

Week 2



- Snyder: Helu joins Hightower to form successful one-two punch. R2
- Kolb pressured by suffocating pass rush from Orakpo, Kerrigan. R3

Redskins 22, Cardinals 21



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SECTION R

BOUNCE BACK

A win that comes by taking care of business



DAN DALY

Bay Bucs. (I'll stop there, lest I be accused of belaboring the painful point.)

Sunday at FedEx Field, the Redskins were on the verge of losing another, this one to the Arizona Cardinals. Despite dominating the first half everywhere but on the scoreboard — thanks in large part to two Rex Grossman interceptions — they found themselves behind 21-13 with 10:58 left after a Kevin Kolb-to-Larry Fitzgerald bomb. Was it really going to happen again? After a promising season opener, were they really going to go back to being Team Woulda, Coulda, Shoulda?

Not on this afternoon, at least. In their first brush with serious adversity in 2011, the Redskins responded the way a team with playoff aspirations is supposed to respond. They put together a 13-play drive to score on an 18-yard, fourth-down pass from Grossman to Santana Moss. Then, following a missed two-point try, they quickly forced a punt and marched down the field again, leaving Graham Gano to boot a 34-yard field goal with 1:45 to go for a 22-21 win.

Let's face it, the Redskins have spent the past decade, if not longer, losing games like this. It's been the absolute bane of their (and their fans') existence. A year ago, 10 of their games were decided by four points or less — and they found a way to lose six of them. One such way was to botch an extra-point snap with nine seconds remaining. Another was to blow a 27-10 third-quarter lead.

The latter came in Week 2, when the Redskins had a chance, as they did Sunday, to start the season with two victories — and get some early traction in Mike Shanahan's first year as coach. Instead, they set the tone for the rest of season by letting a winnable game get away.

Against the Cardinals on Sunday, though, they may have set an entirely different tone, a whatever-it-takes tone that can win you a lot of games. Granted, we're just two weeks into the schedule, but maybe these Redskins aren't like their predecessors. They've certainly been telling us that since training camp. And if they keep pulling out these close ones, we might have to start believing them.

To hear the players tell it, there was no panic on the Washington sideline when the Cards came back in the second half — with Beanie Wells rushing for large chunks of yardage — and went up by eight on the 73-yard heave to Fitzgerald. As DeAngelo Hall, who was burned by on the All-Pro wideout, put it: "It's just ma-

» see DALY | R3



Grossman hits his stride after two early interceptions

By RICH CAMPBELL
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Rex Grossman's two interceptions in the first quarter Sunday were Nos. 41 and 42 of his checkered NFL career. If there's a silver lining to all those picks, maybe it's that he has fought the emotional lows and on-field adversity that accompanied them.

So when it came time for the Washington Redskins' quarterback to undo that damage, which took the form of an eight-point deficit with 10 minutes, 52 seconds remaining against the Arizona Cardinals, he remained calm and focused on finding his team a lifeline.

"You try not to let that momentum turn that against you in a negative way," he said.

What transpired next is the stuff that restores some shine to a tarnished reputation and helps transform a six-win team into a playoff contender.

Grossman engineered two scoring drives, including an 18-yard touchdown pass on fourth-and-3, to lift the Redskins to a 22-21 victory.

"Those are the types of situations that build momentum and confidence as a team, knowing throughout the course of the year that you are going to be put in a lot of adverse situations," Grossman said. "I feel like we're one-for-one on that."

And that made the Redskins two-for-two in coach Mike Shanahan's second season. They're 2-0 for the first time since 2007 with significant momentum entering next Monday night's game against the archrival Dallas Cowboys.

The 76,330 fans at FedEx Field soaked that up, too. After a video review with 1:39 left determined that Redskins cornerback Byron Westbrook stripped Arizona receiver Chansi Stuckey, giving Washington possession to run out the clock, chants of "We want Dallas!" rose from the lower bowl.

Oh, but this win was too thrilling and too gutsy to immediately look ahead. Most importantly, perhaps, it was additional evidence that the Redskins' journeyman quarterback isn't the same guy who was run out of Chicago less than a season after helping take the Bears to the Super Bowl.

"Any time you get in a situation like that, you want a leader," fullback Darrel Young said. "You don't want a guy to fold, and that's what he did today."

Memories of Grossman's sparkling season opener against the New York Giants last week vanished with one swing of Grossman's arm on the Red-

» see REDSKINS | R3

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANDREW HARNIK/THE WASHINGTON TIMES

TOP: Redskins receiver Santana Moss pulls in an 18-yard touchdown on fourth down in the fourth quarter as Cardinals safety Adrian Wilson defends. **MIDDLE:** Cornerback Kevin Barnes and safety Reed Doughty pounce on a fumble late in the game, allowing the Redskins to run out the clock. **BOTTOM:** Quarterback Rex Grossman celebrates the fumble recovery, which sealed Washington's first 2-0 start since 2007.

YOUTH MOVEMENT



ANDREW HARNIK / THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Young Redskins fans root for their team during the fourth quarter at FedEx Field. Washington rewarded their exuberance with a 22-21 win over Arizona.

One-two punch proved to be right combination



DERON SNYDER

Facing his old team for the first time since it traded him away, Redskins halfback Tim Hightower had extra motivation to have a big game Sunday.

Throw in the fact that last week's performance left much to

be desired — a mere 2.9 yards per carry — and Hightower had another reason to prove himself. We just didn't know he'd have another runner to help him.

Hightower did his part in establishing the ground game and softening the Arizona Cardinals' defense in Washington's 22-21 victory, demonstrating the same downhill, power-running style that was so impressive during the preseason. He had rushed for 83 yards by halftime, helping the Redskins to a three-point lead.

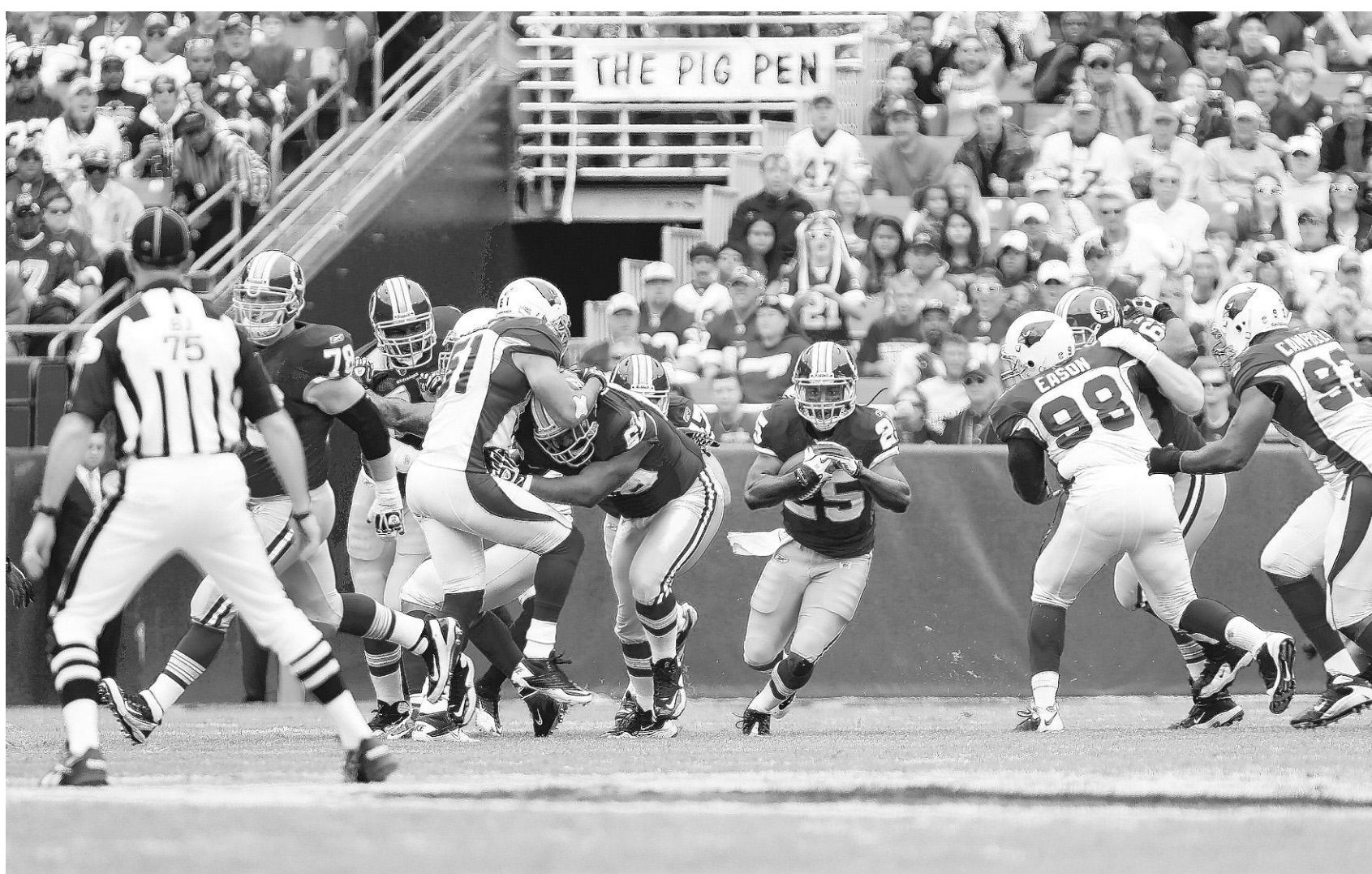
But another story line was building steam at intermission: rookie Roy Helu's emergence as an all-purpose threat. After Hightower took every handoff except one in the season opener, coach Mike Shanahan decided to expand Helu's role in the offense — though it wasn't exactly planned.

"You can kind of see on the sideline when somebody gets tired or loses a little bit of his zip," Shanahan said after Helu accounted for 112 yards from scrimmage.

"One of the reasons we drafted him, and we were hoping we could get him when we did, was his big-play capability," Shanahan said. "He's extremely fast, and you could see it out there. You give him a yard, you give him a foot, and he's got the chance to break the big play. It's always nice to bring in a guy that's fresh when Tim gets a little bit tired. It's a different type of back for the defense."

Hightower finished with 20 carries for 96 yards, and Helu had 10 rushes for 74 yards. That's the sort of one-two punch that can give defenses fits and keep each back from wearing down. It's also the sort of ground game that has defined Shanahan, who certainly wasn't pleased with the Week 1 production.

Shanahan and other coaches insisted that Hightower just missed breaking some long runs against the New York Giants. They also stressed the importance of sticking with the run, even when yardage is scant. To their credit, the Redskins didn't abandon the run Sunday, exhibiting near-perfect balance in the first half — 20 rushes and 21 pass attempts — and finishing with a heavy dose of



PHOTOGRAPHS BY T.J. KIRKPATRICK / THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Redskins running back Tim Hightower was excited to square off against Arizona, the team that traded him this offseason. Rookie Roy Helu (below) provided clutch relief with 74 yards on 10 carries.

Helu.

"We made it a point this week to make the running game our staple on offense," fullback Darrel Young said. "Any time you have coaches who believe and coaches who believe, you've got to get that thing going. It opens up everything."

Hightower said last week that he doesn't like coming off the field, and he certainly isn't looking forward to the type of situation that existed in Arizona, where he shared carries and eventually became expendable. But if Hightower harbored any resentment after Helu had more second-half carries (six to his five), it wasn't evident.

"That's just good coaching," Hightower said. "Just like in basketball, when someone has the hot hand, you go with them. As much of a competitor as I am, at the end of the day, I like to win. I don't care whether it's me, Ryan Torain or Helu."

Hightower's knowledge of Arizona was helpful during the Redskins' first drive (which, unfortunately, ended at the Cardinals' 6-yard line after Rex Grossman threw his first interception). Hightower en-

gaged Arizona safety Kerry Rhodes, who was blitzing on a third-down incompletion, and egged him into an unnecessary roughness penalty.

"That was me being me and getting under those guys' skins," Hightower said. "I practiced with those guys for three years so I know exactly who I can press what buttons on. I got the outcome I needed."

There were several skirmishes throughout the game, with pushing and shoving going on after the whistle, as if Hightower's emotion had overtaken the entire team. It probably didn't go unnoticed amongst his former teammates that Hightower predicted a Washington victory.

"I tried to tell myself all week that this was just another game," Hightower said. "But it wasn't. It meant a lot to me, was very special to me. That's the team that brought me in, and I had a lot of memories with that team. I wanted this one really bad, and I told the guys that."

He got his revenge and the Redskins got their 'W,' while unveiling a new, exciting weapon along the way. "At the end of the day, it's great to have the two-headed monster," Young said.



REDSKINS 22, CARDINALS 21

LBs Orakpo, Kerrigan applied relentless pressure

By **STEPHEN WHYNO**
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

It's the goal of every NFL team to find playmakers in the first round of the draft. On Sunday, two of the Washington Redskins' past three first-rounders made almost every play they were asked to — disrupting Arizona Cardinals quarterback Kevin Kolb with a suffocating pass rush.

Brian Orakpo and Ryan Kerrigan were at the forefront of the blitzing attack that had Kolb on his heels for much of the afternoon.

"I love hunting quarterbacks," Orakpo said after the 22-21 win. "That's what I'm all about."

"I thought we did a phenomenal job putting pressure. That's the mentality we've got to have, man. We expect a lot of ourselves. I know I'm going to bring it, Ryan's going to bring it and the rest of the outside [linebackers] are going to bring it when they come in."

The final numbers included three sacks, five quarterback hits and plenty of bumps and bruises for the Cardinals quarterback.

Orakpo popped the ball loose on his second-quarter sack, and soon after Kerrigan was relieved to pick up his first career sack on a second-down play.

Kerrigan also excelled in pass coverage, tipping a ball that turned into a London Fletcher interception. For



Linebackers Brian Orakpo (98) and Ryan Kerrigan celebrate after the Redskins recovered a fumble during the fourth quarter. Orakpo and Kerrigan pressured Cardinals QB Kevin Kolb much of the afternoon.

a rookie who made a quick adjustment from college defensive end to NFL outside linebacker, the growth he has shown is impressive.

"Ryan's a playmaker. He tips passes in the passing game; he gets

pressure on the quarterback," Fletcher said. "He's still learning, though. He knows he's going to grow so much more."

Kerrigan looked all grown up Sunday, combining with Orakpo to tor-

ture Kolb, who had little time to make anything happen for long stretches of the game. And the frequent hits he took led the Cardinals to approach the passing game differently.

"They were getting rid of the ball

very quickly in the second half," Kerrigan said. "I think that can be attributed to our defense because we were getting a lot of pressure."

For most of the game, that pressure made wide receiver Larry Fitzgerald a nonfactor. He had just five catches for 41 yards before a 73-yard touchdown early in the fourth quarter.

Arizona's biggest play of the game even included Kolb getting hit — with Fletcher crushing him from the blind side after he let go of the ball. But it's hard to blame the blitz.

"Kolb is an intelligent quarterback. He read the blitz coming, he knew which way to slide to buy him some more time," Orakpo said. "Fletcher had a great hit on the back side, but he already was rolling out and knew where it was coming from."

But it was no coincidence Fitzgerald didn't take over the game. Part of that can credit can go to DeAngelo Hall, whom Fletcher praised for accepting the challenge of blanketing the All-Pro.

But so much of it centered on Kolb not being able to see him — because Orakpo, Kerrigan and others were constantly in his face.

"That's what you've got to do when you've got a player on the outside like Fitzgerald," Kerrigan said. "You've got to pressure the quarterback and not even let him get a chance to get the ball."

REDSKINS 22, CARDINALS 21

Gano put misfire out of his mind with game-winning kick

By **NICK EILERSON**
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

When hulking Arizona Cardinals defensive end Calais Campbell swatted Graham Gano's 30-yard field goal attempt in the closing seconds of the first half, the Washington Redskins kicker could have sulked into the locker room with his confidence derailed. Instead, he used that jarring moment to help his team stay undefeated.

"After the block, I went up to [special teams coach Danny Smith] and I told him we were going to have a chance to win on a field goal," Gano said. "I had a feeling it was going to come down to that at the end."

The second-year veteran redeemed himself in the fourth quarter with a 23-yard boot to cut the Cardinals' lead to 14-13. But his real test came with just under two minutes to play, when a drive stalled deep in Arizona territory. As 76,330 anxious fans held their breath in dreaded anticipation, Gano trotted onto the field set on pulling his team out of a 21-19 hole.

Even with the blocked field goal try lingering somewhere in the back of his mind, Gano had reason to feel confident. His right foot clinched three Redskins victories last season, nailing overtime game-winners against Jacksonville, Tennessee and Green Bay.

"I was pretty pumped up; I've been there before," Gano said. "I'm just excited for those opportunities. The biggest thing is you try not to think about it too much. You just go back to what you've done in practice and let

your instincts take over. That's what I try to do and hope that everything goes well and put the ball through the uprights."

And through the uprights it went, sending Gano into the middle of a mob of jubilant teammates near midfield.

In addition to securing a dramatic win, Gano's 34-yarder with 1:45 left boosted Washington sideline's confidence in a player who scores high in an attribute crucial to any kicker worth his salt: shaking off adversity. Not only did Gano need to put aside the blocked kick, he had to overcome the embarrassment of a missed 39-yard attempt in the season opener against the New York Giants.

That miss could have rattled Gano, especially in the wake of 10 consecutive successful field goals during the preseason. Sunday's 3-for-4 performance suggested the Week 1 blunder was in his rearview mirror.

"I have the utmost respect for Graham," Washington fullback Darrel Young said. "To have the season he did last year and to come back and miss one last week and then finish the game today, that says a lot about his character."

Gano deflected commentary on the strength of his character to that of the entire team, which heads to Dallas next week.

"I think it starts with good character on this team," Gano said. "We've got a lot of guys who like to fight and win. Coach Shanahan really stresses the only important thing is winning. Nothing else really matters."

REDSKINS

From page R1

skins' first series. On third-and-goal from Arizona's 6, he overthrew Santana Moss cutting parallel to the goal line, and Cardinals safety Adrian Wilson intercepted it.

It was a wretched start, considering the magnitude of missed red-zone opportunities. Grossman moved forward, though, knowing the gaffe wasn't entirely his fault.

Moss, it turned out, stopped running his designed route. He thought he could get open by improvising and cutting inside, but he was supposed to break back to the sideline. Grossman looked to Moss but pump-faked, unsure of his intentions. By the time Moss was clear, the play was a bust.

"Rex is the dude, man," Moss said. "You can probably blame them picks on us. One of them was me trying to make a play when I should have just kept going."

The Redskins continued to amass yards — they outgained Arizona in the first half, 253-85 — but it didn't translate to points. Their second series stalled on third-and-6 at the Arizona 39 when cornerback Richard Marshall hauled in Grossman's deflected pass to receiver Anthony Armstrong.

Armstrong had a step on cornerback A.J. Jefferson over the middle but didn't separate entirely. Grossman's throw grazed Armstrong's fingertips, and Marshall caught it.

"It was a perfect read," coach Mike Shanahan said. "I thought [Jefferson] did a good job of kind of tugging him a little bit. He should have been wide open, but we won't get into that."

So Grossman had a clear conscience. His first interception was receiver error. His second should have been flagged for holding. And he had time to make up for them.

He was at his best after Larry Fitzgerald's 73-yard touchdown put the Redskins behind 21-13 with 10:52 left.

He completed 5 of 9 passes on the first drive and capped it with a fourth-down touchdown to Moss. The design of the play forced the defensive back on the right side to choose between a receiver running a shorter route and Moss running to the back right corner of the end zone. Grossman saw a potential touchdown before the snap.

"I watched the corner, and the play was designed to go to the flat," he said. "He kind of settled his feet, and I'd rather have a touchdown."

It was a gamble, though, going for the score instead of only the first down.

"If I'd have missed, it would have been — interesting," Grossman said with a smile.

After the Cardinals went three and out, Grossman was even sharper. He completed his first four attempts to move the Redskins into field goal range.

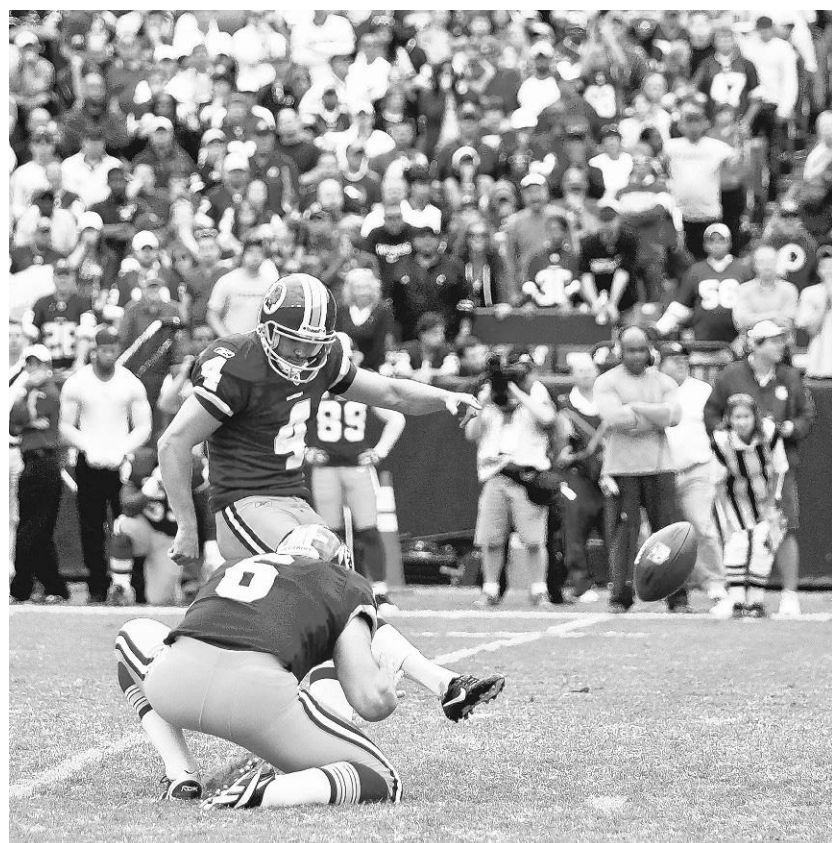
Graham Gano's 34-yard field goal and Westbrook's forced fumble gave him that measure of redemption that has eluded him so many times before. And for the second straight week, the Redskins celebrated that Rex Grossman is their starting quarterback.

Said Shanahan: "He showed the poise after having a couple of interceptions early — regardless of how they occurred — to come back and fight and find a way to win."

"Rex is the dude, man. You can probably blame them picks on us. One of them was me trying to make a play when I should have just kept going."

—Santana Moss

REDSKINS 22, CARDINALS 21				
Arizona	7	0	7	7-21
Washington	0	10	0	12-22
First Quarter				
Ari-King 21 pass from Kolb (Feely kick), 3:54.				
Second Quarter				
Was-FG Gano 26, 10:25.				
Was-Davis 1 pass from Grossman (Gano kick), 3:04.				
Third Quarter				
Ari-Wells 2 run (Feely kick), 2:47.				
Fourth Quarter				
Was-FG Gano 23, 11:18.				
Ari-Fitzgerald 73 pass from Kolb (Feely kick), 10:58.				
Was-Moss 18 pass from Grossman (pass failed), 5:17.				
Was-FG Gano 34, 1:45.				
A-76,330.				
	Ari	Was		
First downs	16	28		
Total Net Yards	324	455		
Rushes-yards	15-93	35-172		
Passing	231	283		
Punt Returns	2-30	4-73		
Kickoff Returns	2-62	4-105		
Interceptions Ret.	2-50	1-0		
Comp-Att-Int	17-30-1	25-43-2		
Sacked-Yards Lost	3-20	1-8		
Punts	6-49.0	3-39.3		
Fumbles-Lost	2-1	0-0		
Penalties-Yards	10-97	3-15		
Time of Possession	21:30	38:30		
Leaders				
RUSHING —Arizona, Wells 14-93, Taylor 1-0. Washington, Hightower 20-96, Helu 10-74, Young 1-7, Grossman 4 (minus 5).				
PASSING —Arizona, Kolb 17-30-1-251. Washington, Grossman 25-43-2-291.				
RECEIVING —Arizona, Fitzgerald 7-133, Roberts 3-30, King 2-36, Stuckey 2-24, Doucet 2-20, Heap 1-8. Washington, Davis 6-86, Gaffney 5-62, Moss 5-61, Helu 3-38, Stallworth 2-16, Armstrong 2-14, Hightower 1-10, Young 1-4.				
MISSED FIELD GOALS —Washington, Gano 30 (BK).				



T.J. KIRKPATRICK/THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Redskins kicker Graham Gano delivers the game-winning field goal, a 34-yarder with 1:45 to play, Sunday against the Cardinals.

DALY

From page R1

turity, man. This is a game that probably last year we lose. We've got a different team now, a different attitude. We've got some fighters in here."

Part of the reason for the Redskins' calm, nose tackle Barry Cofield said, is that "the offense had moved the ball all day. We knew they had the ability to score." And indeed, Grossman rebounded from his two picks to throw for 291 yards and two touchdowns, and Tim Hightower (96 yards) and Roy Helu (74) took turns punching holes in the Arizona defensive front. That's a big change from last year, when the Redskins *didn't* have much ability to score — and thus, every one of their mistakes was magnified.

Beyond that, though, they just seem to have a confidence this season that was missing before, a confidence that has replaced the false bravado of previous years. "For some reason," Trent Williams said, "I just knew we were going to get [the win]. I don't want to sound

cocky, but I felt it."

The Redskins aren't just playing with self-assurance, they're playing a little mad. You have to understand, Moss said, "We have guys who don't get the recognition they should get because the team hasn't won. We sit around in the offseason thinking about it: We don't get any respect. That's why I didn't want to go anywhere [in free agency]. It's taken me this long to be part of something [special]."

We got an inkling of this sea change at the beginning of last week, when the Redskins passed up their traditional Victory Monday after beating the New York Giants and came to work instead. And Sunday we got an even bigger inkling when they pulled themselves together in the fourth quarter and willed their way to a win.

"In years past," Moss went on, if the team found itself in that situation, "we'd say, 'Here we go again.' Now we just say, 'It's our turn to score.'"

Such little things separate winners from losers in the NFL. For a long time, the Redskins have lacked those little things, lacked the intan-

gibles — the ability, as much as anything, to deliver when it matters most. The past two Sundays, though, they've been at their very best in the final minutes. And as a result, they're 2-0 for just the fourth time in the Dan Snyder era. The last two times — under Joe Gibbs in 2005 and 2007 — they made the playoffs.

"I was just joking with the guys," Cofield said. "I told them, 'We were a couple of plays away from being a miserable locker room, and now we're one that's excited and looking forward.' The margin of victory is razor-thin in this league. We talk about it in meetings. The difference between being in the playoffs and not is very small. And once you're in, anybody can win."

Cofield learned that lesson as a rookie, when his Giants club caught fire in the postseason and went all the way. Nobody's making any such predictions for the Redskins, but you have to like what you've seen so far. They've won two games they were capable of winning, against teams no better than themselves — and now they have another one in Dallas.

REDSKINS SCHEDULE

WEEK 1



vs. Giants
W, 28-14

WEEK 2



vs. Cardinals
W, 22-21

WEEK 3



at Cowboys
Mon., Sept. 26

WEEK 4



at Rams
Sun., Oct. 2

WEEK 6



vs. Eagles
Sun., Oct. 16

WEEK 7



at Panthers
Sun., Oct. 23

WEEK 8



at Bills (Toronto)
Sun., Oct. 30

WEEK 9



vs. 49ers
Sun., Nov. 6

WEEK 10



at Dolphins
Sun., Nov. 13

WEEK 11



vs. Cowboys
Sun., Nov. 20

WEEK 12



at Seahawks
Sun., Nov. 27

WEEK 13



vs. Jets
Sun., Dec. 4

WEEK 14



vs. Patriots
Sun., Dec. 11

WEEK 15



at Giants
Sun., Dec. 18

WEEK 16



vs. Vikings
Sat., Dec. 24

WEEK 17



at Eagles
Sun., Jan. 1

REDSKINS 22, CARDINALS 21: QUARTER-BY-QUARTER



T.J. KIRKPATRICK/THE WASHINGTON TIMES

FIRST QUARTER: Cardinals cornerback Richard Marshall picks off a pass that glanced off the hands of Redskins receiver Anthony Armstrong.



ANDREW HARNIK/THE WASHINGTON TIMES

SECOND QUARTER: Running back Tim Hightower takes a handoff from quarterback Rex Grossman. Hightower finished with 96 yards on 20 carries.



T.J. KIRKPATRICK/THE WASHINGTON TIMES

THIRD QUARTER: Cardinals running back Beanie Wells (14 carries, 93 yards) hurdles Redskins safety Reed Doughty to score on a 2-yard run.



PRATIK SHAH/THE WASHINGTON TIMES

FOURTH QUARTER: Redskins cornerback DeAngelo Hall pumps up the crowd at FedEx Field after Washington recovered a fumble.

1 The Redskins had just about every statistical advantage possible in the opening quarter, most notably possessing the ball for nearly 13 of the period's 15 minutes. But Arizona still led 7-0 at the end of the quarter because it did what the home team could not, taking advantage of its lone scoring opportunity. Though the Redskins' defense largely held the Cardinals in check, Kevin Kolb didn't waste his chance when the second Rex Grossman interception of the day put Arizona at the Redskins' 37. Two passes and 38 seconds later, the visitors were in the end zone. The pick that set up that score wasn't Grossman's fault — the ball glanced off Anthony Armstrong's hands — but the first interception was. A methodical opening drive was squandered when the Washington QB sidearmed a ball toward Santana Moss on third and goal from the 6 and saw it picked by Adrian Wilson.

2 After being burned on a couple of interceptions early, Kyle Shanahan's play-calling shifted toward the running game from late in the first quarter into the second. The Redskins pounded away with Tim Hightower, letting Grossman pick and choose with shorter passes when they did put it up. Hightower's workmanlike approach — nothing fancy there — ultimately paid off. He had 83 rushing yards by halftime and it was his work, with an assist from Roy Helu, that positioned Grossman to find Fred Davis on a 1-yard scoring pass for the Redskins' first touchdown of the afternoon. Up 10-7 at the time, the Redskins exuded confidence, particularly on defense. During one timeout, several defenders danced along to the Beyonce song blaring over the PA system. Not all was well, though, the Redskins squandered a long Brandon Banks punt return with a messy offensive series before Graham Gano had a 30-yard field goal attempt blocked.

KEY PLAY

With the Redskins trailing by eight and facing a fourth-and-3 at the Arizona 18 with 5:23 to play, Mike Shanahan didn't think twice before sending the offense out to go for it. Rex Grossman dropped back, saw Santana Moss breaking free of rookie corner Patrick Peterson in the end zone and fired the ball that way. Moss didn't have a defender near him when the ball arrived, as safety Adrian Wilson came over too late. The ensuing two-point conversion failed, but momentum was back on the Redskins' side after that huge conversion.

3 The Redskins' tenuous grasp on a lead that should have bigger slipped after halftime. While Washington's defense had its way with Arizona early on, harassing Kolb and limiting Beanie Wells to six yards on three carries in the first half, the Cardinals finally broke out in the third quarter. Wells had 84 yards on 10 carries in the third, exploiting gashes in the Redskins' front that weren't there in the opening half. The threat of the run allowed Kolb more time to work, and he finally got star receiver Larry Fitzgerald more involved. Kolb completed 7 of 11 passes in the quarter, connecting with Fitzgerald four times. Most importantly, Arizona found a way to get the ball in the end zone, with Wells scoring from 2 yards out to give the Cardinals a 14-10 lead. Meanwhile, the Redskins' offense stalled, failing to sustain a drive as the running game escaped them — Hightower carried the ball three times for six yards in the quarter.

4 Entering the fourth down 14-10 and later trailing 21-13 in the period, the Redskins did plenty of work to ultimately win this game, and they needed big plays from their offense, defense and special teams to do so. Perhaps most significant was the way Washington responded after being smacked in the mouth via a 73-yard Kolb-to-Fitzgerald touchdown that gave Arizona an eight-point lead moments after a Gano field goal had cut the deficit to one. After two incompletions, Grossman led a 13-play drive that ended in a touchdown pass on fourth-and-3. A missed two-point conversion didn't affect the defense, which earned a three-and-out before Grossman led another drive that culminated in Gano's go-ahead field goal. But the Redskins still had work to do with 1:45 on the clock, and their defense came up with a huge forced fumble and recovery to seal it.

REDSKINS NOTES

Secondary fill-ins prove more than capable

By **STEPHEN WHYNO**
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

BY THE NUMBERS

8-1: Washington's record against Arizona at FedEx Field

600: Career receptions for Santana Moss with his first catch Sunday, good for 14th among active players

97: Penalty yards incurred by the Cardinals; the Redskins had just 15

37: Minutes played Sunday before Sav Rocca unleashed the Redskins' first punt midway through the third quarter

162: Career wins for Mike Shanahan, moving him ahead of Bill Cowher and into 15th place all-time

79-48: Redskins' edge in number of offensive plays run

191: Receiving yards through two games for tight end Fred Davis, who had 316 yards in 16 games last season

35: Percent of third downs converted by the Redskins (6 of 17)

It took some jelling, but the Redskins' secondary was just starting to look comfortable without LaRon Landry during Sunday's game against the Cardinals. Reed Doughty was proving to be more than a capable fill-in at strong safety, and the defense was cruising along.

Then starting cornerback Josh Wilson's head awkwardly hit Arizona getting picked apart by the Arizona offense. But at the end of the game, Westbrook's forced fumble with 1:45 left sealed the victory.

"As far as backup cornerbacks — me, KB, Brandyn Thompson — when those guys go down, we have to be prepared," Westbrook said. "We're not just at practice and or in the meeting room not paying attention. When one guy goes down, we have to make sure that we can stay at his level or higher."

During the first drive featuring Westbrook and Thompson, quarterback Kevin Kolb and the Cardinals marched 90 yards down the field with little resistance. Both players said it wasn't a matter of giving



ANDREW HARNIK/THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Redskins tight end Fred Davis catches a 1-yard touchdown pass during the second quarter.

ing extra cushion to receivers, but the secondary struggled nonetheless.

But when the Redskins' defense needed a big play to hold on at 22-21, Westbrook stripped Chansi Stuckey and Doughty recovered the fumble to allow the offense to run out the clock.

"When the guy caught the ball, he didn't see me behind him, so I just went and took a swipe and the ball came out," Westbrook said. "Game over."

It was a bit of validation for the backup cornerbacks, especially after a less-than-stellar second half.

"You're proud because that's the reason we won the game right there," cornerback DeAngelo Hall said.

Big-play Davis

In Week 1, Fred Davis put up his best game in the NFL by surpassing 100 yards and presenting Rex Grossman with a deep threat from the tight end position. In Week 2, Davis quietly finished with 86 yards — and his two big catches on the game-winning drive stood out.

Davis caught a 15-yard pass to start it off and a 4-yarder on the next play. The defense had to focus on Davis from then on, opening up the rest of the targets.

"You're not going to get big plays all the time," Davis said. "Those catches are kind of harder than the big ones, actually, because they know what's going on and they got a guy on your back and you've got to make that catch."

Defense bounces back

It didn't take much for Kolb to suck the air out of FedEx Field — just a 73-yard touchdown pass to All-Pro wideout Larry Fitzgerald. But defensive captain and middle linebacker London Fletcher stressed that, with 11:09 on the clock, it wasn't cataclysmic.

"There was a lot of time left in the ballgame," he said. "There was no panic on our sidelines."

The next time out, the Redskins' defense forced a three-and-out, setting up the game-winning drive.

**WEEK 3
REDSKINS AT COWBOYS**



Kickoff: 8:30 p.m. **TV:** ESPN
Radio: AM-980, FM-92.7, FM-94.3

What to watch: The Redskins head to Dallas looking to start 3-0 for the first time since 2005. A win also would improve their record against the NFC East to 2-0. Cowboys quarterback Tony Romo suffered a fractured rib Sunday and returned to the game but likely won't be at full strength.

● Dallas is dynamic at the skill positions with Felix Jones as the top running back and Miles Austin and Dez Bryant at receiver. Bryant, however, missed Sunday's game against San Francisco with a quadriceps injury.

● On defense, outside linebacker DeMarcus Ware is the best pass rusher Washington left tackle Trent Williams faced last season. He collected three sacks against the Redskins last year.

