





Orleans in two weeks.

Most fans wore some sort of red and blue clothing to show support for the Patriots.

David Benevides, 30, and Michael Contois, 27, had high expectations. Anything but another championship would be a failure, they said during the first quarter.

"At the end of the day, we always think Brady is going to come through and [Bill] Belichick will have a winning game plan," said Benevides.

But as the game wound down, the packed bar grew silent. Some stared at the screens in disbelief. Others buried their heads in their hands.

Some said high expectations from fans has led to a lack of appreciation for the franchise's remarkable success over the past 12 seasons. And, despite falling short again this season, fans have a lot of recent wins to reflect on and be proud of.

"It will never be this good again," said Shaun Dawson, 26, of Boston.

His buddy, Mike Andruszkiewicz, 25, of Beverly, agreed.

"We're living in a really special time right now," he said. "And, I think we take it for granted around here."

"I've listened to stories from my granddad and my dad. It certainly wasn't always this way," he added.

A small number of Ravens fans showed their allegiance to their team, at first discreetly.

Baltimore native Jen Kent, 23, did not wear anything with a Ravens emblem on it, opting for a nondescript purple and black plaid shirt. But as the Ravens pulled ahead in the second half, Baltimore fans began to make their presence known, clapping and cheering louder.

By the end of the game, Kent had grown bolder.

"I did not expect them to win by this much," Kent said. "If we can beat the Pats we can beat the 49ers."

Four San Francisco natives who attend college in Boston left the bar smiling after their hometown squad defeated the Atlanta Falcons to move on to the Super Bowl.

For Josh Gorelick, 28, and his wife, Shayna, 34, a Pats-49ers matchup would have been particularly unnerving.

He is a lifelong 49ers fan. She is a Pats fan.

But in two weeks, she plans to root for the Ravens, not the 49ers, she said Sunday.

"What?" exclaimed Josh.

He had rooted for the Pats to beat the Ravens.

Because, he said jokingly, "I don't want to get divorced."

Matt Rocheleau can be reached at [matthew.rocheleau@globe.com](mailto:matthew.rocheleau@globe.com).

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