

You can come to a lot of conclusions about Friday's news that Derek Anderson has re-upped with the Browns. But there is only one conclusion that matters at this point: If Anderson stays put, he and Brady Quinn are on a collision course. And we're in for yet another good old fashioned quarterback controversy, at least amongst the fans of the team that have split themselves into two camps. Erik Cassano discusses the signing of DA, and the dynamic between our two signal callers in his latest.



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If Anderson stays put, he and Brady Quinn are on a collision course.

The Pro Bowl starter/first round draft pick backup scenario worked for one season, and it relied on a delicate balance of a don't-rock-the-boat mentality brought about by a team experiencing its first real taste of success together, a starting QB who had come out of nowhere to become a Top 10 passer, and a backup who was a rookie expected to play the rookie part of staying quiet, holding the clipboard and learning.

That worked in 2007. In 2008, those factors will change drastically.

Heading into next season, the Browns will be viewed by the majority of NFL observers as a winning team. As Kellen Winslow's recent not-so-subtle hint that he'd like a bump in pay illustrates, the Browns have already begun to behave like a winning team, where personal gain no longer takes a backseat to the greater good.

Winslow will likely be a trendsetter in the me-first department. Consider the boat rocked.

Though many of us who had a front-row seat to Anderson's statistical decline in

November and December would argue otherwise, the majority national media perception is that Anderson is one of the top emerging QBs in the NFL. Several [media outlets](#) [lavished praise](#) on Anderson and Phil Savage for continuing their working relationship.

Anderson and his representatives know he's viewed as one of the "it" players in the league right now, at least by those who write about the Browns from a distance. One year might not make a career, but it can certainly make a reputation when you have national columnists on your side.

Quinn came to training camp late, yet still vastly outplayed Anderson and Charlie Frye in the preseason. He had to have known at that point that he could win the starting job outright, but when Romeo Crennel stuck with Frye, then moved along to Anderson when Frye finally wore out his welcome, Quinn still played the part of the submissive rookie, dutifully wearing his skull cap and holding his clipboard during games without a syllable of public complaint.

Don't expect Quinn to take second chair and love it again this year. Quinn watched Anderson's Week 16 flameout in Cincinnati along with the rest of us. Though he projects a kind of unassuming, nice-guy image, don't let the facade fool you: Quinn has a huge ego like any NFL quarterback who was a four-year starter at Notre Dame would. Though he's never said anything to the effect, it wouldn't be a shock to find out that Quinn thinks he's a better QB than Anderson, that he just might believe that if it had been him under center last year, the Browns would have made the playoffs instead of falling just short.

Savage understandably wants to keep his options open. He wants to be able to keep Anderson, trade Anderson, start Quinn, bench Quinn, based on whatever benefits the Browns the most. And there is something to be said for having two starter-caliber quarterbacks on your roster, when the likes of the Falcons and Dolphins arguably couldn't even dress one if they had to play a game tomorrow.

But if a General Managing in Sports 101 class exists, you'd have to think that it would include a unit on team chemistry. Amassing talent is one thing, providing an environment for that talent to succeed is something else.

Any way Savage and Crennel slice it, attempting to have Anderson and Quinn co-exist for another year is a potential hand grenade thrown into the Browns

locker room. This isn't last season's QB conundrum, when neither Frye nor Anderson performed well enough to take over the role. Coin flips prior to preseason games won't be enough to determine a starter between Anderson and Quinn.

Anderson has a Pro Bowl entry on his resume. Quinn is the guy Savage wanted so much, he spent a first- and second-rounder to get him. The stakes are higher, the egos far bigger, and the potential fallout much more damaging.

For once, the Browns aren't rebuilding the skeletal structure of their organization from the ground up. Savage is in the process of filling in the holes on what is now supposed to be a playoff-level team that is eyeing Super Bowl contention in the next two-to-four years.

But there are a number of things that could throw a large wrench into the machine powering the Browns' ascent. Having two quarterbacks -- one paranoid starter and one sulking backup -- is one such thing.

Whether he wants to or not, Savage will be forced to make a decision on his QB of the future, and it will likely mean the end of either Anderson's or Quinn's stay in Cleveland. It's an unenviable position. He can't afford to be wrong.

Unfortunately, Savage's decision is far more complicated than choosing one quarterback over the other. Quinn or Anderson might be wrong answers to the QB dilemma, one or both. But, as of the end of the '07 season, we definitely know "I'll decide later" is the worst answer of all.