

Week 8



- Defense's many errors glaring in loss. R3
- Fletcher continues to be bright spot. R3

Bills 23, Redskins 0



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The Washington Times

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SECTION R



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Buffalo defensive tackle Marcell Dareus (99) celebrates a sack of Redskins quarterback John Beck during the Bills' 23-0 victory at Rogers Centre in Toronto. Buffalo collected a season-high nine sacks.

SAD SACKS

Offense comes up empty in Shanahan's first shutout loss of career

By RICH CAMPBELL
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

TORONTO | You don't win two Super Bowls and 163 games in an 18-year head coaching career without answers. Mike Shanahan has had them more often than not. Heck, there have even been times when Shanahan, widely regarded as one of the sport's sharpest offensive minds, has invented new ones.

Yet when he emerged from the Rogers Centre visitors locker room Sunday night, the solutions escaped him. After all, there isn't much to say when

a big, fat zero sits next to your team's name on the scoreboard.

And for the first time in his 267 regular-season games as an NFL coach, he suffered that ignominy in the Washington Redskins' 23-0 loss to the Buffalo Bills.

"It's pretty humbling to take that," he said.

How else to describe such a thorough dismantling? Shanahan built a possible Hall of Fame career with his offensive prowess, but now he must deduce how to resurrect a reeling Redskins unit that did nothing right in the

team's third straight loss.

The Redskins surrendered nine sacks and gained only 178 yards in one of the franchise's ugliest games in recent memory. The Redskins (3-4) were shut out for the first time since December 2009. The nine sacks allowed tied a 33-year-old franchise record.

"It's humbling at times," left guard Will Montgomery said, using Shanahan's word. "We were 3-1 and you guys are asking us about playoffs. Now we're 3-4 and [stuff] is hitting the fan."

How did it devolve to this point? "That," Shanahan said, "is a good

question."

There are so many possible starting points, really.

A crowd of 51,579 filled Rogers Centre to witness NFL football's only game north of the border this season in the Bills' annual series designed to expand their market share here. Fans saw one NFL team that appears to have reversed years of losing and one that appears headed for another disappointing finish.

The Redskins, it seems, didn't have a passport for offensive execution.

"You think I'm satisfied? We didn't score a point," Shanahan bristled. "Ob-

viously I'm very disappointed in our execution, but we'll go back and work on the execution."

Pass protection, in particular, was a major problem. Washington's patchwork offensive line still has not recovered from injuries to starting left tackle Trent Williams and left guard Kory Lichtensteiger two weeks ago. Three second-stringers started up front for the second straight week.

"We have plenty of talent, plenty of ability and some guys that can do some

» see REDSKINS | R3

This team has dropped the ball



DAN DALY

have no hope. Cancel the last nine games and just hold an extended minicamp.

But, of course, you can't cancel the last nine games. You can only sit through atrocities like Sunday's 23-0 blanking by the Buffalo Bills at Rogers Centre — the first time a Mike Shanahan club has been shut out —

and wonder how it went so bad so fast. Sure, the Redskins have injuries. The entire NFL has injuries — injuries coming out its earholes. But that still doesn't explain the sorry display against the then 1-5 Panthers or the virtual no-show here in the home of the Toronto Argonauts. I mean, did the Redskins even make the trip? Quick, somebody check the manifest.

The Washington team that arrived in Canada might have been ailing, but it also should have been angry. Its season was spiraling out of control — as so many have before it — and Redskins fans were looking for any vital signs, any indication that, no, this year would be different, this year they would, as DeAngelo Hall phrased it afterward, "put a cork in the sinking ship."

A crisp first offensive series, perhaps, that led to a touchdown. Or a determined defensive effort — against a very good Buf-

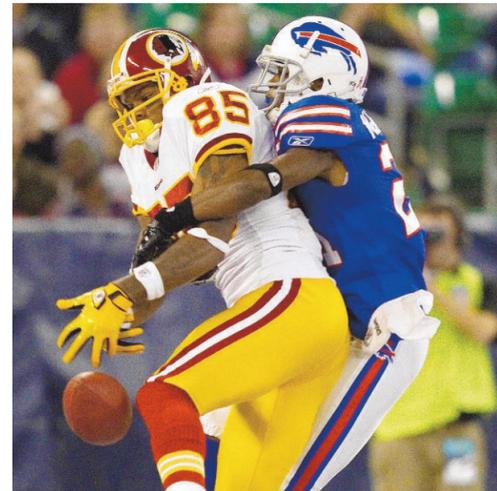
falo attack — to keep the Bills from running off and hiding. Something, anything to suggest that the Redskins plan to go the full 16 rounds this year, that December might actually mean something for a change.

Instead, the Redskins came out flatter than Albert Haynesworth's seat cushion, gave up an 80-yard TD drive in Buffalo's second possession and it only got worse from there. The Bills even tried to help them a time or two, once by fumbling a snap at their 31, but John Beck and Co. couldn't do anything with the gift. Buffalo ended up blocking the (long) field goal try.

"We've just got to play better from the beginning of the game," Jammal Brown said. "It's tough playing catch-up the whole time."

To which nose tackle Barry Cofield

» see DALY | R2



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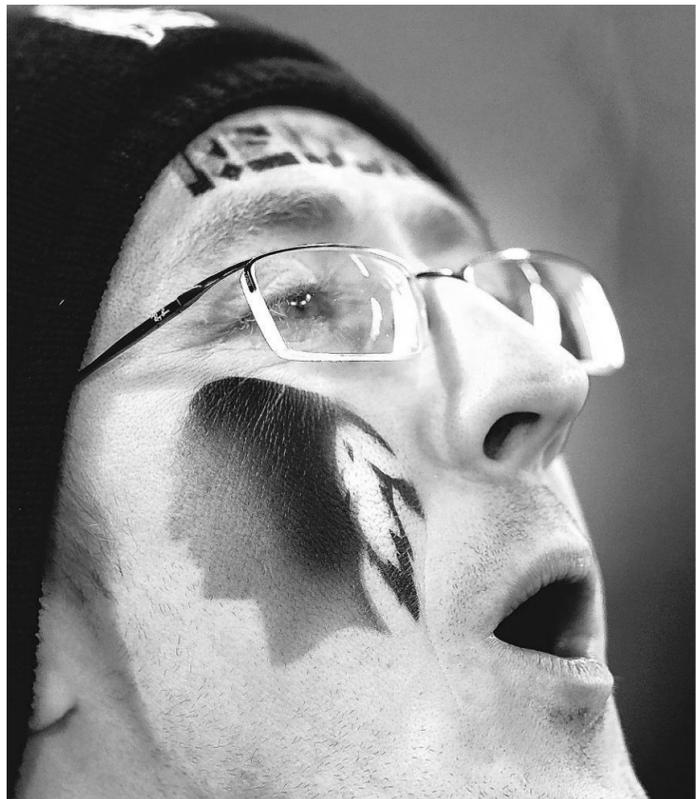
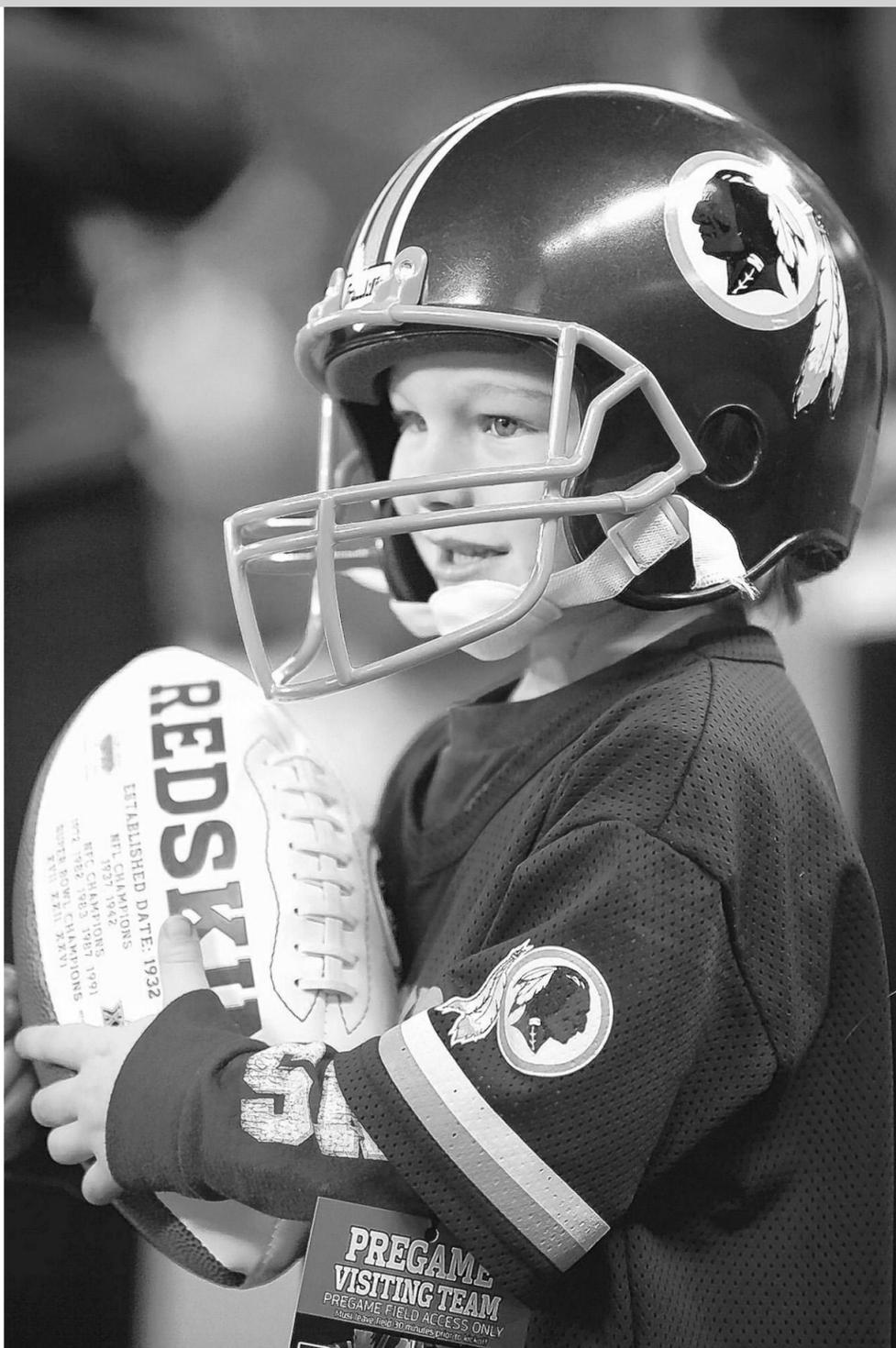
Much like this pass intended for rookie receiver Leonard Hankerson, broken up by Bills cornerback Leodis McKelvin, the Redskins had a hard time getting a handle on anything against Buffalo in absorbing their third straight defeat.

REDSKINS NATION GOES INTERNATIONAL



ASSOCIATED PRESS PHOTOGRAPHS

ABOVE: Two Redskins fans show their colors — and their spirit — before kickoff against the Buffalo Bills at Rogers Centre in Toronto. **RIGHT:** A young Redskins fan gets in the mood to see an NFL game during warm-ups. **BELOW:** Mike Capobianco wore his heart on his cheek, hoping to see a Washington victory.



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DALY

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added, more pointedly: "You want to be competitive at least, but we weren't even close. It's going to be tough [Monday watching the tapes]. If we don't get better, there are going to be a lot of changes."

Once again, a lengthy losing streak — three and counting — is sucking the life out of a Redskins season. And once again, neither the coach nor his coordinators nor his quarterback nor anybody else seems to know how to apply the brake. Indeed, after a 3-1 start that saw it shoot to the top of the NFC East standings, the club is facing the prospect of finishing with a worse record in Shanahan's second year than it did in the first (6-10).

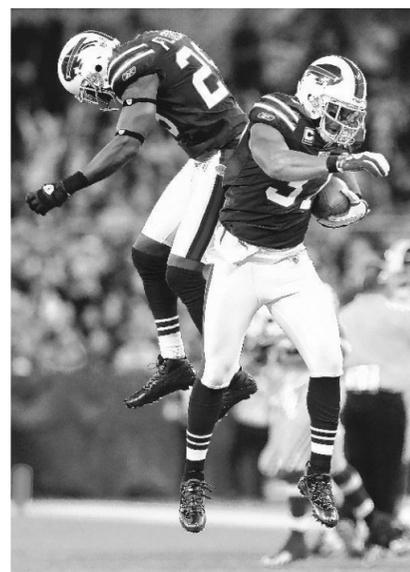
Can the Redskins find three more wins in the final nine weeks and avoid the embarrassment of *regressing* in Year 2 of the Shanahan era? Not as currently constituted (to return to our original thought).

For starters, with Trent Williams (ankle) and Kory Lichtensteiger (knee) gone from the offensive line, which was never very Hog-like to begin with, the Redskins can't do that most fundamental of things: protect their quarterback. Beck, poor fellow, was turned into a crash-test dummy by Buffalo's front seven. The nine sacks he absorbed — tying the franchise record — only begin to tell the story. He was knocked down. He was blindsided. He was buried in the occasional avalanche.

Beck isn't going to remind anybody of Sammy Baugh, but no QB can flourish in that kind of environment (which at least partially explains his Rex Grossmanesque 53.6 passer rating).

Still, "It's not just [the] protection," Chris Chester said in the line's defense. And he's right about that. "We put ourselves in the position a lot of the time of *having* to throw," he went on — first by getting stuck in a bunch of third-and-longs and then by falling further and further behind. The quarterback almost always gets crunched in those situations sooner or later (and sometimes both).

Besides, even if Beck *had* received the necessary blocking, he wouldn't have had Santana Moss (hand) and Chris Cooley (knee) to pass to or Tim Hightower (another wounded knee) to run a stretch play. When the Redskins began the game with a fake end-around to Jabar Gaffney — and followed it with a real one by Donte Stallworth — it was almost as if they were saying: We're going to have to do this with smoke-and-mirrors, folks. We really don't have offense.



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Buffalo's Drayton Florence, (left) and George Wilson celebrate Wilson's interception of a John Beck pass during the second half of Sunday's loss in Toronto. Beck was intercepted twice in his second start.

And the events of the afternoon bore that out. The Redskins made just 10 first downs, gained a mere 178 yards and, until the end, never drove past the Buffalo 16 (and only then thanks to the aforementioned dropped snap by Ryan Fitzpatrick).

On defense, meanwhile, despite enjoying fairly good health, they continued to grope blindly for ways to stop the opposing offense. Missed tackles, including a grievous whiff by Rocky McIntosh on Fred Jackson's 46-yard catch-and-run just before halftime, also remained a big concern.

"You see guys working every day in practice and doing what they can to get better," Brian Orakpo said. "Hard work just isn't paying off for us right now. That's the frustrating part."

Let's face it, the Bills, much of the time, looked to be toying with the Redskins. But then, what would you expect? On this day, the Redskins were an NFL team only by the broadest definition. They played more like they belonged in that other league, the one with the 110-yard field and 12 players on a side. Shanahan sure could have used that 12th man Sunday.

EXPANDED REDSKINS COVERAGE:
WASHINGTONTIMES.COM/SPORTS/FOOTBALL

“We got beat down. I stopped looking at the scoreboard. It was frustrating to not be able to get some things going defensively. I felt like we knew what was coming and still couldn’t stop them.”

— Cornerback DeAngelo Hall

BILLS 23, REDSKINS 0

Errors abound as defense pushed around

Tackling, coverage and penalties were a recipe for defeat

By JAY SKURSKI

SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON TIMES

TORONTO | Brian Orakpo didn't have much of an answer for just what's happened to the Washington Redskins during the team's losing streak, which reached three games Sunday with a 23-0 no-show against the Buffalo Bills in the Rogers Centre.

"It's just a blur right now," Orakpo said. "I don't know. I'm at a loss for words. I really thought we were prepared. I really felt like we needed this game to stay in the race. I mean, we're not technically out of it, but this is just devastating. I don't know. It's just frustrating. I'm very disappointed and it hurts."

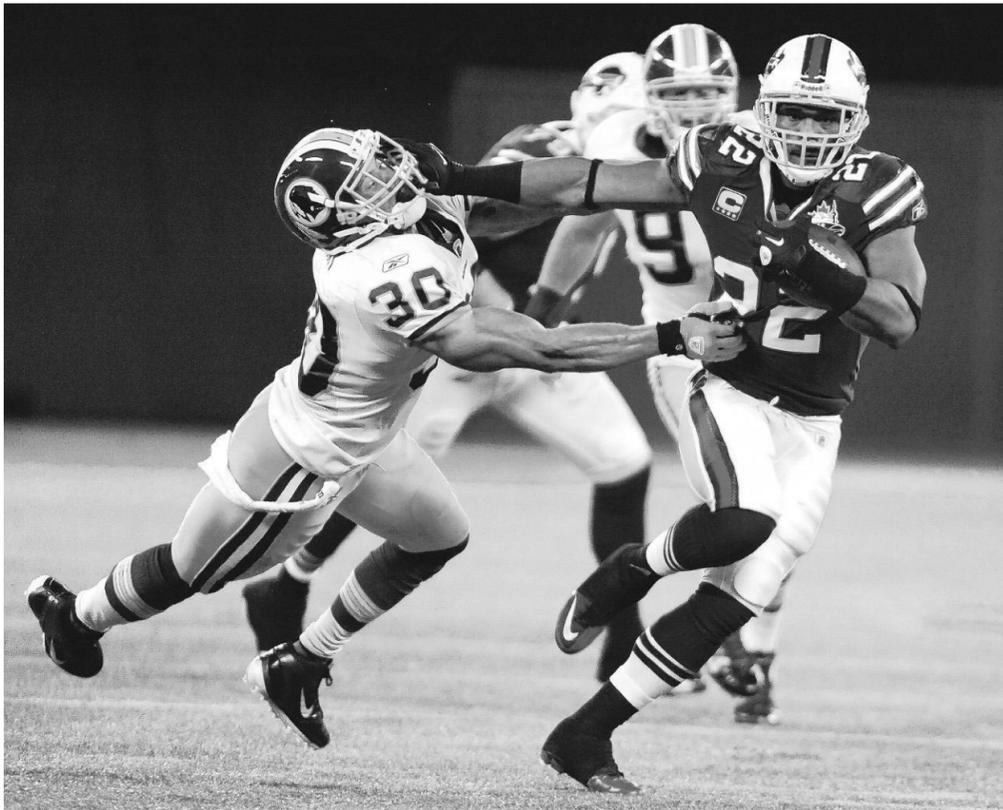
The few defensive bright spots Orakpo and his defensive teammates were able to produce Sunday were greatly outweighed by their lapses. The Redskins were hurt by a deadly trio: missed tackles, blown coverages and inopportune penalties.

Washington gave up eight plays of 10-plus yards in the first half alone. The Redskins finished the game by giving up 12 such big plays.

"We got beat down. I stopped looking at the scoreboard," cornerback DeAngelo Hall said. "It was frustrating to not be able to get some things going defensively. I felt like we knew what was coming and still couldn't stop them."

Bills running back Fred Jackson had gains of 46, 43 and 24 yards by himself, finishing with 194 all-purpose yards (including 120 rushing).

Frustrations came to a head early in the second half for the Redskins, when Fox television cameras caught Hall and veteran linebacker London



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Buffalo running back Fred Jackson finished with 194 total yards, including 120 yards rushing on 26 carries.

Fletcher in a confrontation on the sidelines.

"Everybody was frustrated. That's what happens in the heat of the battle. Tempers start to flare up a little bit and cooler heads will prevail. I was out there trying to be the cool head for once in my life," Hall said.

After the game, safety LaRon Landry took the blame for the argument, saying it was "on him," but declining further comment.

On the previous play, the Redskins

had given up a 15-yard touchdown pass from Bills quarterback Ryan Fitzpatrick to tight end Scott Chandler, the pair's second of the game. Fletcher was trailing Chandler on the play, but there appeared to be a communications breakdown in the secondary.

That wasn't the only problem on the drive, as Jackson ripped off a 43-yard run on the Bills' first play from scrimmage in the second half.

"You're [ticked] off, you're mad and you don't know what went

wrong," Orakpo said.

Among the other missteps for the Redskins included when linebacker Rocky McIntosh blew an open-field tackle on Jackson on a play near the end of the second quarter. McIntosh was the last line of defense, and after he whiffed Jackson went for 46 yards down the left sideline until he was run out of bounds by safety Oshiomogho Atogwe. That play ultimately set up a field goal by Rian Lindell that put Washington in a 13-0 hole at halftime.

Earlier in the half, cornerback Josh Wilson was whistled for a 34-yard pass interference penalty after making contact with Bills receiver C.J. Spiller on a deep route. That penalty led to a 37-yard field goal.

"I think we're still playing hard defensively," Orakpo said. "I think guys are still flying around. This is the National Football League. Look at the average points that Buffalo puts on people and the points they put up. I thought we did a great job as far as trying to stay in the game."

Even when the Redskins did something positive on defense, it was wasted by a woebegone offensive attack.

Orakpo's recovery of a Fitzpatrick fumble early in the second quarter set up the Redskins with a first down at the Bills' 31-yard line, but the drive was set back by sacks and a 49-yard field goal attempt by Graham Gano was blocked.

Later in the first half, Fletcher intercepted Fitzpatrick in the Redskins' end zone, preventing a touchdown, but the offense went three-and-out and gave the ball right back.

The Bills held the ball for 34:51, staying on the field by converting 50 percent of their third downs (7 of 14). Defensive lineman Barry Cofield didn't think fatigue was a factor, though.

"You love to be on the field. You love to play, but you just hope to play well," he said. "You hope to play at a high level, and that's what we didn't do."

The Redskins' pass rush, which was tied for first in the NFL with 21 sacks entering the game, got to Fitzpatrick just two times, as the Buffalo quarterback was adept at getting the ball out of his hands quickly. Orakpo finished with five tackles, with no sacks or pressures, while defensive end Adam Carriker made just one solo tackle.

BILLS 23, REDSKINS 0

Week in and week out, Fletcher remains steady force amid storm

By JAY SKURSKI

SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON TIMES

TORONTO | London Fletcher has been around the NFL long enough to know that games like Sunday's are going to happen.

That's why he took a calm, measured approach to his postgame session with the media following the Washington Redskins' 23-0 loss to the Buffalo Bills at Rogers Centre.

"I think everybody's frustrated we've lost three consecutive games," the 14th-year linebacker said. "We haven't played well enough to win any of the games."

Fletcher might be the only one who can't say that about himself after Sunday's effort. Facing his former team, he turned in one of the most inspired performances on either side of the ball, racking up 20 tackles (12 solo), a half sack, two quarterback hits, an interception and a pass defensed. He now has 43 tackles in the Redskins' seven games.

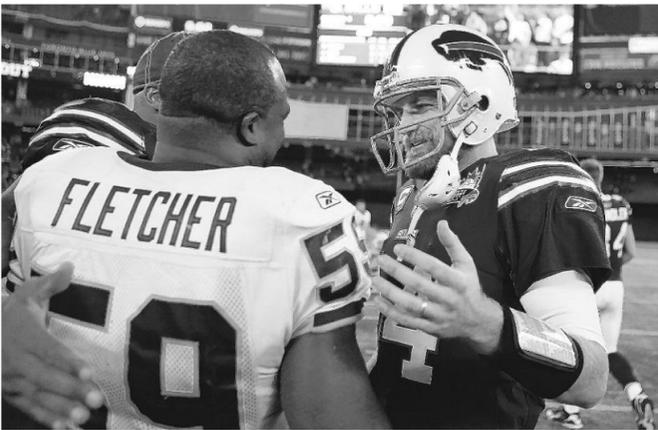
For a player who was questionable to play because of a hamstring injury, it was just the bounce-back performance he needed following a miserable showing in the Week 7 loss to Carolina.

"He played phenomenal," fellow linebacker Brian Orakpo said. "Fletcher is a leader of this team. He played a great game against his former team."

Fletcher spent five seasons with the Bills from 2002 to 2006. Despite starting all 80 games during that stretch, Buffalo let him go after the '06 season, believing his best football was behind him.

He has shown during his first four seasons in Washington (at least 87 tackles in each) that's not the case. That he played Sunday after dealing with an injury all week should come as no surprise — he appeared in his 215th straight game and made his 170th straight start.

The filled stat sheets mean little



ASSOCIATED PRESS

While the Redskins' season swirls around him, veteran linebacker London Fletcher, shown here meeting with Bills quarterback Ryan Fitzpatrick after Sunday's game, continues to play at a high level.

after a loss, however.

"Defensively, we don't want to give up touchdowns," he said. "I think we had good practices, good preparation, but it takes more than just that. That's the good foundation you need in order to give yourself a chance to be successful on Sundays. — Hopefully it just carries over on game day. It didn't happen for us [Sunday]."

Fletcher had his rough moments, too. He was in coverage on both of the touchdown passes caught by Bills tight end Scott Chandler. Quarterback Ryan Fitzpatrick floated the ball over Fletcher's head in the first quarter for a 20-yard touchdown. On the Bills' first drive of the second half, Chandler beat Fletcher on a post route for another touchdown, this one gave the Bills a commanding 20-0 lead.

After that third-quarter play, the Fox television cameras caught Fletcher having an animated discussion with cornerback DeAngelo Hall on the sideline.

Fletcher, though, refused to point

any fingers after the game.

"I wouldn't agree that my teammates didn't play with passion. ... I don't think anybody's out there not giving effort," he said. "That's not the case. They made more plays than us, and that's pretty much the bottom line."

"I don't know what was going on, but it's just frustration. I think guys care. Guys want to win and want to do well so when things aren't going right tempers can flare. Especially in a game like this, competition and emotions run high. That just comes with it," defensive lineman Barry Cofield said.

Redskins coach Mike Shanahan agreed, saying, "Every once in a while, it happens in the emotions of a football game. Sometimes, when there's a missed assignment, some guys get very emotional during the game."

Fletcher stopped short of calling the loss rock bottom.

"I think we can bounce back from it," he said. "It's going to take effort from everybody."

REDSKINS

From page R1

great things," right guard Chris Chester said, despite Sunday's evidence to the contrary. "I think it's just all putting it together consistently. We have great work throughout the week. I think it just comes down to executing on Sunday."

The Bills entered the game with four sacks on the season but feasted when Washington fell behind and abandoned the run.

"It sucks, straight pass rush," fill-in left tackle Sean Locklear said. "They're not worried about anything but getting to the quarterback."

John Beck didn't help the cause much. On some plays, he held the ball too long. On others, he didn't have enough time to set and scan the field.

He finished 20-of-33 for 208 yards. He threw two interceptions in the second half. One was behind tight end Fred Davis, deflected off by trailing safety George Wilson and picked. The second was a deep throw on which Donte Stallworth fell in pursuit of the ball. Safety Jairus Byrd kept his feet and caught the pass without trouble.

"This is a tricky one to give answers for," Beck said. "I'm trying to figure it out myself."

Washington's defense wasn't a big help, either. Yes, London Fletcher picked off a pass and Brian Orakpo recovered a fumble — turnovers that eluded the Redskins in the previous week's loss to Carolina — but the group appeared to blow coverages on both of Buffalo's touchdown passes.

Bills quarterback Ryan Fitzpatrick hit tight end Scott Chandler for touchdowns of 20 and 15 yards. Fletcher raised his arms in frustration after both, as if to ask who blew their assignment.

The Redskins now face an unraveling season. The most shocking part, perhaps, is how far they have regressed.

“We have plenty of talent, plenty of ability and some guys that can do some great things. I think it's just all putting it together consistently. We have great work throughout the week. I think it just comes down to executing on Sunday.”

— Guard Chris Chester

BILLS 23, REDSKINS 0

Washington	0	0	0	0-0
Buffalo	7	6	7	3-23

First Quarter

Buf-Chandler 20 pass from Fitzpatrick (Lindell kick), 5:11.

Second Quarter

Buf-FG Lindell 37, 8:45.
Buf-FG Lindell 44, :00.

Third Quarter

Buf-Chandler 15 pass from Fitzpatrick (Lindell kick), 10:56.

Fourth Quarter

Buf-FG Lindell 41, 3:26.
A-51,579.

	Was	Buf
First downs	10	17
Total Net Yards	178	390
Rushes-yards	12-26	33-138
Passing	152	252
Punt Returns	2-32	3-22
Kickoff Returns	3-63	0-0
Interceptions Ret.	1-0	2-34
Comp-Att-Int	20-33-2	21-27-1
Sacked-Yards Lost	9-56	2-10
Punts	6-46.5	3-45.0
Fumbles-Lost	1-0	1-1
Penalties-Yards	3-54	6-35
Time of Possession	25:09	34:51

Leaders

RUSHING — Washington, Torain 8-14, Beck 3-10, Stallworth 1-2. Buffalo, Jackson 26-120, B.Smith 4-14, Fitzpatrick 3-4.

PASSING — Washington, Beck 20-33-2-208. Buffalo, Fitzpatrick 21-27-1-262.

RECEIVING — Washington, Davis 8-94, Gaffney 4-40, Helu 3-20, Austin 2-22, Hankerson 1-23, Torain 1-6, Young 1-3. Buffalo, St.Johnson 6-57, Nelson 4-47, Jackson 3-74, B.Smith 3-18, Chandler 2-35, Spiller 2-9, Roosevelt 1-22.

MISSED FIELD GOAL — SWashington, Gano 49 (BK). Buffalo, Lindell 44 (WR).

THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Their fast start might as well have been a different team in a different season. Their search for answers intensifies.

"We'll go back," Shanahan said, "get some young guys some more experience and hopefully get better for next week."

REDSKINS SCHEDULE

WEEK 1



vs. Giants
W, 28-14

WEEK 2



vs. Cardinals
W, 22-21

WEEK 3



at Cowboys
L, 18-16

WEEK 4



at Rams
W, 17-10

WEEK 6



vs. Eagles
L, 20-13

WEEK 7



at Panthers
L, 33-20

WEEK 8



at Bills (Toronto)
L, 23-0

WEEK 9



vs. 49ers
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

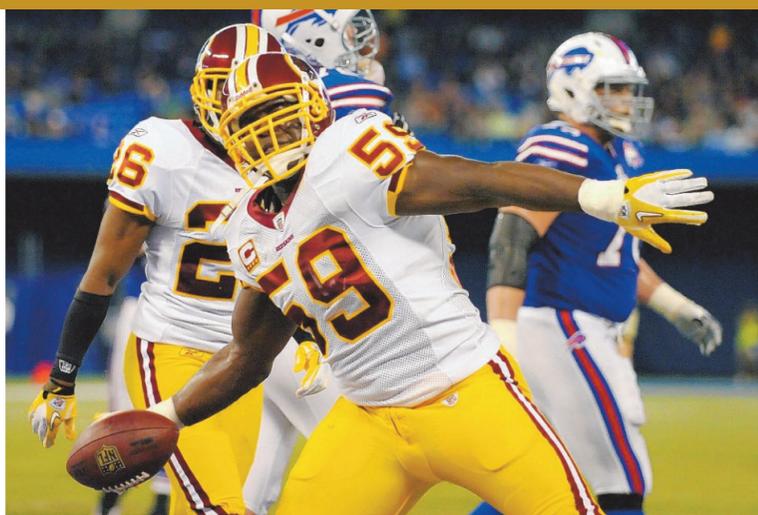


at Eagles
Sun., Jan. 1

BILLS 23, REDSKINS 0: QUARTER-BY-QUARTER



FIRST QUARTER: Bills tight end Scott Chandler slips the ball inside the pylon to score a touchdown as Redskins linebacker London Fletcher defends.



SECOND QUARTER: Redskins linebacker London Fletcher unleashes an emotional spike to celebrate his interception. The play was one of the few bright spots for the Redskins in the first half, and things only got worse after that.



THIRD QUARTER: Bills running back C.J. Spiller found himself surrounded by Redskins defenders including Perry Riley (56), Lorenzo Alexander (97) and DeJon Gomes (24).



FOURTH QUARTER: Bills safety Jairus Byrd intercepts a John Beck pass. Buffalo's defense kept Beck under wraps throughout, sacking him nine times and intercepting him twice.

1 The first look at the Redskins offense without injured back Tim Hightower and injured receiver Santana Moss was about as expected — not very pretty. Washington went nowhere on its first two drives. The Bills used their second drive to march down the field for a touchdown, with Ryan Fitzpatrick hitting Scott Chandler with a 20-yard scoring pass. But so as not to be a total downer only one quarter in, there was a highlight for the Redskins. Rookie receiver Leonard Hankerson, the third-round pick involved in some controversy on his first play of the season in the loss to Carolina, hauled in his first career reception. Quarterback John Beck hit Hankerson for 23 yards with about two minutes to play in the quarter. That accounted for a major chunk of the 57 yards Washington gained in the quarter. Beck later overthrew Hankerson badly when he tried to connect with him on a bomb.

2 Finding a highlight in this quarter would require considerable license, more commonly known as fiction. When a team is outgained 124-4, as the Redskins were, highlights are really hard to find. Well, there's this: Buffalo was only able to increase its lead to 13-0 at halftime on a pair of Rian Lindell field goals. And the Redskins' London Fletcher did intercept Fitzpatrick to kill a Bills drive, the first "red zone" pick Fitzpatrick has thrown this season. Of course, after running it himself on first down, Beck was sacked on second down. The Bills sacked Beck four times in the first half. That's not good under any circumstances. It is particularly bad when you consider the Bills had only four sacks in six games coming into Sunday. With two weapons out in Hightower and Moss and two starting linemen also hurt, Beck had to be a magician to make anything happen. But he's not.

KEY PLAY

The second half starts. A big defensive series for the Redskins and who knows? Despite their offensive ineptitude in the first half, maybe they can get back in it.

Nope. Fred Jackson goes for 37 yards on a rush.

Shortly thereafter, the Bills score again on the second Ryan Fitzpatrick to Scott Chandler hookup of the day.

The momentum stayed with the Bills, thanks to Jackson's big run to start the half. The way the Redskins' offense was struggling, this puppy was as good as over with them down by 20 points.

3 Who knew the first two quarters would actually look good compared to the third? If there was a fiery halftime speech delivered, Redskins coach Mike Shanahan needs to tear it up and not use it again. Washington did pretty much nothing in the third quarter. OK, that's what Washington did in the first half. It didn't improve on that in the third quarter. Beck was sacked twice more, bringing the total for the game to six. Washington collected only two first downs in the quarter. Not once did it threaten to score. Still within range, the Redskins could have made things at least interesting with a good start to the quarter. Instead, the Redskins let Fred Jackson run for 37 yards on the first play of the half. Buffalo eventually went in for its second touchdown, another Fitzpatrick-to-Chandler pass, to build a 20-point lead that must have seemed like 200-0 given the Redskins' struggles on offense.

4 It just kept getting worse for the Redskins, who tried to avoid being the first NFL team coached by Shanahan to be shut out. They failed, thus ending Shanahan's nonshutout streak at 266 games, which is more than 16 full seasons. Beck was intercepted twice in the quarter and he spent a whole lot of time getting knocked down. Washington allowed nine sacks, tied for the most in team history. The last came very late, when Washington was within range of at least a field goal. It set up a fourth-down play and the Redskins went for the touchdown. Beck's pass went incomplete. For the day, Washington was outgained more than 2-1 (390 yards to 178). Ryan Torain led the team in rushing. His total? Fourteen yards. The Redskins allowed Jackson to rush for 120 yards and Fitzpatrick to pass for 262. It was a day that started ugly and remained that way throughout.

REDSKINS NOTES

Patchwork offensive line's struggles on full display

By Rich Campbell
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

BY THE NUMBERS

0: That's more than just the Redskins' point total Sunday. It's how many times Redskins coach Mike Shanahan had a team shut out in 266 previous games as a head coach. Washington was last shut out on Dec. 27, 2009 vs. Dallas.

4: That's how many sacks Buffalo had on the season coming into the game. That's also how many sacks the Bills had in the first half against the Redskins.

6: Washington has now lost to Buffalo six straight times, dating to 1993. The last time the Redskins beat the Bills? It was in Super Bowl XXVI.

9: That's the number of sacks allowed by the Redskins, tied for the most in team history.

TORONTO | Ever since left guard Kory Lichtensteiger and left tackle Trent Williams went down with leg injuries against Philadelphia on Oct. 16, the Washington Redskins' offensive line has struggled to do much of anything right.

The unit's problems were on full display in Sunday's 23-0 loss to Buffalo. The Bills entered the game with only four sacks but had nine for 56 yards Sunday.

"Individual breakdowns and they blitzed a couple times, so it was the whole group," left tackle Sean Locklear said.

Each lineman, it seemed, took his turn, and the Redskins' offense crumbled as a result.

Meanwhile, the Bills rotated defensive linemen and stayed fresh. The emphasis they put on improving their pass rush during the bye week was evident.

"That would be the biggest understatement of the year," Bills coach Chan Gailey said. "They gave such a great effort, did a good job of working technique and getting back to fundamentals. You've got to depend on the fundamentals when you come back off a bye week. They did a great job of that."

The Redskins' technique breakdowns were everywhere. Linemen were pushed back into the pocket, disrupting quarterback John Beck's



Redskins quarterback John Beck was under siege all afternoon as Buffalo racked up nine sacks. The Bills entered the game with four.

reads. After a while, Beck seemed to sense pressure before it actually arrived.

"I want to go back and see on tape how I could have helped that cause," Beck said. "There were some that were probably on me there. Part of protection is on the quarterback. It's my job to get the ball out of my hands."

Even the running backs played a part. Rookie running back Roy Helu

ran out of the backfield on third-and-16 in the second quarter instead of staying in to block. Free safety Jairus Byrd blitzed off the edge right past Helu and was unblocked en route to his sack.

First catch for Hankerson

Rookie receiver Leonard Hankerson recorded his first NFL reception in the first half. On third-and-8 from the Redskins' 28-yard line, he ran an in cut against the Bills' zone and caught John Beck's throw for 23 yards. It was his only catch of the game.

Hankerson, a third-round pick last April, spun the ball after the play in celebration. It was a stark contrast to his first NFL play. Last Sunday against Carolina, he ran a different route than Beck expected, and the ball was intercepted. Hankerson took criticism from fans on Twitter and later responded using his account on the microblogging site.

Extra points

A Redskins field goal try was blocked for the third time this season when Graham Gano attempted a 49-yarder early in the second quarter. Buffalo defensive end Spencer Johnson surged up the middle and got his hand up to knock the ball out of the air. It came seven plays after Redskins linebacker Brian Orakpo recovered a fumble at the Bills' 31.

WEEK 9 REDSKINS VS. 49ERS



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

What to watch: First-year coach Jim Harbaugh got the 49ers off to a fast start that resulted in a three-game lead in the woeful NFC West.

- They boast one of the NFL's best rushing attacks. Frank Gore entered Week 8 with 541 yards, good for eighth in the league. He gained 134 yards Sunday against the Browns. Meanwhile, Harbaugh has minimized quarterback's Alex Smith's chances for mistakes. San Francisco entered Sunday's game with fewer passes attempted than any team, but Smith had 8 TDs, 2 interceptions and a 95.2 rating.
- Cornerback Carlos Rogers returns to Landover. The ninth overall pick in 2005 signed with the 49ers in the offseason. He has three interceptions this season, including one returned for a score.

Jim Harbaugh

