

## Random Thoughts: Browns-Chiefs

Written by {ga=mitch}

Tuesday, August 14 2007 7:00 PM -

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As mentioned last week, after months of nagging, I finally convinced Mitch to do a Browns column for us this season. And the format for his "Random Thoughts" column showcases his football acumen and biting sense of humor. In this week's column, Mitch looks back at the Browns-Chiefs game, commenting on the little green dot on the back of the quarterback's helmets, the limitless potential of Kam Wimbley and Eric Wright, and new offensive coordinator Rob Chudzinski.



~~~ I'd like to start right out with the troubling thing about the QB situation. What the hell is up with those lime green dots on the back of the quarterbacks' helmets? Didn't the equipment managers have time to remove them after taking them out of the boxes? Are they the NFL's version of a Gold Star Sticky, designating good little boys? Or is it a really stranger version of the red shirts QBs wear in practice? I hope not, because I think it would be quite difficult for defensive players to see them in time to avoid squashing them like a (green) grape.

No...it turns out they are to designate the one (and only one) helmet allowed on the field with a radio receiver in it to get signals from the sidelines. Evidently, with the advent of soooo many 'Slash' QBs that can play multiple positions, the NFL was afraid that you'd have a situation where, say, both Charlie Frye and "emergency QB" Joshua Cribbs could receive instructions on the field at the same time.

Now that begs the question as to what may happen if both Frye and Cribbs were getting signals at the same time. Given that Charlie tends to turn into Boo Weekley when under extreme stress, I'm not sure that overloading the poor boy by expecting him to differentiate between instructions to him ("throw the ball") and commands to Cribbs ("catch the ball") would be a good thing.

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~~~ Oh...that OTHER troubling thing about the QB situation? That falls in another category and will be addressed at the bottom of the article.

~~~ If you are a Kansas City Chiefs fan...aren't you just a bit on the panicked side at this point? They got rid of Trent Green, who is already being booed in Miami, and the job will now go to either Damon Huard or Brodie Croyle. Yech. At least the Browns have three incompetent QBs and a semi-promising rookie to choose from. The Chieftains also don't think it's a big deal that Larry Johnson pouts at home. After all, they do have 56 year old Priest Holmes chomping at the dentures to step back in. They also seem to think that competent wide receivers are simply a luxury in the NFL, and it's no big deal if they don't have any (one wonders if Chris Palmer and/or Butch Davis are on the Chiefs' payroll as consultants).

The point is...don't take one performance by the Browns defense in the first exhibition game against THIS collection of "talent" as a sign that Todd Grantham's crew are ready to dominate the league.

And don't you know that Larry Johnson and his agent were both sitting back watching the game Saturday night going "Cha-CHING!"

~~~ Despite the above point, you have got to like how Kamerion Wimbley and Eric Wright looked. The rookie CB was picked on early and often, and responded by immediately sentencing Kenny Wright (aka "Ralph Brown, Redux") to a comfy spot on the bench. Bodden and Holly both looked good on their interceptions. Of course, it helps when the QB throws it directly into your hands without the aggravation of having a single Chiefs' receiver within five yards of you.

Wimbley, meanwhile, looks to be the breakout defensive stud not seen since...damn...I have no idea when the Browns had this type of disruptive force that every team in the league has to game plan around. I think the phrase I'm looking for is "the breakout defensive stud not seen since time began".

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~~~ One other thing coming out of the Wimbley Show is that Joe Thomas has to be feeling a bit better now, seeing someone else get totally abused by the phreakish combination of speed and size. And I also think the Browns are now breathing a lot easier about their decision to put Thomas in with the first unit at LT so early. Even with Lenny Bruce...er...Lenny Friedman at LG instead of the injured Eric Steinbach, Thomas did quite well, a couple of holding penalties notwithstanding. The kid's footwork and technique looked excellent, and he's a quick learner, so I'm expecting that the Browns might have the best LT since Tony Jones was protecting Bernie's blind side.

Was I alone in yelling "Dumbass!" at the screen when Ryan Tucker made his first appearance? However, it might be best in the long run, as this forced Shaffer to RT early enough to make the adjustment...but if either Shaffer or Thomas go down in the first or second game, I am really going to be ticked at MuthaTucker.

~~~ Willie McGinest? Matt Stewart? I don't seem to recall either of those names at this time. After the "Peek Performance" this week by Antwan (sorry...I shouldn't have went there. But I couldn't resist...I promise never to do it again), plus respectable showings by David McMillan and the Player Formerly Known As A Stupid Second Round Pick By Butch Davis...oh, wait...that doesn't narrow the field down much, does it? So let's just say McMillan and Chaun Thompson, who was switching positions AGAIN to OLB. Both are showing some potential for depth at the position, enough to where we won't miss McGinest or Stewart.

Then again...how can you "miss" something that you never really had?

~~~ There were a few plays that confused me Saturday night. Something about giving the ball to a RB and having him burst quickly and decisively through a hole, and picking up over ten yards...a concept I am totally unfamiliar with when it involves a RB in an orange helmet.

Welcome, Jamal Lewis. Damn, that's still a little painful to write...although after

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seeing his potential for 1,500 + yards this year, I might just get used to it. Jerome Harrison looked pretty good as well. Other than the part where he and Charlie Frye shared ZERO brains between them on the overthrown-screen-pass-that-was-really-a-lateral-that-no-one-in-white-went-after.

~~~ Should Steve Heiden be worried that Chudzinski seems to have brought over all his tight end buddies from the Chargers and the University of Miami? OK...technically, Buck Ortega was here first, serving time on the practice squad last year. But he did look pretty decent tearing up that third string Chiefs defense. And having Ryan Krause lining up as an H-back in several formations is something new.

Chud's offensive scheme is supposed to be very tight end friendly. Given the talents of Kellen Winslow and Steve Heiden, this is a good thing. (To answer the earlier question, Heiden should not be worried. Darnell Dinkins, on the other hand, needs to start planning his next career). After last year witnessing an offensive coordinator planning to the "strengths" of such stars as Lawrence Vickers and Terrell Smith, this is another pleasant surprise.

~~~ Wide receiver depth? Very, very scary. Granted, it's hard to totally judge things when you have Derek Anderson throwing C.C. Sabathia speed passes at the ankles of receivers 15 feet away from him, but right now, things don't look good after you get past Braylon Edwards and Joe Jurevicius. Tim Carter is hurt, and has never been much more than Dennis Northcutt without the punt returning skills. And the self proclaimed "best WR in the 2006 draft", Travis Wilson, has been aptly named ["Steely Hands"](#) by our own Hiko.

~~~ What scares me worse than the wideouts? Punt returns. Sorry to say this to all those "adopt a pathetic rookie" types out there that have fallen in Training Camp Love with Syndric Steptoe, a man with a name that should have come from a Harry Potter novel. Well, it looks like that nasty little Draco Malfoy has put a Clueless Curse on Syndric, as he demonstrated the habit of catching the ball, and then juking five or six times before deciding to run forward, resulting in a return of

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about six inches. In fairness, he didn't do that EVERY time. There was the time that he forgot to run up and fair catch the ball at the 30, letting it bounce down to the 12. And the other time that he caught the ball, took three steps forward, and then ran backwards ten yards before he was tackled.

### ~~~ **Abusing a No-Longer-Breathing Four Legged Kentucky Derby Participant.**

Derek Anderson sucked rotten eggs and has all the finesse of a sumo wrestler on inline skates. Charlie Frye did a couple of things well, and then twice decided to drink a really cold Slurpee at the line of scrimmage which caused his not-too-big-brain to freeze. Ken Dorsey is Craig Krenzel without the high IQ or the win in his final game in college.

All of this has been the cause of the deforestation of one or two small nations to handle all the newspaper stories regarding the subject, along with increasing Global Warming by having billions and billions of electrons flying back and forth on the Internet with every Browns fan in the world chirping in on The State of the Quarterback.

Bleh. I'm bored with it, so I decided to emulate the Browns' fearless leader and flip a coin. If it's heads, I won't care, and if it's tails, I won't give a rat's petootie.

In truth, I'm sure Charlie will be fine right on through October 15<sup>th</sup>, when the Brady Quinn era will begin under new (and interim) Head Coach Todd Grantham, while Derek Anderson will be seeking employment somewhere north of the 49<sup>th</sup> parallel.

But what Romeo really needs to do (other than to mix in a salad every

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once in awhile), is to take a page out of baseball's book, and simply bring in a relief pitcher whenever (a) Charlie gets into the Red Zone, or (b) the clock gets down inside of two minutes, as Charlie's closing skills are about the same as Paris Hilton's (fill in the blank with anything that doesn't involve sex) skills.

I might advocate having Romeo bring in Eric Wedge as a consultant, but if that were the case, Romeo would be trotting out Elvis Grbac or Mike Phipps in those situations.

I need a drink. Or twenty.