

The Redskins vs. the dregs of the league (e.g. the Vikings)

As we saw Saturday, going up against a bottom-scraping ballclub can have its hazards.

As you watched the Irrelevant Bowl between the Redskins and Vikings, the following thought might have crossed your mind:

Have the Redskins ever played a 2-12 team before?

The answer, actually, is yes. In fact, Saturday was the third time since 1978, when the season was lengthened to 16 games, that the Redskins have met a club with that bad a record – or worse. The Redskins, I'm sorry to report, are now 1-2 in these games after their 33-26 loss to the Vikes. The details of the first two "classics":

- Dec. 13, 1981 – Redskins 38, Colts 14, at RFK Stadium. <http://bit.ly/sa7Gbe> In the next-to-last game of Joe Gibbs' first season, Washington faced a 1-13 Baltimore team that had won its opener, then lost 13 straight. The Redskins made it 14 straight, with Joe Theismann throwing for 339 yards and two touchdowns and John Riggins scoring from 8 and 14 yards out in the second quarter to break it open.

The Colts ended their skid the next week by beating the Patriots in one of the worst matchups in NFL history. (The Pats were 2-13 coming in.). That cost Baltimore the first pick in the draft, since it swept New England for its only two victories. The Pats wound up taking Texas DT Kenneth Sims No. 1, and the Colts settled for LB Johnnie Cooks at No. 2. Either of them, alas, could have selected OG Mike Munchak (eighth overall) or RB Marcus Allen (10th), both of whom went on to the Hall of Fame.

- Dec. 11, 1988 – Cowboys 24, Redskins 17, at RFK Stadium. <http://bit.ly/rE9HBj> Believe it or not, this was the last of Tom Landry's 270 wins as Dallas' coach. After the season, Jerry Jones bought the franchise and replaced him with Jimmy Johnson. The Cowboys were 2-12 when they arrived in D.C. that day, and the Redskins were all but out of playoff contention at 7-7. But Dallas got a huge game – the first of many huge games – from rookie wideout Michael Irvin, who caught three touchdown passes from Steve Pelluer (24, 61 and 12 yards), including the game-winner in the fourth quarter. TE Terry Orr had a 50-yard TD grab and a career-best 104 receiving yards for the Redskins, but it wasn't enough.

And now we have another lovely memory: Vikings 33, Redskins 26. Wonder how we'll look back on *that* abomination 20 or 30 years from now.

END