

The Hornless Rhino was at last night's game against the Chiefs, and after reading the PD and ABJ's gloomy accounts of the game ... wondered if he saw the same game they did. What he saw was a pretty solid effort that was much better than last years first exhibition. And while the print mediums chose to focus on two poor decisions by Charlie Frye, the Rhino reminds us that the rest of the effort (by Charlie and the team) was encouraging.



I read the accounts of last night's Browns game in this morning's Beacon Journal and

Plain Dealer

, and it occurs to me that those reporters may well have written their stories before the game even started, and decided that it adhered closely enough to their chosen plot line that there was no need to revise their stories to fit what actually happened.

If you read Pat McManamon's [account](#) of the game, you'll find that neither Charlie Frye nor Derek Anderson took a step forward last night, and that the Browns QB situation remains as muddled as ever. Meanwhile, back at The Plain Dealer

, field events aficionado Bill Livingston tore himself away from his beloved pole vaulters just long enough to

[opine](#)

that neither QB capitalized on the opportunity to claim the starting spot.

Yeah, yeah, yeah -- all I can say is that if it had been Brady Quinn who turned in the performance that Charlie Frye did last night, the local media would be falling all over itself anointing him as the team's savior. Unfortunately for Charlie, the party line on him is that he's yesterday's news, and that's how the story line will read for him until he definitively proves otherwise.

Sure, Charlie showed us that he hasn't lost all of his bad habits, although I'm more

concerned about the decision-making at the end of the half than I am about the abysmal swing pass to Jerome Harrison that ended up going the other way. That play was ugly, but it's an execution problem and it's fixable. Whether Charlie's propensity to make bad decisions at key points in a game is fixable remains an open issue.

It's hard not to focus on the two brain-dead plays that Frye made in the first half that ended up killing two drives, but to do so to the exclusion of everything else he did in the team's first preseason game obscures some good news. Most importantly, Frye showed a lot more patience in the pocket last night than he ever did last season, and it resulted in several impressive deep completions that were only possible because he didn't run around like a scared jackrabbit.

Frye's overall numbers were very good, particularly when you take into account Romeo Crennel's strange decision to have his QBs alternate offensive series, thus making it hard for either of them to get into the flow of the game. For the night, Frye was 12 of 15 for 122 yards. He averaged 8.1 yards per attempt, and his overall QB rating was 100.6. Those are pretty impressive stats for a guy who has only been in camp for two weeks.

What makes them even more impressive is the team that he posted them against. The Chiefs defense is supposed to be [one of the best](#) in the league this season. Despite their continuing inability to punch the ball into the end zone, the Browns managed to drive 49 yards for a field goal against the Chiefs first unit (which only played the first quarter), and dominated the Chiefs statistically during the first half. The Browns were by no means good on offense, but let's keep things in perspective -- they were a hell of a lot better than they were in the first preseason game [last year](#).

There are a lot of questions about the Browns, including whether Charlie Frye has what it takes to be a starting QB in the NFL, but dismissing his overall performance on the basis of two bad plays is a mistake. There's quite a bit of work to be done, but I'm not as down on Frye's performance as the media was. I thought he showed some improvement over last season, and came away from it thinking that he's got a chance to be decent.

I don't want to get carried away here, because there's no way anybody should look at the first five weeks of this season with anything but [dread](#), but if Frye's decent, the Browns just might have a chance to be decent too.