

New Quarterback, Same Results As Browns Lose to Chiefs

Written by {ga=tommoore}

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The Cleveland Browns lost to the Kansas City Chiefs on Sunday by the score of 23-17.

It was the Browns third consecutive defeat, dropping them to 3-5 as the 2013 NFL season hits the halfway mark. Meanwhile, the Chiefs remained the league's lone unbeaten team as they climbed to 8-0.

More importantly, it was the sixth time this season that the Browns scored 20 points or less on offense.

Apparently the Jason Campbell-led offensive revolution will have to wait at least one more week before it commences.

The Browns were completely dominated through the first 27 minutes or so of the game. Their first three drives of the game were all three-and-outs and produced just 13 yards of offense. The highlight of the first half had to be that the Browns rushed three times for minus-one yard, a level of incompetence that is staggering even by the team's low standards for running the ball this season.

While the Browns were busy setting offensive football back to the Brian Daboll days as

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offensive coordinator, the Chiefs were rolling up 281 yards of offense, 109 rushing yards and converting nine-of-12 third down opportunities as they put up 20 points in the first half.

Despite all that, the Browns were saved by the general mediocrity of Chiefs quarterback Alex Smith, who could only put up six points in the opening quarter. But Smith was able to hit Anthony Sherman for a 12-yard touchdown pass to give the Chiefs a 13-0 lead early in the second quarter and seemingly put the game out of reach.

But while it took the Browns some time, Campbell finally got a little something going by hitting tight end Jordan Campbell for 19 yards then connecting with wide receiver Josh Gordon for a 39-yard touchdown on a flea-flicker play.

After a quick six-play, 75-yard drive resulted in Kansas City's second touchdown of the half, Campbell was able to move the Browns to the Chiefs' 26-yard line with plenty of time to try and cut into the halftime lead. But three consecutive incomplete passes left the Browns settling for a Billy Cundiff field goal and a 20-10 deficit as the teams headed into the locker room.

Something happened to the Browns defense in the second half (maybe playing in the Central time zone threw them off early) as the Browns limited Kansas City to just 50 yards of total offense and held the Chiefs to just one-of-seven on third down.

Kansas City was only able to add a Ryan Succop field goal in the second half, but that was enough as the Browns offense continued to struggle.

Cleveland opened the second half by going 80 yards in nine plays for a touchdown, with Campbell hitting Fozzy Whittaker for a 17-yard scoring pass.

But that was it for the offense as the Browns punted on their next three possessions and turned the ball over on downs on their final possession, one that saw the offense move all of 15 yards on seven plays.

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“We weren’t able to make the plays at the end there to win the game,” [Browns coach Rob Chudzinski said](#)

“Kansas City started fast and we weren’t able to get anything going early in the game. I thought our guys did a great job of fighting and getting back in the game.”

So what did we learn today?

Quarterback remains an issue for the Browns.

While everyone loves a scapegoat because it makes things so much easier if one person is the problem, the only advantage that Campbell has is that he is not Brandon Weeden.

Campbell had a nice stat line on Sunday (22-of-36 for 293 yards, two touchdowns and – most importantly – no interceptions) but he only could put up 17 points – or basically what Weeden has been giving the Browns.

It’s all well and good that Campbell is now the quarterback, but if the team’s production doesn’t change, what does it really matter?

Josh Gordon can be really good when he wants to be.

Gordon was the lone bright spot for the Browns on offense against the Chiefs, finishing the game with five receptions for 132 yards (his third 100-yard game of the season) and a touchdown. On the year, Gordon has 32 catches for 582, which if you project that out over 16 games, would give him 83 receptions and 1,552 yards. Only two players – Ozzie Newsom and Kellen Winslow – have ever had more than 83 receptions in a season and no one has had more receiving yards.

With the trade deadline looming on Tuesday, there is still a possibility that Gordon will be traded, and if he is he went out with a bang.

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The Dolphins may have known something about Davone Bess.

Bess had probably his worst game of what is becoming a rough season on Sunday, dropping three more passes and fumbling a punt in the fourth quarter that the Chiefs recovered near midfield.

Browns CEO Joe Banner likes to talk about how he only makes trades that he knows he can win. Well, that philosophy works both ways and, as the weeks go by, it is getting easier to see why the Dolphins were willing to let Bess go.

The running game has become a complete joke.

Another week, another embarrassing performance from the non-exist running game.

Three rushes in the first half for minus-one yard? Is that even possible?

For the game, the running back tandem of Willis McGahee (nine rushes for 28 yards) and Chris Ogbonnaya put up their typical weak effort, rushing for just 3.33 yards per carry on a combined 12 rushes.

It was so bad that Chiefs quarterback Alex Smith outgained McGahee (40 to 28) and Campbell came close with 17 rushing yards.

The defense needs to figure out just what the hell it is doing.

As good as the defense played in the second half is how bad it was in the first half. Letting the

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Chiefs convert on 75 percent of their third downs isn't going to cut it.

The Browns also continued to struggle with stopping the run. According to ESPN Stats & Information, the Chiefs 4.7 yards per carry where a season high and 101 of their rushing yards came before first contact with a Cleveland defender.

The defense did what it could in the second half to keep the Browns in the game, registering six sacks from six different players, but if they had brought even some of that intensity in the first half the outcome may have swung in the Browns favor.

So the Browns sit at 3-5 as the NFL season hit the halfway mark, the sixth consecutive season the Browns have had three or fewer losses after eight games.

But at least Brandon Weeden is no longer the starting quarterback.

As for the rest of the problems that plague the team? No worries. The Browns will get around to fixing them in 2014 (or beyond).

(Photo by The Plain Dealer)