

## Preview: Bengals at Browns

Written by {ga=hermanfontenot}  
Saturday, October 03 2009 7:00 PM -

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Here we go again Browns fans. At least we've all learned not to say "it can't get any worse than this" anymore. 1:00 Sunday, the "Battle of Ohio". Bengals come to town for a 1:00 game with the Browns here on the north coast. The Bengals are 2-1 and are a freak week one play away from being undefeated. The Browns? 0-3, and they've gotten progressively worse each week. In his latest, Jesse previews the game, and gives our readers his uncensored thoughts on Coach Mangini.



**Time:** 1:00 pm, Sunday, October 4, 2009

**Location:** Cleveland Browns Stadium

**Network, Announcers-** CBS: Ian Eagle and Rich Gannon

**Line:** Bengals by five-and-a-half.

**Team W/L Records:** Cleveland is 0-3; Cincinnati is 2-1

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**Coaches:** Eric Mangini 23-28 overall, 0-3 with the Browns; Marvin Lewis is 48-50-1 in his seventh season with the Bengals.

**Last Week for the Browns:** Hit rock-bottom (at least for the time being) in a 34-3 loss to the Ravens in Baltimore. At halftime Eric Mangini replaced Brady Quinn with Derek Anderson, who vindicated his coach's decision with three second-half interceptions and a quarterback rating of 30.

**Last Season for the Bengals:** Climbed back from a 20-9 third-quarter deficit to beat Pittsburgh 23-20, scoring the winning touchdown with 14 seconds to play. It was Cincinnati's first home victory over the Steelers since 2001.

**All-Time Series:** Bengals lead, 36-35

**Last Meeting-** [December 21, 2008](#): Ken Dorsey and Bruce Gradkowski combined to go 12-of-22 for 72 yards and four interceptions as the Browns stretched their string of scoreless quarters to twenty in a 14-0 loss to the Bengals at Cleveland Browns Stadium. Cincinnati defensive back Leon Hall- who picked off three passes during the game- opened the scoring with a 50-yard interception return for a touchdown in the second period, pretty much icing things right there. Although the Bengals (3-11-1) weren't exactly potent, gaining 246 yards and scoring only seven points on offense, they didn't have to be against Cleveland's inept "attack" which gained 182 yards, turned it over four times and committed nine penalties.

**Out or Questionable for Cincinnati:** T Andre Smith (foot) is out; CB David Jones (foot), CB Jonathan Joseph (foot), DT Domata Peko (neck), DT Tank Johnson (foot) and S Roy Williams (forearm) are questionable.

**Out or Questionable for Cleveland:** K Phil Dawson (right calf), RB Jamal Lewis (hamstring) and G Floyd Womack (ankle) are doubtful; RB James Davis

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(shoulder), DE Kenyon Coleman (ankle), G Rex Hadnot (knee), G Eric Steinbach (knee) and DE Corey Williams (knee) are questionable.

***What to watch for the Bengals:*** Watch for the Bengals to do whatever they want, offensively, defensively, and otherwise. Cincinnati has played good football all year- they should be 3-0 and would be if not for the fluke play that got them beaten by Denver- and there's no reason to believe they won't continue to play good football on Sunday.

***What to watch for the Browns:*** I'm not going to get into game plans, strategies or scenarios for Sunday. I'm way past that at this point. I'm just going to say this:

Eric Mangini has to go. Preferably now. If not now, very soon.

This guy has been a complete and utter disaster almost from the minute he squeezed his doughy body through the door at the Berea complex. He botched the draft, turning a premium pick into a center who can't execute a shotgun snap, a special-teams linebacker, a backup defensive end, a third-string quarterback, and a starting safety that happens to suck eggs *and* is a [convicted sex offender](#) .

One of his two second-round picks, Brian Robiskie, can't even make the active list for a team with arguably the worst receiver corps in football.

None of his hand-picked ex-Jets toadies have amounted to a hill of beans and his offensive line imports, particularly John St. Clair, have been little more than expensive turnstiles.

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Reportedly, agents are telling [their free-agent clients to steer clear of Cleveland](#) as long as this radioactive idiot is in charge.

His team has flat-out quit on him in each of the first three games. Personally, I've never seen a coach lose a team as Mangini has lost this one. Of course, when you're [fining players four figures for neglecting to put a three-dollar bottle of water on a hotel bill](#) , you're not exactly going to win friends.

The final straw for me was his handling of the quarterback situation, culminating in his benching of Brady Quinn for Derek Anderson at halftime of last week's loss in Baltimore. Now, I'm not in the bag for Brady Quinn, and as a matter of fact, he has been absolutely awful to start this season. On a pure football level, I had no problem with the change.

Here's my problem:

Eric Mangini had *eight months* to get the quarterback situation straightened out. He had two clear-cut options: use the fifth overall pick on a quarterback- namely, Mark Sanchez- or get rid of either Brady or Derek and anoint the leftover as his clear-cut starter, no ifs, ands or buts about it. He had every opportunity to bring clarity to the position- something the Browns, tormented by quarterback controversies over the years, sorely needed.

Instead, what does he do? He trades the pick which could have put Mark Sanchez in a Browns uniform. He keeps both Brady and Derek and spends the entire preseason on a competition which settles absolutely nothing. (And save me the cries of, "But it isn't Mangini's fault! NO ONE STEPPED UP AND TOOK THE JOB!" In how many of these stupid competitions did anyone "step up and take the job"? Did Kelly Holcomb "take the job" in 2003? Did Charlie Frye "take the job" in 2007? When you have two mediocrities battling for a spot, guess what? *Neither is going to distinguish himself.*  
Duh!)

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Then, two weeks after *finally* naming a starter, Mangini benches him. For a guy who threw three interceptions in one half, along with a quarterback rating of 30.9

He couldn't have botched this situation more if he'd tried.

Absolutely nothing good has come out of Eric Mangini's tenure in Cleveland. And yeah, I know it's early and no, I don't care. I have no reason to believe the situation is going to improve one iota as long as this guy is around. I don't want to &quot;give him another season.&quot; I don't want to &quot;let him get his system and his people in place.&quot; I want him *gone*.

***Good Past Win over the Bengals-*** [September 15, 1991](#) : Matt Stover drilled his fourth field goal of the day, this one from 45 yards with four seconds left, to topple the Bengals at the Stadium, 14-13. Cleveland won despite not scoring a touchdown, getting all of their points from Stover's field goals and rookie defensive tackle James Jones's end-zone tackle of Bengals running back James Brooks. Brooks, a Cleveland killer from way back, had a tough day: not only did he give up a safety; he was also hit so hard by Browns rookie Eric Turner at one point that his facemask bent.

***Bad Past Loss to the Bengals-*** [December 3, 1989](#): Already struggling with a loss and a tie in their previous two games, the Browns looked downright horrible against the Bengals, losing 21-0 at the Stadium. It was the franchise's first shutout loss at home since 1977. Boomer Esiason threw two touchdown passes, both in the third period, as Cincinnati broke the game open after halftime. Bernie Kosar had a bad day, completing 15-of-30 passes for just 130 yards and getting benched for backup Mike Pagel at the beginning of the fourth quarter.

***Next Week for Both Teams:*** The Bengals are at Baltimore; the Browns are at Buffalo.

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**Trivia:** The Bengals have won three of their last four against the Browns at CBS, including two shutouts (30-0 in 2006; 14-0 in 2008.)