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Even taking into account the erratic nature of preseason scheduling, going a week and a half between games is stretching the amount of time a team should reasonably be laid off from action as they are trying to nail down a routine. By the time the Browns roll into East Rutherford, N.J. next Monday to take on the Super Bowl champion Giants, it will be like starting the preseason all over again.

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1. Derek Anderson might be even better this year.

What everyone will remember from Thursday's touchdown drive was the acrobatic one-armed scoring catch by Braylon Edwards. But it was Anderson's masterful piloting of the offense that made the catch possible.

Anderson relied almost exclusively on short throws -- his well-documented

weakness last year -- and an 11-yard burst from Jamal Lewis to put the Browns in the end zone before the first drop fell from the lightning storm that ended up delaying the game for an hour in the first quarter.

Anderson became known for his big arm and his big play capability last year. But the efficiency with which he directed the TD drive shows a potential maturation of Anderson with regard to his game-directing skills. Anderson took nine plays and 4:48 to drive the Browns 62 yards on 4-of-5 completions.

Great quarterbacks might not all have great arms, but they all have the ability to control the pace of the game when on the field. Anderson still has some proving to do in the greatness department, but if he matures from thrower to pitcher, to use a baseball term, he's going to be a really good one.

2. However, Brady Quinn will continue to push Anderson.

When the rains let up and the game resumed with a little over four minutes to play in the first quarter, Quinn stepped onto the field and continued to look like a guy who would probably be given a shot to start by more than a few other NFL teams.

Quinn finished his stint under center 13-of-17 with one pick on a tipped pass. He squirmed out of a would-be sack for an 11-yard gain and a first down that kept a touchdown drive alive in the second quarter.

Quinn and the second team offense put 10 points on the board on two scoring drives. We knew the Browns have some good starters. If the backups can play some ball, the number of different looks Rob Chudzinski can throw at the opposing defense gets multiplied.

3. I am starting to really like Jason Wright.

Seven rushes on 17 yards doesn't seem like anything great, but even if Wright never becomes a featured back in the NFL, he still has a skill set that can help the Browns win games.

Most backup running backs want to show off whatever speed/strength/agility they have in an effort to attract more carries. Especially if they're young. It's not uncommon to see an unseasoned backup rusher spend his preseason carries attempting to plow into gnat-sized holes, run people over or do some Barry

Sanders break dancing in an effort to show that they do, in fact, have mad skills.

Wright is different. Yes, he has a few years of experience over some of the greenhorns fresh off the bus from college. But this is still a guy who has never had a serious look as a starter. With a 100,000-mile Jamal Lewis ahead of him on the depth chart, you could excuse Wright if he tried to make things happen in an effort to impress Romeo Crennel.

Instead, Wright uses his Northwestern-groomed smarts to pick apart plays while they're happening, allowing the play to develop in front of him before choosing his point of attack. You might call it a long-winded euphemism for "too slow," but I'd argue that it takes a great deal of self-discipline for the guy carrying the ball to play that way.

Focus on Wright when he is carrying the ball. He doesn't make a lot of stupid mistakes. Like a smart baserunner who doesn't get himself out, Wright seldom runs himself into lost yardage. That's not athletic talent. That's athletic intelligence.

4. Josh Cribbs' new best friend should be Syndric Steptoe.

If Cribbs wants a raise, the only way he's going to get it is to become a consistent producer with the offense. The only way he's going to get the chance to produce with the offense is if he doesn't have to focus solely on special teams. The only way that's probably going to happen is if someone else can step up and take a portion of the kick returning duties off Cribbs' plate.

I give you Syndric Steptoe. The late-round pick from Arizona in 2007 is getting a chance to make the team as a special-teams contributor, which is the reason he was drafted.

Steptoe finished Thursday with four returns -- two punts and two kickoffs. His long return was 42 yards on a kickoff. A very small sample size, to be sure, but if anyone should be rooting for Steptoe's coming-out party to occur in 2008, it should be Cribbs, who desperately wants to graduate from special-teams stud to bona fide NFL receiver.

5. The beauty of the defense is only skin-deep.

Every Browns fan is hyped over the new-look defensive line, hyped over what the presence of Shaun Rogers is going to mean for Kamerion Wimbley's sack total, even hyped over the super-squirt corner tandem of Eric Wright and Brandon McDonald.

Hype away on those guys, because what's coming behind them is not pretty.

It takes a while to build depth on a football team. The past few offseasons, Phil Savage has concentrated on adding talent and depth to the offense, and the Browns are now bearing the fruit of his labor with a talented, deep, dynamic offense.

The defense is a year or two behind the offense. The starting 11 is noticeably better than last year with the additions of Rogers and Corey Williams to the line. But behind the starters is a giant avalanche of question marks, and it's starting to look like the answers to those questions will be negative.

Early marks on the guys who are slated to provide the depth for the Browns' defense and special teams are not good. It was those units that allows the Jets' offensive backups (hardly high on the NFL food chain themselves) to rally and win Thursday with big plays.

If your third team defense gets out-executed by the opponent's third team offense, fine. That's how young players learn. But when your defense surrenders a 70-yard touchdown bomb from Brett Ratliff to David Clowney, then your special teams surrenders a 62-yard punt return for a touchdown minutes later, that's not getting outmaneuvered. That's getting burned.

If the Browns' defensive starters start showing up in braces and casts en masse, be afraid. Be very afraid. It's only August, and I can already see that defense will have to be the first and second priorities for Savage in the 2009 draft.

6. But, hey, he'll still make one heck of a QB coach.

A lot of Browns fans have drawn parallels between Bernie Kosar and Ken Dorsey. Like Kosar, Dorsey is a Miami of Florida graduate who seems to be of above-average intelligence. Like Kosar, he seems to command a huddle well and seems to be good at improvising in the pocket.

But here's a crucial difference between Kosar and Dorsey: If Kosar were to be faced with a first-and-goal at the five yard line with less than a minute to play and a chance to win the game, that ball is going in the end zone (surprise appearances by Earnest Byner and Jeremiah Castille excluded).

If Kosar had four shots to put the ball in the end zone from five yards out, he'd probably have found a way to do it most times. Dorsey, on the other hand, couldn't seem to keep his passes away from the hands of Jet defenders. Four passes, four incompletions.

It shouldn't irritate me this much that a third-string quarterback couldn't punch the ball into the end zone with the game on the line. But it does.

Please stay healthy, Derek and Brady. If Dorsey is ever forced to take snaps in a regular season game, we're screwed.