

Hiko went to a Browns/Bengals game, and a Texas Tech/Hawaii game broke out. We dispatched our talented columnist to Cleveland Browns Stadium this week, and man did he like what he saw. And in this week's Outsider, Hiko gives us his usual quarter by quarter, drive by drive breakdown of this past Sunday's game ... taking breaks for humor and analysis along the way.



A View From The Cheap Seats **Week 2 – Cleveland vs. Cincinnati**

Well... that was fun. And I actually mean that this time.

If I were to write about every big play, every important play, every eventful play in this game, I would die of Carpal Tunnel Syndrome. This might be longer than *Dr. Zhivago*.

I went to a Browns/Bengals game, and a Texas Tech/Hawaii game broke out.

There were many heroes for the Browns in this game. We can gush about Derek Anderson. We can wax poetic about Jamal Lewis. We can brag about Braylon Edwards. We can spew

orgasmic phrases about Kellen Winslow. We can offer pleasantries about Joe Jurevicius. But the real key to the game was the Offensive Line.

Anderson, Lewis, Edwards, Winslow, and Jurevicius don't have their big days without the incredible efforts of **Joe Thomas, Eric Steinbach, Hank Fraley, Seth McKinney**

, and – yes, even you –

Kevin Shaffer

. Anderson wasn't sacked all day. Hell, he was barely touched. And no one outside of Barry Sanders runs for over 200 yards without some nice blocking.

And since the Offensive Line is maybe the most important key to a team's success, we should all feel fantastic about that aspect of the Cleveland Browns sports franchise. Hail, O Line! We are proud of ye!

As always, if you'd like the more compact version, feel free to skip ahead to the Conclusion. But this might be one game you want to recall.

Expectations

I expect the Offense to look better, and I expect Derek Anderson to move the ball against a suspect Bengals D, but I expect him to make a couple key mistakes, and it will cost the Browns a chance to win. *(I may have missed on this one.)*

I expect the Defense to look even worse than last week, which is hard to do. *(Unfortunately, this one was probably correct.)*

I expect a much more competitive game, but, sadly, another Loss. *(Only when you are as pessimistic as I can you truly enjoy being wrong. I am ecstatic about being wrong.)*

Pregame

My girlfriend, myself, and 2 of our friends went to the game. We got a late start, and didn't arrive until about 10:30. Still,

plenty of time for some mental lubrication, also known as *drink enough to ease the impending pain*

.

Besides, I was the designated driver last year, and was not going to screw up my free pass.

Everywhere I looked, Bengals fans interacted with Browns fans. Every group seemed to have at least one individual wearing a Palmer jersey. I remarked on the phenomenon. It seems that Cincinnati fans are much less repugnant socially than Steelers or Ravens fans. And, truly, I must admit that the sight of some fool wearing tiger striped jerseys didn't elicit the same amount of ire that I normally experience from those wearing black-n-yella or purple.

Maybe I was just surprised that the Bengals had fans. As recently as 5 years ago, they didn't.

One of my friends, Franco, asked me "Over-under on Derek

Anderson interceptions today?”

As much as it pained me to say it, I replied “Three.” My faith in the Browns was tarnished. I mean, there was a layer of muck on it thick enough to plant corn.

With about 15 minutes to game time, having used the parking lot as a bathroom only thrice, we headed towards the gates to foolishly try and resuscitate hope.

First Quarter

The Bengals got the Opening Kickoff, and started at their own 30. Quickly, as if their lives depended on it, Cincy moved the ball right down the field, seemingly unimpeded. With 10:40 left in the 1st Quarter, Palmer threw a 13 yard TD pass to Rudi Johnson, and it was suddenly: *Bengals*
7, Browns 0.

“That was quick,” Franco said.

“I don’t think they even had a 3rd down,” I replied. I was correct – they didn’t.

“Over-under on the crowd chanting for Brady?” he asked.

“9 minutes left in the 1st,” I said.

Derek Anderson did little to give us hope on Cleveland’s ensuing possession, as he threw two terrible passes en route to a Browns 3 and out. The crowd, already tense from last week’s debacle, began the booing process in a hurry.

“Over-under on how full the stadium is after Halftime?” Franco asked.

“65 percent,” I replied.

Little did I know what would happen after that. Those two errant throws by DA were obviously aimed at internal demons, and he nailed ‘em.

On the first play of the following Cincinnati possession, Robaire Smith sacked Carson Palmer for a loss of 7. That was important,

as, two plays later, it caused Palmer to throw a highly inadvisable pass that was easily intercepted by Sean Jones.

Starting at the Bengals 37, Jamal Lewis ran the ball 3 straight times, banging out a 1st down. Then Anderson threw a perfect pass to Braylon Edwards in traffic. Edwards got hit, upended, and dropped the ball. It would've been a tough catch, but, if you want to be considered an elite receiver in this league... man, I could swear I've said this before.

My belief in Braylon has been notched

up a bit since that moment.

On 3rd and 6 from the Cincy 22, Anderson dropped back, had the ball knocked out of his hands, recovered, moved to his right, and threw towards a wide open Joe Jurevicius in the end zone. Unfortunately, there was some kind of tractor beam about 6 yards out of bounds that sucked the easy TD right into an incomplection.

When you get an opportunity like that, you have to take it

, I thought.

We'll need to take advantage of every chance we get if we're gonna hang in this game.

Field Goal. *Bengals 7, Browns 3.*

The Bengals got the ball back, but did very little with it. Orpheus Roye had a great opportunity to nail Rudi Johnson for a big loss, but tackling wasn't the theme of the day, and Johnson got away and turned it into a 2 yard gain. Apparently, the offenses weren't properly warmed up yet, since the Browns held and we saw the second punt of the game. They were to be few and far far between.

Starting at their own 19, the Browns moved right down the field into Bengals territory. Anderson was over his jitters, and his throws were crisp and his receivers were open. Edwards made a tough diving catch (the kind elite receivers make) over the middle for 20. But, the drive stalled at the Bengals 22. Derek Anderson didn't have many bad throws after the opening possession, but he made one here as he almost threw an INT on 3rd and 7, and Phil Dawson came in for his second FG. *Bengals 7, Browns 6.*

Phil kicked off, the Coverage team made one of their few good plays of the day and stopped Cincy on their own 15. The quarter ended, and the scoreboard gave absolutely no evidence of what was yet to come.

End of 1st: Bengals 7, Browns 6.

Second Quarter

It looked like the Bengals were going to march rapidly down the field as they got a pass to Chad Johnson (who had like 423 yards receiving) for 14 and a run by Rudi Johnson right up the gut for 20. But - Hallelujah! - Rudi was kind enough to fumble at the end of the run, and the Browns took over at midfield.

The wheels were greased now, and the Browns were undaunted

by even a 3rd and 13, which they converted with a sweet pass to Winslow for 20 yards. Two plays later, Anderson dropped back and threw a perfect fade to Joe Jurevicius for the score, and – YE GODS! – we had ourselves a ballgame. *Browns 13, Bengals 6.*

That opened the floodgates.
Even Noah was scared.

“So that’s what a lead feels like,” I told Franco.

“Weird,” he replied.

Employing the No Huddle, the Bengals moved the following possession right down the field. On 1st and 10 from the

Cleveland 23, Palmer hoisted a pass to a wide WIDE open TJ Houshmandzadeh in the end zone for a TD. Or was it? The replays at the stadium certainly seemed to show that his 2nd

foot was out of bounds, and Romeo challenged it. It was not overturned, and Browns fans around the world were incensed enough to overturn chairs and tables in protest. I tried my hardest to lose my voice in my anger, suggesting

the ref do things to himself that are probably not physically possible. Even Houshmazilly thought he was out.

Watching the play again at home in super slow motion, it does appear that the ball hit TJ's hands as his left foot was still on the ground. It was close. Close enough to not

overturn... I guess...

Dammit... *Bengals 14,*
Browns 13.

A perturbed Josh Cribbs made the Bengals feel his displeasure as he returned the ensuing kickoff for 85 yards to the Cincy 11. There is no doubt in my mind that Cribbs is one of the top 3

Return men in the league,
and his presence is going to
give us many advantages.
May he live a thousand years.

The drive was pretty easy
from there, as – on 3rd down
– Anderson dropped back,
pump faked, went quickly
through his progressions
, and nailed Joe J for each

player's 2

nd

TD of the day.

Browns 20, Bengals 13.

That was the kind of QB play that I haven't seen from a member of the Cleveland Browns in SO FREAKIN' LONG. If Derek Anderson can keep that

up... well, I just don't wanna say, 'cause I'm afraid I'll jinx it.

The Browns kickoff coverage had another nice stop on the next play, and Cincy had to start deep in their own end. On 2nd and 2 from their own 20, Palmer threw a pass to Glenn Holt,

and Brodney Pool speared him right in the head. I don't believe for a second that Pool meant to go head to head, since Holt was sliding down, and Pool actually gave himself a concussion (and did not return). But it did net a 15 yard Personal Foul, and helped the Bengals move right down the field.

And they didn't need any help.

The Bengals moved the ball to the Cleveland 22, where Palmer found a wide WIDE open Chad Johnson for the easy EASY TD. How he was that wide open is a mystery wrapped

in a riddle wrapped in an enigma. Leigh Bodden fell down on the coverage, but can we get some Safety play please? Anyone? Please?

Now we started to get a sense for what this game had become. *Bengals 21,*

Browns 20.

Johnson had promised to jump in the Dog Pound if he scored, but he was on the wrong side of the stadium, so he ran in circles, trying to decide if he would run the length of the field, or if he would

jump into the stands in the nearby end zone (otherwise known as the *Not Dog Pound*), and was finally restrained by a teammate that was tired of seeing Ocho Cinco make an ass of himself. Ah, if only there were someone assigned to that duty on a more regular basis.

Cribbs took the kickoff and once again made Cincy feel his wrath, returning the ball 97 yards this time.

Alas! Chaun Thompson was called for the illegal block, and the Browns had to start at their own 12 instead of the Bengals 4.

No matter

, Derek Anderson said.

This only delays the inevitable.

The Browns appeared as if they might play it conservatively, but then Jamal Lewis blew through the line for a 31 yard run to the Cincy 48, which ran the clock down to 2 minutes. On 2nd and 2 from the Bengals 40, Anderson made a somewhat dangerous throw to Edwards amidst triple coverage. The ball

was knocked up in the air. Braylon, who was laying on the ground, rolled over and grabbed it before it hit the turf for a spectacularly lucky gain of 15. It was the kind of catch you rarely see outside of backyard football.

On the next play, Anderson zipped the ball across the middle to a highly open Winslow for a beautiful 25 yard TD. I mean, that play was gorgeous. It was the Scarlett Johanssen of pass plays. *Browns 27, Bengals 21.*

“Over-under on the Browns scoring 50?”
Franco queried.

“50 percent,” I replied.

With about a minute left in the half, Cincy got the ball back, and moved it to their 39. Palmer nailed Chad Johnson with a 25 yard pass, but Johnson did the Browns a huge favor (one of his few) and stayed in bounds, allowing the clock to run to triple 0 as the Bengals had no Time Outs

remaining.

To a huge round of
applause, the Browns
trotted into the locker
room.

*Halftime: Browns 27,
Bengals 21.*

Third Quarter

The Bengals were so

scared of Josh Cribbs' returns that they squibbed the kickoff, despite Cribbs not even being in the game (he wasn't feeling too well and was getting an IV). So the Browns had the ball at their own 20 with a lead.

Unfortunately, during Halftime, Derek Anderson remembered that he was Derek Anderson, not Carson Palmer, and threw the ball right to Dexter Jackson – a Not Browns player – and we had our first INT.

“Over-under on the Browns blowing this game?” Franco asked.

“Will you please shut up already?” I replied.

Starting at the Browns 25, the Bengals ran Rudi Johnson right down Cleveland's throats. It was suddenly 2nd and 2 at the Browns 3, and things weren't looking so good. Now, the Browns D doesn't stop the run well, and it doesn't stop it often, but it stopped Rudi twice here, and forced

Cincy to settle for a FG.
This was a key stop,
allowing the Browns to
maintain their slim lead.
Browns 27, Bengals 24.

Cribbs was still not in,
but the Bengals
squibbed it again

anyway (damn, they must've been petrified).

Anderson righted his mental ship, and, on 3rd and 6, he nailed Edwards on a 19 yard pass along the sidelines. It was a great

catch (the kind elite receivers make), and it withstood Cincinnati's challenge. Lewis then ran for 10 (he had 73 at this point), and the Browns converted another 3rd

down 2 plays later with a 10 yard catch by Winslow to the Bengals

34.

Well, Mr. Anderson,
since you're starting to
feel it again, what shall
you do now? How
about a lovely (running
out of synonyms now)

pass to Braylon Edwards, as he had toasted Leon Hall and caught the ball in stride in the End Zone. This was just getting silly now. *Browns 34, Bengals 24.*

The Browns decided to shoot their momentum right in the spleen as they allowed the Bengals to return the kickoff all the way to the Cleveland 35. Four plays later, Palmer hit Chad Johnson on a slant for an all-too-easy TD. Yes, Chad, you're

in the Dog Pound end zone now. Gonna do it?

Yep. He ran up and jumped right up to the stands. Beer got dumped all over him.

Someone threw a hot dog. Hands reached down to try and drag him in (I can only speculate what might've happened had that occurred – I'm sure it wouldn't have been friendly). He got down and backed off, somehow surprised by

his drenching and
ensuing rude finger
gestures.

What did you expect,
dumbass? *Browns 34,*
Bengals 31.

How would the Browns respond, you ask? It didn't take long to find out. On the 1st play of the drive, Anderson handed the ball to Jamal Lewis, who made one cut, and was gone. No, that doesn't really sum it up. He was GO

NE

Untouched, he blew by Bengals defenders on his way to a 66 yard TD. It was fantabulous to see that kind of speed out of the supposedly over-the-hill Lewis. I'm fairly sure I was floating at this point – and it wasn't

just the beer.

Browns 41, Bengals 31.

A shootout isn't a
shootout unless both
combatants are firing,
and the Browns
Defense saw no

reason to slow down the bullets. Someone get the D on a conditioning program. Cincy took the kickoff and went quickly down the field, during which Rudi Johnson joined Jamal Lewis in the Over 100 Yards club. On 1st and Goal at the

Browns 5, Palmer hit
TJH for the easy (no,
it's not déjà vu) TD.

*Browns 41, Bengals
38.*

With 49 seconds left

in the quarter, Josh Cribbs returned (to the game and the kick), and it was evident as the Browns started the drive at their 42. The Browns ran two plays, and they headed for the 4th

Quarter with a 3
rd

and 6.

*End of 3rd: Browns
41, Bengals 38.*

Fourth Quarter

To start off the 4th,
the 3
rd

down pass to
Jurevicius was

marked just short,
bringing up a
critical 4
th

down at midfield,
which Romeo
decided to go for.
Why not? The
Bengals hadn't

stopped us all day.

Well, they stopped
us there, as Ron
Chudzinski opted
for the quick

handoff to
Laurence Vickers
instead of
pounding Lewis.
The collective
hearts of Cleveland
Browns stadium
fell. We'd been
burned too many

times before, and
we always feel like
there's a torch
nearby.

I still feel it was the

right call to go for
it. It's not like
punting would have
slowed the Jungle
Cats down.

The Browns D
rarely decided to
play in this game,
but they did seem
to rise up every
time the Browns O
was for some
reason held without
a TD, and they

opted to shock the world by attempting to hold for a 3 and out. And they did, forcing an incompleteness on 3rd and 2! In other news, a blizzard was spotted in

Egypt.

The Browns
started at their
own 8. How long
would it take them

to go 92 yards? 5 plays. Lewis for 3, a pass to Steve Heiden for 27, Lewis for 14, a pass to Vickers for 11, and then a TD pass to Braylon for 37.

Pow! Bang!
Zoom! *Browns 48,*
Bengals 38.

Let's discuss the
TD for a moment:

Braylon Edwards
was running up the
left side of the field
so wide open that
Derek Anderson
probably
wondered if he
was hallucinating.
Perhaps overly

eager, he threw
the ball a little too
far. Everyone
waited to let loose
a unified

“AAAAAAWWWW
Wwwwww!” of
disappointment.

However, Braylon

just dove, made a helluva catch (the kind elite receivers make), and slid right into the End Zone. It was that kind of day. The kind where everything goes

right. You know,
the kind that is
rarer than
unicorns.

Cincy knew what

was up now, and they needed to respond. Moving the ball rapidly, they reached midfield. There, they had some problems with stalling. Two

incompletions, a
Delay of Game
penalty, and
another
incompletion on 3^r
d
and 15 resulted in
a Bengals punt.
The crowd went

nuts. That was
TWO IN A ROW.
Stop the presses.

With 8:29 left in
the game, the

Browns took over
at their own 30.

What's the best
thing to do when
you want to run
some clock?

Why, run the ball
of course. Here

you go, Mr. Lewis.

Why don't you
take that handoff
and run for
another 47 yards?
Good. Thanks.

From there (the
Cincy 23),
Anderson hit
Winslow down to
the 5. First and
Goal. Whaddaya
do? Whaddaya
do? You pound

the ball in there
with Lewis – that's
what you do.

They did, down to
the 1. But, on 3rd
and 1, they opted
for the rollout,
which ended with

Anderson
throwing the ball
away and bringing
Phil Dawson onto
the field.

*Browns 51,
Bengals 38.*

I don't mean to
nitpick... actually,
yes I do. That's
not the Bears
Defense in there.
You've been
running on them
all day. Chances

are really good
you can pound
that ball in on 3rd
and Goal from
the 1. And, if
you don't, you eat
up the clock. The
clock was not our

friend at that
point. Kill it. Kill
it dead. A
mistake to throw
that ball at that
juncture, in my
mind.

The Bengals got the ball back, and again drove to midfield, and again stalled. However, with just over 4 minutes left and

down by 13, the
Cats were forced
to go for it on 4th
and 10. The
crowd tried to set
new decibel
levels, knowing
that a stop would

effectively end
the game. 'Twas
not to be.

Palmer hit Chad
Johnson for a 32
yard gain. Let
the drama
continue.

Five passes later, Palmer nailed Glenn Holt with a 7 yard TD, and here we go again. *Browns 51, Bengals 45.*

The Browns
took over at their
34 with 3:39
left. On 1st
down, Lewis ran
for 2 yards, and
Cincy took their
2nd

Time Out. We
in the stand
debated about
what to do.

“Pound the
ball!”

“They know
we’ll pound the

ball! Catch
them with a
surprise throw!”

“If the ball is

incomplete,
then it stops the
clock. Don't
stop the clock!
They only have
one Time Out
left!"

“But it might be
worth it!”

Well, the
Browns must've

felt the same,
as Anderson
rolled out and
tossed the ball
to a wide open
Vickers. If
Vickers caught

the ball, he
would probably
still be running.
(OK, he might
be walking by
now.) It was a
medium-risk,

high-reward
call, and I don't
blame them for
taking it.

However,
Vickers felt he
had better

things to do
than catch the
ball. The clock
stopped.

(For the record,
I was one of
the proponents
for pounding the
ball.)

On 3rd and 8,
Braylon caught
a tough pass in
traffic, the refs
took mercy on
our souls with
the spot, and

the Browns
continued their
drive at their 44
with 3:11 left.
Cincy took their
last Time Out.

The Browns
took heed of
my advice and
pounded the
ball with Lewis
twice. That
brought us to

the 2 minute
warning: 3rd
and 4 at the
Bengals 49.
The debate
raged again.

“Run the ball.
Even if you
don’t get the 1st
down, you
punt, and the
Bengals have
to go 80 to 90

yards in just
over a minute
with no Time
Outs left.”

That argument
seemed to win
over most of
the
constituents.

And that's
what the
Browns did.
Dave Zastudil
came out for
his 2nd punt
(yes, only

TWO!), which
he dribbled
down to the
Cincy 9. Hold
onto your
cookies,
Browns fans.

1st and 10,
Cincy 9 –
Palmer made
a deep pass
down the
middle, which
was tipped

and
incomplete.

2nd and 10,

Cincy 9 – 8
yard pass to
Rudi
Johnson. Out
of bounds. 58
seconds left.

3rd and 2,
Cincy 17 – 3
yard pass to
Rudi
Johnson.
Out of

bounds. 53
seconds left.
“That’s right,
march down
the field 3
yards at a

time!” I
encouraged
Marvin Lewis.

1st and 10,
Cincy 20 –
30 yard pass
to Chad
Johnson right
down the

middle.
D'Qwell
Jackson and
Sean Jones
were both
right there,

but somehow
Palmer
threaded the
needle,
Jackson was
a bit shaken

up, and the
Browns were
charged an
injury Time
Out with 33
seconds left

at the game
and the
Bengals
poised like
an evil
vampire

hawk at
midfield.

Uh oh.

“Over-under

on...” Franco
began.

“SHUT THE
F*** UP!” the
entire
section
screamed.

1st and 10,
Midfield –
20 yard pass
to TJH that
was broken
up nicely by

Mike Adams
(could very
well have
been
intercepted.)
28 second

left.

2nd and 10,

Midfield –
Palmer
threw the
ball 20 yards
to the right
towards

Chad
Johnson,
but Leigh
Bodden was
in great
position,

caught the
ball over his
shoulder,
dragged his
feet, and the
game was

over.

Oh, they

reviewed it,
but it held
up,
Anderson
came in, the
Offense

assumed
the Victory
Formation,
and the
Browns
pulled out

the highly
improbable
win.

Whew.

Time for a
celebration
beer. Or 8.

Final:

Browns 51,

Bengals 45.

Conclusion

~~ It wasn't

so much
that the
Browns
secondary
was getting
reamed as

Carson
Palmer was
incredibly
sharp.
Sometimes,
a QB is in a

zone and
his throws
are just too
good.

However,
there were
several
terrible,
horrible,
vomit-induci

ng broken
coverages,
and that
feces needs
to get fixed
right now.

In particular,
the play
from our
Safeties has
been – to
put it mildly -

disappointin

g.

~ ~ I focused
on
Kameron
Wimbley on
several
plays, and

he kept
trying to
make his
outside
dip-the-shoulder
move

to get by the
Left Tackle.
It didn't work
at all, and
killed his
momentum.

Kam – that's
a nice move
and all, but
it won't work
if you use it
every time.

I expected
a nice
season from
you, but you
haven't
done

bupkiss so
far. Hell, I
expected a
good
season for
the whole D.

All I can
say is: 34
and 45

■

Despite the
win, the
entire
Defense
needs a
good public

flogging.

~~What

have we
learned from
this? Be
more
decisive
during the

preseason.

In the QB

battle du

jour, neither

Frye nor

Anderson

got enough
reps with
the starters,
especially
when Quinn
was mixed

in there,
and,
consequently,
the
Browns
offense

never
achieved
cohesion. It
certainly
affected
Frye, who

really let it
get into his
head when
things went
downhill in a
hurry versus

Pittsburgh,
and it
must've
affected
Anderson,
who looked

like a
completely
new QB with
a week of
solid starter
reps under

his belt.

Really, that

Pittsburgh
game was
essentially
our last
preseason
game. We

still didn't
know who
our QB was,
the
Offensive
line hadn't

played
together,
Jamal Lewis
was still an
unknown
quantity, our

defense got
tired, etc.
etc. etc.

And if the
Steelers
beat down
had any
silver lining,
it was that

Anderson
got plenty of
reps with
the starters
against the
starters.

We're
probably
lucky the
Browns got
it together
as quickly

as they did.
No thanks to
the people
making the
personnel
decisions in

Berea.

~ ~ Plenty of

people
across the
country will
be picking
up Derek
Anderson in

their fantasy
leagues. 5
TD's is
nothing to
scoff at. But
wait a

moment,
eager
fantasy
junkies! Let
him show he
can do it a

second time
in a row
before you
go droppping
that
all-important

backup RB
to get him.

~ ~ And
before we
all get too
excited,
know that
the Bengals

are not a
very good
team.

“They beat
the
Ravens!”

you protest.

Ah, but the
Ravens
aren't that
great either.
Their
offense is

putrid. They
almost had
to go to OT
at home
against a
Jets team

that was
throwing out
a backup to
make his
first start
ever.

As
overrated as
the Ravens
are, they
turned the
ball over 6

times

against

Cincy and *st*

ill

had a

chance to

win it. So,
again, the
Bengals are
not an elite
team.

What we
have shown
is that we
are at least
as good as
they are,

and
probably
about as
good as the
Ravens. As
the Bills can

attest, the
Steelers are
– as of right
now – the
class of the
AFC North.

~ ~ Anyone
else notice
that Little
Ben
Roethlisberg
er keeps

talking
smack
about Bill
Cowher?

“Our
relationship
wasn't
great,” he
said back in
April ■

Then, on
NFL Total
Access, he
said with a
chuckle
about his

new coach
Mike
Tomlin, “He
really
doesn't get
rah-rah. As

a player you
like that.

He's calm.

You don't

have to

worry about

getting
yelled at or
spit on or
getting stuff
thrown at
you.”

Laugh it up,
Furball.

Entice
Cowher to
come to
Cleveland.

I'm not Bill
Cowher's
biggest fan.
I can hardly
stand to
look at him

when he's
on the
sidelines
making
stupid faces
and

convulsing
like he's
having an
epileptic fit.
But there's
no doubting

Cowher's
ability to
coach, and
there's no
arguing with
his results.

I am of the
mind that
the Browns
players (and
coaches)
now have

an irrational
fear of the
Steelers.
Pittsburgh
probably
has more

talent than
the Browns,
but not to
the extent
where
Cleveland

should get
blown out
every time
they play
our inbred
brethren to

the east.

Take the

Steelers

players, put

them on

another

team, and
the Browns
would give
them a
game.

It's in the
players'
heads now.

The game
is lost
before they

even take
the field.

They don't
believe they
can beat the
Steelers.

And the
Steelers
don't
believe they
can be
beaten by

the Browns.

But if

Cowher
were to
become the
Head
Coach in
Cleveland...

~~ I thought
it was odd
that one of
the Bengals'
D Lineman,
#94 Domata

Peko, had a
dead cat
nailed to
the back of
his helmet.
You'd think

that would
be against
league
uniform
policies.

~~~Welcome  
back to the  
200 yard  
club, Jamal  
Lewis  
(actually

216). It's  
the first time  
I've  
enjoyed  
seeing you  
do it.

~~ So we're  
1-1. One  
game  
behind  
Pittsburgh,  
tied with the

rest of the  
AFC North.  
Was this  
win a  
harbinger of  
things to

come, or an  
albatross of  
false hope?

I don't know  
yet, and  
neither do  
you, so I  
won't even  
bother to

speculate.

All this

game really  
does is  
makes me  
a lot more  
excited for  
the Oakland

game next  
week than I  
was for this  
one. That's  
all I ask.  
Give me

something  
to believe  
in.