SPORTS

THE BIG APPLE

GIANTS IN FIRST PLACE IN NFC, YANKEES STRUGGLE IN ALDS

by James Badeau
CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT
HE/HIM/HIS
james.badeau@uconn.edu

If you look back to November 2015, you will see the New York Giants atop the National Football Conference East with a 5-5 record. Fast-forward to today and the Giants now have a record of 3-1, putting them in first place in the division for the first time since then.

Sunday's game against Arizona featured the full Jameis Winston experience. Winston finished the day with 250 passing yards, three touchdowns and two interceptions. Both of his turnovers can only be described as ugly. The second in particular was nowhere near his receivers, and it fell perfectly into Budda Baker's hands.

Although he tossed three touchdowns, Winston's decision-making is subpar. He missed countless open receivers, made late decisions which led to incomplete passes, and couldn't move like a traditional quarterback. JJ McCarthy, the newest addition to the team, was the third-stringer Sunday, and fans were chanting his name after Winston's interceptions. There has to come a time when Head Coach John Harbaugh realizes that it's time for a change.

Maybe I should pump the brakes a bit.

Did the Giants win on Sunday? Yes, they did. But they could've performed at a much better rate if McCarthy was under center. Harbaugh believes that Winston is the best choice right now for the team to succeed.

McCarthy is still learning the playbook, which is probably why he was the third stringer behind Jake Haener, who has been on the team for much longer.

The major bright spot on Sunday was the defense — rookie Arvell Reese in particular. Reese was an absolute monster, finishing with nine tackles, one tackle for loss and an interception. The rookie from Ohio State was drafted No. 5 overall and is already second in Defensive Rookie of the Year odds behind Miami's Jacob Rodriguez. Reese was also named Rookie & Defensive Player of the Week by PFF after Sunday's performance.

It wasn't just Reese who dominated defensively against Arizona. Cornerback Deonte Banks, who was less than ideal for his first few seasons in the NFL, stepped up heavily, as he led the defensive stand at the goal line in the final seconds of the game. On fourth down and goal with just seconds remaining on the clock, Banks intercepted Jacoby Brissett and returned it all the way for a touchdown, winning the game for the Giants 36-24. He finished with four combined tackles and four passes defended on top of the interception.

The Giants head to banged-up division rival Washington for Week 5. Kickoff is set for 1p.m. on FOX.

Down in Tampa, the high-flying Yankees fell back to Earth as they were an absolute no-show in the first two games of the American League Division Series.

Game 1 was the complete opposite of the Wild Card as the Yankees couldn't find a hit until the eighth inning. Their one hit was from Austin Wells, who roped the ball to the right field wall. Wells thought he could turn what was a routine double into a triple. The Rays defense made an effortless cutoff relay to get the Yankees' catcher out at third base.

The ugliness from Game 1 shifted right away into Game 2, as they committed three errors in the first inning. The first came on the first batter as McMahon misplayed a ground ball at third base, which allowed Yandy Díaz to get to first base. The second error came from Jazz Chisholm Jr., who tried being a hero by making an off-balance throw in an attempt to turn a double play. Instead, the ball got away from first baseman Ben Rice, allowing Díaz to score. The final error came from Wells, who got called for catcher's interference, giving batter Liam Hicks a free ride to first base.



Max Fried handing a baseball to a little kid in the crowd during a game. The Yankees won 9-2 against the Boston Red Sox on Sept. 30, 2026.

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The only player who truly showed up for Game 2 was Ben Rice. Rice slugged two solo home runs, which were also half of the Yankees' hits on Monday night.

Now the Yankees have their backs against the wall as they are now down 0-2 in the series. The do-or-die Game 3 is tonight at 8 p.m. as Max Fried goes up against Nick Martinez. Fried pitched the close-out game against Boston, going six innings and striking out six batters on just three hits.



Arvell Reese of the New York Giants attempting to block a pass from the Jacoby Brissett of the Arizona Cardinals. The Giants defeated the Cardinals 36-24 on Oct. 4, 2026.

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