

Always one of the most popular columns we run each week, Hiko checks back in with this week's "Browns Outsider" today. And if you've been reading this column all season, you know Hiko is jazzed about the change at quarterback, and he gives us his thoughts on the change on this week's piece. Hiko also looks ahead to tonight's game against the Broncos, and makes some bold predictions on the look and feel of next years Browns team.



A View From The Cheap Seats **Week 8 - Cleveland vs. Baltimore**

Well, I had this article $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way written, and suddenly the Powers That Be™ announce that Brady Quinn will be starting in place of Derek Anderson this Thursday. $\frac{3}{4}$ of the $\frac{3}{4}$ I wrote was instantly nullified. I spent several hours coming up with semi-clever quips and looking up stats for nothing - nothing, I say! Woe is me.

I don't know if I've ever been happier to completely re-write an article, because the original wasn't joyful, and it wasn't hopeful.

The only excerpt I will preserve is: *For a variety of reasons, it's just simply not the Browns year. Watching a mediocre team play out the schedule with little direction and no evolution is not fodder for epic poems. Just another Lost Season. That story's been told before.*

That is now as moot as Tito Jackson.

This Brady Quinn-to-start topic is going to be beaten to death long before you ever read this, so I'll make my thoughts short and pointless.

*My initial thought was that giving Quinn all of one practice to prepare to start is setting him up to fail. But then I remembered that if Derek Anderson had started and were to get hurt, I would expect Quinn to come in and perform. So the 2 or 3 day preparation is luxury.

*And that perception can be enhanced by the fact that Denver has probably the weakest Defense of all the teams left on the Browns' schedule.

*I do buy that Romeo Crennel was forced to make the move.

*I don't buy that it was due to fan pressure. I do buy that no one wanted the franchise embarrassed on National TV with the massive Booing and Brady chants, but that wasn't the main reason for the change. I think that powers higher up than Romeo, maybe all the way at the top, sat him down and strenuously suggested making the switch. I think the "suggestion" was issued due to that individual's belief that the move was long past due.

*I don't buy that the players are supposedly upset about the move. They want to win too. No matter how much other factors have contributed to Anderson's failures, it is undeniable that he, himself, has been mostly awful as well. The players know this.

*For the love of Buddha... Romeo/Chud, don't try to "protect" Quinn the way you "protected" DA, i.e. running Jamal into the line

twice then trying to convert 3rd and 8.

*I think Quinn will struggle at first, but since Anderson was already struggling, it won't get any worse than it already is. Maybe - just maybe - it will improve.

*Crennel/Savage/Lerner should not be lauded for making the move, because the move should have been made weeks ago. Honestly, the move should've been made during the offseason.

*The thoughts of the national media on the QB change show the complete lack of knowledge that they have on the state of Cleveland Browns football this year (and the end of last).

*I am not happy that Brady Quinn is in. I don't even

really like the guy. I'm just happy that Anderson ISN'T in. The Browns QB needs to be better than what Derek was providing.

*I feel that Quinn cannot help but be an improvement because even though he may lack DA's explosive potential, he'll be much more consistent. Consistency is vastly more important than a big arm. Ask Jamarcus Russell.

It's too late to save the season. It's over. But at least now this non-Playoff season has a point - building towards 2009. Anderson is done. We don't have 2 good QB's. Now we get to see if we even have one. 8 games should certainly give us a better idea about that.

Pregame

I forwent mowing in order to watch the contest. I currently regret that. I don't know when I'll get a chance to do it now, and if it rains, I'm hosed.

Following the game, I took my fair daughters to Chuck E. Cheese (otherwise known as Hell) for my younger one's 6th Birthday. A few hours and some really awful pizza later, she complained of her stomach hurting as we drove home. Upon arrival at the homestead, I carried her inside, where she promptly projectile vomited all over my face, jacket, and Browns shirt. I quickly ran her to the bathroom and told her to throw up in the toilet, but the seat was down, and the second wave hit before it could be lifted. You'd be amazed how reddish-pink goo can just skip off a plastic toilet lid, causing an array on the wall that would make Jackson Pollack envious.

After she was finished, she turned and told me she was sorry she threw up all over my Browns shirt. "*That's OK, honey,*" I replied. "*I've wanted to do that all day*"

First Quarter

This will be brief because looking back will teach us no lessons.

3 and Out. Short Punt. Ravens drive 20 yards

and get a Field Goal. ***Ravens 3, Browns 0.***

Syndric Steptoe fumbles, Baltimore recovers. Brandon McDonald gets burnt on a long pass for a TD to Mark Clayton, his 1st TD ever. ***Ravens 10, Browns 0.***

Josh Cribbs finally breaks a Kick return, getting the Browns back in the game. ***Ravens 10, Browns 7.***

Baltimore drives 46 yards, but is forced to Punt.

End of 1st: Ravens 10, Browns 7.

Second Quarter

Browns go 3 and Out again.
Baltimore gets the ball at midfield, but D holds them to a Punt again. DA finally gets warm, drive the Browns down to the BAL 6, where they are held and forced to kick on 4th and 1.
Browns 10, Ravens 10.

Cleveland can't stop the run again, and the Ravens drive right down the field, but Shaun Rogers sacks Joe Flacco on 3rd and Goal. ***Raven***

s 13, Browns 10.

With only 29 seconds left in the Half, DA completed 2 quick passes and Phil Dawson hit a masterful 54 yard FG that would've been good from Mars.

Halftime: □ Browns 13, Ravens 13.

Third Quarter

The Browns held the Ravens to their first 3 and Out, then Cribbs returned the punt all the way to the BAL 28. Anderson threw a ball toward Braylon Edwards in the End Zone, but it wasn't a great throw and the coverage was tight, so it would've been picked had Braylon not managed to get simultaneous possession as

they hit the ground. Great play for the TD. ***Browns 20, Ravens 13.***

The D forced another 3 and Out, and DA was hot. The Browns drove right down the field, and Jason Wright took a swing pass 7 yards for a score (sort of). ***Browns 27, Ravens 13.***

Up by 14, the crowd was excited and the Browns were feeling it. D'Qwell Jackson sacked Flaccid to bring up 3rd and 16 from the BAL 15. A stop meant 3 consecutive 3 and Outs and great Field Position for Cleveland. But they rushed only 3, got no pressure, and gave Flaccid plenty of time to hit Derek Mason for 20 (thanks, Terry Cousin). Ballgame.

After that, the Browns Defense completely forgot how to tackle or fill a gap, Ray Rice started his march to the Hall of Fame, and Sean Jones got plowed over by Le'Ron McClain for a TD. ***Browns 27, Ravens 20.***

3 and Out Cleveland.

***End of 3rd :□ Browns 27,
Ravens 20.***

Fourth Quarter

Starting at the Browns 42, it took only 3 plays for the Ravens to tie the game. Eric Wright fell down on his

coverage of Mason,
enabling the purple
Receiver to stroll into the
End Zone. ***Browns 27,
Ravens 27.***

Cleveland ran Jamal Lewis
twice, which is about as
effective as throwing a frog
at a flash flood. DA threw
deep on 3rd Down, a

perfectly thrown 50 yard pass right into the arms of a streaking Braylon.

Sadly, Hands of

[Osmium](#)

botched it, and the crowd gave him a gentle remonstration.

The Browns D finally got

it's dung together and held a 3 and Out. But the Browns O returned the favor. Then Ray Rice ran through a gargantuan hole, juking a couple Defenders into oblivion, and picked up 60 to the CLE 3. An admirable Goal Line stand kept the game interesting. ***Ravens 30, Browns 27.***

4th Quarter. 5:36 left.
Down by 3. Ball in your hands... it's stuff that QB's dream of as kids. DA responded by going 3 and Out. The D held Baltimore, and Time Outs were used.

Let's try this again: 4th

Quarter. 3:25 left.
Down by 3. Ball in your hands... sigh. DA, under pressure all day, tried to dump a screen to Wright as Ngata smooched his grill. But he had to rush it, and Wright wasn't ready. Or near the ball, for that matter. Terrell Suggs was, though, and he took the awful

decision back for a Pick 6 to effectively end the game and Derek Anderson's career in Cleveland. That was the hippo that broke the camel's back.

Final: □ Ravens 37,

Browns 27.

Offensive MVP: **Everyone.** The Offensive Line blocked well and opened up huge holes for Jamal Lewis, who ran without

hesitation and picked up vast chunks of yardage. With the game tied at 27 in the 4th

Quarter, Braylon's 50 yard catch over the middle on a bomb swung the momentum back in Cleveland's favor, and Derek

Anderson finished it off with a classic game-winning drive at the end.

Defensive MVP: □
Sean Jones. □ His Goal Line stop on Le'Ron McClain and

key tackle on Ray Rice
in the open field
helped keep the
Browns in this game.

Conclusion

~ ~ ~ This is very simple. The season is done. The Browns need to know what they have in Quinn.

If he plays well, then Derek Anderson's \$5

million roster bonus
will not be paid, and
the Browns will shop
him, maybe for a 5th
Rounder or so.
Maybe they are
forced to outright
release him.

If he struggles, then the Browns can pay DA's roster bonus, and they can go into the 2009 Training Camp with an open QB competition.

This is a move the Browns HAD to make in order to determine their future. That's what they're playing for now, after all.

~~~~This whole mess would've been avoidable had Derek Anderson just gotten hurt like all the other QB's in the league.

Then we could get to see what Quinn had without making a total commitment to him for the rest of the season if he played terribly.

But no, Huckle had to go and suck *AND* stay healthy, thus forcing this eventuality. Now he's a nigh worthless commodity, and Quinn has the pressure of Instant Savior on his

shoulders.

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~ ~ ~ Lost in all the  
hubbub is the Joe

Jurevicius press conference. From that, we gleaned that he's not going to be back this year due to multiple knee surgeries involving our friend Staph. Not a surprise. When he was

wasting away in the hospital, Phil Savage didn't call him. Not a surprise. And he plans on coming back for another season in 2009. Somewhat of a surprise.

If the loss of Joey J is really creating as much havoc in the Browns' O as it seems, his return will be more welcome than a one night stand in Vegas.

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~ ~ ~ Time for my  
almost annual  
tradition of  
Adopt-A-Team. In  
years when the  
Browns are out of it

by midseason (most years), I select one team from the NFC that has a fighting chance at the Playoffs so I can still have a rooting interest as the season gets late.

This year, my adopted team is the Arizona Cardinals. They've been down as long as our poor franchise - even longer - and Kurt Warner is my fantasy QB.

This is the year for  
the sun to finally  
shine on Phoenix.  
Metaphorically  
speaking, naturally.

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~ ~ ~ Far be it for me  
to defend Derek  
Anderson, because  
he has performed  
woefully for the  
greater part of the  
season. But I don't  
think he's the sole  
reason Cleveland  
lost this game. Not

by a long shot.  
There was the Run  
D in general, Terry  
Cousin surrendering  
the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 16 when  
up by 14, and Hands  
of Osmium (or HOO,  
for short) dropping  
the long pass in the  
4<sup>th</sup>.

All these things led to a situation where you were asking DA to lead a game winning drive, and that's something he's simply not capable of these days. Under those

circumstances, he will lose far more often than he will win.

The mistakes made earlier led to a state of affairs where the

threat of the run  
(such as it was) was  
gone and DA was  
under heavy  
pressure on a  
frequent basis and  
that is where he  
does the opposite of  
excel. The way the

interception  
happened was a  
surprise, but the  
interception itself  
was not.

With 3 ½ minutes  
left, the ball at

midfield, and only  
down 3, most teams  
would feel that they  
were in an  
advantageous  
position. Did you  
feel that way? I  
know I didn't. I  
knew I *should* feel

that way, but I also knew Anderson had previously assumed Shape of Suck and there wasn't enough time left for him to shake it.

The game was already lost before the ill-advised dumpoff landed in Terrell Suggs' claws. That just made it worse.

If the D had stopped the Ravens on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 16 from the BAL 15 - with that momentum and the following field position, then the Browns win.

If HOO (rhymes  
with  
"Boo")  
catches the bomb  
and the Browns  
score to go back up  
by 7 in the 4<sup>th</sup>, then  
*mayb*  
*e* the

Browns win.

But, with 3 minutes left, INT or no INT, the Browns lose anyway.

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~ ~ ~ Suggestion to  
Chud: Now that  
Quinn, the far  
more mobile QB,  
is in, run a play

where you  
suddenly split  
Brady out wide,  
bring in DA (or  
Cribbs) at the QB  
position, send  
Quinn and  
Edwards on deep  
routes, and then

throw the ball over  
the middle for 20  
to Winslow.

Everyone will think  
it will be one of  
those trick throws

to the QB, such as  
the ones  
completed to Joe  
Flacco and Tyler  
Thigpen in recent  
weeks. And those  
that don't will think  
it's going to  
Braylon. Leaving

the middle wide  
open for a nice  
gain.

Then you run the  
same play the  
following week,

and you DO throw  
it deep.



~ ~ ~ While we're making some changes, the time has come for Jamal Lewis to relinquish his stranglehold on the starting job.

I love the way  
Jamal runs. I love  
his leadership. I  
love his  
toughness. But  
he's lost a step.  
The hole is often  
closed by the time  
he hits it, and

almost everything  
is between the  
tackles since he's  
not quite quick  
enough to get the  
corner any more.

He averaged 2.58 yards per carry against Baltimore. Fair enough. Baltimore has a tough Run D. But he has only averaged 3.6 per carry all season.

A majority of his yards come at the end of the game - he HAS to be more effective earlier in the contest.

Jason Wright and especially Jerome Harrison both need to get more touches. Even a whole series here and there. The Running Game is predictable and

ineffective at this point, and change has to come here too.

This probably also means the Browns

will have a new starting RB next season. Likely, he is not currently on the team.

~ ~ ~ And now for  
the winners of the  
Donte Stallworth  
contest. Some of  
the e-mails  
contained multiple  
submissions - I  
used a max of 3  
per. Don't shoot

the messenger.

Donte Stallworth is  
more fragile than...

*A promise to  
call her in the  
morning.*

*Marv Albert's  
&quot;Feminine  
Side.&quot;*

*Toilet paper  
made of daisies.*

*Sexual  
Boundaries  
between siblings in  
Western PA.*

*Campaign  
promises.*

*Bald Eagle  
eggs on DDT.*

*TO's ego.*

*Phil Savage's  
inter-personal  
skills.*

*A glass  
flyswatter.*

*My pledge to  
give up drinking  
after Mardi Gras.*

*Testicles in a  
blender.*

*Doug Dieken's  
hair.*

*The  
&quot;Greatness&  
quot; of Art  
Modell's legacy.*

*Courtney  
Brown.*

*&quot;;I  
do.&quot;;*

*Joe Paterno's  
bowels.*

# *Happiness.*

Thanks to all that participated. Now we just need Donte's e-mail address...

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~ ~ ~ What gives,  
Sean Jones? You  
looked thoroughly  
disinterested.  
Were you carrying

the 1 whilst adding  
up your imaginary  
contract?

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~ ~ ~ Per the Plain Dealer

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*John Harbaugh, the Ravens rookie coach, announced the team was dedicating the game to former*

*Browns and Ravens owner Art Modell.*

*&quot;He deserves this more than*

*anybody, &quot;  
Harbaugh said.*

Excellent - now I  
have someone  
else to hate. My  
hatred is too large

to be confined to  
just one area.

Harbaugh, you're  
in your first year  
with the purple  
ones. Modell

hasn't been the owner there for several. He has almost nothing to do with your current team, so your dedicating the game to him is nothing but an

intentional slap to  
Cleveland's face.  
Time for me to fill  
your condoms with  
Tobasco.

And, just so you

know, the only  
thing Modell  
&quot;deserves&q  
uot; is having his  
tomb turned into  
the world's largest  
urinal.

Yes, this means  
that the Ravens  
have now  
re-ascended to the  
top of my Shit List.  
I think I'll rent *The  
Sum of All Fears*  
again and chortle.

I don't want to use profanity, but I have it on good authority that John Harbaugh is something that rhymes with Clock-sucker.

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~ ~ ~ Let me tell you  
about another  
Clock-sucker. His  
name is Trent  
Dilfer.

*"Public opinion has made this decision for the Browns ,*

*"*  
[said Dilfer](#)

*,* who was Cleveland's starter in 2005 before he

lost his job to  
Charlie Frye.

&quot;

*I have spoken to  
coaches who have  
said, 'This is not  
Derek Anderson's  
fault.' In fact, at  
times he's played*

*better than his statistics have showed. This is a function of the defense not getting off the football field; Braylon Edwards, a superstar*

*receiver who's supposed to make all the plays to make you better, having 14 drops at least. It's about their playmakers, Kellen Winslow, not being there,*

*not being  
dependable. It's  
about people not  
being at their best  
and Derek  
Anderson  
burdening the  
responsibility for  
this.*

*&quot; This is an organization that I played for for a year and I saw very closely that the organization itself is highly dysfunctional and cannot make*

*decisions that are  
good for the  
long-term growth  
of the organization*  
.”;

What a whiny little

bitch.

No, Trent,  
common sense  
made this decision  
for the Browns.

Differ sort of  
&quot;broke&quot;  
this story, and with  
his inexplicable  
sensitivity, I have  
to wonder if his  
source wasn't a  
Cleveland QB with  
a strong arm and

inconsistent ability.

Trent can identify with that. He's a big fan of the crappy QB, since he spent the vast majority of his career being just that.

Most of this year,  
the Defense was  
fine with getting off  
the football field.

Remember the 0-0  
Halftime tie at  
Washington? Was  
that loss the  
Defense's fault?

How about giving  
up 10 to  
Pittsburgh? Were  
those 2 picks in  
Baltimore perhaps  
responsible for  
some of the  
scoring there?

And Braylon's 14  
drops in 8 games  
don't turn Tom  
Brady into Scott  
Mitchell.

Not to mention that

DA's best two  
games came when  
Winslow was out.

Certainly, the  
whole team has  
not played like

they should, but to say that Derek Anderson was “burdening” with that responsibility is pigshit. Just because others are to blame for

the team's losses  
doesn't excuse DA  
for his part in the  
debacle.

Mr. Dilfer, you  
were mostly lame,

and, with a losing team, the franchise had to see what they had in Rookie Charlie Frye. It happens all the time; bad veteran QB's get replaced by

untested QB's  
because the team  
knows what it has  
in the limp vet, so  
maybe the new  
guy is an  
improvement.  
Maybe he's not.  
But staying the

course with the  
Trent Dilfers of the  
world only leads  
you to Suck.

Sour grapes don't  
lend you

credibility. I understand that you want to be "controversial" so you can keep your job at ESPN, but it would also help if what you said were

intelligent.

Here's hoping you  
go the way of Trev  
Alberts

▪

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~ ~ ~ During the 1  
pm games on  
Sunday, many bad  
teams rose up and  
threatened to

shock the world  
with wins over  
good teams.

KC was up 21 over  
Tampa... and lost.

Detroit was up 10  
at Half over  
Chicago... and  
lost.

The Browns were  
up 14 over

Baltimore... and  
lost.

At least one of the  
bad teams built a  
big lead and pulled  
it out. Yep. The

Bengals got up  
21-3, and  
managed to hold  
on 21-19. Now the  
'76 Tampa Bay  
Buccaneers only  
need the Lions to  
win and they can  
twist the lid on

their Mad Dog  
20/20.



~~~~I'm 36 today.  
18 years from 18,
which seemed like
only 18 months
ago.

Time flies when

you're inebriated.

If I had chosen to
become a
professional
football player, I'd
probably be retired

by now. Is it too late to go back and change my major?

~ ~ ~ Despite the
doom and gloom
currently
pervading the
Browns outlook,
I'm actually still
buying into "
Wait 'Til Next Year
"; Here are

the changes that
we are likely to
see:

*Derek Anderson
will likely be gone.
I don't know what

Quinn will bring,
but DA has started
27 games now and
I *do* know what he
brings, and it's a
simple equation of
addition by
subtraction.

*Romeo Crennel
might be gone.
Whoever replaces
him will be a
"new
coach" (for
the Browns, at
least), and
optimism will

abound as the
general public will
put their faith that
this guy finally will
be The One.

*Phil Savage will

address the
weaknesses at the
Linebacker
position.

*Glass Flyswatter
will be replaced.

*There will be a new 1st and 2nd Round picks for people to pin their hopes on (and buy jerseys for).

*There will be a new class of Free Agents.

*Returning will be Daven Holly, probably playing

nickel, meaning
no more Terry
Cousin.

*Returning will be
Ryan Tucker and
Lenny Friedman

to bolster the OL.

*Returning will be
Antwan Peek to
bolster the pass
rush.

*Returning will be
Joe Jurevicius to
bolster the
receiving corps.

*Returning will be
Robaire Smith to

bolster the D Line.

There are 7 teams
with worse
records than the
Browns, and 4 are

tied at 3-5, so if this draft position holds, Cleveland will be picking somewhere from #8 to #11 (yes, it's really THAT bad).

What kind of
player could be
had at that spot?

How about a
Linebacker like R
ey Mauualuga

- USC (my first choice) or

James Laurinaitis

- Ohio State (I personally feel he's too small for the 3-4)?

How about a
Defensive End to
rush the QB, like
Michael Johnson
- GA Tech or
George Selvie
- South FLA or
Brian Orakpo

- Texas (despite his recent injury)?

How about another Defensive Tackle to plug the middle since Phil

wisely passed on
Haloti Ngata for
Kam Wimbley?
Or a shut-down
Corner to bolster
the secondary?
Maybe a stud
Safety like Taylor

Mays -

USC so we don't
have to overpay
Sean Jones to
stay? Another
Offensive
Lineman never
hurts, and there're

lots of good ones
available at the
top of the draft.

Or maybe a

dazzling skill

player like WR

Michael Crabtree

- Texas Tech or

RB

Knowshon

Moreno

- Georgia?

And you sit there
with stars in your

eyes imagining
the team with all
these
additions/changes
... ah, it's sip of
cool water whilst
wandering in
Nevada.

Yes, Cleveland
Browns fans, no
matter how bad
today is...

**WAIT 'TIL NEXT
YEAR!**

Yeah baby!
Woooo!

Next Up

~ ~ ~ The Denver
Broncos.

Originally, this is
what I wrote: *Her
e is a guarantee,*

*straight from me
to you.□ If the
Browns lose this
game at home, it
will be the last
game that Derek
Anderson starts
at QB for*

*Cleveland
(barring injury).*

*We all know the
season is done,
but the Browns*

*themselves won't
give up so soon
(nor should they).*

*But another loss
would drop them
to 3-6, and that
loss would be to
a team that is*

*playing awful
football right now.*

*At that point,
even the powers*

*that he would
have to admit that
was the end of
2008. And,
realizing that, the
Brady Quinn
Experiment would
begin.*

Now that the
Experiment is
under way, I have
much less idea of
what to expect.

The Broncos
Defense is awful,
Jay Cutler is
struggling
mightily, and
Denver's Run
Game has been
poor. Against the

Browns' Run D,
however, that
might change.

I think the team
will be angry for

this game. The D will play much better, having a chip the size of Delaware on their shoulder. HOO will somehow cure his dropsies.

Quinn will be effective enough against a poor Denver pass rush. Jamal will average over 4 yards a carry.

*Browns 24,
Denver 13.*