

# Redskins Legacy: RG3 Sparks Win Over Bucs

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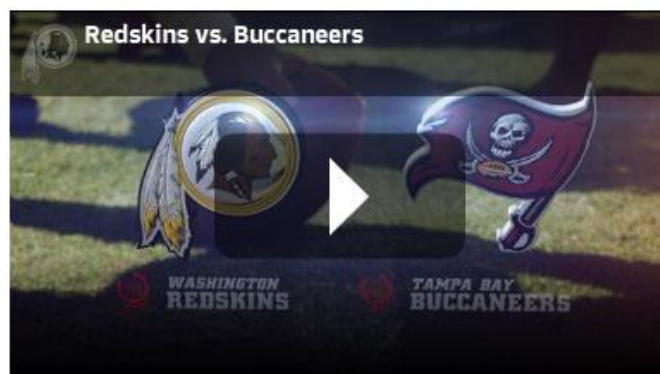
Since the late 1990s, the Washington Redskins and Tampa Bay Buccaneers have engaged in a mini-rivalry, despite playing in different divisions. They've split their past 12 meetings, 11 of which have been decided by seven or fewer points, with three one-point games and one victory apiece in playoff clashes.

True to form, their last encounter on Sept. 30, 2012, was a thriller. After three earlier misses, Billy Cundiff hit a 41-yard field goal with three seconds left for a 24-22 Redskins win.

The victory at Raymond James Stadium in Tampa, Fla., improved the Redskins to 2-2 and marked their first regular-season win in Tampa Bay in nearly two decades. They beat the Bucs on the road in an NFC wild card game in the 2005 season.

The 2012 game didn't have to be so close. After Tampa Bay opened the scoring with a field goal, the Redskins scored three consecutive touchdowns to take an 18-point lead, only to relinquish it late in the fourth quarter.

Their first touchdown capped a 75-yard drive late in the first quarter. Rookie quarterback **Robert Griffin III** was inches from scoring but got hit just before the goal line and fumbled. But his teammate, wide receiver **Pierre Garçon**, recovered the ball in the end zone.



A few minutes later, Redskins cornerback **DeAngelo Hall** stepped in front of All-Pro receiver Vincent Jackson for an interception that gave Washington possession on the Bucs' 35. Six plays later, Griffin III ran five yards up the middle for a score, tying him with Joe Theismann and Eddie LeBaron for the most rushing touchdowns by a Redskins quarterback in one season: four.

The Redskins scored again on their next possession. Rookie running back **Alfred Morris** – who had 113 yards rushing on the day – found a gaping hole and ran 39 yards for a 21-3 lead.

Once in the end zone, he did what is now customary when he scores: a baseball swing with his fists.

Tampa Bay kicked a field goal shortly before halftime and began to mount a serious rally toward the end of the third quarter. The Bucs scored touchdowns on back-to-back possessions sandwiched around a 31-yard miss by Cundiff to create a 21-19 game (they missed a two-point conversion attempt on their second touchdown).

Both offenses stalled for the rest of the quarter until Connor Barth's 47-yard field goal with 1:47 left put Tampa Bay up, 22-21.

Griffin III then showed why the Redskins picked him second overall in that year's NFL Draft.

With the ball on the Redskins' 20, he passed to receiver **Santana Moss** for 15 yards and tight end Fred Davis for another 20. Two plays later, he scrambled around right end for 15 yards to the 26. After a spike, a false start penalty and a 7-yard completion to Moss, the Redskins faced a 3<sup>rd</sup> and 8 on the 24 with seven seconds left.

Cundiff then redeemed himself for his horrid day, but it was tense for a moment. His kick hooked from his right and snuck just inside the left goalpost for the win.

Griffin III, who completed 26-of-35 passes for 323 yards in a dazzling performance, looked cool and in control on the final drive although his headset wasn't operating properly.

He spoke to reporters afterward about the game-winning 80-yard march, citing a remark made by actor Gene Hackman in the football comedy movie "The Replacements."

"You try to rise to the occasion," Griffin III said. "In the movie, 'The Replacements,' they said great players want the ball in their hands when it's crunch time.' So it's funny that I just watched that movie, but it's also funny that that's how it is. That's how it really is, and it's true. You want the ball in your hands. When something has to happen, you make it happen, and that's what we did."

Redskins coach Mike Shanahan gushed over Griffin III's performance.

"First off, I thought he played his best game of the year yesterday – very poised," Shanahan said. "I thought he handled himself extremely well. (He) made some plays that you always want a quarterback to make. A lot of times, they can't make those plays this early in their career. I'm talking about the two-minute drive, some play action passes, quarterback keeps that I thought were exceptional."

That week, Griffin III was named NFL Offensive Rookie of the Month for September.

Through the first four games, he completed 86-of-124 passes (69.4 percent) for 1,070 yards, with four touchdowns and a passer rating of 103.2.

On Sunday, he'll once again lead the Redskins' offense against the Buccaneers, this time at FedExField.

*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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