

All The Young Dudes: Sunday Roundup Edition

Written by {ga=davekolonich}
Saturday, June 13 2009 7:00 PM -

Finally, a brief respite from the "dark ages" of the NFL offseason as the Browns open a mandatory weekend minicamp in Berea. Thanks to some actual reporting from some Cleveland-based sites, we can cobble together some more clues regarding the 2009 version of the team. Yet, around the national blogosphere, the rumor mill is running in mid-season form. Dave Kolonich checks in with a weekend Browns update for his latest piece for us.



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[Mangini \(but not Pro Football Talk.com\) Vague on Vick](#)

So, what are the odds of suspended quarterback Michael Vick joining the Cleveland Browns?

They would seem like a fairly strong candidate to join the Anti-Vick List since they already have Brady Quinn and Derek Anderson on the roster.

Still, Browns coach Eric Mangini declined to response when asked about Vick following his official release today from the Atlanta Falcons.

"I have no idea of the status of anybody that has been released today," Mangini told reporters in comments distributed by the team. "We haven't gotten any of that information. I wish him well, but I'm focusing on the guys that we have here."

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Without any hint of sarcasm, clearly Mangini's comments signal that the Browns are prepared to bring in Vick to challenge Brady Quinn and Derek Anderson for the starting QB job, as well as play multiple positions across the line. The only questions now concern Vick's tenuous legal status, issues over a potential 100 million dollar contract and of course, the delight national media types will discover when they realize the Browns are still referred to as the "Dawgs."

Based on Mangini's comments, how could you possibly come to any other conclusion?



When asked whether the Browns would possibly consider Vick, who remains on home confinement in Virginia under the supervision of the Federal Bureau of Prisons, Mangini didn't give out any information.

"We look at all players," Mangini said. "It's not specific to him or anybody else, we look at all players who we think can help us and it works within the context of the guys that we are bringing in."

See what I mean?

"We look at all players....and "bringing in."

Clearly, ProFootballTalk.com continues its excellence in accurate journalism, as they rarely just make stuff up to see what sticks. Clearly, this story is legitimate. And if the likes of ESPN and Yahoo Sports are looking for filler content in three days, this story could become front page "news", which will likely send shockwaves throughout the league.

So what does this imaginary move signal for the likes of Josh Cribbs, the Browns current hypothetical Slash?

Meanwhile, the Browns haven't experimented with kick returner and wide receiver Josh Cribbs at other positions this week.

Cribbs has been previously mentioned as a potential candidate to play defense or possibly be utilized in a Wildcat role on offense.

Looks like someone is getting the cold shoulder...and I think we all now know the reason why. Hurry up and practice your contrite expressions, Michael. Make a donation to PETA. You're coming to the lakefront, you lucky so and so.



And back to reality...in more ways than one...

[Mangini's Press Conference](#)

Speaking of Cribbs, it is either much too early to speculate on what offensive role he will see in 2009, or Mangini doesn't see much early progress. Based on Cribbs' route-running struggles so far in his career, combined with Mangini's inclination for intelligent play, it would appear that Cribbs has a lot of work to do.

(On what he sees Joshua Cribbs doing other than returning kicks) - "We've really only worked him on offense to this point. I wanted to do that to get him the most familiarity with the system. Like all the guys at this point, there are good things and there are things that aren't as good.

Some of it is just familiarity - new system, new routes, new expectations in terms of depths and reads, sights and hots, and tons of information. We will keep moving down this path, see how it goes, and at some point, hopefully it builds flexibility into where we will work on defense as well."

(On if Cribbs has just worked at wide receiver so far) - "Through these camps, yes."

Although visions of Cribbs taking direct snaps from center and being a primary option on swing passes (hopefully not thrown by Derek Anderson) are compelling, it seems that his best chance to contribute offensively is through mastering the skills of a NFL wide receiver. Based on the incredibly undefined depth at the position heading into 2009, this is Cribbs' best chance to break through and become more than just a special teams weapon.

In related news...

(On what Harrison's niche will be) - "That is going to have to be worked out. He will get a lot of opportunities in different roles. It's important for him to develop a role."

As I've stated before, this is Jerome Harrison's time to show if he is truly an NFL caliber running back. Looking at the running back depth, he is competing with a broken down Jamal Lewis and a seventh-round pick for playing time. Recent reports indicate that Mangini has been impressed with Harrison this offseason, but then again, is there anyone on the roster Mangini hasn't given similar sentiments to?

(On what he has seen from James Davis) - "He has really done a good job. He's picked up things quickly. He doesn't often repeat the same mistake the next day, which is positive. I have been extremely pleased with what he has done with his opportunity.

There is a great example of a young guy getting a lot more reps than he normally

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would because of the situation we have. He is a guy that has maximized that opportunity."



See what I mean? So long, Jerome. I will always hold a place for you at the Browns Last Supper of Potential. You can sit between Lee Suggs and Madre Hill. Also, please note...William Green is coming...and we are serving rock hard pork chops. You've been warned.

And speaking of weapons...

(On how important it is to have an elite safety) - "I know we have talked about this with other positions, I just see the secondary as a unit. That group has

to be able to operate together, and it's a little bit different than the offensive line because they have to be able to operate together as well, but they are all adjacent to each other.

With the secondary, they are in a huge ring around the field, about as far away as you can get from each other. I never look at it as having one dominant player in the secondary, and that makes a good secondary. I look at it as being how well does the group play together as defining a good secondary."

I understand that Mangini is viewing the Browns roster from a long-term perspective and in some ways, the safety depth is improved from 2008, mainly based on the departure of Sean Jones...however I can't help but long for the days of Eric Turner. While some fans desire an impact outside linebacker or stud running back, my biggest wish for the Browns going forward is to find a dynamic young safety who can become a game-changer, along the likes of Ed Reed or Troy Palomalu.

According to Mangini's comments, that is not going to happen anytime soon. Much like Romeo Crennel before him, Mangini seems content on finding cohesion rather than relying on the talents of a dominant safety. Of course, finding both of these qualities would be ideal in the coming seasons. I am intrigued by Abe Elam, especially considering his blitzing and run defense skills. However, much like Sean Jones before him, I worry about the deep coverage skills of the current players at the position.

And shifting from units back to individuals...

(On you could say Braylon Edwards and Jamal Lewis aren't participating) - "They have been participating. They are just not getting the reps that everybody else has been getting."

(On if they will take more reps in the rest of camp) - "We will see how it goes. We have a couple more practices to go, but we will see how it goes."

You have to admit, Mangini has been more forthcoming during his press conferences than anyone could have predicted prior to his arrival in Cleveland. However, you can clearly trace Mangini's Belichick pedigree when you hear the coach discuss injuries and players who are riding stationary bikes rather than participating in practice. As for the readiness of Lewis and Edwards come late

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July...I guess we will see how it goes.



And speaking of our precocious Braylon...

[Braylon's Injury](#)

So he may be in great mental condition BUT 2 weeks ago he was at EMH in Avon playing some basketball and twisted his ankle, it may just be a precaution but he was then at the movie theater on Saturday in an air cast when I saw him so yet another little injury for him..... He was a really nice dude but it just pissed me off he twisted his ankle in a pickup game when we are paying him millions, wear ankle braces or something!!

After watching Braylon for the past four years, I have arrived at one simple conclusion...

Braylon is a child.

And even worse, Braylon is a child who continues to do stupid things, not out of deliberance or spite or rebellion....but just because he does. And since we are dealing with such a delicate flower as Braylon, we have to realize that he will probably never reach his full potential in Cleveland unless the organization decides to tape his mouth shut and cryogenically seal him from January through September.

Otherwise, injuries like these and the footy episode from a year ago will continue to plague him for the rest of his Browns tenure. We need to act now to save Braylon for his own good.

Next thing you know, one of Michael Vick's dogs will bite him.