

Redskins Legacy: Redskins Shock Giants In 2011

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Mike Richman
Redskins Historian
RedskinsHistorian.com



On Sunday, the Redskins will face the Giants in the Meadowlands with nothing to play for but pride.

The circumstances were similar for the 4-9 Redskins then they visited the 7-6 Giants at MetLife Stadium with three games remaining in the 2011 season. Only then, the Giants were in playoff contention.

The Redskins surprised quite a few people that day, pulling off a 23-10 win that embarrassed the Giants in more ways than one.

It marked the first time since 1999 that the Redskins had beaten their NFC East rivals twice in the same season. Giants quarterback Eli Manning threw three interceptions, the most he has ever tallied in 20 career games against Washington.




Plus, safety Antrel Rolle had to eat his words after saying a few days before the game that his Giants would beat the Redskins 99 out of 100 times.



The day after the game, Redskins quarterback Rex Grossman said his squad felt disrespected by Rolle's remark.

"I mean, how can you take that comment any other way," he said on Sirius XM Radio. "I mean, 99 out of 100 times they're going to beat us? And we beat them two in a row this year. I'm not going to the casino with him anytime soon."

Grossman showed great poise and leadership skills that day, but the game began not to his liking. He threw interceptions on two of the Redskins' first three possessions, which were sandwiched around a 36-yard Graham Gano field goal that gave Washington a 3-0 lead.

But the 10th-year quarterback found his touch on a 13-play, 82-yard march that ended with his 20-yard scoring toss to receiver **Santana Moss**  early in the second period. Moss ran a deep out pattern on the play, and Grossman hit him in stride as he got both feet in bounds before stepping out of the end zone.




Backs **Roy Helu Jr.** , Evan Royster and **Darrel Young**  carried the load on the ground.

The Redskins' defense, which kept the Giants' offense off-balance most of the game, then came up with a huge play. Manning's pass hit linebacker London Fletcher's helmet and was intercepted by diving safety Oshiomogho Atogwe, who returned it 26 yards to the Giants' 41.

Helu Jr., Royster and Young again grinded out yardage, while Grossman's 16-yard pass to receiver Jabar Gaffney (6 catches, 85 yards) created a first-and-goal at the 6. Young then burst up the middle for his first career touchdown.

Gano's conversion created a 17-0 game midway through the second quarter.

The Giants kicked a field goal just before halftime, but Manning continued his erratic ways on the first possession of the second half, with cornerback **DeAngelo Hall**  making a gorgeous one-handed, over-the-shoulder interception and returning it 26 yards to the Giants' 34. The play set up Gano's 43-yard field goal.

The Giants' Lawrence Tynes missed a 44-yarder on the next possession, and Gano's third field goal, a 25-yarder, created a 23-3 game early in the fourth period.

Manning subsequently threw his third interception, this one into the arms of safety Josh Wilson in the end zone, prompting the Giants' embattled quarterback to raise his arms in disbelief.

Soon after came a sequence that was emblematic of New York's woes.

On second and goal from the 4, Manning found receiver Hakeem Nicks in the end zone, but the ball went through his hands. (It was the second touchdown pass Nicks dropped that day.) Manning then completed a short throw to running back D.J. Ware that was ruled a touchdown after the ball broke the plane of the goal line.



But the Redskins challenged the call, and replays showed that Ware bobbled the ball at the goal line before Wilson tackled him in the field of play. A holding call pushed the ball to the 12, and on fourth down, rookie linebacker **Ryan Kerrigan** sacked Manning for a 13-yard loss.

Grossman, who completed 15-of-24 passes for 185 yards with a touchdown and two interceptions, steered an offense that converted 8-of-15 third downs against a strong defensive front. He explained how he maintained his confidence after an inauspicious start.

"I think every quarterback when you do have a couple of interceptions early, if you weren't aware of it, you'd be lying," he told the NFL Network. "You know exactly how many interceptions you have all game. But really it shouldn't change the way you read the defense and go through your progression. And the offensive coordinator, Kyle Shanahan, and (head coach) Mike (Shanahan), they allowed me to still go out and play well and keep calling the plays that are a little aggressive. We were able to do that and put some points on the board."

The loss left the Giants at 7-7. They won their last two regular-season games, earned a wild card spot, and captured four postseason games, including a 21-17 win over the Patriots in Super Bowl XLVI.

The situation was eerily similar to 2007, when Washington was the last team to beat the Giants before they marched through the playoffs as a wild card team and beat New England, 17-14, in Super Bowl XLII.

Mike Richman is the author of [The Redskins Encyclopedia](#) and the [Washington Redskins Football Vault](#). He hosts a podcast called "Burgundy & Gold Flashback." His web site is redskinshistorian.com. Check out his Facebook [Friend](#) and [Fan](#) pages and follow him on [Twitter](#).

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