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Carolina 28, Washington 10

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By JENNA FRYER, AP Sports Writer
August 14, 2005

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) -- [Rod Gardner](#) did his best to downplay the touchdown he scored against his former team. [Stephen Davis](#) wouldn't let him do it.

Traded by Washington to Carolina days before training camp opened, Gardner opened his tenure with the Panthers with a 21-yard touchdown catch that helped them to a 28-10 preseason victory over the Redskins on Saturday night.

He then declined to gloat, even when told Davis -- another former Redskins player -- took delight in sticking it to Washington the first time he faced his former team.

"He did, too!" Davis interrupted. "Don't lie! Tell the truth!"

Gardner still wouldn't bite.

"It was good. It was a good feeling," he said. "It was good to make a play against my old team and let them see what they miss."



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Unhappy with his role in Washington's offense, Gardner asked the Redskins to trade him in January. They completed a deal with Carolina late last month, getting a sixth-round draft pick in exchange for a four-year starter.

But Gardner has his work cut out for him in Carolina. [Steve Smith](#), who missed 15 games last season with a broken leg, has a hold on one starting spot and second-year player [Keary Colbert](#) is slotted in the other. But with Colbert in street clothes nursing a hamstring injury, Gardner got the start against the Redskins.

Gardner opened the game with a 10-yard catch to start Carolina's drive, then Smith added two catches for 18 yards. Gardner put the Panthers on the board on their ninth play when he raced into the end zone as [Jake](#)

[Delhomme](#) was under pressure.

Gardner squared up against former teammate [Ade Jimoh](#), fighting for the same piece of field. Gardner won, pulling down the touchdown catch, as Jimoh was flagged for pass interference. Gardner, who

played just the first quarter, caught both balls thrown to him and finished with 31 yards receiving.

"I know I've got the potential to go out and make plays here," he said with a wide smile.

The win was Carolina's 10th consecutive preseason victory dating to 2002.

The game marked the first time in almost a year that the Panthers were near full strength. They were decimated by injuries last season -- at one point they were down to their sixth-string running back -- and it led to a 1-7 start.

Everyone but Davis is healthy, and it showed with a solid first quarter from the starters.

"We're just knocking the rust off," said defensive end [Mike Rucker](#).

Washington, which is still trying to find a potent offensive scheme under coach Joe Gibbs, was able to move the ball a little against Carolina's first team right before the first quarter ended.

But the Redskins struggled on their first two drives. [Patrick Ramsey](#) ended their first possession when he underthrew [Santana Moss](#) and was intercepted by [Chris Gamble](#), and they couldn't move the ball at all on their second attempt.

"I'd say for us, obviously we have a long way to go," Gibbs said. "We're going to have to go home. We've got a lot of work to do."

Ramsey was decent his third time out, completing three straight passes -- two to [Ladell Betts](#) and a 16-yarder to [Chris Cooley](#) -- before the drive stalled. Ramsey finished 8-of-12 for 77 yards but failed to lead the Redskins to any points.

"I think you lose, you're disappointed. You don't score, you're disappointed," Ramsey said. "We moved the ball. Obviously we've got to stick it in the end zone."

Both teams' backup quarterbacks led scoring drives.

Carolina's [Chris Weinke](#) threw a 1-yard TD pass to [Michael Gaines](#) and finished 6-for-9 for 79 yards. [Stefan LeFors](#), Carolina's fourth-round draft pick, added a 1-yard TD pass to [Drew Carter](#) in the fourth quarter and a 24-yarder to Aaron Boone.

[Mark Brunell](#) set up [John Hall](#)'s 43-yard field goal before halftime that cut Carolina's lead to 14-3. The quarterback marched the Redskins down the field again early in the third quarter, but [Jeff Chandler](#) missed a 42-yard field goal attempt.

Brunell also led Washington's only touchdown drive, a 14-play march capped by [Nehemiah Broughton](#)'s 1-yard TD plunge that cut the score to 14-10. Brunell finished 11-of-19 for 121 yards.

[Jason Campbell](#), the Redskins' first-round draft choice, played the fourth quarter and went 10-of-18 for 132 yards.

"I like what we've got at quarterback," Gibbs said. "I like our depth there. You know, we'll see."

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