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NO GOOD: Kicker Neil Rackers (1) grabs his face mask in disgust after missing a 40-yard field goal that would have given the Cardinals the lead in the final minute of Monday night's game at University of Phoenix Stadium.

CARDINALS: Find another way to lose

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Leinart was a star again, completing 24 of 42 passes for 232 yards, two touchdowns and no interceptions. Receiver Anquan Boldin made up for injured cohort Larry Fitzgerald by catching 12 passes for 136 yards.

Statistically, the Cards won everywhere — except the scoreboard.

"Anything positive," safety Adrian Wilson lamented, "always turns into a negative for us."

The points were painful.

The Cardinals were dominating with a 23-3 lead with just seconds left in the third quarter when a blocking assignment mixup — tackle Oliver Ross allowed Bears

defensive end Mark Anderson an unimpeded shot at Leinart's blind side — resulted in a sack, a fumble and a Bears touchdown as safety Mike Brown scooped up the ball and returned it 3 yards.

At that point, the Cards were still in control and grinding time off the clock. But with five minutes left, running back Edgerrin James — who got his carries (36) but not many yards (55) — was stripped by Bears linebacker Brian Urlacher, and Charles Tillman returned it 40 yards for a score.

"Defensively, we stepped up when we had to, plus I wasn't getting blocked, so that always works out good," Urlacher said. "It didn't feel like I was getting blocked at least. It seemed like it was just me

and Edge."

Just like the games blown against the Rams and Chiefs in the two previous home games, doom was on the way.

In this case, its face was punt returner Devin Hester, who took a Scott Player boot two minutes later and raced 83 yards for the go-ahead touchdown.

Yet Leinart was unflappable on the final drive, completing 5 of 6 passes to take the Cards 39 yards to set up Rackers' attempt.

But Rackers, 40-of-42 on field goals in his Pro Bowl season of a year ago, missed his second attempt of the game and fifth of the season.

"I've let my teammates down twice," Rackers said, referring to

his miss of a game-tying attempt against the Chiefs. "I'm sick for these guys. We deserved to win."

It was a sentiment that washed through the locker room.

"I wish there was something I could say to justify this," said defensive end Bertrand Berry, who finally notched his first sack of the season. "This just flat out is not fair. ... It rips your heart out."

Leinart said next week's game at winless Oakland "is gut-check time" as the team desperately searches for a way to win.

"We have to learn how to finish," Leinart said. "That's it, simple as that."

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