

At the outset of 2009 Browns training camp, Derek Anderson and Brady Quinn are on a level playing field. Eric Mangini says he has no preconceived notions about who will be under center for the regular season opener. Both quarterbacks will start from zero, and the better man over the next six weeks will lead this team onto the field Sept. 13 against Minnesota. That's what worries Erik Cassano. He explains in his latest.



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That's what worries me.

Why? Because I know that the Browns need to move on from Derek Anderson. They need to move on from this two-year QB controversy masquerading as a QB competition. They are a rebuilding team and they need to know what they have in 2007 first-round pick Brady Quinn, and the only way that is going to happen is if Mangini gives Quinn the reins for an entire season. If Quinn succeeds, you breathe a sigh of relief. If not, quarterback just got moved up the list of priorities for next offseason

But this need to hold onto Anderson and Quinn as a security blanket to guard against injuries and outright failure has to stop. Unfortunately, based on Mangini's early-camp comments to the media, it appears he's going to hang onto both QBs all season.

If Quinn is under center on opening day with Anderson holding the clipboard, I can live with that. I still don't like it, but the net result is Quinn starting. But what really has me wary is Anderson's ability to tease.

Anderson is completely capable of looking like the better QB through camp, through the preseason and even into the early part of the regular season. And when Anderson is at his best, Quinn just can't measure up. Anderson has all the physical attributes. At 6'6", he's among the tallest QBs in the NFL. His power arm is well-documented. And, perhaps most attractive to a coach, Anderson is not a thinking man's QB.

That's not a criticism of his level of intelligence, but let's just say that line-of-scrimmage audibles aren't Anderson's strength. He won't scrap the playbook in the huddle and run his own game. He has the plays strapped to his wrist, and that's that.

Somehow, I get the feeling that Mangini values submissive coachability in his quarterbacks. Think Bill Belichick circa 1993.

When Anderson is throwing 35-yard completions on a frozen rope, his physical attributes look sublime. It's so easy to get sucked in by Anderson's height and strength when he's cooking. And for a coach like Mangini, who likely has no shortage of belief in his ability to mold players, it can be extremely tempting to look at Anderson and believe that he can be a franchise QB if he's placed in the right system and taught the right things.

If Anderson bursts out of the gate like he did in '07, hanging among the NFL's elite passers through September and October, the illusion becomes even more crystallized. Brady Who? This Anderson kid has finally turned the corner. All he

needed was a real system and a real coach.

Anderson is scary because he's perfectly capable of doing exactly that. If he gets his act together, he can blow Quinn out of the water for several months. It won't be by design, Anderson will just happen into a groove and look unstoppable for a certain period of time.

But Mangini, for all the hours he's certainly spent watching video of Anderson, hasn't yet experienced December Derek. For all the hours of sterilized video, free of emotional involvement, free from that horrible gut check we received on that cold day in Cincinnati two years ago, Mangini hasn't experienced December Derek until he's experienced him.

And that is when Mangini will realize he was snookered. He was seduced, courted and left at the altar by a quarterback whose trademark pose is walking back to the sideline with his hands on his helmet after throwing another interception.

That is Derek Anderson with the pressure on. That is the DA that you want no part of. That is the DA you never see coming in August when he looks like John Elway in 7-on-7 drills. The worst part is, by the time Anderson makes a compelling enough case to get benched -- compelling to a coach, not to fans -- three-fourths of the season has passed and Quinn is little more than a stopgap until the coaching staff can go back to the drawing board during the offseason

After a two-season roller coaster with Anderson, we can safely arrive at the conclusion that he can be judged at face value. Big, strong, rocket arm, can heave the deep ball with the best of them, can't complete precision passes with any regularity, questionable decision maker, and tends to wilt in pressure situations, when QBs generally earn (or fail to earn) their large paychecks.

Another season of DA won't produce any new revelations, even with a new, more competent coach.

The previous regime invested two draft picks in Quinn, and it's time to give him a season to show his stuff, whatever that may be. For at least one proving-ground season, before the Mangini Era gets too far along, he has to know what he has in

Quinn. Quinn's chance to prove himself can't be short-circuited by Anderson's peak-and-valley performance peaking just in time to save his hide from the recycle bin, once again.

The only things that will be accomplished by keeping Anderson around is to keep him in the conversation, keep Quinn looking over his shoulder, and risk the possibility of Mangini falling in love with his potential. Just like Romeo Crennel and, before him, Phil Savage.

If I can't be sure of anything else with this team, I can be sure that's a powder keg waiting to blow up in everyone's face.