



2007 WASHINGTON REDSKINS

Record: 9-7

3rd Place – NFC East (Wild Card playoff team)

Playoffs: 1st Round loss to Seattle

Head Coach: Joe Gibbs

2007

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|----------|---|----------|-----------------|
| Sept. 9 | W | 16-13 OT | Miami |
| Sept. 17 | W | 20-12 | at Philadelphia |
| Sept. 23 | L | 17-24 | NY Giants |
| Oct. 7 | W | 34-3 | Detroit |
| Oct. 14 | L | 14-17 | at Green Bay |
| Oct. 21 | W | 21-19 | Arizona |
| Oct. 28 | L | 7-52 | at New England |
| Nov. 4 | W | 23-20 OT | at NY Jets |
| Nov. 11 | L | 25-33 | Philadelphia |
| Nov. 18 | L | 23-28 | at Dallas |
| Nov. 25 | L | 13-19 | at Tampa Bay |
| Dec. 2 | L | 16-17 | Buffalo |
| Dec. 6 | W | 24-16 | Chicago |
| Dec. 16 | W | 22-10 | at NY Giants |
| Dec. 23 | W | 33-21 | at Minnesota |
| Jan. 1 | W | 27-6 | Dallas |

9-7

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| | | [Playoffs] | |
| Jan. 5 | L | 14-35 | at Seattle |

Never a Dull Moment for the Redskins in 2007

Drama, drama and more drama. So it went for the Redskins during a 2007 season that carried elements of a Hollywood script, or a riveting novel, for that matter. As the most erudite sports historians would agree, it was a unique year for any professional team.

All the while, the Redskins and their fans rode an emotional roller coaster as the burgundy and gold endured one type of adversity after another. Repeated heartbreaking losses, multiple injuries to key players, embarrassing coaching blunders, and something so unimaginable and unprecedented in NFL history, the murder of safety Sean Taylor, the team's best player and the face of the franchise for years to come, all befell the Redskins in 2007.

While the death of Taylor was so tragic, the season was also one of triumph. Led by a reserve quarterback who hadn't started an NFL game in a *decade*, Todd Collins, the once written-off Redskins found the will and determination to win their final four games, finish 9-7 and reach postseason play as an NFC Wild Card team. A 35-14 loss to Seattle ended their magical run, but the remarkable season consisted of one more compelling chapter.

Three days after the loss to Seattle, the Redskins' Hall of Fame coach, Joe Gibbs, called it quits with a season left on his five-year contract. His resignation took many by surprise, including Redskins owner Dan Snyder, but the 67-year-old coach looked relieved to be retiring after enduring a grueling stretch.

The Redskins' long and storied history consists of many more statistically successful seasons, three of which have ended with Super Bowl wins. But this one was storied in a special way. No Redskins team was ever more resilient than the 2007 squad, which redefined the word resilience, in fact.

"To be in a hole the way we were this year, everything that happened, the tough losses, the brutal disappointments that we had, the team rallied at the end of the year," Gibbs said at his parting press conference on Jan. 8, 2008. "The coaching staff deserves a lot of credit, but the players' attitude, their character ... it bodes well for a bright future. We're in a position today, as opposed to four years ago ... bright things are ahead, we certainly have a lot of things in place."

Defensive end Andre Carter: "We just kept plugging away, we believed in each other, coach kept believing in us. To a certain degree, there was always a remedy for the predicament as far as the losses that we had. We just had to find an antidote. We stuck together and kept on rolling."

Taylor's Passing Jolts Redskins Nation

The murder of Sean Taylor not only hit the Redskins hard, but it shook the team's loyal fan base, which responded with an outpouring of grief.

From the candlelight vigils at Redskins Park and FedExField, to the makeshift memorials at the practice facility and the stadium, people came from across the Washington area and beyond to pray for, pay tribute to and say so long to their star player. Streams of Redskin fans, some dressed in Taylor's No. 21 jersey, stopped by to leave flowers, photos, balloons, Teddy Bears and signs in remembrance of him. A plethora of fans also e-mailed the Redskins expressing condolences. The despair was palpable, for many supporters of the burgundy and gold felt like they had lost one of their own although they had never met Taylor.



At The Quarterback Club Player of the Year dinner, where Taylor was honored posthumously as the Redskins' co-player of the year, his father, Pedro Taylor, thanked Redskin fans for their emotional support after his son was shot and killed at his home in Miami.

"We have been so, so blessed," Pedro Taylor said. "The prayers, everything that you have done for us, we are appreciative."

He added: "Sean said he had 11 of the best guys in front of him, 22 surrounding him, but he had 53 great guys on the team, another 10 on the practice squad. He had coaches and players. He had a staff that loved him. We say thank you from the bottom of our hearts. We love you, burgundy and gold, hail to the Redskins."

Tragedy struck the Redskins in other ways in 2007. Two young former Redskins, Justin Skaggs and Kevin Mitchell, passed away before the season. Skaggs, a reserve receiver who played in Washington in 2001 and 2002, succumbed to brain cancer at age 28. Kevin Mitchell, a linebacker from 2000 to 2003, died of cardiac arrest in April 2007 at age 36. Former linebacker LaVar Arrington, one of the most popular Redskins of the 21st century, nearly died from a motorcycle accident. And the father of Redskins cornerback Shawn Springs, former Dallas Cowboys running back Ron Springs, fell into a coma in October 2007. He had been suffering from diabetes.

"It was a tough season," said Thomas Clarke, a member of the Redskins' marching band and of the "Funky Four," dancers who perform at FedExField during games. "I was very disappointed and hurt when Sean Taylor died. I never had a chance to meet him, but you could just feel his love for the game, looking at him and looking at his dedication to football."