

Browns Training Camp Preview Part 1: In Norv We Trust

Written by {ga=tommoore}

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The Cleveland Browns open training camp this week in Berea with a new outlook on the offensive side of the ball.

But unlike the defense, which will we cover tomorrow, the changes on offense come not from an influx of new players but from one key area – offensive coordinator Norv Turner.

We've been intrigued to see what Turner will bring to the field ever since the Browns hired him. Even before the team has played a single game or held a real training camp practice, Turner is clearly the best offensive coordinator the Browns have employed since ... well, probably Lindy Infante. From Maurice Carthon, who hasn't had an offensive coordinator position since being fired in Cleveland; to Brian Daboll, who has had head coaches fired in Cleveland, Miami and Kansas City; to Pat Shumur, who is now getting coffee and sandwiches (allegedly) for Chip Kelly in Philadelphia, Browns fans have been witness to some of the worst offensive minds in the NFL over the years.

A quick look at Turner's coaching career [shows some pretty interesting highlights](#) :

- Dallas quarterback Troy Aikman goes from throwing 36 interceptions in his first three years to just 10 in his three years in Turner's offense.
- Washington's passing attack moves from 26th in the NFL to 11th in Turner's first year in charge – and that's with Heath Shuler at quarterback.
- Oakland moves from 27th to eighth in the NFL in passing in Turner's first year as head coach.

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Turner's offense is based on a consistent running game, an accurate passing game that takes chances downfield and utilizing the tight end as an offensive weapon. That philosophy should maximize whatever skills the Browns possess on offense, particularly those of quarterback Brandon Weeden (the accuracy part still needs work) and running back Trent Richardson. (The Browns are still working on the tight end part; can't fix everything at once, after all.)

One aspect of Turner's offensive philosophy that we really like is his willingness to fit his game plans and play calling around the talent of the players, rather than forcing the players to fit a pre-conceived notion of how an offense should look. (Hello, more shotgun for Weeden.)

"I don't think it's hard to be innovative with your play calls, but it's hard to make sure that the guys you have are comfortable running those plays," [Turner wrote in an NFL.com article from a few years ago](#). "The key is to make sure you have a group of plays that your team can execute and then find a way to make them look different to the defense. That was the key to this system when Don Coryell put it together years ago. He made it very player friendly. You can give the defense a lot of different looks while running basically the same plays."

Turner is also not stuck on the need to script plays, rather emphasizing plays that he knows he will want to call on Sundays and then using them accordingly.

"We do try to script the 12 first- and second-down plays that we're really looking at using. We use it mostly for the teaching and preparation aspect," Turner wrote. "We don't script as much as other people, and we don't script third downs because it's just too hard to predict the down-and-distance situation. But the 12 plays we look at are ones you're definitely going to call on Sunday and probably call early. If you get too caught up in a script and they completely change up the defense, then it's really hard to get out of that mentally and pull something up."

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