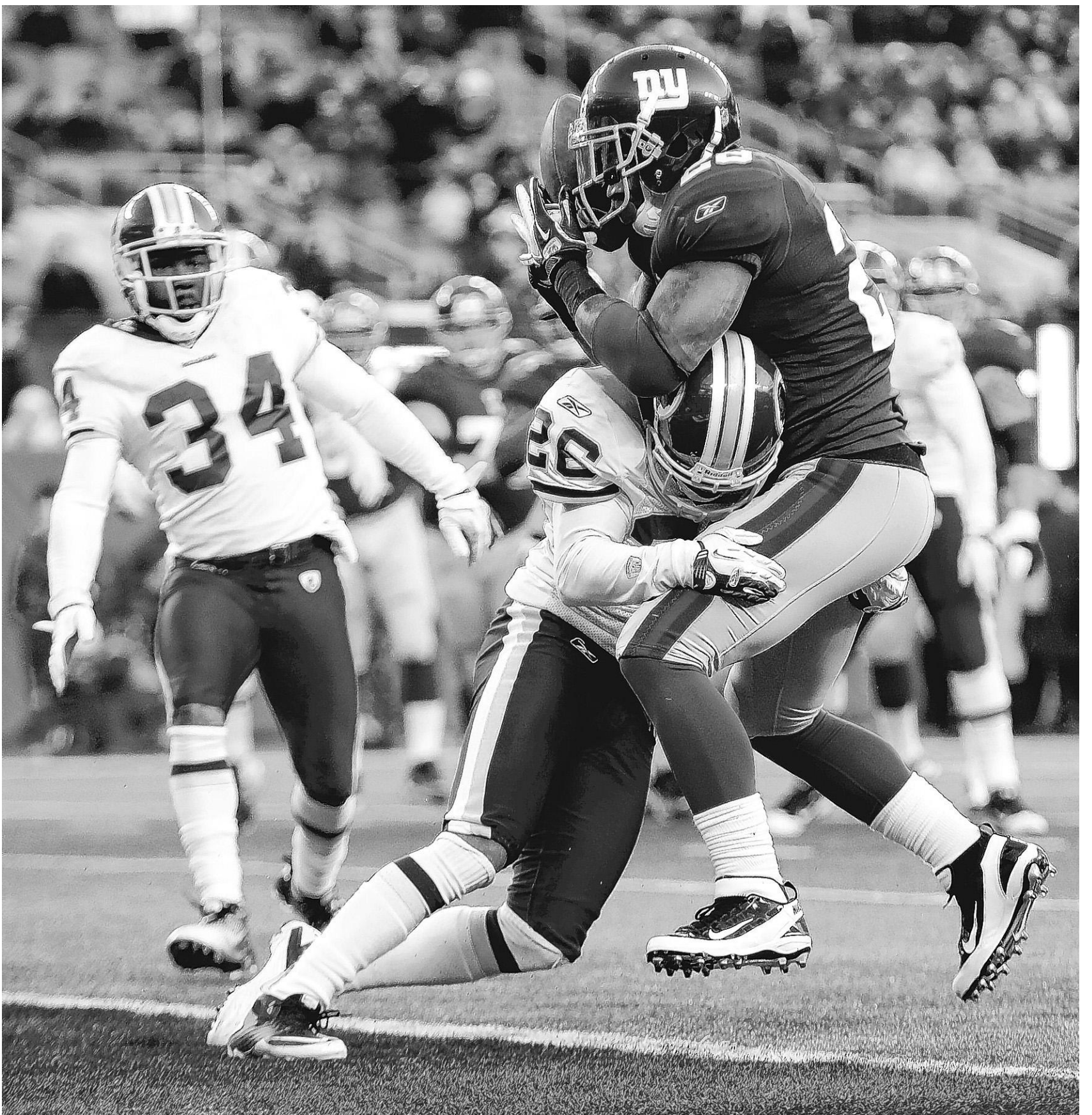
Sunday "these guys" helped the offense control the ball for 35 minutes and held the hard-charging New York pass rush to a single sack. And if you can keep your quarterback upright against the Giants, he can take advantage of their highly suspect secondary, one that gave Jabar Gaffney, Santana Moss and Donte Stallworth plenty of room to roam.

Yes, the Redskins have issues. But you look at the trouble the Giants — and the Patriots before them — have covering people and, well, you realize there isn't this gigantic chasm separating Shanny's warriors from the Haves and Semi-Haves in the NFL. Every team has weaknesses; it's mostly a matter of how many (and how serious they are).

Not to over-romanticize it, but the Redskins seem to have rediscovered the joy in the game in recent days. Just because you're out of playoff contention and the laughing-stock of the Twitterverse doesn't mean you can't still have some fun. Indeed, it's at moments like these that you're almost obliged to . . . let go — if only to keep your sanity.

Against the Patriots, the Redskins had Brandon Banks, their miniature return man, throw a touchdown pass. (The very idea.) And against the Giants, they began the game with a flea-flicker — Roy Helu taking the handoff and then flipping the ball back to Grossman, who heaved it downfield in the general direction of Moss. New York's Corey Webster came down with the interception, but that was almost beside the point. The point was: Once again, the Redskins were holding nothing back.

And let's face it, football is a hold-nothing-back sport. Go anything less than all out, and you're likely to get knocked into next week. The past few games, the Redskins have been putting forth the kind of effort that usually brings positive results. Perhaps they've finally turned



In addition to having one of the Redskins' three interceptions, Josh Wilson held up DJ Ware at the goal line in the fourth quarter to prevent the Giants from scoring a touchdown. The play was initially called a touchdown, but it was overruled because Ware did not have control before Wilson pushed him back from the goal line.

a corner, figured out that effort as much is talent is what's going to return them to relevance in the NFL. (As if that's any great secret.)

It's been a long time since the Redskins controlled an opponent as completely as they did the Giants. For the second week in a row, they put up big points in the first half — 17 (after dropping 20 on the Pats) — only this time they had a big lead to go with it. And as Cofield said, "It

makes a great difference. You've got a chance to make a team one-dimensional. The defensive coordinator can really open his playbook, and you can really harass the quarterback, get hits on him and create plays for the secondary. It's just a whole different ballgame."

The plays created by this harassment were a season-high three interceptions — by O.J. Atogwe, DeAngelo Hall and Josh Wilson.

With Brian Orakpo, Ryan Kerrigan and others constantly flying at him, Manning (23 of 40, 45.5 passer rating) never got in a rhythm. In fact, you wouldn't have guessed the Giants have one of the best passing attacks in the league, with Victor Cruz and Hakeem Nicks both over 1,000 yards.

"You feel good about the way they've played," Shanahan said. ". . . To finish the way we did today was

nice, to kind of have the game under control and not put a lot of pressure on the players in the fourth quarter."

Now the Redskins just have to finish the season the way they finished the Giants — and the way they wish they had finished the Patriots. Then they can head into the offseason with justifiable optimism, with the conviction that the worst is behind them and that better times are ahead.



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Despite throwing two interceptions, Redskins quarterback Rex Grossman had things well in hand. He finished 15 of 24 for 185 yards, including a 20-yard touchdown pass to Santana Moss during the second quarter.

REDSKINS 23, GIANTS 10

Grossman's resilience shines through in victory

By RICH CAMPBELL
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. | Rex Grossman did his best Joe Namath impersonation after the Washington Redskins' 23-10 victory over the New York Giants on Sunday. As he trotted into the tunnel, the first player off the field, he wagged his index finger at the Giants fans who were showering him with pleasantries not suitable for print.

Grossman savored the moment, his fifth victory in 11 games this year as the Redskins' starter. And why not? After eight NFL seasons, there's a limited amount remaining in his future.

"I don't really care about the Giants at all," Grossman said. "I care about our team and going out and winning a divisional game and working your [tail] off all week and celebrating the fact of all that hard work. You go out, you execute and you win. That's plenty of gratification." Grossman did it in typical resilient fashion. He threw

"I don't really care about the Giants at all. I care about our team and going out and winning a divisional game and working your [tail] off all week and celebrating the fact of all that hard work. You go out, you execute and you win. That's plenty of gratification."

— Rex Grossman

an interception on his first and seventh passes of the game. After that, though, he completed 11 of 17 throws for 151 yards and a touchdown — good for a passer rating of 112.6.

Overall, he was 15 of 24 for 185 yards, a touchdown and two interceptions. His rating was 65.5.

Regardless of whether he wins or loses, Grossman's narrative usually involves adversity. It has defined his career and his season with the Redskins.

In the afterglow of Sunday's victory, though, he wanted little part of it.

The first two questions reporters

posed to him centered on rebounding from his early interceptions. He answered by offering considerable insight, as usual. He doesn't always make the right decisions, but he certainly can explain them.

Then he realized that was no way to celebrate a win.

"I'm not sure what I've taken so long talking about those interceptions," he said.

As many fans and analysts turn their attention to the offseason and wonder about the future for the Redskins' quarterback position, Grossman is busy living in the present and making the most of his second chance.

"He's definitely enjoying a lot, but he's also approaching it in such a professional way," tight end Logan Paulsen said. "It's not like he's just basking in the moment, he's proactively looking to help this team get better."

He did that by shaking off his two early picks, neither of which hurt because they were long throws and their defense held.

Grossman underthrew a long-developing flea-flicker on the first play of the game. On the second interception, the Giants' safety fooled him by running up at first but changing directions and getting back into a deep po-

sition. "It was a bad play on the second one," Grossman said. "Whatever. We went down and scored a touchdown right afterwards."

That's a perfect example of his mindset. No matter the mistake, he keeps slinging it.

He hit Santana Moss for a 20-yard touchdown on the next drive to give the Redskins a 10-0 lead they never relinquished. Coming out of the huddle, he saw Kenny Phillips, the Giants' only safety, in the deep middle. He knew then he had a touchdown because Phillips would be unable to get over to Moss in time.

Moss ran a corner route, separating from rookie cornerback Prince Amukamara. He turned to find the ball descending into his path.

"He's just been a guy that, regardless of what he does, he's going to go out there and give us a chance," Moss said. "That's why I've been saying from Day 1 that I'll ride with the guy like that."

REDSKINS

From page R1

times and left the usually vocal crowd as boisterous as an afternoon at a library.

The strong-armed Manning entered Sunday having passed for 1,153 yards and seven touchdowns in his previous three games. His lowest quarterback rating was 90.7. And the Redskins won just once since October, including being dissected by Tom Brady and the New England Patriots a week ago, in a season plunged into talk of playing youngsters and draft position.

Add two early interceptions by Redskins quarterback Rex Grossman on Sunday — including one on the team's first possession — and the script looked familiar.

But each time the ball left Manning's hand, play after play came from the secondary. Hope came, too.

"Nobody believed we had a chance," said DeAngelo Hall, who snagged one of the interceptions. "Imagine what's going to happen when everything starts coming together. That's scary."

Added defensive lineman Stephen Bowen: "When we play like this all season, we'll be playing in January."

First, though, the Redskins and defensive coordinator Jim Haslett tried to confuse Manning. They didn't want him to relax in the pocket with time to read the defense and pick it apart. Reed Doughty, who started at safety, likened the variety of looks and coverages the Redskins deployed to a chess match. The Redskins, Hall believed, knew what the Giants wanted to do.

Manning escaped the Redskins' pass



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington cornerback Josh Wilson (26) celebrates with Brandyn Thompson after intercepting Eli Manning in the end zone in the fourth quarter.

rush for the first 2½ quarters, but constant pressure forced him into quick and off-balance throws.

"Some things that we were expecting we didn't get," said Manning, who finished 23-for-40 for 257 yards. "They do some things defensively where we thought we had a good plan and could hit a few big plays. ... They were there. We just didn't capitalize on those."

The most glaring of those missed opportunities was Manning's long pass

Hakeem Nicks dropped in the first quarter. Nicks beat a pair of Redskins defensive backs and would have had an easy touchdown.

But three of Manning's passes found the hands of Redskins defensive backs, including Atogwe. The onetime starter played just 13 snaps against the Patriots. When Manning heaved a pass to Victor Cruz, the ball hung in the cold air. Atogwe wrapped his arm under the ball as he tumbled to the turf, then re-

turned it 26 yards thanks to Hall's key block.

In the third quarter, Hall snatched a pass intended for Hakeem Nicks on a post-corner route at the Redskins' 40-yard line.

Redemption came with Hall's grab, after last week's Patriots game when he was called for a personal foul after tossing an official's flag and stood next to a play without attempting a tackle.

Hall shrugged off the play: "I just turned around and got my hands on it."

Finally, cornerback Josh Wilson killed another Giants drive in the fourth quarter. With Manning running a no-huddle offense in the shotgun, the quarterback lobbed a pass to the left corner of the end zone for Mario Manningham.

The diminutive Wilson grabbed the pass while falling out of bounds. Then he walked toward nearby Giants fans with his hand cupped around his ear as if they were too silent to hear.

On the next series, Wilson also stopped D.J. Ware from taking a short pass into the end zone.

Wilson wasn't available to speak after the game because of concussion-like symptoms after a fourth-quarter collision.

After the game containers of chicken broth and apple cider and hot chocolate sat in a corner of the Redskins' locker room that felt sweltering compared to the chill outside.

Blood trickled from a cut under Atogwe's right eye.

And around the piles of pants and shreds of tape and bowls of orange slices was a rare thing this season: smiles.

"We can still make something out of every game," receiver Santana Moss said, "every Sunday."

REDSKINS 23, GIANTS 10

Washington	3	14	3	3	-23
N.Y. Giants	0	3	0	7	-10

First Quarter

Was-FG Gano 36, 9:14.

Second Quarter

Was-Moss 20 pass from Grossman (Gano kick), 13:42.
Was-Young 6 run (Gano kick), 7:56.
NYG-FG Tynes 40, :02.

Third Quarter

Was-FG Gano 43, 11:49.

Fourth Quarter

Was-FG Gano 25, 14:57.
NYG-Bradshaw 3 run (Tynes kick), :33.
A-78,861.

	Was	NYG
First downs	19	22
Total Net Yards	300	324
Rushes-yards	40-123	18-91
Passing	177	233
Punt Returns	1(-2)	0-0
Kickoff Returns	3-27	4-104
Interceptions Ret.	3-52	2-0
Comp-Att-Int	15-24-2	23-40-3
Sacked-Yards Lost	1-8	3-24
Punts	2-33-0	4-49-0
Fumbles-Lost	1-0	1-0
Penalties-Yards	2-48	8-75
Time of Possession	35:00	25:00

LEADERS

RUSHING—Washington, Helu 23-53, Royster 10-36, Young 4-14, Armstrong 1-14, Paul 1-7, Grossman 1(-minus 1). N.Y. Giants, Bradshaw 10-58, Jacobs 8-33.

PASSING—Washington, Grossman 15-24-2-18.5. N.Y. Giants, Manning 23-40-3-25.7.

RECEIVING—Washington, Gaffney 6-85, Helu 3-16, Moss 2-40, Stallworth 2-35, Paulsen 1-9, Young 1-0. N.Y. Giants, Nicks 5-73, Cruz 5-44, Manningham 3-57, Bradshaw 3-21, Pascoe 2-26, Hynoski 2-13, Ballard 1-15, Barden 1-6, Ware 1-2.

MISSED FIELD GOALS—N.Y. Giants, Tynes 44 (WL).

THE WASHINGTON TIMES

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)
L, 23-0

WEEK 9



vs. 49ers
L, 19-11

WEEK 10



at Dolphins
L, 20-9

WEEK 11



vs. Cowboys
L, 27-24 (OT)

WEEK 12



at Seahawks
W, 23-17

WEEK 13



vs. Jets
L, 34-19

WEEK 14



vs. Patriots
L, 34-27

WEEK 15



at Giants
W, 23-10

WEEK 16



vs. Vikings
Sat., Dec. 24

WEEK 17



at Eagles
Sun., Jan. 1

REDSKINS 23, GIANTS 10: QUARTER-BY-QUARTER



ASSOCIATED PRESS PHOTOGRAPHS

FIRST QUARTER: The Redskins wasted no time extending their turnover streak to 28 games, as Kenny Phillips intercepted Rex Grossman off a flea-flicker on the game's first play. Grossman has thrown at least one interception in his last 10 games.



SECOND QUARTER: Redskins receivers Santana Moss and Jabar Gaffney celebrate a 20-yard touchdown by Moss, the first of two touchdowns in the quarter. Washington extended its lead to 17-0 when fullback Darrell Young scored on a 6-yard run.



THIRD QUARTER: Brian Orakpo jumps in to finish off Eli Manning after Stephen Bowen (bottom) sacked the Giants quarterback to stall a drive. New York then missed a field goal.



FOURTH QUARTER: The Giants thought they had scored their first touchdown with a pass to D.J. Ware (28), but he was ruled to not have possession before being pushed back.

1 Well, that didn't take long. The Redskins extended two dubious streaks on the game's first play, when Rex Grossman was intercepted on a flea-flicker. That made it 28 straight games with a turnover for the Skins and 10 straight with an interception for Grossman. But overall, the quarter went pretty well. On the only full drive that didn't end with an interception on the first play (Grossman threw another "pick" later), Washington got a 36-yard field goal. Grossman was 4-for-5 for 34 yards on the drive. And the Redskins were driving for an eventual touchdown as the quarter ended, converting a fourth-and-1 in the process. They got a break when Hakeem Nicks dropped a pass from Eli Manning that would have been a touchdown. Washington possessed the ball for 11 minutes in the quarter. Manning didn't complete a pass, and New York kept a streak alive, too. It has trailed in all 14 games this season.

2 So which of these teams has a shot at the playoffs? You sure couldn't tell it was the Giants by watching the second quarter, though the final minute definitely went New York's way, and may prove to be huge. The Giants stopped the Redskins on fourth-and-1 and drove downfield for a 40-yard field goal by Lawrence Tynes. It was their only trip into Redskins territory of the half and it cut their deficit to 17-3 at halftime. They spent most of the quarter doing nothing on either side of the ball. On offense, they had three punts and an interception on their first four possessions. The Redskins got two touchdowns in the quarter: First, Grossman and Santana Moss connected for a 20-yard score. That was followed by a 6-yard run by Darrel Young. It was the fullback's first touchdown of the season. A big play in the form of an interception by free safety Oshiomogho Atoogwe off a deflection set up Young's score.

KEY PLAY

Where to begin on a day when the Redskins had a season's worth of big plays? Let's try this one: Third quarter, Washington was up 20-3 but New York looked headed for a touchdown. On third-and-6 from the Redskins' 18, Stephen Bowen sacked Eli Manning for an 8-yard loss. That brought out Lawrence Tynes for a 44-yard field goal try. Very makeable, but better than a touchdown. Except Tynes missed, and Washington drove for a field goal of its own. Instead of being up 10 with plenty of time left, Washington was up 20 with less than a quarter left.

3 The Redskins went into the final quarter with a 17-point lead that was destined to grow, given that the third quarter ended with the ball on the Giants' 7. Earlier, just when it looked like New York might make a game of it, Stephen Bowen broke through and sacked Manning for an 8-yard loss on third down. That led to a 44-yard field goal attempt that missed. Because of that, instead of being within 10, New York found itself down 23-3 after one play of the fourth quarter when Graham Gano hit his third field goal of the game. Whatever momentum New York had gained with its late score in the first half was gone. On the second play of the second half, DeAngelo Hall intercepted Manning. That set up a 43-yard field goal by Gano for a 20-3 lead. An interesting note from the first three quarters: The Redskins went into the final quarter without having to punt. Washington also had been penalized just once — for 5 yards.

4 This is how you pretty much dominate an NFL game: You make plays when you need them, you get a break or two and you don't let your mistakes cause too much damage. One sequence in the final quarter highlighted all that. A pass interference penalty set New York up on Washington's 1. A subsequent third-down touchdown pass to D.J. Ware was overturned because Ware did not have possession when he was pushed back from the goal line. The Giants then had a touchdown pass nullified on fourth down by a holding penalty. On the second try to convert the fourth down, Ryan Kerrigan sacked Manning. It was that kind of day for the Giants — and the Redskins. After Gano's field goal on the first play of the quarter, Josh Wilson intercepted Manning in the end zone. It was Washington's third interception of the day. New York finally scored a touchdown in the game's final minute. Way too little, way too late.

REDSKINS NOTES

Washington relishes first Giant sweep since '99

By RICH CAMPBELL AND NATHAN FENNO
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

BY THE NUMBERS

12: Years since the last Redskins sweep of the Giants during the regular season.

6: Sacks this season for Stephen Bowen, a career high.

2: Number of teams in the NFL with four players who have at least five sacks — the Redskins and the Raiders

28: Consecutive games in which the Redskins have had at least one turnover, the longest such streak in the NFL.

8: Times the Redskins converted on third down, in 15 chances. They also were 1-for-2 on fourth-down conversions.

53: Rushing yards for Roy Helu. It was the first time in four games the rookie hadn't reached the 100-yard mark.

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. | Some Redskins players found extra satisfaction in Sunday's 23-10 victory over the New York Giants because of what Giants safety Antrel Rolle said after Washington beat them in Week 1.

"We know the Redskins are not a better team than us," Rolle said. "If we played them 100 times, they might win five."

That quote made the rounds inside the Redskins Park locker room last week, and players kept it in mind when they took the field.

"He gave us motivation," Redskins receiver Santana Moss said.

Washington swept the season series from the Giants for first time since 1999. Linebacker London Fletcher laughed when a reporter asked him if Rolle's comment made the victory sweeter.

"It doesn't make it not sweet," he cackled.

A sack for Orakpo, at last

Brian Orakpo usually is a pass-rushing terror, but one glaring statistic belies that. He entered Sunday's game with 25.5 career sacks, but in 16 games against NFC East opponents, he had only half a sack.

Late in the fourth quarter Sunday, though, Orakpo pulled down Giants quarterback Eli Manning

"We know the Redskins are not a better team than us. If we played them 100 times, they might win five."

— Giants safety Antrel Rolle, after Washington beat New York in Week 1

for a 3-yard loss.

"I don't think about it, but it's reality," Orakpo said. "I finally got that monkey off my back."

The sacks came in a flurry after halftime. Stephen Bowen, playing with a tear of the posterior cruciate ligament in his left knee, sacked Manning for an 8-yard loss in the third quarter. That forced a 44-yard field goal attempt that Lawrence Tynes missed.

"We tried to pin our ears back and go after him," Bowen said.

Ryan Kerrigan then effectively sealed the victory by sacking Manning on fourth-and-goal from the 12 with 8 minutes, 53 seconds to play.

"We were trying to get him a little unfocused out there," Orakpo said.

Thomas carted off

Ex-Redskins receiver Devin

Thomas, now with the Giants, injured his neck on the final play of the first half. After a collision on kick coverage as time expired, Thomas lay on the turf for more than 10 minutes while a crowd of personnel attended.

A marching band scheduled to perform at halftime exited the field without playing a note before Thomas was carted off strapped to a backboard.

Thomas, who did not return to the game, was moving his arms and legs and being evaluated, the Giants said. After the game, Thomas tweeted that he suffered a stinger.

A second-round pick by the Redskins in 2008, Thomas caught one pass for 12 yards this season.

Extra points

Cornerback Josh Wilson was unavailable to speak postgame because of "head symptoms," the Redskins said. Wilson was injured in the fourth quarter but returned to the game.

•Rookie Willie Smith started at left tackle and played opposite defensive end Jason Pierre-Paul, who had 16 tackles and a sack. "It's a great learning curve for me that I got to go out there and go against somebody like that and definitely a confidence booster, but I still have a lot of work to do," Smith said.

WEEK 16 (SATURDAY) REDSKINS VS. VIKINGS



Kickoff: 1:05 p.m. **TV:** Fox **Radio:** AM-980, FM-92.7, FM-94.3

What to watch: When the Redskins traded quarterback Donovan McNabb to Minnesota shortly after the NFL lockout ended in July, this game jumped off the schedule as one of the juiciest of the season. But McNabb is out of football after the Vikings released him earlier this month.

• Minnesota (2-12) has lost its last six games and is playing for the future. Add in the Redskins' record and the holiday, and this one might have a preseason feel.

• Vikings rookie quarterback Christian Ponder has been up and down. He's thrown 13 touchdowns and 12 interceptions. Running back Adrian Peterson returned Sunday after missing three games. He gained 60 yards on 10 carries.

