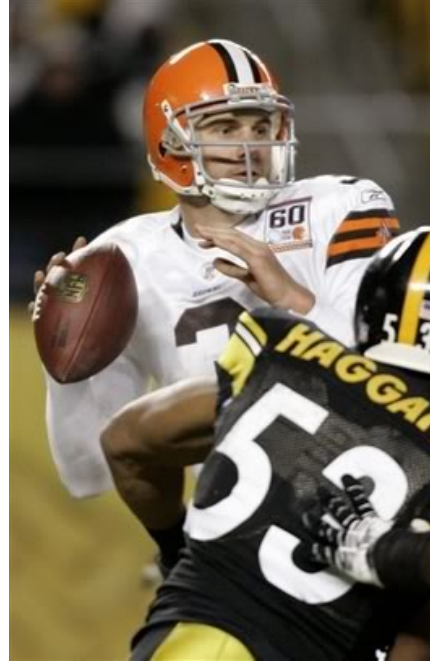


You want to know what makes the Browns unbearable to watch? You want to know why we want to kick the TV set after the majority of games? Thursday night is why. Once again, not only did the Browns lose, they looked like they didn't even belong on the same field with their opponent. They weren't even capable of putting up a fight. They were utterly and thoroughly overmatched and outclassed. Papa Cass vents.



Steelers 27, Browns 7

Record: 4-9

Divisional record: 0-5

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It might as well have been the Northwestern Wildcats out there playing the Steelers.

It keeps happening and happening, usually against divisional opponents, which gives the knife a couple of hard twists.

Once again, we were treated to a fourth quarter of sullen Cleveland players sitting on the sideline, hiding under their helmets, kind of like ostriches sticking their heads in the sand.

Once again, it was a stone-faced Romeo Crennel trotting off the field after his team was embarrassed yet again.

Steelers running back Willie Parker, who will never be confused with Jamal Lewis, racked up a

franchise record 223 rushing yards Thursday night. As a team, Pittsburgh collected 303 yards rushing. That's three football fields' worth of rushing, goal line to goal line, with another three yards to spare.

The Browns? You wouldn't need all your fingers and toes to count their 18 rushing yards. Reuben Droughns led the Browns with six yards on five carries.

If there was a bright spot to be found, it was the play of Derek Anderson. He again showed the poise that helped the Browns beat the Chiefs last Sunday, but was sabotaged by a gaggle of street mimes the Browns refer to as a "receiver corps." They are really good at faking catches. On Fox Sports Ohio's "Cleveland Rants" postgame program, co-host Les Levine estimated the Browns receivers dropped seven passes. I'd take the over on that one.

Some of that, such as a first-half drop by Darnell Dinkins, might have been due to off-the-mark throws from Anderson. My thought is, they pay you hundreds of thousands to millions of dollars to play this game. If you have to reach back for the ball, reach back for the ball and make the damn catch.

Even with all the drops, Anderson's 276 yards passing actually bested Ben Roethlisberger's 225, but when your team racks up 303 yards rushing, your quarterback can generally afford to lose the passing battle.

But I'm actually digressing. Picking apart the minutiae of the game isn't addressing the real problem. This is about a football team that was once again run off the field by a purported division rival. Those are the problems that are never going to be addressed by looking at the box score.

When will the Browns finally get humiliated enough by these blowout losses to do something about them? Will they ever, or have they just kind of resigned themselves to being the resident punching bag in the AFC North?

Does this team have any players, any coaches, any leaders who are going to take control and finally change this team's mentality, or is the roster and coaching staff littered with guys who view their Cleveland stint as prison time?

If there are players and coaches on this team who are just looking to put in their jail time until they finally get their big break elsewhere, can I please encourage them to seek that big break now and get the hell out of town?

Braylon Edwards, I'm looking right at you. Your game sucks. Your hands are terrible. Either you are legitimately as inept as you have shown with regard to catching the ball, or your mind and heart aren't in it. Dennis Northcutt, ditto.

If you look at the other sideline when your team is playing the Bengals and Steelers and envision yourself over there, far be it from any one of us to stop you. Allow me to be the one

who personally signs your release papers and drives you to the doorstep of the team of your choice.

Going through the paces until your contract is up won't change the Cleveland Browns. Mediocrity won't change the Cleveland Browns. Caretaker coaches with no vision and even less energy won't change the Cleveland Browns. Average quarterbacks won't change the Cleveland Browns. Concentrating on defense while neglecting the offense won't change the Cleveland Browns.

This team needs greatness. If you aren't interested in being great, or are interested in being great somewhere else, get out of here. We don't want you, and we don't need you.

Up next: At Baltimore, Dec. 17, 1 p.m.