

Ravens halt valiant comeback effort by 49ers; capture second Super Bowl win

Written by Levi Johnson, Sports Editor
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NEW ORLEANS-What appeared in the early goings to look like a blow-out win for the Baltimore Ravens evolved into a thrilling down the stretch finish that left the San Francisco 49ers a three point(34-31)loser in Super Bowl XLVII Sun.(Feb.3), at the Louisiana Superdome.

Trailing the American Football Conference (AFC)-affiliated Ravens by by 22 points (6-28) in early third quarter play, the Colin Kaepernick-led National Football Conference (NFC)-connected gold miners from the West coast charged back to within five points (23-28) of their deficit, when the aforementioned quarter was history.

Focused and resilient, after a black-out that stalled the National Football League (NFL) championship game for 34 minutes, in the third stanza, San Francisco quarterback Colin Kaepernick attempted to lead the 49ers to what would've been a crushing comeback win in the much-talked about title-game showdown that featured the Harbaugh brothers as coaches (John, directing the Ravens and Jim, calling the shots for the 49ers).

However, when the game truly hung in the balance, during a last ditch effort by the 49ers to turn what earlier was a lackluster showing into a fantastic finish, Ray Lewis and mates rose to the occasion to stop them, as the Ravens won their second Vince Lombardi Trophy, in the history of the organization.

Lewis, who made a not so expected comeback, after suffering a serious leg injury earlier in the season, raved about the Super win that sent him into his predicted happy retirement, after 17 star-studded years in the League.

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"It's not a greater way, as a champ, to go out on your last ride with the men that I went out with, with my teammates," the former University of Miami standout said. "And you look around the stadium and Baltimore! Baltimore! We coming home baby! We did it!"

But while enjoying the spoils of what he described as a well-earned victory, Lewis still found the time to laud the play of Ravens field general Joe Flacco. A pro team signal-caller, who, after five years was still hoping to establish himself as a well-respected on-field team leader, Flacco ended play in the 2013 NFL title game as the Most Valuable Player (MVP). While calling signals for Baltimore, Flacco took home MVP honors by putting up 22-30-0 passing numbers, for 287 yards. His play was highlighted by him throwing three touchdowns, which knotted a Super Bowl standard.

"I've been a Joe Flacco fan for a long time," Lewis said. "His play in this game was big for us, as it has been all season long. What a quarterback! What a leader he is (for this team)!"

Still not in total belief (of the win) several minutes after the final seconds had ticked off the stadium clock, Flacco talked about the surreal state that engulfed him.

"It just hasn't sunk in yet. And I don't really know when it will," said the Ravens No.1 QB. "This is something I've always wanted to experience; and now that I am experiencing it, I don't have words to describe my feelings.

"But, I'm truly happy for us as a team. We believed in ourselves and fought hard to do what we did today."

A Baltimore triumph which was trumped by timely offensive exploits and key defensive stands was boosted in its winning bid by a big special team's play that played out in the opening kick-off of the second half via the effort of Jacoby Jones. Wide receiver Jones fielded the kick-off eight yards deep in the San Francisco endzone and returned it 108 yards for a score that ballooned the 49ers lead to 28-6. The dash to paydirt tied a previous Super Bowl record.