



Well, at least there was no fourth-quarter meltdown this week.

While that may be a nebulous sign of progress, it is just about all the Cleveland Browns have to hang their hats on following a dispirited 24-13 loss to the New York Jets on Sunday.

The defeat was the fifth consecutive on the road for the Browns and the sixth in a row overall.

The loss also puts the Browns at 1-6 on the road with just next week's season-ending game in Pittsburgh left on the schedule. Lose that game and the Browns finish with one road win for the third consecutive year.

But we are getting ahead of ourselves.

The Browns didn't have to worry about blowing a fourth-quarter lead this week because the offense basically called it a day after taking a 10-0 lead midway through the second quarter.

Jason Campbell continued to be just as ineffective running the offense as Brandon Weeden ever did, as the Browns ran 20 plays inside the red zone and came away with just one

touchdown. (But doesn't Campbell look good doing it?)

Campbell finished the game 18-of-40 for 178 yards. He threw two interceptions (giving him four in the past two games) and was sacked three times. Following the touchdown that put the Browns up 10-0, Campbell led five offensive drives that produced 137 yards of total offense and just three points.

"Things just started to unravel today, the whole thing that's been happening over the last month," [Campbell said after the game in an understatement](#) . "Being so close and not finishing it, I think is kind of pressure on guys. We just to win so bad."

The highlight of the offense, if you want to call it that, was Edwin Baker running for 64 yards. Baker averaged all of 3.8 yards per carry, which probably qualifies him for a Ring of Honor position when compared to the output we've seen this year from Willis McGahee, Fozzy Whitaker and the rest of the Browns running backs.

While the offense was a big problem, the defense doesn't get to avoid blame for the defeat.

The Jets ripped the Browns defense for 208 rushing yards, were 12-of-18 on third down and quarterback Geno Smith threw for two touchdowns, ran for another score, didn't throw an interception (despite coming into the game with 21 on the year) and wasn't close to being sacked all day.

Smith's two touchdown passes were to wide receiver David Nelson, his first two touchdown receptions of the season. Nelson was released by the Browns in the final cut down before the start of the regular season because ... well, they had a reason, we're sure.

The defense also allowed the Jets to scored 10 points in the final two minutes of the first half, a recurring event this season.

And even though there was still almost an entire quarter to play after Nelson's second touchdown gave the Jets a 17-10 lead, those seven points were just too much for this Browns team to overcome.

The loss wasn't completely unexpected but it was still frustrating. The Jets are a good home team, but the Browns shouldn't look so ineffective against them – especially on defense.

During the week everyone, from the coaches down to the players, talks a good game about how the team hasn't quit on the season, but then they go out and have a game like this that just makes everyone happy that the end of the season is now one game closer

"I'm not happy with that game. It's unacceptable," [Browns coach Rob Chudzinski said](#) . "I think it was a tough game to swallow. Our execution was poor in a number of situations, whether it was drops, red-zone offense, giving up big plays in the run game . . . it was not good enough. We just executed poorly. Whether it was a mental mistake, a lack of focus or concentration, or getting beat in a one-on-one situation, we will look at it on film."

Maybe that is the silver lining from this game: the Browns have to watch it again, while the fans don't.

One more week to go.

*(Photo courtesy of The Associated Press)*