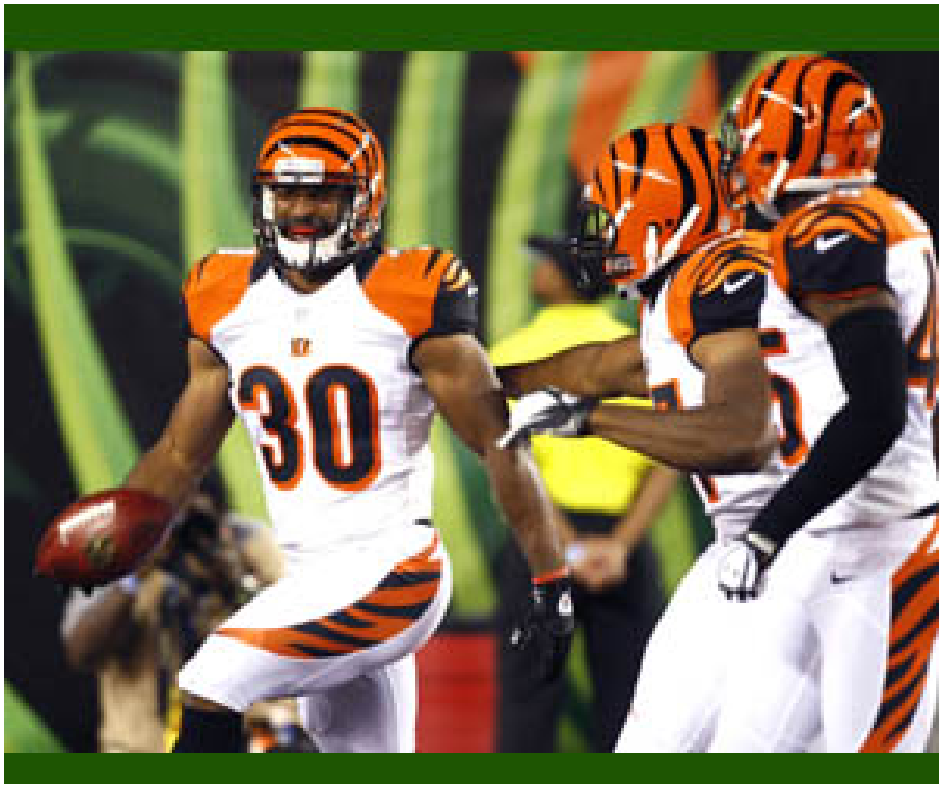

Bengals beat Redskins

LANDOVER, Md. (AP) -- Repeatedly, Robert Griffin III stayed down for an extra few seconds after absorbing one of the six sacks or other big hits that left his burgundy jersey and gold pants smeared with green grass stains.

After his Washington Redskins' 38-31 loss to the Cincinnati Bengals on Sunday, the rookie quarterback sounded a defiant tone.

"I don't know how many times I got hit, but I know I did get hit a lot," the Heisman Trophy winner said.

"The one thing I won't do personally is quit or play scared. I've never played scared in my life. So it doesn't matter how many times they hit me, I'm going to continue to get back up," he added. "Even if they have to cart me off the field, I'm going to get off that cart and walk away."

By the time Washington (1-2) and Griffin got going during his first regular-season NFL home game - serenaded by chants of "RG3! RG3!" from the stands - there was a 17-point deficit to overcome.

On the game's very first snap, the Bengals (2-1) lined up rookie receiver Mohamed Sanu behind center, and he promptly tossed a 73-yard touchdown to A.J. Green. On Washington's second play from scrimmage, left tackle Trent Williams went down with a right knee injury.

It wasn't until the Redskins' sixth possession that they managed to push the ball across midfield. Not until 31 seconds were left in the first half did Griffin direct the offense to any points - a field goal.

Yes, Griffin wound up completing 21 of 34 passes for 221 yards and a 3-yard touchdown toss to Santana Moss to help the Redskins come back to make it a game after trailing 24-7. He also ran 12 times for 85 yards, including a 2-yard TD run that brought the hosts within seven points with 3 1/2 minutes to go. Griffin didn't throw any interceptions, but he did lose one fumble.

"It's not a perfect scenario for a young guy, to be behind by that much and put him in that situation," Redskins coach Mike Shanahan said. "I thought he did an unbelievable job coming back in the second half. ... He's going to get better and better."

Well, that's looking at the bright side.

There are, of course, all sorts of problems for Shanahan to try to repair right now, not least of which is a defense that was thought to be a strength entering the season but has been rather problematic: The Redskins have allowed at least 30 points in each game.

Of particular concern is the pass defense, which gave up touchdown plays of 73, 59 and 48 yards.

"As a total group, coaches and players, we need to get it fixed and get it fixed fast or we're going to see ourselves continue to lose games in this fashion," linebacker Lorenzo Alexander said. "In years past, if our offense gave us 24 points, that was almost like a win for us. And now they're giving us 31, 32 points a game, so the defense really needs to tighten up and make some plays out there."

There also were some decisions that left the Redskins open to second-guessing.

They burned two timeouts sandwiched around one play during a long drive in the third quarter.

"Just bad clock management on our part," Griffin called it.

Then, on a fourth-and-1 at Cincinnati's 44, Shanahan was planning on keeping his offense out there to go for the first down. But when the Bengals called timeout, he changed his mind and punted. The Redskins nearly downed the ball deep in Cincinnati territory, but it was ruled a touchback - a call that Shanahan challenged. The call stayed the same, and the Redskins were left without any timeouts.

After what appeared to be a promising - for Griffin and his entire team - Week 1 victory at the New Orleans Saints, the Redskins have lost two consecutive games.

They've also lost seven in a row at home, dating to last season.

"The one thing I continue to tell myself and tell the team is: God doesn't put you through trials to see if you're going to fold. He sees how you're going to respond. For us it's about responding. We came out in the second half and we responded. We came out when we were down 38-24 and we responded," Griffin said.

"So now what are we going to do when we have two straight losses? We're going to respond - and I'll promise that."