

NOTES

Jackson shows plenty

CBS, viewers shocked, upset

From wire reports

Janet Jackson set off a Super Bowl firestorm on Sunday night when she bared her right breast during her nationally televised halftime show duet with Justin Timberlake.

Michael Jackson's little sister ended a number titled "Rock Your Body" by allowing Timberlake to rip away the leather cup covering her breast, as they sang: "Gonna have you naked by the end of this song."

The split-second exposure, witnessed by up to 100 million viewers, revealed what appeared to be a sun-shaped metal ring atop her nipple.

CBS officials said they were as shocked as any viewer by the incident, which came as Jackson's brother Michael is battling child molestation charges.

"CBS deeply regrets the incident that occurred during the Super Bowl halftime show," network brass said. "We attended all rehearsals during the week, and there was no indication any such thing would happen."

"We would like to apologize to anyone who was offended," the network's statement read.

Timberlake said he did not intend to expose Jackson's breast.

"I am sorry that anyone was offended by the wardrobe malfunction during the halftime performance of the Super Bowl," Timberlake said in a statement. "It was not intentional and is regrettable."

The Super Bowl halftime show, which also featured P. Diddy, Nelly and Kid Rock, was produced by MTV, CBS' corporate cousin in Viacom.

"We were extremely disappointed by elements of the MTV-produced halftime show," Joe Browne, NFL executive vice president, said. "They were totally inconsistent with assurances our office was given about the content of the show."

"It's unlikely that MTV will produce another Super Bowl halftime."

MTV issued a contrite statement, saying the incident was "unrehearsed, unplanned, completely unintentional."

One CBS source likened the incident to being "hijacked."

The CBS switchboard was flooded with angry calls. And outraged parents hit Jackson's Web site with e-mails.

Streaky encore

As if the halftime show weren't enough, as the Panthers prepared to kick off to start the third quarter, a man dressed as an official at the 30-yard line ripped off the black-and-white stripes down to a G-string and shoes and began doing an Irish jig of sorts.

Security was apparently stunned because no one attempted to stop the naked dancer for nearly 30 seconds.

When a team of security officials rushed the field, the dancer, identified as 39-year-old Mark Francis Roberts, darted downfield, making it about 25 yards before he was shoulder-tackled by Patriots linebacker Matt Chatham. Security personnel swarmed the scene and carried the one-man halftime show off the field.

Television cameras did not broadcast the dance, instead showing stunned reaction from players.

Keep a lid on it

NFL officials planned all week to keep the retractable roof of Reliant Stadium open for the Super Bowl unless there was a reason to close it. Early Sunday afternoon the league announced that it would close the roof because of a forecast for rain.

It was sunny and warm early in the afternoon, but clouds had begun to roll in when the roof was closed at 3:45 p.m., about one hour and 45 minutes before kickoff. The league had hoped to open the roof for a pregame ceremony but didn't. With it closed, smoke from fireworks during Aerosmith's pregame concert lingered in the air, a common problem with domed stadiums.

Security tight

As has been the case since the 2002 Super Bowl, held months after the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, security measures were extraordinarily high Sunday.

Screeners outside the stadium said every one of the estimated 70,000 fans was subject to a pat-down search. There were 90 metal detectors deployed outside Reliant Stadium, about 30 bomb-sniffing dogs, radiation detectors, and high-tech monitors designed to detect biological and chemical agents, according to security officials.

An area the size of a football field was walled off with concrete barricades, a measure to reduce the risk of car bombs. A seven-mile no-fly zone was established, and helicopters and fixed-wing military aircraft were scheduled to patrol the perimeter of the stadium.

REACTION

Patriots fans love this repeat

The Associated Press

New England fans have seen this ending before.

When Adam Vinatieri's winning field goal split the uprights with four seconds left in the Super Bowl, fans across New England celebrated — just as they had in 2001 when the Patriots also won the title on the power of his right foot.

"Could you ask for a better script? It's a Hollywood ending — again," said Jim Jackson, 44, of Boston.

After the Patriots beat Carolina 32-29 on Sunday night in Houston, quarterback Tom Brady immediately prepared fans for an even bigger celebration when the team returns for a parade Tuesday.

"Be careful on the T (subway system) — don't tear that thing down!" Brady said during postgame ceremonies.

For the most part, fans across the region heeded Brady's words and behaved themselves, though there were some reports of disruptions in Boston's Kenmore Square and at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst.

Across New England, fans held their breath after Vinatieri uncharacteristically flubbed two previous field goals. Still, they remained faithful to a man who has come through in the clutch in past close situations.

At the Ivy Tavern in Providence, R.I., Terrie McAloon of New Shoreham,



Patriots fans hold the Vince Lombardi Trophy on Sunday in Reliant Stadium in Houston.

leaped and yelled "Vinatieri is the man!"

"It's unbelievable," added her boyfriend, Rob Weintraub. "That's one lucky win."

Carolina, which trailed most of the game, came back twice in the fourth quarter, tying the game with less than two minutes remaining. The comeback

had Patriots fans thinking about another local team — the Boston Red Sox — that hasn't been as lucky at the end of close, crucial games.

"It looks like the curse is only on the Red Sox," Jackson said.

Different story in Carolina

In Charlotte, N.C., dejected fans

orderly shuffled out of bars and homes following the Super Bowl with most saying they were proud of the Panthers' performances.

Carolina's first Super Bowl appearance filled up bars and restaurants all over Charlotte as fans donned teal jerseys and T-shirts to cheer on Carolina.

They left clinging to souvenirs and praising the team's effort.

"I'm not disappointed. I am proud of them," said Rhonda Hull, 33, of Charlotte. "I hate that it ended this way. But it was a great season."

Rhonda watched the game at Coach's Sports Bar and Grill in south Charlotte with husband Chris.

"They represented us well," he said.

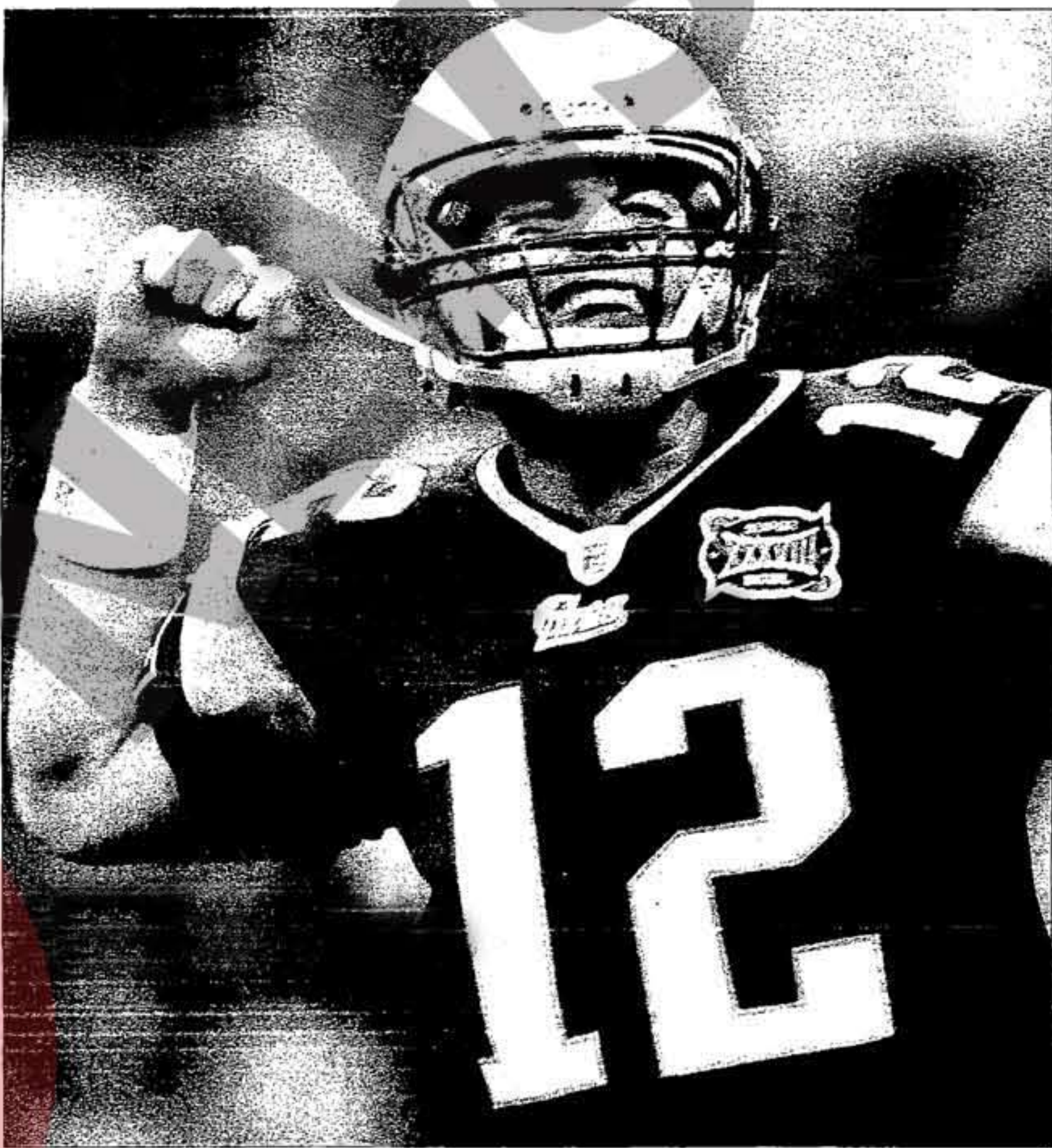
Shortly after the game police pulled down barricades they used to block the intersection of Trade and Tryon streets at the center of downtown.

"They're doing good. No problems," said Charlotte police Capt. Keith Dinkins.

Scott Marquess, 41 of Charlotte, wore a Panthers jersey and carried a blue pom-pom as he departed Coach's. He said he was disappointed, but spoke highly of the team.

"We showed the resiliency that we showed all year on the field. (Jake) Delhomme played great in the second half," he said. "Heck, we weren't even supposed to be here, then we beat St. Louis, beat Philly and we almost did it today."

SUPER BOWL MVP



New England quarterback Tom Brady celebrates Sunday after a touchdown by Antowain Smith in the third quarter against the Panthers.

Perfect when it counts most

Barry Wilner
The Associated Press

HOUSTON — Tom Brady is getting quite a collection of playoff wins and Super Bowl MVP trophies.

The New England quarterback has won all six of his postseason games, including two Super Bowls in three years. He threw for 354 yards and three touchdowns Sunday night in leading the Patriots past the Carolina Panthers 32-29.

Brady also made up for a critical interception in the Carolina end zone by guiding the Patriots to a go-ahead score with 2:51 remaining.

"We realized we had done it so many times this year," Brady said of coming back. "We knew we could come up with the plays."

When the scrappy Panthers came back to tie it, Brady engineered a 37-yard drive in the final minute. His 17-yard completion to Deion Branch on third down — against a shockingly soft defensive alignment — set up Adam Vinatieri's 41-yard field goal to win it with four seconds remaining.

In all, Brady completed a Super Bowl-record 32 of 48

Brady wins 2nd MVP trophy, remains unbeaten in playoffs

passes, with 5-yard touchdown throws to Branch and David Givens and a 1-yarder to, of all people, linebacker Mike Vrabel, who reported as a tight end.

It was a more masterly performance than in 2002, when Brady, then a first-year starter, helped New England upset St. Louis 20-17. Vinatieri also won that game on a late field goal, from 48 yards.

"Maybe it was a little deja vu of two years ago," Vinatieri said. "Tom did it again, he's amazing. This supporting cast did it again and gave me a chance."

And just as against the Rams, Brady made clutch throws throughout the final quarter in taking New England to its 15th straight victory.

"I think each game is different," Brady said. "To win this the way we did is incredible, unbelievable. A great all-around game."

"I don't know how I do it." But he does it.

"In this day in the NFL," offensive coordinator Charlie Weis said, "who else would you want throwing the ball? I'll take Tom Brady 10 times out of 10."

Brady made sure the interception by Reggie Howard with 7:38 to go did not cost New England the championship. Carolina turned that pickoff into an 85-yard touchdown pass from Jake Delhomme to Muhsin Muhamad, the longest play in Super Bowl history.

"I kind of threw it right to him, but he made a great play," Brady said.

With Carolina on top 22-21, Brady went 6-for-8 on a 68-yard drive. He converted two third downs on the series with perfect passes, then found Vrabel in the front portion of the end zone.

"Tom just put it in there," Vrabel said, with his son seated on his lap at an interview podium. "I just thought, 'Don't drop it, treat it like it's your kid.'"

After Delhomme rallied Car-

olina again and the first overtime in Super Bowl history loomed, Brady and New England got a break. John Kasay's kickoff sailed out of bounds, giving the Patriots the ball at their 40 with 1:08 left.

"The kick out of bounds helped us out tremendously," receiver Troy Brown said. "I said, 'We got a chance, especially with Tom. He'll just advance (the ball) and we'll win the game.'"

Brady had two 13-yard completions to Brown, leading to the 17-yarder to Branch when the Panthers played a conservative defense.

"Deion ran a great route. I laid it up for him, and it gave us enough time for Adam to run on the field," Brady said. "We made enough plays at the end there to win it."

Brady always does. His overall record is 40-12. He is 26-4 in games played after Nov. 1. And like Bart Starr and Terry Bradshaw, he is a two-time Super Bowl MVP. Only Joe Montana, with three, has more.

"You can never say enough about Tom Brady," Brown said. "He wins games. What more can you ask for?"

TV COVERAGE

Simms, Gumbel handle big job

David Bauder
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — It was a Super Bowl broadcast marked by long periods of inactivity and eye-popping endings — and we're not just talking about the game.

Adam Vinatieri's field goal with four seconds left gave the New England Patriots, and CBS, a big Super Bowl victory Sunday night. Just as the network had hoped, it was the kind of game that kept viewers glued to their seats.

"The Patriots, looking for a second Super Bowl victory in three years. From 41 yards," play-by-play man Greg Gumbel said, setting the scene as Vinatieri lined up to kick the winner.

"Looks good," Gumbel said as the ball approached the uprights. He then went silent to let viewers soak up the dramatic scene.

Meanwhile, a colorful halftime show ended with Janet Jackson coming momentarily unglued. Justin Timberlake tore off a portion of her leather gladiator outfit to reveal her right breast. CBS, Timberlake and MTV — which produced the halftime show — later apologized to viewers.

The game's dramatic ending could hardly be anticipated considering most of the first half was scoreless. The third quarter was, too.

Gumbel and analyst Phil Simms were low-key and professional throughout, accenting the drama and not overplaying it.

They showed some adept moves of their own, too — beginning with the first play of the game.

"New England likes to start fast," Simms said as the Patriots came to the line of scrimmage. "It wouldn't surprise me to see them go play-action and go down the field."

Boom! Patriots quarterback Tom Brady did exactly that for a 16-yard gain.

Later in the first half, Simms lectured struggling Carolina Panthers quarterback Jake Delhomme not to be too anxious. "Don't be concerned that you're not going to be a big part of it. Just be careful with the football."

Again, Simms seemed prescient a few series later when Delhomme fumbled deep in his own territory, giving the Patriots the break that led to their first score.

Simms, the 1987 Super Bowl MVP with the New York Giants, used his on-field experience to good effect with insights on what the players, particularly the quarterbacks, might be feeling.

The duo was less convincing in trying to persuade viewers that a boring start wasn't necessarily so.