

Mike Freeman probably picked the wrong game to make a point.

The Patriots had just come off a dominant 26–10 win over the Atlanta Falcons in Week 3 of the 2009 NFL season, a game in which New England utilized a balanced attack (Tom Brady passed for 277 yards, spreading the ball to eight different receivers, while Fred Taylor ran for 105 yards) for its second win of the season. Such stability was the antithesis of the previous week's loss, when the Patriots fell to the Jets for the first time at the Meadowlands since 2000 thanks to a defensive effort by New York that shut down New England's air attack and led to a 16–9 win.

Patriots wide receiver Randy Moss was completely dominated by Jets standout Darrelle Revis, and had just four catches in that game for 24 total yards. Revis's name is atop a very short list of legitimate shutdown cornerbacks in this day and age—he made 2009 stays on “Revis Island” a most unpleasant experience for opponents.

Heading into the Falcons game, the Patriots were 1–1, and could have been 0–2 if not for a boneheaded decision by Bills kick returner Leodis McKelvin. Which is why the team's performance—and Moss's in particular against Atlanta—was encouraging.



MIXED RECEPTION

Moss is an enigma, but is his public perception fair?

by Eric Wilbur