



The Cleveland Browns return home on Sunday to take on the Baltimore Ravens in the first of three consecutive games against AFC North Division foes.

The Browns are coming off a game in Kansas City where they fell behind to the Chiefs, staged a rally, only crossed midfield once in their final five drives of the game, and walked out of Arrowhead Stadium the possessors of a moral victory to much jubilation.

As for an actual victory? Well ... they'll get back to us on that.

The Opposition

Baltimore's record: 3-4

Offensive rank: 20th overall/12th passing/28th rushing

Defensive rank: 16th overall/16th passing/13th rushing

All-time record: Ravens lead, 22-7

Last meeting: Baltimore won, 14-6, in Week 2 of this season

[Injury report](#)

The Line: Browns +2.5

What to Watch For

A week after setting Browns fans a twitter with a solid if unspectacular performance against a Top 5 defense (on the road no less, don't you know), quarterback Jason Campbell will try do something this weekend that Derek Anderson, Brady Quinn, Seneca Wallace, Colt McCoy and Brandon Weeden have not been able to do in 11 combined attempts: beat Baltimore with Joe Flacco at quarterback for the Ravens.

The Browns have lost 11 in a row to Baltimore, last beating the Ravens in November of 2007. With the calendar now having turned to November, can Campbell succeed where so many before him have failed?

"We have to get this one," [Campbell told *The Plain Dealer*](#). "It's a division game. The game is at home. You have to defend your own turf. With them being in our division, it makes it an even more important game, plus to try to stay in the hunt, stay in the fight. When it comes late November and December, those are the teams that start to separate themselves. We're sitting at a 3-5 record and a situation where we have to do what we have to do."

Both teams come in on losing streaks – three games for the Browns, two for the Ravens – and both are looking to try and stay on the fringes of the playoffs in the AFC.

"It's been a tough stretch," [Browns coach Rob Chudzinski told ESPN](#). "What guys have

learned playing some very good teams is we've played, whether it's a half, whether it's a quarter, whether it's a couple series or three quarters of games, very well at times. It's a matter of consistently putting it together for four quarters. That's what the mission is we're on right now."

Moral victories – it's the new thing in Berea.

The Browns will be looking to take advantage of a Baltimore defense that has some holes in it – the Ravens are fifth worst in the NFL, giving up eight yards per pass attempt – but can still be tough when it needs to be as they have only given up five red zone touchdowns in 19 attempts (tops in the league) and are fifth on third-down conversions at 34.3 percent.

But a savvy, veteran quarterback like Campbell should be able to exploit the shortcomings of a defense, though, especially if he can find Josh Gordon in the passing game.

According to Pro Football Focus, [Gordon is eighth in the league in yards per route run at 2.27](#) . He should be a tough match up for the Ravens, who have three cornerbacks currently posting negative grades in pass coverage – Lardarius Webb (-4.9), Jimmy Smith (-5.2) and Corey Graham (-2.9).

If Campbell has any chance of not being, well, Jason Campbell, he should look to Gordon (who did not play in the first meeting with Baltimore) and tight end Jordan Cameron, who is fourth in the league in receptions with 49 and 13th in yards with 596. The duo have combined for 57 percent of the team's passing yards, 44 percent of their receptions and 69 percent of the team's touchdown catches.

"Josh's presence is always there, whether he's making plays or whether they're aware of him in terms of doubling him," Browns coach Norv Turner said this week. "We have to find a way to get everyone involved in our offense. Right now, Jordan and Josh are making most of the plays in the passing game and we need to get everyone involved."

The Browns could help their cause immensely if they could must a running attack to take some

of the pressure of Campbell but, this being Cleveland, that's not an option.

The Ravens come into the game giving up just 3.8 yards per carry and have allowed just rushing touchdown and one run of more than 20 yards – a mirror image of a Browns running attack that is averaging 3.9 yards per carry, has just one rushing touchdown and only one run of more than 20 yards by a running back.

“If you want to have a high average-per-attempt, you have to break the long runs,” [Turner told *The Plain Dealer*](#)

. “We haven't had any long runs (this season). So to think all of a sudden those are just going to show up ... so we have to manage the running game.”

It's probably safe to say the over/under on the number of passes that Campbell throws on Sunday is around 50.

On defense, this could be the Browns best opportunity to finally beat Flacco, who has thrown for 13 touchdowns in going 11-0 vs. Cleveland in his career.

Flacco is off to a slow start this year with his eight touchdown passes matching his eight interceptions. They've lost three-of-four and are having as much trouble running the ball as the Browns (although they do have five rushing touchdowns), which is strange to see after watching so many Raven running backs chew up the Browns over the years.

The Browns counter with a defense that gave up 31 points in consecutive losses to Detroit and Green Bay and then saw the Chiefs roll up 281 yards and 16 first downs in the first half of last week's game. But the Browns turned that around in the second half, holding Kansas City to just 50 yards of offense and four first downs in the second half and will look to carry that momentum into the game with Baltimore.

“I think the guys dug deep,” [Browns defensive coordinator Ray Horton said](#) . “I think they were embarrassed and there's always a turning point somewhere in the season, good or bad. I hope that halftime was our turning point, that we understand we can be and are good. (Because)

we're very good, statistically, in a lot of things.”

The Browns haven't scored more than 17 points in any of the last nine meetings against Baltimore, so if they have any hope of winning on Sunday, Horton better be right about the defense.

The Prediction

The Browns need to beat the Ravens at some point, don't they?

Because the AFC is so top heavy, the Browns find themselves on the margins of the final playoff spot, even with a 3-5 record. Following the game against Baltimore, the Browns travel to Cincinnati and then host Pittsburgh.

Put together a tidy three-game winning streak and, suddenly, the Browns are solidly in the playoff picture.

That is easier said than done, of course.

For all their current struggles, the Ravens are still better than the Browns and they clearly have the edge at the most important position – quarterback.

It once took the Browns 16 tries to finally win at Pittsburgh's Three Rivers Stadium, and while we don't believe it will take that long for them to finally beat Flacco, it's going to take more than 12 attempts.

Take the Ravens in an easy cover.

(Photo courtesy of ClevelandBrowns.com)