

Not-So-Instant Analysis

Written by {ga=jb}

Thursday, August 16 2007 7:00 PM -

Manny Lucas is back in the fray for us this morning, and there is no one that breaks down a game quite like him. His takes are self-described as "raw and dirty", but as someone who's been reading him for 6-7 years ... it doesn't get much better than Mansfield if you are a hard core Browns fan. Today, he takes a look at the good, the bad, and the ugly from the Browns first pre-season game.



This season my goal is to have an article up for the site by two hours after every game I don't attend, and up the night of every game I do attend once I make the long trek home from the house your vices and credit usage built. I want to capture the agony and ecstasy that only the Browns can bring to my life on a weekly basis as their fate determines my mood for the week. I know you live and die the same way I do, too. You may agree, disagree, and be offended, but you'll feel the raw and the dirty. But hell, not since about 2003 have I rearranged my life to fit around *exhibition* football. Thank God for PVR.

I re-watched the Browns and Chefs the last two nights. Not bad. Not too bad.

To those who tell me that the first quarter of X season ball is meaningless, I scoff. Yeah, when our guys who regret the passing of the Barcelona Dragons are playing their guys who long for the days of the Frankfort Galaxy, it is worthless. But base on base vanilla talent early on does have some, if limited meaning. Here are my takeaways from the game.

The starting defense is noticeably faster.

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OK, so there were some coverages blown and mistakes made, but there's no question that we finally have a defense that is potentially athletic. No more Ben Taylor's and Percy Ellsworth's. The defensive backs are there in waves. The safeties fly to the ball and the corners covered something fierce. Kamerion Wimbley is a pro bowler waiting to get discovered by the national sheep media and Antwan Peek played as a force. David McMillan also had many good reps. The D line wasn't abused even when the backups went in, and Orien Harris, Simon Frazier and some of the kids played stout. I saw some blitzing. This might be the year the defense turns the corner and does so with a vengeance.

Scientifically speaking, Charlie Frye sucks 40% less than last year.

When I first watched the game I fixated on Frye's arm. That stuff is ugly. I don't know if dude's shoulder is glued back on like cat was a Kung Fu Grip GI Joe who had a rough go-round with an M 80, but it sure as hell is one good impression of one. Watch how he throws and his mechanics. You too can pay \$ 40 at Big Fun in Coventry for an old school GI Joe and pick up some fireworks in Boardman and give it a try with some Krazy Glue™, and then watch the Browns and Frye next week and see if I am not dead nuts on. You just have to lie and say you're taking the fireworks to Georgia or some stupid stuff the Ohio General Assembly got lobbied into passing. But my friend The Rocket Scientist, I call him that because he thinks he is just cause he works for NASA and helps manage missions where they launch rockets, reminds he that he's seen a lot of good Browns' quarterbacks with bad arms over the years. The fact that Ryan, Nelson, and Sipe all threw like me should be proof enough we shouldn't automatically blow Frye out of the water as a starter. He's got his point. Just cause he took Calc 27 at CSU in the day he thinks he knows all, but I begrudging allow him this point. Frye's arm is a ramen noodle. I don't even mean those expensive ones that cost a dollar and you get the non-biodegradable Styrofoam bowl with them masquerading as soup. I mean that Top Ramen crap you get ten for a dollar at Rite Aid for God-knows-what reason. The plus side is that other than that play we saw where he reverted to lame Chuck form trying to make a ten yard run up the middle with six second left at the end of the half, Frye played with presence and actually made a read on a progression or two rather than playing sand lot ball. That's a big improvement for him. And given this next point, enough to make him the holding-the-seat-warm-for-BQ-the-QB starter for now.

DA was craptacular.

Wow. I mean, just wow. What the hell was *that*? That is all.

Jamal Lewis is Krispy

Beastie. Quick. Strong. You know, this is gonna be fun, because...

This is the year that the O line may just stop sucking.

Joe Thomas in space blocking down field. Am I weeping? Wouldn't surprise me if I was. Seth McKinney looked like a bona fide NFL guard. Kevin Shaffer played well as did Fat Hank. And we haven't even seen Eric Steinbach, who is incredibly athletic and probably the best of the bunch at this point in their careers. They got out there in space and they got push up close. They gave the passers more than enough time. Most of last year's starters are this year's depth. I am actually optimistic that with a little time, a little luck, and a little health the O line turns the corner early this season. And if you have a defense, and an offensive line, and a back looking like Jamal Lewis is looking? You can make up for a lot of quarterback deficiencies. I'll say it now: unless KC suddenly leaves the NFL via a ban for sucking and joins the MAC, and I believe that they are representative of the lower wend of the middle 50% of the League, we're gonna surprise some teams this season.

Stay down, Willie. Stay down.

Kameron Wimbley, Antwan Peek, and David McMillan all played with

speed and power. All of them looked fresh and quick. Wimbley had two or three of his low end moves were he is like one half Gumby and one half Carl Lewis in his prime. We're set with quality outside linebackers, and that, cats, is what makes a 3 - 4 defense work.

Leon Williams must play. I don't care who has to sit.

Seriously, I don't. Right now I'm leaning toward Jackson sitting, but it could be Davis. Really, I don't give a rat's ass who sits so long as Leon starts and plays. What about huge and fast and play making doesn't get him that starter's PT?

Did I just see Jerome Harrison pick up a blitz?

It had to be an optical illusion like that horrible tabloid photo of a fat Valerie Bertinelli. No way Valerie could ever be nasty. Not my Valerie.

All you Dropcutt hatas are gonna be so, so sorry on punt returns this season.

Yeah, his body-catching third-down pass dropping drive-killing ass frustrated the bejesus out of me just like it did you. But the punt returners I saw were just plain scary in a way I haven't seen since Glenn Close just wouldn't die in the damn bathtub. They will cost us points, field position, and maybe even games this season. Dennis

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wasn't worth the high number two pick, and he was never a good receiver, but he spoiled us as a punt return man. Mark my words. I'd like to see what Chris Barclay could do there as Cribbs has the best hands but lacks the quicks.

Overall, the Browns spanked the Chfs and made them look pathetic. It was a quality effort and I saw big improvement from the young players. More like that.

Until next week...