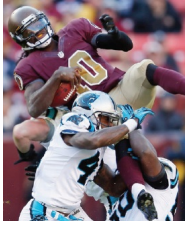


## Finishing finally becomes timely reality for hopeful Carolina Panthers

Written by Levi Johnson, Sports Editor  
Thursday, 08 November 2012 15:45 -

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Finishing finally became a reality for the hopeful Carolina Panthers!

Saddled with a 1-6 worksheet prior to their visit this past weekend to the area of our nation's capital to contest the Washington Redskins in a National Football Conference (NFC) duel, Ron Rivera's big cats wanted badly to reverse a trend that saw them lose five of the six setbacks due to an inability to "close the deal".

However, with tough defensive play in the redzone (20 yard line to the endzone) versus host Washington and a timely run for six in fourth quarter action, the Panthers were able to reverse the aforementioned general direction, thanks to a 21-13 win over Mike Shanahan's 'Skins Sun. (Nov. 4), at FedEx Field, in Landover, Maryland.

In seeing his charges halt a five-game losing skid, Rivera reacted with obvious satisfaction.

And in assessing the overall play of his Panthers, the second year Carolina coach cited the performance of his "D" players; especially the deep defenders.

"Versus their run-game, we were able to keep everything in front of us," said Rivera. "And I

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thought our defensive backs played a really solid game."

Showcasing two highly-touted quarterbacks, in Washington's Robert Griffin III and Carolina's Cam Newton, the before noted NFC clash was far from being a shootout between the first and second year NFL field generals.

Instead it came down to a battle involving two teams that wanted badly to impose its will on the other. Obviously, the Panthers aided by stout defensive play, when it was necessary, won that fight.

Now it's on to the next confrontation for a Carolina team which obviously hopes it has turned the corner toward a more productive 2012 run.

The timely road win over the Washington Redskins left Ron Rivera more than just hopeful that even better days are ahead.

Nevertheless, the Carolina coach was unwilling to suggest that his Panthers have indeed arrived at the point where they need to be.

However, Rivera admitted that he was pleased that his team was able to come together and pull out a win that certainly should build confidence for the future.

The future for Rivera and company is just days away, as Peyton Manning and former Carolina coach John Fox lead the Denver Broncos into Bank of America Stadium this Sunday (Nov. 11). Gametime for this American Football Conference (AFC), National Football Conference showdown is set for 1:00 p.m.

Fox, who coached the Panthers from 2002-2010, will be returning to his old home for the first time since being ousted after the 2010 campaign.

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