By JOSEPH WHITE

The Associated Press

LANDOVER, Md. — There was the fumble by Robert Griffin III that turned into a Washington Redskins touchdown. There was the fumble by teammate Alfred Morris that led to a melee of leg-pulling followed by a kick to the midsection and something dangerously close to a stomp.

The quartet of flawed teams that make up the NFC East sure do make things interesting.

The division title that seemingly belonged to the New York Giants is up for grabs after their 17-16 loss Monday night to the Redskins, who are back in the running thanks to a rookie quarterback and a three-game winning streak.

“We had an opportunity here today,” New York coach Tom Coughlin said. “But now there’s one team with seven and two teams with six wins. There’s four games to go.”

That about sums it up.

Now that the Giants (7-5) have lost three of four, the Redskins (6-6) and Cowboys (6-6) are squarely in the hunt despite mediocre records. Washington has dispatched each of its division rivals — Philadelphia, Dallas and now New York — one by one over the last three weeks to recover from a 3-6 start that prompted coach Mike Shanahan to talk about evaluating players for future seasons.

“We know that our backs are against the wall,” said Griffin, whose Redskins host Dallas in what

they hope will be a meaningful season finale. “And even though we won tonight, our backs are still against the wall.”

It’ll be hard to count the Redskins out as long as Griffin is on the field. He completed 13 of 21 passes for 163 yards and a go-ahead, 8-yard touchdown to Pierre Garcon in the fourth quarter to finish with a 101.9 passer rating. He also ran for 72 yards to get to 714 for the season, breaking Cam Newton’s NFL record for a rookie quarterback.

It was his sixth game with a 100-plus passer rating, his eighth without an interception — and his second in which one of his fumbles turned into a Redskins score.

On the way to the turf after a 12-yard run, Griffin was stripped by Stevie Brown — but the ball flew right to teammate Joshua Morgan 3 yards upfield. Morgan then ran 13 yards for a first-quarter touchdown no one would ever diagram on a whiteboard.

“We didn’t run it in practice because we wanted to save it for the game,” Griffin said with a grin. “I knew he was going to be there for it. ... Joshua did a good job being in the spot where he was supposed to be.”

The game’s other fumble was just as chaotic — and a little scary. After Morris was stripped during a third-quarter run, New York defensive tackle Linval Joseph yanked at Redskins center Will Montgomery’s leg while players were fighting for the ball in the pile.

Montgomery kicked out in response, a swipe that Joseph said hit him in the groin.

“I was just trying to get my leg loose,” Montgomery said.

Joseph then stomped at Montgomery, appearing to pull back at the last second but still making contact.

“It took me everything not to kick him back because I didn’t want hurt the team, and I didn’t want to get fined and none of that,” Joseph said. “I started, then I stopped.”

Joseph and a Redskins player were whistled for offsetting unnecessary roughness penalties.

Morris finished with 124 yards, reaching 1,106 for the season to break Reggie Brooks’ franchise rookie rushing record of 1,063, set in 1993. Garcon caught eight passes for 106 yards, showing no signs of the painful toe injury that forced him to miss six of the season’s first nine games.

Eli Manning completed 20 of 33 passes for 280 yards and a touchdown, and Ahmad Bradshaw ran for 103 yards on 24 carries for the Giants. Victor Cruz, who caught the game-winning score when the teams met in the Meadowlands in October, had five catches for 104 yards.

The Giants moved the ball well, but they only managed three field goals by Lawrence Tynes and one touchdown — Manning’s 4-yard pass to Martellus Bennett late in the second quarter.

Tynes also missed a 43-yard field goal, and the Giants were uncharacteristically penalty-prone, getting flagged nine times for 73 yards. New York led 13-10 at the half, but scored only three more points.

“This is not real complicated. I don’t know what happened in the second half,” Coughlin said. “We certainly didn’t come out and play. Penalties. Sloppy football.”

NOTES: The Giants had won 26 in a row on the road when holding a halftime lead. They last failed to finish the job in 2006 against Tennessee. ... The Redskins snapped a 10-game home losing streak in Monday night games. ... Shanahan got his 171st win (regular and postseason), tying him with Redskins’ Hall of Fame coach Joe Gibbs for 12th all time. ... New York S Tyler Sash left the game with a hamstring injury, and RT Sean Locklear was carted off in the fourth quarter with a knee injury.

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