

EXPANDED COVERAGE, R4: Replacement officials lose control
Secondary exposed by Rams' Amendola; Carriker, Orakpo add to injury woes



31   28

GAMEDAY

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2012



The Washington Times

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DOWN TO EARTH



ASSOCIATED PRESS PHOTOGRAPHS

Rams defensive tackle Kendall Langford (98) put the heat on Redskins quarterback Robert Griffin III during the fourth quarter, then celebrated (below right) as kicker Billy Cundiff's late 62-yard field goal attempt fell short. St. Louis pulled out a 31-28 win, preventing the Redskins from opening with two straight road wins. Washington squandered a 15-point lead in a game that was a mixture of miscues and over-the-top roughness, thanks to missed calls by officials.

Big lead, Week 1 momentum go out window with loss

By RICH CAMPBELL
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

ST. LOUIS | The men who play professional football will tell you it is the most emotional of sports. That's a byproduct of its physical nature and the machismo that inevitably accompanies that. This is the NFL, where the players are the biggest and fastest in the world. Fame and fortune only raise the stakes.

Players also will tell you the retaliator usually is the one penalized. When emotions boil over on the field, victory can be determined by poise and composure. When your opponent illegally hits you, how do you respond?

That was on Joshua Morgan's mind as he sat at his locker Sunday evening, towel wrapped around his waist, staring at his cellphone. For all the skirmishes that occurred during and after plays in the Washington Redskins' 31-28 loss to the St. Louis Rams, and for all the good and bad plays the Redskins made while staying within reach of victory, one truth mattered more than any other.

Morgan was the retaliator. And, of course, he was caught.

The Redskins wide receiver was penalized 15 yards for throwing the ball at Rams cornerback Cortland Finnegan with 1:18 remaining in a 3-point game. It didn't matter that Finnegan shoved Morgan in the face as Morgan got up from the turf after a catch-and-run that advanced the Redskins to the Rams' 29-yard line, sufficient position to attempt a game-tying field goal.

No, this maligned crew of replacement officials did not recognize how Morgan was provoked. One referee saw the retaliation, though, and it cost the Redskins a chance to tie the game.

"The second man get caught," Morgan said softly. "Coach been telling me that all week. I should have just kept my cool."

The Redskins missed an opportunity to begin the season with back-to-back road victories for the first time since their first Super Bowl championship season in 1982. More importantly, the momentum from their scintillating Week 1 win at New Orleans, in which they outlasted the Saints by scoring 40 points, is gone after losing to a Rams team that won only two games last season.

To say Morgan cost the Redskins a win would be to overlook an extensive list of shortcomings, miscues and failures.

Quarterback Robert Griffin III was 20 of 29 for 206 yards, and he ran for two touchdowns and threw for another in his second game. But his interception just before halftime led to a St. Louis field goal.

Griffin threw off his back foot over the middle. The pass was behind the intended receiver, and

» see **REDSKINS** | R2

Redskins live on the edge, then fall off



DAN DALY

That's the way it is with rebuilding teams, with bad teams. There's no margin for error.

That seemed to be changing in Week 1 at New Orleans, when the Redskins had a punt blocked for a touchdown and lived to tell about it.

ST. LOUIS

Every time something bad has happened to the Washington Redskins in recent years, it's cost them one way or another. A starter has gotten hurt — and there's been nobody to replace him with. Or somebody has fumbled or thrown a pick or committed some other on-field blunder — and it's crippled their chances to win a game.

But Sunday at St. Louis, it came back to bite them again. They had another punt blocked, this one leading to the go-ahead TD, and fell — hard — to the Rams 31-28.

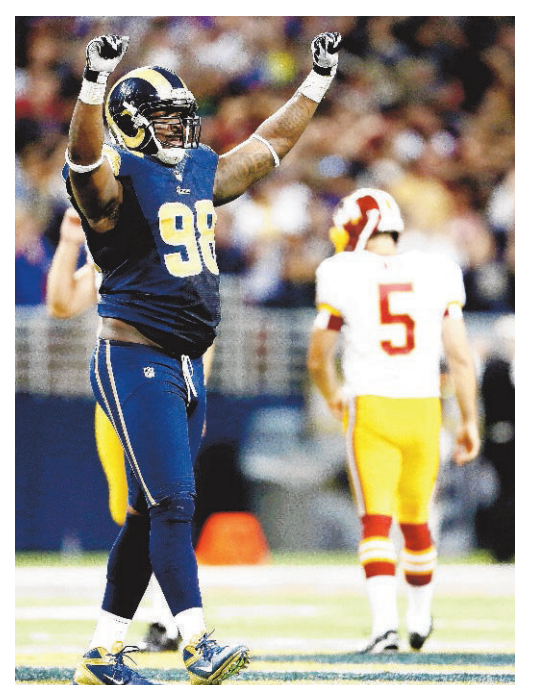
The loss hit "hard" for all kinds of reasons. It hit hard because the Redskins blew a 15-point second-quarter lead after appearing headed for a 2-0 start on the road. It hit hard because St. Louis gave them all kinds of help — a fumble on the first play from scrimmage that was returned for a score by Josh Wilson, a fumble in the final three minutes with the Rams trying to run out the clock, among other transgressions — and still the Redskins couldn't close the deal.

It hit hard, as much as anything, because it was a hard game, with lots of extracurricular activity and much, on the Washington side, to regret afterward. The biggest blunder was an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty against Josh

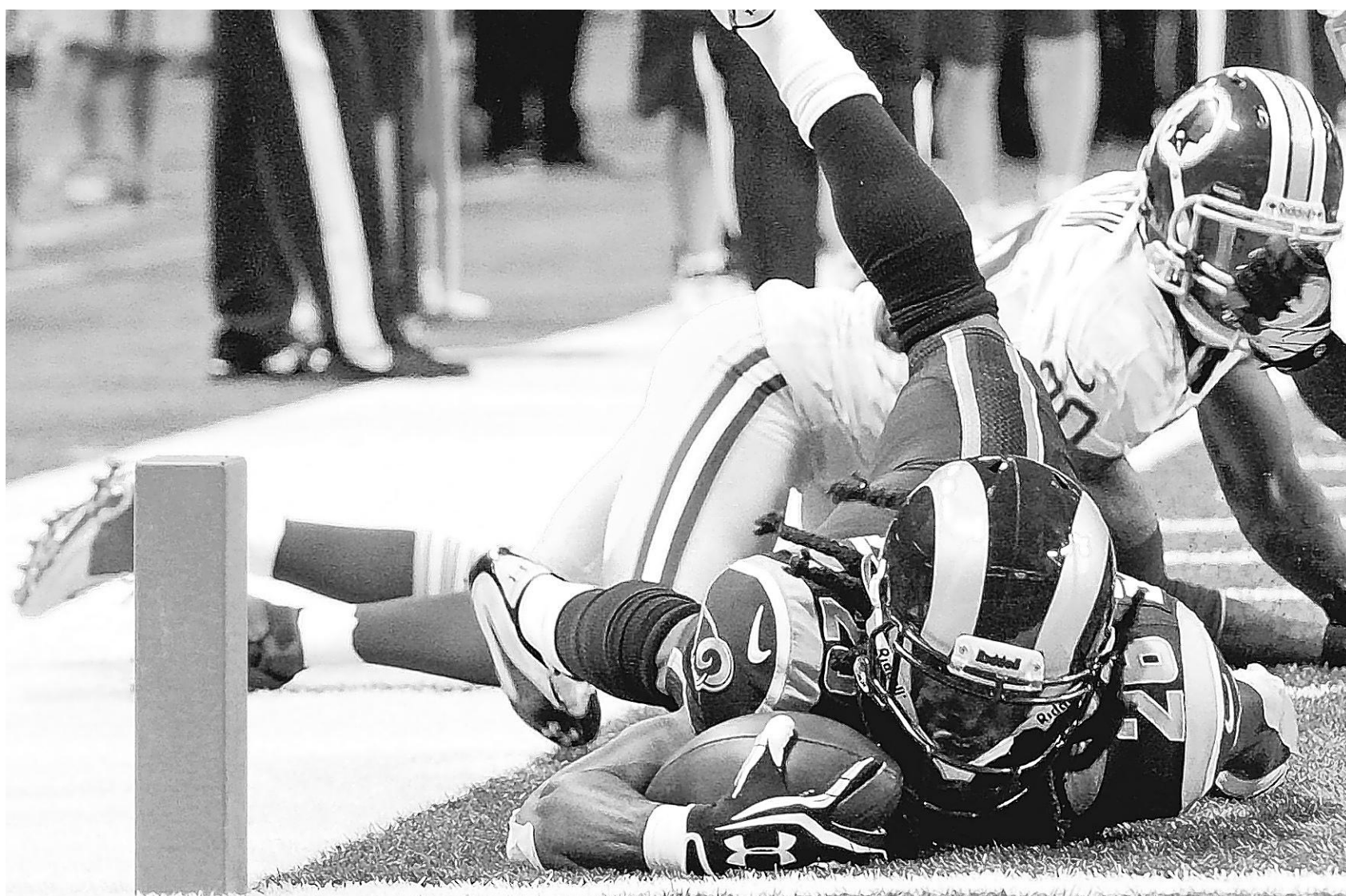
Morgan with 1:18 left that made Billy Cundiff's potential game-tying field goal attempt a 62-yarder instead of a 47-yarder. (Not surprisingly, it was short.) Morgan was reacting to a post-play shove by St. Louis cornerback Cortland Finnegan — by tossing the ball at him — but it was a move reminiscent of Michael Westbrook ripping off his helmet in overtime against the New York Giants in 1997. (Sorry to have to exhume that awful memory.)

Yes, the replacement officials let matters get out of hand. Yes, it was a poor advertisement for pro football. But I'm not going to dwell on it. Why? Well, for starters, because, as Robert Griffin III said, "We're men. We can handle ourselves out there." But also because, for all the Rams' physicality, the Redskins had more penalties

» see **DALY** | R2



EXPANDED REDSKINS COVERAGE THROUGHOUT THE SEASON: WASHINGTONTIMES.COM/SPORTS/FOOTBALL



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Rams running back Daryl Richardson (front) takes the ball down to the 1-yard line as Redskins defensive back Cedric Griffin looks on during the third quarter Sunday.

REDSKINS

From page R1

Finnegan intercepted it.

"I was just trying to make a play when I shouldn't make a play," Griffin said. "It's what we talked about during the preseason. It's just a mistake I can't make. I'll learn from that."

On the other side of the ball, St. Louis proved its offense is reborn under new coach Jeff Fisher and offensive coordinator Brian Schottenheimer. The Rams averaged more than 70 yards per play. Sam Bradford had 310 passing yards, and St. Louis amassed 151 rushing yards on 27 attempts.

The Redskins also gave up a blocked punt for the second straight game. That set up the decisive touchdown early in the fourth quarter.

All that was against the backdrop of unrestrained and unruly physicality, players said. Players on both teams repeatedly yelled at each other after plays, and the game was delayed several times to separate players in fights.

"This is the dirtiest game I've ever played in," Redskins fullback Darrel Young said. "Hitting after the play. A guy ripped my helmet off one time. I didn't know that was legal."

Said Redskins coach Mike Shanahan: "I have never been in a game like this."

Finnegan has a reputation for being a pest and an instigator. He lived up to that throughout the game and in one of the decisive moments with Morgan at the end.

"I definitely saw Cortland pushing on him and shoving him," Redskins cornerback DeAngelo Hall said. "It probably should have been called both ways, but the second guy always gets caught."

That's so well known, yet Morgan still let his

emotions overtake him.

"I never did nothing like that before," Morgan said. "It just came to point where you just get tired of it."

Instead of fourth and 1 and the Rams' 29, the Redskins had fourth and 16 from the 44. Billy Cundiff attempted a 62-yard field goal that was short the moment it left his foot.

After the ball bounced harmlessly in the end zone, and the delighted fans filed out of Edwards Jones Dome, Redskins players spoke of growing from the experience.

How else to heal such a painful sting?

"I'm excited because this is what every great team has to go through to be great," Young said. "We can't have the special teams mistakes; that's two weeks in a row. We can't have the false starts at the goal line. We can't have the missed block by me on the outside zone. It all adds up. We've got to learn as men to grow from that. We've got to learn we can't always hit guys back"

RAMS 31, REDSKINS 28

Washington	14	7	7	0	28
St. Louis	3	13	7	8	31

First Quarter

Was — J.Wilson 30 fumble return (Cundiff kick), 14:49.
StL — FG Zuerlein 39, 9:05.
Was — Griffin III 5 run (Cundiff kick), :19.

Second Quarter

StL — FG Zuerlein 33, 8:17.
Was — Hankerson 68 pass from Griffin III (Cundiff kick), 6:19.
StL — Amendola 1 pass from Bradford (Zuerlein kick), 1:58.
StL — FG Zuerlein 42, :02.

Third Quarter

StL — Gibson 34 pass from Bradford (Zuerlein kick), 10:23.
Was — Griffin III 7 run (Cundiff kick), 5:27.

Fourth Quarter

StL — Mulligan 1 pass from Bradford (D.Richardson run), 14:55.
 A — 53,979.

	Was	NO
First downs	18	23
Total Net Yards	373	452
Rushes-yards	29-176	27-151
Passing	197	301
Punt Returns	1-(-3)	4-29
Kickoff Returns	4-53	1-12
Interceptions Ret.	1-0	1-5
Comp-Att-Int	20-29-1	26-35-1
Sacked-Yards Lost	1-9	2-9
Punts	6-40.0	3-54.3
Fumbles-Lost	0-0	3-2
Penalties-Yards	11-96	7-60
Time of Possession	28:36	31:24

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

RUSHING — Washington, Morris 16-89, Griffin III 11-82, Royster 1-4, F.Davis 1-1. St. Louis, D.Richardson 15-83, Jackson 9-58, Bradford 3-10.

PASSING — Washington, Griffin III 20-29-1-206. St. Louis, Bradford 26-35-1-310.

RECEIVING — Washington, Morgan 5-50, Moss 3-14, Paul 3-13, Hankerson 2-68, A.Robinson 2-40, F.Davis 2-14, Royster 2-7, Helu 1-0. St. Louis, Amendola 15-160, St.Smith 3-39, Gibson 2-53, Kendricks 2-25, D.Richardson 2-19, Mulligan 2-14.

MISSED FIELD GOALS — Washington, Cundiff 62 (SH).

ANDY ANSWERS

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ASSOCIATED PRESS

Rams quarterback Sam Bradford hurls a touchdown pass — one of his three in the game — to Matthew Mulligan as Redskins linebacker Lorenzo Alexander arrives too late to prevent the score.

DALY

From page R1

(11-7) and more penalty yardage (96-60). Indeed, all five penalties in the fourth quarter, for a grand total of 50 yards, were called against Washington. That, right there, is a textbook illustration of How Not To Win a Game.

"We should have just controlled ourselves a little more," Santana Moss said. "But it's hard. You have to defend yourself [that is, look out for the best interests of the team] by not defending yourself."

The 2012 Rams, if it makes you feel any better, bear little resemblance to the 2011 Rams. Those Rams — 17-10 losers to the Redskins in this very same building, Edward Jones Dome — were dead in the water. Those Rams were awful enough to "earn" the second pick in the draft, which they were nice enough to trade to Mike Shanahan so he could select RG3.

But these Rams, under new coach Jeff Fisher, have been instilled with some of the spunk and chippiness his Tennessee clubs were known for. And with two more of the Redskins' first-round picks to spend, courtesy of the Griffin deal, they should only get tougher to beat.

But back to the game. Between penalty flags, it turned into a Big 12-style shootout between Griffin (Baylor) and Sam Bradford (Oklahoma). And really, who wasn't dying to see Robert in that kind of situation — the kind where he feels like he has to score every time he gets the ball because, well, the other guy is going to score, too?

Thus did the scoreboard go from Redskins 21-6, to Rams 23-21, to Redskins 28-23 (after RG3's second touchdown run, a 7-yarder) to Rams 31-28 (after Bradford's second TD throw, a 1-yarder to

Matthew Mulligan). It was the game within the game: Which Heisman Trophy winner is better? And it only added to it that the Rams could have had Griffin but opted to stick with Bradford (and take a boatload of selections instead). Folks figure to be debating that decision for the next decade.

On this day, the statistical comparison was pretty close. Bradford racked up 320 yards (310 passing, 10 running) and three scores (all throwing), and Griffin totaled 288 yards (206 passing, 82 running) and three scores (one with his arm, the others with his feet). But Sam's club came away with the victory, so we'll give him a slight edge.

As much as anything, this was the game that exposed the Redskins for what they are. Griffin's many talents make them much more dangerous offensively; that's increasingly obvious. But defensively, especially with Orakpo largely a spectator, Shanahan's club isn't going to scare anybody. The secondary is particularly suspect — as we expected it to be.

Most of the Redskins' games the rest of the way probably will be like these first two. They'll have to score — and keep scoring — because it'll be hard to predict how many points they'll need. That's one of the things you have to keep in mind about the interception Griffin threw in the last minute of the first half, the one that cost three points (a 42-yard Greg Zuerlein field goal) and easily could have cost seven. The Redskins were ahead 21-13, sure, but they also had enough time to move into scoring position. And in their defense-challenged circumstances, you don't want to be wasting any possessions.

You don't want to be wasting any chances for victory, either, and this clearly was one. But the season is young and, just as important, so is RG3. On to Week 3 — and the Cincinnati Bengals.

NFL WEEK 2

Top performers

- Giants QB Eli Manning: 510 yards, 3 TDs
- Bills RB C.J. Spiller: 170 total yards, 2 TDs
- Bengals QB Andy Dalton: 318 yards, 3 TDs



GAME OF THE WEEK

Eagles serve turnovers, but Vick leads comeback

By ROB MAADDI
ASSOCIATED PRESS

PHILADELPHIA | With the game on the line, Michael Vick made all the right decisions — again.

Vick scored on a 1-yard TD run with 1:55 left, helping the Philadelphia Eagles overcome a slew of turnovers to beat the Baltimore Ravens 24-23 on Sunday for their second straight comeback win.

The Eagles are 2-0 for the first time since Donovan McNabb and Terrell Owens led them to the Super Bowl in 2004.

“In the moment, you have to be at your best,” Vick said. “It’s got to be an any-means-necessary mentality.”

Rookie kicker Justin Tucker made field goals of 56, 51 and 48 yards for the Ravens, but Joe Flacco couldn’t get Baltimore (1-1) in his range in the final minute.

Flacco overthrew Ray Rice on fourth and 1 from the Ravens’ 46, and the Eagles ran out the clock.

Vick threw four interceptions at Cleveland last week, but rallied the Eagles to a 17-16 win.

He did it again, though the replacement officials almost made a costly mistake.

Down 23-17, the Eagles started at their 20 with 4:43 left. Vick threw passes of 24 and 13 yards to Brent Celek. A 19-yard pass to Clay Harbor coupled with a roughing-the-passer penalty put the ball at the 3.

“There’s some serious calls the refs missed. It’s just the way it is, man, all around the league. We have to correct that. These games are critical!”

— Ray Lewis

Vick then threw incomplete as he was being hit by Haloti Ngata, but the play was ruled a fumble and it was recovered by the Ravens. A replay overturned the call, and Vick scored on the next play.

“There’s some serious calls the refs missed,” Baltimore’s Ray Lewis said. “It’s just the way it is, man, all around the league. We have to correct that. These games are critical. Guys are giving everything they’ve got all across the league. But these are calls, with the regular refs, if they were here, we know the way the calls would be made.”

The Eagles committed three turnovers in the red zone in the first half and lost two starting offensive linemen in the second. They have nine turnovers in two games, a major reason why they only have 41 points despite totaling 942 yards of offense.

“We have to get better at it,” coach Andy Reid said. “You have to take care of the football. You have to throw the football to the right person. This isn’t something we planned on having.”

The Eagles improved to 5-9 in home openers under Reid and won one for the first time since 2008.

Vick finished 23 of 32 for 371 yards with one touchdown and two interceptions. Celek had eight catches for 157 yards and DeSean Jackson had seven receptions for 114 yards.

This was a homecoming of sorts for Flacco and Ravens coach John Harbaugh. Flacco, who was 22 of 42 for 232 yards, grew up in nearby Haddon Township, N.J. Harbaugh spent 10 seasons as an assistant under Reid before going to Baltimore in 2008.

Tucker almost made them winners. An undrafted rookie out of Texas, Tucker beat out veteran kicker Billy Cundiff in the preseason and has made all six of his field goals in the first two games.

Tucker’s 56-yarder at the end of the first half sent the Ravens into the locker room up 17-7 and tied the franchise record set by Wade Richey in 2003. His 51-yarder early in the fourth made it 17-14.

Cundiff was 1 for 6 from beyond 50 yards last year, and missed a potential game-tying, 32-yarder against New England in the waning seconds of the AFC championship game.

“I think we’ll be just fine coming out of this going forward,” Harbaugh said.

Baltimore quarterback Joe Flacco walks off the field after throwing incomplete to Ray Rice on fourth and 1 on Baltimore’s last drive of the game. Flacco was 22 of 42 for 232 yards with one touchdown and one interception in the Ravens’ 24-23 loss.

ROUNDUP

Patriots lose nail-biter as kick sails wide

ASSOCIATED PRESS

FOXBOROUGH, MASS. | Stephen Gostkowski lay face down on the field after missing a shot at a winning field goal. On the sideline, Kevin Kolb and the Cardinals celebrated their victory.

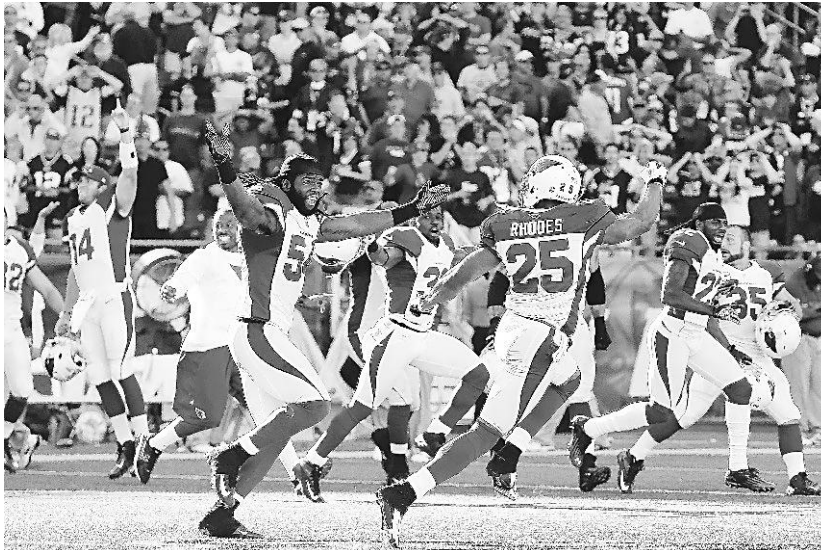
The most accurate kicker in Patriots history sent a 42-yard attempt wide to the left after making three longer field goals, and the Cardinals held on for a 20-18 win.

“Nobody really gave us a chance,” said Arizona coach Ken Whisenhunt, whose team was a two-touchdown underdog. “but our guys believed they could do it and it’s great to see them operate that way.”

Backup quarterback Kolb did his part by throwing for one touchdown and running for another. Arizona’s defense contributed by sacking Tom Brady four times. And the special teams came through with a blocked punt that set up a touchdown.

Ryan Williams fumbled at the Cardinals 30-yard line with 1:01 left, then a 30-yard run into the end zone by Danny Woodhead was nullified by a holding penalty.

Brady advanced the ball to the 24 but could only watch as Gostkowski’s attempt missed left.



Safety Kerry Rhodes and the Cardinals celebrate after Patriots kicker Stephen Gostkowski missed a 42-yard field goal try with 6 seconds left in Arizona’s 20-18 win.

and a touchdown, but the Jets hardly looked like the offensive juggernaut that piled up points in a 48-28 opening-week blowout win over Buffalo.

Bengals 34, Browns 27

CINCINNATI | Adam “Pacman” Jones returned Cleveland’s first punt 81 yards for a touchdown, and Andy Dalton matched his career high with three touchdown passes in Cincinnati’s win.

The Bengals have won 13 of their past 16 against the Browns, who got impressive games from rookie quarterback Brandon Weeden and running back Trent Richardson but still couldn’t get a win.

Colts 23, Vikings 20

INDIANAPOLIS | Adam Vinatieri made a 53-yard field goal with 8 seconds left to give Andrew Luck and Indianapolis a victory over Minnesota.

The Vikings rallied from a two-touchdown deficit in the final 5 minutes, tying the score on a 6-yard TD pass from Christian Ponder to Kyle Rudolph with 31 seconds left.

But that was too much time for Luck. He started with back-to-back 20-yard completions, then drew the Vikings offside before spiking the ball with 12 seconds to go.

Vinatieri, the best clutch kicker in NFL history, then drilled his game-winning kick.

Giants 41, Buccaneers 34

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. | Eli Manning threw for 510 yards, and Andre Brown’s 2-yard run with 31 seconds left lifted New York from a 14-point deficit to a wild win over Tampa Bay.

Manning was the first-half goat and the second-half star in the second-best passing day in team history. His three first-half interceptions gave the Bucs an 11-point lead, but his monster second half helped the Super Bowl champion Giants avoid an 0-2 start.

Chargers 38, Titans 10

SAN DIEGO | Tight end Dante Rosario had three touchdown catches for the first time in his career, and San Diego’s defense harassed Jake Locker all afternoon in beating Tennessee for the ninth straight time.

With Antonio Gates inactive due to sore ribs, the Chargers turned to Rosario. He had only five career scoring catches coming in, including a game-winner against San Diego in the 2008 season opener while with Carolina.

Rivers was 24 of 32 for 284 yards and Rosario four catches for 48 yards.

Dolphins 35, Raiders 13

MIAMI | Reggie Bush ran for 172 yards and two touchdowns, and Miami routed Oakland to win a home opener for the first time since 2005.

Ryan Tannehill threw his first NFL touchdown pass, ran for another and avoided any turnovers after tossing three interceptions in his pro debut a week earlier.

Joe Philbin earned a sideline drenching for his first victory as a head coach, while the Raiders, led by new coach Dennis Allen, are 0-2 for the first time since 2007.

Bills 35, Chiefs 17

ORCHARD PARK, N.Y. | C.J. Spiller scored twice and had 123 yards rushing to spark Buffalo’s rout of Kansas City. Ryan Fitzpatrick threw two touchdown passes, including a 49-yarder to Stevie Johnson, and Leodis McKelvin scored on an 88-yard punt return in the Bills’ home opener.

Buffalo’s high-priced defense had five sacks and forced three turnovers as the Bills bounced back from a dreadful season-opening 48-28 loss at the New York Jets last week.

Texans 27, Jaguars 7

JACKSONVILLE, FLA. | Arian Foster ran for 110 yards and a touchdown, Ben Tate added 74 yards and two scores and Houston dominated from the opening kickoff in a romp at Jacksonville.

The Texans improved to 2-0 for the third consecutive season by winning their fourth in a row against the AFC South rival Jaguars, who started 0-2 for the third time in the past five years.

The Texans gained 242 yards in the first half while building a 17-0 lead. The Jaguars finished with a franchise-low 117 yards in the first half.

Seahawks 27, Cowboys 7

SEATTLE | Marshawn Lynch and Seattle took control of the clock and the scoreboard in the second half, shutting down Tony Romo and defeating Dallas.

Lynch ran for 122 yards and a 3-yard touchdown in the fourth quarter, and the special teams came up with two huge first-quarter plays to give the Seahawks momentum early.

Michael Robinson forced Felix Jones to fumble on the opening kickoff that led to a short field goal, and Malcolm Smith blocked Chris Jones’ punt, which Jeron Johnson returned for a touchdown.

Rookie Russell Wilson threw for 151 yards in his first NFL victory.

NFL STANDINGS

AMERICAN CONFERENCE

EAST	W	L	T	PCT	PF	PA
N.Y. Jets	1	1	0	.500	58	55
New England	1	1	0	.500	52	33
Miami	1	1	0	.500	45	43
Buffalo	1	1	0	.500	63	6

SOUTH

W	L	T	PCT	PF	PA	
Houston	2	0	0	1.000	57	17
Indianapolis	1	1	0	.500	44	61
Tennessee	0	2	0	.000	23	72
Jacksonville	0	2	0	.000	30	53

NORTH

W	L	T	PCT	PF	PA	
Baltimore	1	1	0	.500	67	37
Pittsburgh	1	1	0	.500	46	41
Cincinnati	1	1	0	.500	47	71
Cleveland	0	2	0	.000	43	51

WEST

W	L	T	PCT	PF	PA	
San Diego	2	0	0	1.000	60	24
Denver	1	0	0	1.000	31	19
Kansas City	0	2	0	.000	41	75
Oakland	0	2	0	.000	27	57

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

EAST	W	L	T	PCT	PF	PA
Philadelphia	2	0	0	1.000	41	39
Dallas	1	1	0	.500	31	44
Washington	1	1	0	.500	68	63
N.Y. Giants	1	1	0	.500	58	58

SOUTH

W	L	T	PCT	PF	PA	
Atlanta	1	0	0	1.000	40	24
Tampa Bay	1	1	0	.500	50	51
Carolina	1	1	0	.500	45	43
New Orleans	0	2	0	.000	59	75

NORTH

W	L	T	PCT	PF	PA	
Detroit	1	0	0	1.000	27	23
Green Bay	1	1	0	.500	45	40
Minnesota	1	1	0	.500	46	46
Chicago	1	1	0	.500	51	44

WEST

W	L	T	PCT	PF	PA	
Arizona	2	0	0	1.000	40	34
San Francisco	1	0	0	1.000	30	22
St. Louis	1	1	0	.500	54	55
Seattle	1	1	0	.500	43	27

THURSDAY’S GAME

Green Bay 23, Chicago 10

SUNDAY’S GAMES

St. Louis 31, Washington 28
Philadelphia 24, Baltimore 23
N.Y. Giants 41, Tampa Bay 34
Carolina 35, New Orleans 27
Arizona 20, New England 18
Indianapolis 23, Minnesota 20
Buffalo 35, Kansas City 17
Cincinnati 34, Cleveland 27
Houston 27, Jacksonville 7
Miami 35, Oakland 13
Seattle 27, Dallas 7
San Diego 38, Tennessee 10
Pittsburgh 27, N.Y. Jets 10
Detroit at San Francisco, late

MONDAY’S GAME

Denver at Atlanta, 8:30 p.m.

EXPANDED REDSKINS COVERAGE THROUGHOUT THE SEASON: WASHINGTONTIMES.COM/SPORTS/FOOTBALL

QUARTERS

1 Josh Wilson's fifth defensive touchdown of his career came on the game's first play. Redskins teammate Perry Riley punched the ball out of Danny Amendola's hands and Wilson picked it up and ran 30 yards for a touchdown. RG3 was sacked on the Redskins' first possession. On their second, he scored his first career rushing touchdown, from 5 yards out, to conclude a drive that was helped by two personal foul penalties on the Rams. Washington was up 14-3 at quarter's end.

2 The day of firsts continued. Leonard Hankerson scored his first NFL touchdown, hauling in a 68-yarder from RG3 midway through the quarter to help put the Redskins up 21-6. But the quarter also saw RG3's first career interception, by Cortland Finnegan in the final minute of the half. St. Louis turned that into a 42-yard field goal by rookie Greg Zuerlein, his third of the day. Washington led 21-16 at the half.

PLAY OF THE GAME: With 1:18 left in the game, Joshua Morgan caught a third-down pass on the sideline and was pushed by St. Louis cornerback Cortland Finnegan. Morgan responded by throwing the ball at Finnegan, which drew a 15-yard unsportsmanlike conduct penalty and loss of down. Billy Cundiff missed a 62-yard field goal on the following play.

3 After a quick Rams touchdown, RG3 responded by capping an 8-play, 80-yard drive with a 7-yard touchdown run. The Redskins looked poised to score again after London Fletcher intercepted Sam Bradford's pass in the end zone, but a stalled drive and blocked punt changed all that. The Rams capitalized on their great field position and drove the ball to the 1-yard line at quarter's end.

4 The Rams completed a touchdown pass and 2-point conversion to open the fourth. Two possessions later, Aldrick Robinson dropped a long pass from RG3 down the middle of the field. The two teams exchanged possessions until a Redskins three-and-out gave St. Louis the ball with a few minutes remaining. However, Fletcher forced a fumble at the 2:41 mark and gave the Redskins another chance. Washington failed to capitalize when a 62-yard Billy Cundiff field goal sailed wide right.

NUMBERS

1982: The last time the Redskins opened a season with two straight road victories, a streak that continues with Sunday's loss.

12: First-half catches for St. Louis' Danny Amendola, matching his career high. He finished with 15 for 160 yards.

206: Passing yards for Robert Griffin III, or 114 fewer than he had in his debut. RG3 was looking to become the first Redskins QB to have consecutive 300-yard games in the same season since Jason Campbell in 2007.

1975-76: The last time the Redskins opened consecutive seasons with a 2-0 record.

NEXT

CINCINNATI AT REDSKINS
1 P.M. SUNDAY, CBS

• After looking like Mr. Hyde during an ugly season-opening loss to the Ravens, the Bengals were decidedly more Dr. Jekyll in Sunday's 34-27 victory over the Browns. QB Andy Dalton tied a career high with three TD passes, each to a different receiver, and Cincinnati added a special-teams score on a punt return. The Bengals

did struggle once again on defense, as rookie QB Brandon Weeden threw two TDs, including one to rookie RB Trent Richardson, who also ran for a score. Cincinnati won the last meeting against Washington, but neither team resembled its current version. In that 20-13 loss, Jason Campbell was the quarterback and Clinton Portis the leading rusher. Veteran Santana Moss did account for the Redskins' lone TD.



Andy Dalton



Redskins coach Mike Shanahan barks at a replacement official during Washington's loss at St. Louis. The regular officials have been locked out by the NFL since June over a labor dispute.

RAMS 31, REDSKINS 28

Afternoon of anarchy

Replacement officials lose control early on

By NATHAN FENNO
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

ST. LOUIS | Late in the fourth quarter Sunday, a disgusted chant rippled through Edward Jones Dome.

For a moment, the tense, three-point game was forgotten. Instead, the half-full dome's vitriol cascaded on eight men in black and white uniforms. "Referees suck! Referees suck!"

This wasn't ordinary Sunday griping. The NFL's regular referees have been locked out since June after their collective bargaining agreement expired and, in their place, crews of inexperienced replacement referees have faced mounting criticism.

That devolved into 60 out-of-control minutes of football that, at times, resembled professional wrestling more than the NFL, as the St. Louis Rams edged the Washington Redskins 31-28.

More than a dozen scuffles and undisguised punches followed plays. Calls — and non-calls — baffled players, coaches and supporters of both teams. One instant replay review, interrupted by yet another fight, took seven minutes to process. Players repeatedly jawed with referees and lost composure. Even a mundane kickoff turned touchback led to Redskins returner Brandon Banks taking a swing at one of the Rams.

In the first half, authority slipped from the referees and toward on-field anarchy in a game that looked little like a mid-September meeting between two teams with nothing approaching a rivalry.

"They were doing things out there that they should have called," fullback Darrel Young said. "It was blatant. Hitting after the play and stuff — I'm not going to say names — but it wasn't the cleanest game in terms of guys playing dirty."

And those "referees suck" chants became as much of a staple Sunday as the fake mustaches given away in honor of Rams coach Jeff Fisher.

NOTEBOOK

Carriker, Orakpo add to injury woes

By RICH CAMPBELL AND NATHAN FENNO
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

ST. LOUIS | Before Robert Griffin III took a snap in the first quarter Sunday, two key Redskins defenders left because of injury.

Defensive end Adam Carriker was helped off after injuring his right knee 21 seconds into the game. He never returned, spending much of the game sitting with a wrap the size of a bowling ball on the knee.

Then outside linebacker Brian Orakpo injured his right chest after sacking Bradford minutes later. Orakpo wasn't happy and chucked his helmet 10 yards as he staggered to the sideline, but returned with 4:51 left in the first.

Orakpo partially tore his left pectoral muscle in last season's finale and needed offseason surgery to repair the problem.

The extent of the injuries wasn't immediately clear.

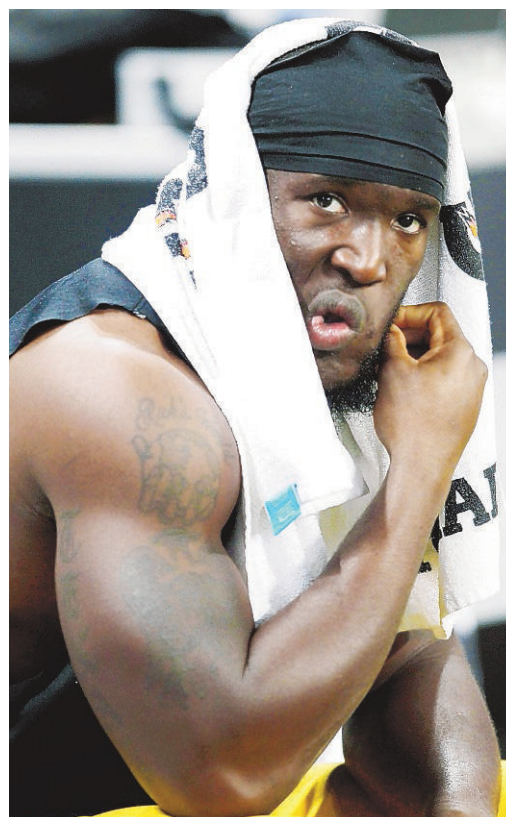
"It's tough," linebacker London Fletcher said. "You're talking about two marquee players. ... It's the opportunity for another guy. It's football. The next man has to be ready."

Garcon sits, Robinson starts

Wide receiver Pierre Garcon was inactive because of a right foot injury. Aldrick Robinson started in his place as Washington's 'X' receiver.

Garcon had four receptions for 109 yards and a touchdown last week against New Orleans. He left that game after his 88-yard catch-and-run for a touchdown.

The Redskins listed Garcon as questionable on the team's injury report. Garcon did not practice Wednesday, and he was limited in practice on Thursday and Friday. Garcon and the Redskins



Redskins linebacker Brian Orakpo injured his right chest while making a sack of Rams quarterback Sam Bradford in the first quarter Sunday. St. Louis won 31-28.

were pessimistic about his status.

Coach Mike Shanahan said Garcon would be a game-time decision, but he did not take the field hours before the game with other receivers.

Secondary can't handle Amendola

By NATHAN FENNO
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

ST. LOUIS | Danny Amendola isn't the sort of wide receiver who keeps defensive coordinators up late inventing new ways to stop him.

Undrafted out of Texas Tech, Amendola started 10 games over parts of four NFL seasons entering Sunday's contest between the St. Louis Rams and Washington Redskins at the Edward Jones Dome. Somehow the 5-foot-11 Amendola transformed into a defensive nightmare the Redskins' defense couldn't end.

Amendola wasn't the biggest or fastest or strongest player on the field. Instead, he seemed, at times, to catch anything quarterback Sam Bradford threw near him and, inexplicably, found himself open play after play against the Redskins' scuffling secondary.

Lost in the glow of last week's 40-32 win at New Orleans, the Redskins allowed 326 yards passing. Those issues didn't improve against the Rams, coming off a 2-14 season.

In the first half, Amendola caught 12 passes for 133 yards and a touchdown. The 12 catches tied Reggie Wayne's NFL record for the most grabs in one half and resembled something you'd expect from sure-handed New England Patriots receiver Wes Welker.

By the time Amendola and the Rams finished with their 31-28 victory, he had 15 grabs for 160 yards.

Brandon Marshall holds the NFL's single-game record with 21 catches.

Bradford's first seven completions were to Amendola, six on one drive. Most of the balls were short — nine gained 10 yards or less. Redskins defenders weren't physical with Amendola, not an imposing presence, and veteran cornerback DeAngelo Hall struggled to make plays.

Over and over, the public address announcer repeated, "Bradford pass to Amendola."

So Bradford found Amendola open for a 56-yard gain as the receiver sprinted through the Redskins' defense in the second quarter to eventually set up a his 1-yard touchdown catch.

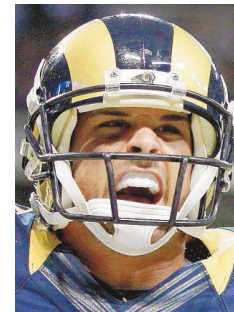
Even halftime couldn't provide the Redskins with the right adjustments to slow Amendola.

One third-quarter play epitomized the game-long struggle. Backed into 3rd-and-6 at their own 24-yard line, the Rams faced the dire prospect of giving the ball back to the Redskins after quarterback Robert Griffin III scored on the previous series.

Out of the slot, Amendola ran an out toward the left sideline. Two Redskins defenders played off him. Bradford pitched a 17-yard pass to him as easily as during pregame warm-ups when the red and blue seats were empty and Phil Collins' "In the Air Tonight" drifted through the dome.

The duo of Redskins weren't close to making a play or even making Amendola's catch difficult.

They weren't just a step late. They were a game late.



Amendola