

KEEPING PACE NOT ENOUGH AS TIE ENDS UNITED'S SEASON, C1

EXPANDED COVERAGE, R4: RG3 enjoys a perfect day
Finally seeing the field in 2012, Meriweather makes immediate impact

31   6

GAMEDAY

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2012



The Washington Times

washingtontimes.com/sports/football



ANDREW HARNIK/THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Staunch defense was displayed throughout as Redskins strong safety DeJon Gomes (24) and inside linebacker London Fletcher break up a pass intended for Eagles wide receiver Jeremy Maclin (above) in the fourth quarter. Defensive end Jarvis Jenkins (99) and cornerback Josh Wilson put the squeeze on QB Nick Foles (below) in the second half, forcing a fumble.

POUND & GROUND

Eagles look like they're on verge of extinction



DAN DALY

The festivities at FedEx Field on Sunday had the feel of a dual ceremony — a funeral and a birth. You had the once-proud Philadelphia Eagles, laid low by injury, age and misjudgment, getting rolled by the Washington Redskins 31-6. And you had Robert Griffin III leading the way for the home team with a near-flawless performance (one incompletion, four touchdown passes, a game-high 84 yards rushing).

Let's face it, Andy Reid's Eagles are officially in ruins. It's not just that they've lost six straight and have been forced to start a rookie, third-round pick Nick Foles, at quarterback. It's that they're Lost in America, Lost in

» see DALY | R2



CRAIG BISACRE/THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Redskins' decisive victory over Philly verdict for defense

By RICH CAMPBELL
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Perry Riley jumped up from the turf, fresh off a quarterback sack, and went right into a B-boy stance. The Washington Redskins' 31-6 rout of the Philadelphia Eagles on Sunday featured rare occasions for the defense to celebrate, so players seized the opportunity whenever they could.

The win keeps the Redskins' faint postseason pulse beating ahead of their Thanksgiving Day game against the Cowboys in Dallas. They ended their three-game losing streak and improved to 4-6. They are now two games behind the NFC-East-leading New York Giants, who were idle, with six games to play.

Riley mugged for the cameras in the third quarter by folding his arms and nodding his head with a swagger Washington's defense had not previously earned the privilege of flaunting in any game this season.

Such flashes of showtime were the payoff for the Redskins' best game of the season. The defense forced three first-half turnovers, slowed the Eagles' cadre of speedy skill-position players and harassed rookie quarterback Nick Foles. Its complete performance injected a bit of hope into a season that two weeks ago seemed lost.

"We always thought we were a pretty good defense," Riley said, "but just going out there and

» see REDSKINS | R2

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

Feel-good win comes with caveats

When wins for the Redskins have been scarcer than African-American votes for Mitt Romney, complaints about the quality show a lack of gratitude. Victories in the NFL are not to be taken lightly, no matter the opponent or whatever transpired during the game. The standings only reflect the ends, not the means.

So the joy is understandable, now that the Redskins snapped their three-game losing streak. A cloud has lifted and the stench in D.C. has been washed away, left to continue plaguing the City of Brotherly Love. Let the Philadelphia Eagles search for positives in their 31-6 shellacking by the Redskins; Washingtonians are content to gaze fondly at the 'W'.

But since the typical post-mortem involves explaining away Redskins losses, the wins should be subject to the same scrutiny. And despite all the positives in Sunday's performance at FedEx Field, there's reason for concern looking forward, when future opponents won't enter the game lugging five-game losing streaks with a coach who appears headed for the unemployment line shortly.

From a distance, the score and statistics suggest that the Redskins



DERON SNYDER

each quarter and an incompleton on just one of his 15 pass attempts.

What's not to like? Plenty, including 13 penalties, six Philadelphia completions covering 20 or more yards, and nine Redskins' plays in the second half that netted zero or fewer yards (not counting the victory formation kneel-down to conclude matters).

"We have to look at things we did poorly," coach Mike Shanahan said after Washington's largest margin of victory during his tenure. "It's a lot easier to look at those things after a win. At the end of the day, you have to find a way to win the game. Then you go back and be tough on yourself, take a look at film and eliminate those mistakes."

Like most teams that lose more

were nearly flawless. The defense didn't allow a touchdown while recording four sacks and picking off two passes from rookie-starter Nick Foles. His counterpart, Redskins quarterback Robert Griffin III, threw a touchdown pass in

often than they win, Washington fondly has claimed to be a few snaps away. They're usually big plays that the Redskins yield, and/or don't make themselves, at the games' most crucial moments. A breakdown here, a mix-up there and penalty flags all over, which typically results in a sullen locker room filled with long faces.

Washington won the battle of back-breaking game-changers from the start Sunday, with DeAngelo Hall's interception on the third play from scrimmage. The Redskins began their first drive just 9 yards away from the end zone and cashed in on RG3's 6-yard pass to Darrel Young. They scored on another short-field drive at the end of the first half, thanks to Barry Cofield's forced fumble with 27 seconds left.

Thankfully for Washington, it faced a team as just as hapless in the Eagles. Foles was making his first career start, and it showed. The Redskins harassed him with a variety of blitzes and disguised looks. Redskins wideout Aldrick Robinson didn't have a defender within shouting distance on his 49-yard TD reception in the first half. Philadelphia committed nine penalties of its own.

The good news is Washington prevailed in a must-win between two desperate NFC East foes. And another

game with the Eagles remains. The bad news is that the Dallas Cowboys and New York Giants will be as just as desperate when they play Washington, but not nearly as inept as Philadelphia was.

"Guys have to be honest with themselves, go back and be honest," linebacker Lorenzo Alexander said. "We can't overlook things we wouldn't allow in defeat."

We know RG3 is a consistent threat to make something out of nothing, but his magic had been waning entering Sunday. Relying on his heroics — like the four TD passes he threw Sunday — is risky business. And the Redskins can't continue to nearly kill themselves with false start and holding penalties. That formula worked against Philadelphia, which hasn't been the model of stability on defense, but it doesn't bode well down the line.

And while the defense bent without breaking, for a change, being gashed on several long plays remains a concern. There are no more rookie quarterbacks to feast on down the stretch (unless Foles starts again on Dec. 23).

The Redskins got the win, which is all that counts in many ways. But there's still room to question whether they're good enough to keep it up.



PRESTON KERES/SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Tight end Logan Paulsen scored on this 17-yard catch, and Aldrick Robinson had a 49-yarder in the second quarter.

NOTEBOOK

Paulsen, Robinson have hand in offense

BY STEPHEN BOWEN

THE WASHINGTON TIMES

It looked like the ball was in the air forever. Aldrick Robinson had to make up ground, but with no defenders within shouting distance, the Washington Redskins receiver just had to complete a little game of catch.

When he did, Robinson came down with a 49-yard touchdown in the second quarter Sunday and showed what he can mean to Robert Griffin III and the offense. For a player whose opportunities are limited, it was a much-needed moment.

Two weeks ago, one ball was thrown to Robinson, and he dropped it. This time, he didn't let the chance slip through his fingers.

"I knew I was getting the ball," Robinson said. "He put it in a spot where I had to chase it, so I didn't have to think about it that much."

What Robinson had to do to for his only catch in the Redskins' 31-6 drubbing of the Philadelphia Eagles was exploit a breakdown in coverage. Griffin did most of the work by making Eagles safety Nate Allen leave his deep responsibility to cover tight end Niles Paul.

"Niles was wide open. ... When there's open guys and you can stare a receiver down, they're going to try to cover that open guy," Griffin said. "And Aldrick's extremely fast. If you make a misstep, he can get by you."

Robinson wasn't surprised that Philadelphia's secondary wasn't on top of the coverage; the same thing happened in practice. But that didn't make it any less meaningful of a play.

"It feels good," he said, "but it feels better to win."

Paulsen rebounds

Logan Paulsen was worried. As he was getting brought to the ground the Redskins tight end made sure his left knee was supported, but he couldn't do the same with his left hip.

He got up and felt the pain and hobbled to the sideline. Paulsen let the worry creep into his mind that it was a serious injury but came back into the game to catch a touchdown pass that sealed the victory.

On the touchdown, he needed a second effort to get into the end zone, and his hip didn't seem to be a concern. "I didn't even know I scored until Josh Morgan came up to me and said, 'Congratulations' because I couldn't see where I was on the field," Paulsen said. "Very cool. I'm really happy about it, happy for the team."

Afterward, Paulsen shook off his initial concern.

"Thankfully, I don't think it's very serious. I'm going to talk to the doctors tomorrow."

Morris' miscommunication

Running back Alfred Morris finished with 20 carries for 76 yards, continuing an impressive rookie season, but Sunday was also fraught with mistakes. Morris was whistled for two false start penalties and was responsible for one sack on Griffin because he was on the quarterback's wrong side for a zone read handoff.

"There was a lot going on in our minds. There's definitely sometimes going to be some miscommunications," Morris said. "But we still won."

Injury report

Cornerback Josh Wilson hurt his shoulder late in the game and did not return.

DALY

From page R1

Space. At times against the Redskins, it was a challenge for them to get the snap count right. Another time, they fumbled in a kneel-down situation and handed Washington a gift field goal. Still another time, they had Santana Moss double covered and allowed him to snatch a 61-yard scoring throw.

When the clubs meet again Dec. 23 at Lincoln Financial Field, I fear for Santa Claus' safety — especially if the Eagles keep playing like this. Philly fans, after all, have never been particularly tolerant types, even in good times.

And the 11 years from 2000 through 2010 were very good times, indeed, times that saw the Eagles go to five NFC title games, one Super Bowl and compile the best regular-season record in the conference (113-62-1). But they couldn't re-create with Michael Vick what they had with Donovan McNabb — for reasons too myriad to go into here — and now their coach is reduced to saying, as he

did Sunday, "I am not doing a good enough job. ... It's my fault that that's the way things are going."

The Redskins were in the same 3-6 straits as the Eagles when the game began: win or start making plans for next year. But there was a difference in their desperation that became more and more obvious as the afternoon progressed. In Griffin, the Redskins have a Next Year to look forward to ... and a Next Year after that ... and a Next Year after that, the football gods willing. The Eagles, on the other hand, are waiting to see if Foles is a long-term answer at quarterback or merely a temporary plug-in. This much seems relatively certain, though: He's no RG3.

Granted, one game isn't much basis for comparison, and that goes double when it's Foles' first NFL start (to Griffin's 10th). Still, it bears mentioning that the Philly QB threw 24 more incompletons (25 to 1), four fewer TD passes (0 to 4), two more interceptions (2 to 0) and rushed for 84 fewer yards (0 to 84). Those last two stats were especially telling, because Eagles turnovers led to 10 Washington points and because Foles'

lack of running ability enabled the Redskins to rush him with virtual impunity.

As Ryan Kerrigan put it, "Michael Vick's speed and feet kind of change how you rush a little bit. ... It's always a huge factor when [he's] back there and has the ability to throw on the run."

Or to flee the pocket and fly downfield for a demoralizing — for the defense — first down. How often has Vick done that to the Redskins over the years? But he couldn't do it in this game because he still was recovering from a concussion inflicted the week before. (Not that he seems long for the starting job. His play had dropped off enough this season so that Philadelphiaans already were beginning to bang the drum for Foles.)

Anyway, the Eagles had a terrific run under Reid, and now the Redskins are trying to have a run like that, with Griffin as the focal point. Days like Sunday, days when he hardly misses a pass, make you realize the limitlessness of his horizon.

"He ignites our fire," Moss said. "When he's doing his thing ... it just rubs off on everyone else."

"We actually played as the defense that we know we can be. Now it's just all about being consistent."

— Stephen Bowen

REDSKINS

From page R1

putting it on the field like that, it definitely boosts our confidence."

They avoided the fate they dealt to the Eagles, who dropped to 3-7 — a record no team in NFL history has overcome to make the postseason. And considering defensive breakdowns have been Washington's greatest obstacle this season, Sunday's game provided players with the formula required to make a run at the playoffs.

"To be able to get out of that and get a win, I think it's going to do huge things for this next game and from here on out because I think there's a feeling of 'Hey, we're back in this,'" left guard Kory Lichtensteiger said.

The Redskins' margin of victory was the largest since October 2007.

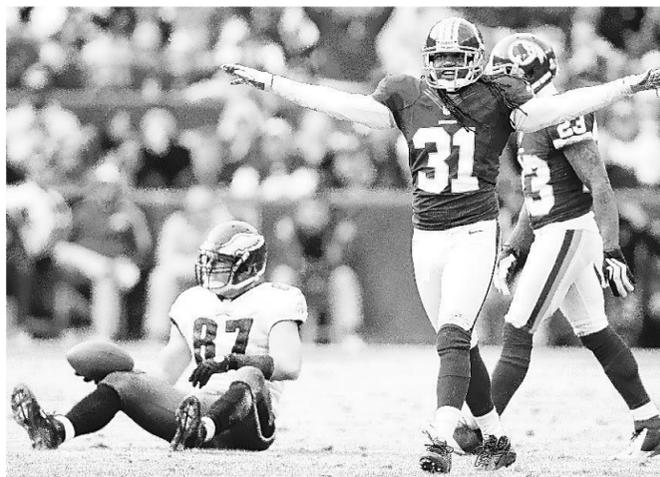
Defensive players credited coordinator Jim Haslett's scheme for finally generating an effective pass rush. It helped that Philadelphia played without three first-stringers on its offensive line. The Redskins stunted on pass rushes, and the play designs helped free blitzers.

On Riley's sack, for example, outside linebacker Ryan Kerrigan crashed down on the left tackle, and Riley looped around the right edge unblocked.

Riley noted how Washington's misdirection and creative rush designs created confusion and slowed Philadelphia's linemen.

"We had a couple times where I would line up on the inside and rush outside," he said. "Their tackles would bite our ends with the inside stunt, and that would give me the free corner."

On the back end, the Redskins capitalized on opportunities to create turnovers, something they failed to do in lopsided losses to Pittsburgh and Carolina in the previous two games.



CRAG BISACRE/THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Free safety Brandon Meriweather (31) celebrates after forcing an incomplete pass intended for Eagles tight end Brent Celek during in the second half. The Eagles' offense sputtered throughout the Redskins' 31-6 win at FedExField.

They took advantage of Foles, who started in place of concussed quarterback Michael Vick.

Cornerback DeAngelo Hall intercepted a pass that linebacker London Fletcher deflected on the game's third play from scrimmage. His 22-yard return set up fullback Darrel Young's 6-yard touchdown reception two plays later.

"For the first time, I feel like we played a full game," Hall said. "The way this group of guys were focusing in this locker room ... the whole week of preparation, it wouldn't have mattered who you had out there."

Brandon Meriweather showed what the Redskins have been missing with him sidelined to this point with a sprained left knee.

He had an interception and was credited with seven tackles before

spraining his right knee in the second half.

It all helped a Redskins offense that has carried the load too often this season.

"Whenever your defense plays like that, it makes you feel as an offense that you don't have to press to try to score every time," quarterback Robert Griffin III said.

When the drubbing was complete, the Redskins left the celebrations on the field. Coach Mike Shanahan gave players 12 hours to enjoy the victory before looking forward to Thursday's game against Dallas.

Some guys started before they departed the locker room.

"We actually played as the defense that we know we can be," defensive end Stephen Bowen said. "Now it's just all about being consistent."

REDSKINS 31, EAGLES 6

Philadelphia	0	3	3	0-6
Washington	7	10	7	7-31

First Quarter

Was — Young 6 pass from Griffin III (Forbath kick), 13:07.

Second Quarter

Phi — FG Henery 41, 14:15.
Was — A.Robinson 49 pass from Griffin III (Forbath kick), 10:35.
Was — FG Forbath 25, :00.

Third Quarter

Phi — FG Henery 42, 8:27.
Was — Moss 61 pass from Griffin III (Forbath kick), 4:50.

Fourth Quarter

Was — Paulsen 17 pass from Griffin III (Forbath kick), 10:24.

A — 79,327.

	Phi	Was
First downs	16	15
Total Net Yards	257	361
Rushes-yards	21-80	34-169
Passing	177	192
Punt Returns	3-28	3-32
Kickoff Returns	4-80	0-0
Interceptions Ret.	0-0	2-47
Comp-Att-Int	21-46-2	14-15-0
Sacked-Yards Lost	4-27	2-8
Punts	5-46.8	5-45.4
Fumbles-Lost	4-1	2-0
Penalties-Yards	9-70	13-80
Time of Possession	31:24	28:36

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

RUSHING — Philadelphia, McCoy 15-45, Brown 5-35, Foles 1-0. Washington, Griffin III 12-84, Morris 20-76, Banks 1-6, Royster 1-3.

PASSING — Philadelphia, Foles 21-46-2/20.4. Washington, Griffin III 14-15-0-20.0.

RECEIVING — Philadelphia, McCoy 6-67, Cooper 5-61, Celek 5-42, Jackson 2-5, D.Johnson 1-21, Havili 1-9, Harbor 1-(minus 1). Washington, Morgan 3-25, Garcon 3-5, Hankerson 2-30, Moss 1-61, A.Robinson 1-49, Banks 1-17, Morris 1-7, Young 1-6, Paulsen 1-0.

MISSED FIELD GOALS — None.

NFL WEEK 11

Top performers

Texans QB Matt Schaub: 527 yards, 5 TDs
Texans WR Andre Johnson: 273 yards, 1 TD
Jaguars WR Justin Blackmon: 236 yards, 1 TD

GAME OF THE WEEK

Bailey's overtime FG gives Dallas wild win

By Schuyler Dixon
 ASSOCIATED PRESS

ARLINGTON, TEXAS | Tony Romo persevered through a career-high seven sacks, even avoiding costly mistakes that have dogged his career as he ran from constant pressure.

Just when he had Dallas in position to finish a rally and beat Cleveland, Romo lost a fumble that left the Cowboys scrambling to survive a wild ending Sunday in the first overtime game at Cowboys Stadium.

Dallas did find a way to extend the Browns' road losing streak to 12 games on Dan Bailey's 38-yard field goal with 6:07 left in the extra period after Bailey made a tying kick with 2 seconds remaining in regulation.

Late in the fourth quarter Romo had just put the Cowboys ahead 17-13 with a 28-yard scoring pass to Dez Bryant, who had a career-high 145 yards receiving. Anthony Spencer sacked Browns rookie Brandon Weeden on the next drive, forced a fumble and recovered it at the Cleveland 18 with 5:45 remaining.

Romo gave it right back, though, fumbling two plays later — his first turnover in three games — as he was hit by Frostee Rucker while trying to avoid the sixth Cleveland sack. Dallas' offensive line didn't have left tackle Tyron Smith for most of the game because of an ankle injury.

"I obviously need to hold onto the ball and not let the guy come from behind and let the ball come out," Romo said. "That could have been a big one."

The Cowboys made one goal-line stand in the final minutes, but the Browns (2-8) got another chance and went ahead 20-17 on Weeden's 17-yard

pass to Benjamin Watson with 1:07 remaining. Dallas drove to the Cleveland 9 in the dying seconds, keyed by a 35-yard pass interference penalty on Sheldon Brown. The Cowboys tried to throw into the end zone twice, then settled for Bailey's tying kick.

Dallas won for the first time in six games when Romo is sacked at least five times. Despite the constant pressure, he still finished 35 of 50 for 313 yards with the touchdown to Bryant, who had 12 catches for a career-high 145 yards.

"Tony did a really good job of playing with poise," Cowboys coach Jason Garrett said. "When you play quarterback and you have a lot of negative plays ... it's easy to kind of get out of yourself and do some things you shouldn't be doing."

Cleveland looked like a winner at halftime, leading 13-0 while Romo was running for cover and the crowd was booing. But Dallas scored on its first three possessions of the second half, capped by Romo's toss to Bryant.

After Weeden and Romo traded fumbles, Weeden took the Browns to the Dallas 1, but bruising running back Trent Richardson was stuffed on third down and Weeden threw incomplete with 1:42 remaining.

The Browns weren't finished, though. They used all three timeouts and forced a Dallas punt. The Cowboys' John Phillips was penalized for a horse collar tackle on Joshua Cribbs, even though replay showed Phillips grabbing Cribbs' hanging dreadlocks rather than his jersey. With the ball at the 17, Weeden found Watson in the middle of the end zone on the next play, just as he did on a 10-yard play for the game's first score.

The Cowboys had finally scored on a 44-yard field goal with 5:44 remaining in third quarter.



Dallas kicker Dan Bailey follows through on a 32-yard field goal with 2 seconds left in regulation. Bailey hit from 38 yards in overtime to seal a 23-20 comeback victory over Cleveland.

ROUNDUP

Schaub, Johnson power Texans past Jaguars in OT

ASSOCIATED PRESS

HOUSTON | Andre Johnson caught a screen pass from Matt Schaub and ran 48 yards for the winning touchdown in overtime as the Houston Texans rallied to beat Jacksonville 43-37 on Sunday.

Schaub threw a career-high five touchdown passes, completed a franchise-record 43 passes and finished with 527 yards passing, second most in NFL history.

Warren Moon also threw for 527 yards for the Houston Oilers in December 1990 against Kansas City. Norm Van Brocklin holds the record with 554 for the Rams in 1951.

Johnson caught 14 passes for 273 yards, both career highs. The Texans (9-1) won an overtime game for the first time at Reliant Stadium.

Chad Henne threw a career-high four touchdown passes in relief of injured Blaine Gabbert for the Jaguars (1-9). First-round pick Justin Blackmon finally had his breakout game, making seven catches for 236 yards. It was the first time in NFL history opposing players each had more than 200 yards receiving in the same game.

Blackmon caught Henne's pass at midfield, shrugged off two defenders for a stunning 81-yard touchdown with 12:33 left in regulation to put Jacksonville up 34-20.

Schaub then threw two touchdown passes to tight end Garrett Graham in the final 5:39 to force overtime.

Shayne Graham and Josh Scobee kicked field goals in overtime and, for a while, it looked like NFL would have its second tie in two weeks. San Francisco and St. Louis finished 24-24 last week.

Packers 24, Lions 20

DETROIT | Aaron Rodgers threw two touchdown passes, including a 22-yarder to Randall Cobb with 1:55 left, and Green Bay overcame Detroit for its fifth straight win.

Mason Crosby kicked 39-yard field goal with 19 seconds to go after missing two attempts earlier.

Matthew Stafford threw two interceptions — one of which was returned 72 yards by Green Bay safety M.D. Jennings for a go-ahead score in the third quarter — and lost a fumble.

Green Bay moved a half-game behind first-place Chicago in the NFC North. The Bears play at San Francisco on Monday night. Detroit has dropped two in a row, making its goal of playing in consecutive postseasons very difficult.

Rodgers was 19 of 27 for 236 yards



Texans quarterback Matt Schaub and tackle Duane Brown (76) celebrate after Houston rallied to beat Jacksonville 43-37 in overtime.

with two TDs, the first of which was a 20-yard connection with wide open Jermichael Finley early in the second quarter to give Green Bay its first lead, and an interception.

Cobb had nine catches for 74 yards and the game-winning TD, a twisting grab in the end zone. Finley had three receptions for 66 yards and a score.

James Starks helped the Packers strike somewhat of an offensive balance with 74 yards rushing on 25 carries.

Stafford completed just 17 of 39 passes — missing many receivers badly — for 266 yards with a 25-yard TD pass to Calvin Johnson.

Buccaneers 27, Panthers 21

CHARLOTTE, N.C. | Josh Freeman threw a 15-yard touchdown pass to Dallas Clark in overtime to cap Tampa Bay's comeback win over Carolina. It was Freeman's third touchdown pass of the game for the Buccaneers.

Carolina appeared to have the game in hand after a 29-yard touchdown pass from Cam Newton to Brandon LaFell put the Panthers up 21-10 with 4:34 left. But after a 40-yard field goal by Connor Barth, the Panthers' offense couldn't put the game away and had to punt.

Freeman led the Bucs 80 yards on seven plays in 50 seconds, despite not having any timeouts.

He finished the drive with a perfectly thrown 24-yard touchdown pass to Vincent Jackson among three defenders with 12 seconds left. Freeman went back to Jackson for a 2-point

conversion on a slant route to tie the game.

Carolina has lost seven of its past eight. The Panthers held a fourth-quarter lead in five of their past six defeats before fading in the final seconds. Cam Newton threw for 252 yards and a touchdown to fall to 8-18 as an NFL starter.

Falcons 23, Cardinals 19

ATLANTA | Matt Ryan overcame a career-worst five interceptions, guiding Atlanta to its only offensive touchdown in the fourth quarter in a sloppy victory over Arizona.

The Falcons turned it over a total of six times, but Michael Turner scored on a 1-yard run with 6:40 remaining to give Atlanta its first lead of the game. Ryan set up the score with four completions for 64 yards, including a 9-yarder to Tony Gonzalez on third-and-5 at the Arizona 10.

LaRod Stephens-Howling accounted for most of Arizona's yards, carrying 22 times for 127 yards. He entered the game with only 184 yards rushing.

Broncos 30, Chargers 23

DENVER | Peyton Manning threw for three touchdowns and Von Miller had three sacks as Denver defeated San Diego to take a three-game lead in the AFC West.

Manning threw for 270 yards and Miller finished the day with 13 sacks on the season — most in the NFL.

The Broncos quarterback got off to

a slow start, throwing an interception that Eric Weddle returned for a score and an early 7-0 lead. But the Broncos took a 10-7 lead early in the second quarter and never trailed again.

Manning won his 148th regular-season game as a starting quarterback, tying John Elway for second on the all-time list. Brett Favre has 186.

Bengals 28, Chiefs 6

KANSAS CITY, MO. | Andy Dalton threw for 230 yards and accounted for three touchdowns, A.J. Green caught a touchdown pass in his ninth straight game and Cincinnati whipped woeful Kansas City.

Green finished with six catches for 91 yards in another dazzling performance, Mohamed Sanu had a scoring grab and BenJarvus Green-Ellis ran for 101 yards and a touchdown for the Bengals (5-5) won their second straight following a four-game losing streak.

Jets 27, Rams 13

ST. LOUIS | Mark Sanchez directed a turnover-free offense, and Bilal Powell ran for the first two touchdowns of his career, helping New York defeat St. Louis to end a three-game losing streak. Chaz Schilens scored on a 25-yard reception, and Nick Folk kicked a pair of 51-yard field goals for the Jets, who were outscored 58-16 the previous two games. The beleaguered Sanchez was an efficient 15 of 20 passing for 178 yards and a touchdown.

Saints 38, Raiders 17

OAKLAND, CALIF. | Drew Brees threw three touchdown passes, and Malcolm Jenkins returned an interception for another score as New Orleans eased past Oakland. Lance Moore caught two touchdown passes, and Mark Ingram ran for a score as the Saints won for the fifth time in six games.

Patriots 59, Colts 24

FOXBOROUGH, MASS. | New England used three scoring passes from Tom Brady, two touchdowns on interception returns and another on a punt return to match a team single-game scoring record in a rout of Indianapolis.

Brady completed 24 of 35 passes for 331 yards and no interceptions.

Colts rookie quarterback Andrew Luck was 27 for 50 for two touchdowns and 334 yards and set an NFL record as the first rookie with five 300-yard games.

NFL STANDINGS

AMERICAN CONFERENCE

EAST	W	L	T	PCT	PF	PA
New England	7	3	0	.700	358	225
N.Y. Jets	4	6	0	.400	202	241
Buffalo	4	6	0	.400	230	299
Miami	4	6	0	.400	187	205

SOUTH	W	L	T	PCT	PF	PA
Houston	9	1	0	.900	293	180
Indianapolis	6	4	0	.600	210	260
Tennessee	4	6	0	.400	219	311
Jacksonville	1	9	0	.100	164	289

NORTH	W	L	T	PCT	PF	PA
Baltimore	7	2	0	.778	254	196
Pittsburgh	6	3	0	.667	207	177
Cincinnati	5	5	0	.500	248	237
Cleveland	2	8	0	.200	189	234

WEST	W	L	T	PCT	PF	PA
Denver	7	3	0	.700	301	212
San Diego	4	6	0	.400	232	221
Oakland	3	7	0	.300	208	322
Kansas City	1	9	0	.100	152	284

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

EAST	W	L	T	PCT	PF	PA
N.Y. Giants	6	4	0	.600	267	216
Dallas	5	5	0	.500	211	224
Washington	4	6	0	.400	257	254
Philadelphia	3	7	0	.300	162	252

SOUTH	W	L	T	PCT	PF	PA
Atlanta	9	1	0	.900	270	193
Tampa Bay	6	4	0	.600	287	230
New Orleans	5	5	0	.500	287	273
Carolina	2	8	0	.200	184	243

NORTH	W	L	T	PCT	PF	PA
Chicago	7	2	0	.778	242	133
Green Bay	7	3	0	.700	263	207
Minnesota	6	4	0	.600	238	221
Detroit	4	6	0	.400	236	246

WEST	W	L	T	PCT	PF	PA
San Francisco	6	2	1	.722	213	127
Seattle	6	4	0	.600	198	161
Arizona	4	6	0	.400	163	196
St. Louis	3	6	1	.350	174	237

THURSDAY'S GAME

Buffalo 19, Miami 14

SUNDAY'S GAMES

Washington 31, Philadelphia 6
 Dallas 23, Cleveland 20, OT
 N.Y. Jets 27, St. Louis 13
 Houston 43, Jacksonville 37, OT
 Cincinnati 28, Kansas City 6
 Green Bay 24, Detroit 20
 Atlanta 23, Arizona 19
 Tampa Bay 27, Carolina 21, OT
 New Orleans 38, Oakland 17
 Denver 30, San Diego 23
 New England 59, Indianapolis 24
 Baltimore at Pittsburgh, 8:20 p.m.
 Open: Minnesota, N.Y. Giants, Seattle, Tennessee

MONDAY'S GAME

Chicago at San Francisco, 8:30 p.m.

THURSDAY'S GAMES

Houston at Detroit, 12:30 p.m.
 Washington at Dallas, 4:15 p.m.
 New England at N.Y. Jets, 8:20 p.m.

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

QUARTERS

1 The Redskins went into the game winless in their past eight against rookie quarterbacks, but they got off to a good start against the Eagles' Nick Foles. DeAngelo Hall intercepted Foles' second pass and put the Skins in business on the Philadelphia 9. Robert Griffin III hit Darrel Young with a scoring pass on the second play. Washington also intercepted Foles on the next drive. Foles was 9-of-15 for 109 yards, but those two picks hurt. Philadelphia was down 7-0 and driving at quarter's end.

2 Foles' interception total stayed at two throughout the quarter, but the Skins still tacked on 10 points and took a 17-3 lead into the break. Early in the quarter, Philadelphia basically left Aldrick Robinson uncovered, and Griffin hit him for an easy 49-yard touchdown. As the half wound down, Ryan Kerrigan recovered an Eagles fumble with 27 seconds left, and the Redskins closed the half with a 25-yard field goal from Kai Forbath.

PLAY OF THE GAME: Five plays and 1:47 in, Washington led 7-0 despite not having the ball first. That's because London Fletcher tipped rookie Nick Foles' second pass. DeAngelo Hall corralled the ball and returned it 22 yards to the Eagles' 9. That set the tone early. Robert Griffin III found Darrel Young with a 6-yard scoring pass on second down.

3 Philadelphia isn't having a good season. It does have an interesting streak going. It has scored on its first possession of the second half in nine straight games after Alex Henery kicked a 42-yard field goal (his 16th straight make) in the third quarter. That was the Eagles' only scoring of the period, though. Washington's offense didn't do too much, but RG3 found Santana Moss for a 61-yard touchdown that gave Washington a 24-6 lead.

4 Redskins fans probably would be happy with one touchdown pass out of RG3 for every quarter he plays. And that's what they got Sunday as Griffin added a 17-yarder to Logan Paulsen to close out the day's scoring. The four TD passes are a career high. It was a good day for the Skins' rookie QB. He went 14-of-15 for 200 yards and rushed 12 times for 84 yards.

NUMBERS

169: Rushing yards for the Redskins, their eighth game with at least 150. That leads the NFL.

6: Consecutive losses for the Eagles, the longest streak under coach Andy Reid.

186: Completions this season for rookie QB Robert Griffin III, a team record. He had been tied at 172 with Norm Snead. He's 135 behind Snead for the team's rookie yardage record.

169 (again): Career victories for Redskins coach Mike Shanahan, moving him into 14th place all-time.

NEXT

REDSKINS AT COWBOYS
4:15 P.M. THURSDAY, FOX



• The Redskins getting back on track couldn't have come at a better time. Sunday's big win not only ended a three-game losing streak, but it set up what could prove to be an important NFC East showdown against the rival Cowboys on Thanksgiving Day at Cowboys Stadium. Home had not been kind to Dallas this season, especially



QB Tony Romo, who entered Sunday's game having thrown 2 TDs vs. 10 interceptions there this year. The Cowboys offense didn't exactly get untracked against the Browns, but Romo was interception-free while throwing for 313 yards and a TD to Dez Bryant as Dallas edged Cleveland 23-20 in overtime. Romo led the game-winning drive in the extra period to set up Dan Bailey's 38-yard game-winning field goal. Bryant finished with 12 catches for 145 yards. This will be the first Turkey Day game for the Redskins since 2002. The Cowboys won that game 27-20, just as they won the previous five holiday meetings. That's right, in the storied rivalry between the teams, Washington has never won this marquee matchup. Perhaps this year they'll make history.



Cowboys wide receiver Dez Bryant hauls in a 28-yard touchdown from Tony Romo on Sunday during the fourth quarter in Dallas.

REDSKINS 31, EAGLES 6

TOTALLY FEARLESS



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANDREW HARNIK/THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Redskins rookie quarterback Robert Griffin completed 14 of 15 passes, a 93.3 completion percentage, for 200 yards and four touchdowns. His quarterback rating was a perfect 158.3. Griffin, enjoying a light moment during the fourth quarter (below) also rushed 12 times for 84 yards.

Griffin's performance in dominant victory is his finest yet

By STEPHEN WHYNO
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

When Robert Griffin III reared back and let the ball fly down the field in Santana Moss' direction, he was reminded of a lesson his college coach at Baylor, Art Briles, imparted.

"He always told me as a freshman that [there's a] difference between playing fearless and being stupid," Griffin said. "You just have to be able to tiptoe that line."

Griffin tiptoes that line all the time. More apt to take risks with his body in the open field than with the football, Griffin knew that if his pass to Moss was intercepted, it would've been a stupid play.

"But because it was a touchdown," he said, "it was fearless."

That was his game Sunday: fearless without being reckless. Every risk was worth the gamble, and every decision was a smart one. Everything was coming up Griffin as the Washington Redskins rookie quarterback's all-around game came into even sharper focus.

"I didn't second-guess what my instincts were telling me as far as just being out there: When to throw, when not to throw, when to run, when not to run, when to get down, when to get out of bounds," Griffin said. "You thank God to be able to have those moments and feel things out the right way, and it all works out for you."

By the numbers, Griffin was almost perfect. He finished 14-of-15 passing for 200 yards and four touchdowns; his completion percentage of 93.3 was the second-best in the NFL this season.

The miss was late in the second quarter,



when Philadelphia Eagles cornerback Dominique Rodgers-Cromartie batted down a pass intended for Joshua Morgan.

"Except for that one incompleting, I thought he was OK," coach Mike Shanahan said jokingly.

Griffin was in control, even when decisions to take off for the sideline or pass up an open receiver could have been second-guessed. There will be time for questioning Griffin moving forward, but Sunday there was just awe of a special game.

"He's shown us so much this season. I think he's just kind of building on what he's already shown us," tight end Logan Paulsen said. "Obviously, he had a fantastic game today, but we knew that he was capable of stuff like this from

pretty much training camp. ... He showed us some great things, but we were fully expecting him to do that."

Redskins players are so used to Griffin's abilities that Moss joked "I'm tired of talking about Robert." But each new week brings a different level of appreciation.

When the Redskins faltered in losses to the Pittsburgh Steelers and Carolina Panthers, Griffin wasn't to blame, but when he wasn't at his best it was worth wondering what could have gone differently if he was. In the Redskins' 31-6 win Sunday, it was evident what he means not only to the franchise's long-term future but this team on a week-by-week basis.

"He really ignites our fire," Moss said. "And when he's going well and doing his thing and he's in a groove, he's on fire, then he just rubs off on everybody else. I'm glad to have a guy like that."

Griffin is glad to be able to lift teammates up. This was his first of what should be many games as a Redskins captain, and his confident leadership preceded even that honor.

"He said all week he wanted to dominate, and that's what he did today," wide receiver Aldrick Robinson said. "He said he wanted to dominate. He dominated."

Fullback Darrel Young said that's nothing new. Griffin says that every week.

But to hear that message and see him make all the right moves had Redskins players dreaming about what will be with Griffin.

"It's just him. I'm not surprised," Young said. "The sky's the limit where he's going to go. He's just starting out, man. You're going to see this for another 15, 16, 17 years."

Meriweather makes immediate impact

By NATHAN FENNO
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Every word from Brandon Meriweather sounded like a celebration.

"What's up, family?" Meriweather said, between haranguing teammates for a T-shirt and lotion.

He grinned at the bright television lights and recorders thrust toward his locker. He walked without a limp, ice packs, a brace or concern.

Eleven weeks into the season, the free safety signed to a two-year, \$6 million contract to shore up the Washington Redskins' defensive backfield finally made his debut. The bothersome strained ligaments in his left knee couldn't keep him from the field any longer. And Meriweather's contribution to a reeling defense was immediate in Sunday's 31-6 win over the Philadelphia Eagles at FedEx Field.

"He gives us a lot of energy back there, and you can see what type of football player he is," coach Mike Shanahan said.

Wide receiver Pierre Garcon, hobbled by a plantar tear in his right foot since early in the season, returned, too, as the Redskins started to get recover from an injury-ravaged stretch.

While Garcon's impact was minimal — three catches and a quick trip to the training room when the locker



PRESTON KERES/SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Playing in his first game this year, Redskins free safety Brandon Meriweather (left) celebrates his second-quarter interception with cornerback DeAngelo Hall.

room opened to media postgame — Meriweather didn't look like a typical Redskins defensive back. Instead, he intercepted hapless Eagles quarterback Nick Foles to kill a drive in Redskins territory in the first quarter to continue and build his reputation as a player regularly in position to make plays on the football. The play remained a pleasant blur to Meriweather, unable to recall the defense or his read. He just reacted. Seven tackles came along, too, before a right knee sprain forced Meriweather to depart in the second half. He didn't return.

Meriweather downplayed the

injury. After all, he could run and cut without problems on his problematic left knee, reinjured during a freak pregame collision with teammate Aldrick Robinson in September in Tampa, Fla. Meriweather's jovial tone extended to his other, previously healthy knee. "I ain't hurt," he said. "[Leaving] was more me thinking about the future rather than me going back in there."

Shanahan offered a more sedate assessment, expecting to know more Monday or Tuesday: "We're keeping our fingers crossed it's nothing serious."

Meriweather's sort of play hasn't

been typical of Redskins' defensive backs this season, on a defense that entered Sunday allowing its most points per game since 1963. Crooked numbers pop up anywhere you look, from ranking 30th in the NFL against the pass to surrendering 32 plays of 30 yards or more.

Enter Meriweather to prey on the Eagles' beat-up offensive line and rookie quarterback as the Redskins held them to 257 yards and, of course, no touchdowns. This is the closest the Redskins will get to the defensive backfield envisioned during the offseason, with safety Tanard Jackson suspended for the season.

"He brought a lot of energy," cornerback DeAngelo Hall said of Meriweather. "He brought a lot of intensity, seeing things a little differently than somebody else might have. I loved it."

Added Meriweather: "We realized that everything falls on us, so we played like it."

Garcon, in his first game since Oct. 7, didn't play the same role. Signed to a five-year, \$42.5 million contract during the offseason to provide a deep threat, he hasn't been his speedy self since an 88-yard touchdown catch in the opener against the New Orleans Saints. He isn't close to full health, but caught each of the three passes intended for him.