

Preview: Browns at Raiders

Written by {ga=hermanfontenot}
Saturday, September 22 2007 7:00 PM -

Our front page poll showed that 60% of Browns fans have renewed hopes for the season after last weeks 51 point explosion versus the Bengals. And if the Browns have any designs on surprising some people this year, this weeks game against the Raiders in The Black Hole is a must win. As he does every Sunday morning for us, Jesse Lamovsky previews this weeks Browns game.



Time: Sunday, September 23, 4:00 PM

Location: Network Associates Coliseum, Oakland

Network, Announcers: CBS- back, and not by popular demand, it's Bill Macatee and Steve Beuerlein. We're going into the season's third week, and not only are the Browns an even .500- we've yet to see their unofficial, official team of Ian Eagle and Solomon Wilcotts. Bizarro world!

Line: Raiders by 3

Team W/L Records: Cleveland is 1-1; Oakland is 0-2

Preview: Browns at Raiders

Written by {ga=hermanfontenot}
Saturday, September 22 2007 7:00 PM -

Coaches: Romeo Crennel is 11-23 in his third season; Raiders coach Lane Kiffin is 0-2 in his third game.

Last Week for the Browns: Tore apart Cincinnati's defenseless defense in a 51-45 shootout, the eighth highest-scoring game in NFL history.

Last Week for the Raiders: Lost an overtime heartbreaker at Denver, 23-20. Damn Shanahan and his orange tan and sneaky timeouts!

All-Time Series: Oakland leads 11-7, but hasn't beaten the Browns since a 36-10 rout early in the 2000 season. Cleveland has won six of seven in the series and three in a row over the Raiders, including the last two years in California.

Last Meeting: October 1, 2006- The Browns overcame a 21-3 second-quarter deficit to beat the Raiders 24-21 for their first win of the 2006 season, a triumph highlighted by three touchdown passes and an across-the-field, jump-ball interception in the end zone by Charlie Frye.

Out or Questionable for Oakland: C Jeremy Newberry (hamstring), DE Derrick Burgess (calf) and CB Duane Starks (groin) are questionable.

Out or Questionable for Cleveland: LB Willie McGinest is out (strictly looking for a paycheck); CB Gary Baxter (knees) and S Brodney Pool (concussion) are questionable

What to watch for the Raiders: their mental state. They've lost a pair of heartbreakers so far. In Week One, they stormed back from a 17-0 deficit to the Lions to take a 21-20 fourth-quarter lead, only to give up 16 points in three minutes to lose 36-21. Last week, the Raiders thought they had Denver beat in overtime on the road, only to have what appeared to be a game-winning field goal wiped out by Mike Shanahan's sneaky timeout. Oakland went on to lose, 23-20, to fall to 0-2. That record could very easily be 2-0 right now, and the question is; will the Raiders re-double their efforts for Game Three, or will they play with trepidation, waiting for the other shoe to drop? We'll see.

What to watch for the Browns: The offense and defense. Like Billy Joel, both units went to extremes last week, as the Browns scored and gave up a combined 1,085 yards. Is the offense this good? Is the defense this bad? Probably not one or the other, but a match-up with the Raiders, Cincinnati's doppelganger with a tough defense and an anemic offense, will certainly help fill in the gray areas. To be fair, the Raiders are currently 19th in the NFL in total offense, which is more "sub-mediocre" than "anemic".

Good Past Win over the Raiders: It was Week Three of the 1992 season, and the 0-2 Browns looked to be in deep doo-doo, traveling to the L.A. Coliseum without the services of the injured Bernie Kosar. But Eric Metcalf made sure it didn't matter who lined up under center. Metcalf ran for two first-quarter touchdowns to give Cleveland a 14-0 lead. When L.A. fought back to within 14-13 in the second half, Metcalf provided the knockout punch, twice taking short dump passes from Todd Philcox and turning them into long touchdowns, one for 69 yards, the other for 63. The Texas speedster scored all four Cleveland touchdowns, and the Browns were in the victory column for the first time in '92, with a 28-16 triumph.

Bad Past Loss to the Raiders: Other than Red Right 88? How about October 20, 1985. The upstart Browns and established L.A. Raiders were both 4-2 going into the silver-and-black's first visit to the Stadium since RR88. The Browns took a late 20-14 lead on a Kosar-to-Mack scoring pass, but with less than a minute remaining, Marc Wilson hit Todd Christensen for an eight-yard touchdown on fourth-and-goal and Oakland escaped with a 21-20 win. The tough loss touched off a four-game losing streak, forcing the Browns to play catch-up on their way to an 8-8 record and a somewhat modest AFC Central title.

Next Week for Both Teams: Oakland is at Miami (heck of a game in about 1974 or so); Baltimore is at Cleveland.

Trivia: Cleveland's and Oakland's combined 6-26 record was the worst for the contestants of any game during the 2006 season, making the Browns-Raiders donnybrook the official "Stupor Bowl" of 'Ought-Six.