

The Browns may not be very good on the field this year, but at least they're not boring. If it's not top-secret staph infections, it's getting stabbed by the wife. Helmet throwing, linemen punching quarterbacks, locker room snitches, and Playmate girlfriends getting into fights at bars. QB carousels galore. And Braylon Edwards fighting with LeBron James' friends. Good god. You know Chris Hutchison has thoughts on this week's happenings. And as he does each week, gives us his rundown on all things Cleveland football in The Browns Outsider. ***A View***

From The Cheap Seats

The Browns may suck, but at least they're not boring.

Embarking on another season of unimpeded suck, they are not content to go quietly on this Haunted Hayride to Hell. No season, no matter how awful, can escape without some juicy sideshow - perhaps a desperate attempt by the powers that be to distract the masses.

If it's not top-secret staph infections, it's getting stabbed by the wife. Helmet throwing, Linemen punching Quarterbacks, locker room snitches, and Playmate girlfriends getting into fights at bars. And QB carousels galore. Always lots of those to keep us entertained.

In the few short days since the game ended, Braylon Edwards managed to get really drunk at a Cleveland club, talk all kinds of smack (allegedly) about the team and town, punch a midget (oops, sorry, height-challenged individual), piss off LeBron

James, apologize half-heartedly via Twitter, and realize his fondest dream by being shipped the hell out of town.

I don't need to go into the clubbing/punching thing. If you want to read about it, there're some interesting tidbits [here](#). The players are young and rich, and they had the next day off. They should be allowed to go out until 2:30 am if they want to, just like the rest of us (well, at least me) did when we were their age.

And, no, they should not be held to higher standard because they are athletes. They are not role models, nor should they be. Along with actors and musicians, professional athletes are amongst the most spoiled, out-of-touch, egotistical, arrogant, and stupid people on earth. It's not all their fault - we do this to them.

We kiss their ass from a crazy-early age, beg for their autograph, wait in line to see them, chant their name, cheer their every move, buy their posters, wear their jerseys, and, in general, treat them like they walk on water. Just like a beautiful blond with big boobs that figures early on that she doesn't need to think because someone will always be there to take care of her, these individuals feel that everyone else was put on earth to serve them because they were born "special".

Yes, we as a society make heroes out of the last people on earth that should be looked upon thusly.

Personally, off the field issues don't interest me because professional athletes don't interest me. My only concern with their individual affairs is how the consequences of said affairs might affect the Cleveland Browns.

And let's make no bones about it - most professional athletes are tools, but Braylon Edwards is one of the Biggest Tools in the History of Cleveland Sports. He's a friggin' 50 foot hacksaw. On a personal level, you'd be hard pressed to find one person sad to see him go, and that includes his family.

In return for Braylon, the Browns received from the NYJ: WR Chansi Stuckey, Special Teams maven Jason Trusnik, a 3rd Round pick, and a 5

th

Round pick. The 3

rd

Round pick is conditional and has the potential to move up to a

2

nd

Round pick depending on how well Braylon does in The Apple.

Particulars aside, the key to this whole issue is this: Are the Browns a better team today than they were yesterday?

Braylon Edwards cons

Let's be honest - Braylon Edwards is not an elite Wide Receiver. Not even close. Even in his breakout 2007 season, I did not feel he was "elite" - just a good Receiver that racked up some gaudy stats against some bad pass Defenses. That's not to say Braylon doesn't have talent - he has a ton. But he's always been that guy with the "*million dollar arm and the 10 cent head*" ."

Without self-awareness (and Braylon seems to have none), those wandering down errant paths cannot be dissuaded. Thus, you get what you had last year - basically, a mediocre Wide Receiver with an awful case of dropsies that runs bad routes and pouts and gets False Start and Holding penalties in droves. A middle-of-the-pack contributor with an elite contributor

ego and monetary demands.

If you look at his production from every year but 2007, he's replaceable by pretty much any schmoe that comes down the 4th Round pike.

Another fun fact about Braylon - if things aren't going his way, he gets pissy on the sideline and quits on the field. I watched him carefully on Sunday (because he was really screwing *somebody*'s fantasy team) and he stopped trying at a certain point. He'd jog out, then stop and watch the play. So DA stopped looking for him.

When Cincy finally realized that and started rolling their D toward Mo Massaquoi, the Browns O stopped working. So PoutyQuitta kinda screwed his whole team.

And let's not forget that he hates Cleveland. It's not flashy enough for him. He's the kind of guy that won't be happy unless he's in New York, Miami, or LA. And, plus, everyone in Cleveland hated him because he was from Michigan, or at least that was the rationalization that crept into his mind between daydreams of making love to himself.

Braylon Edwards pros

It's easy to forget the 2007 season ever happened, since it seems like 10 years ago now, and Braylon has been pretty much useless since then. But opposing Defensive Coordinators haven't forgotten. It's not that they necessarily *think* that Braylon is going to go off at an elite WR level, but he does have *that potential* because, yes, he has done it before.

So they surmise that they'd better double him - just

in case.

Who on this team is going to command a double team now? Chansi Stuckey? Mo Massaquoi? How about Josh Cribbs or Mike Furrey? Or even Brian "Zero Career Receptions" Robiskie?

This receiving corps now - pardon my bellicosity - sucks. It wasn't that great before, but at least Braylon would command a double-team while doing nothing, leaving the field open for other players like Mo Mass to take up the slack. Now, without the (at least) perceived threat of Braylon hitting them with the big one, teams will creep the Safeties back up, and the O may very well look just about as effective as it did when Quinn was at the helm. Someone will have to step up big-time in this talent vacuum, and I have my doubts that it will happen.

Plus, any time you take a talent-deficient team like

the Browns and make it less talented, it can never be a good thing. Right now, half the Browns roster wouldn't even get a scholarship from USC or Florida.

There's also the idea that keeping Braylon was relatively cheap. With his potential, maybe you remain patient, see if he can finally "get it" and start producing, which both helps the team and raises his trade value. Due to the fact that the CBA has almost zero chance of getting done before 2010, Braylon would be a Restricted Free Agent next year, which means the Browns could tender him at a level anywhere from 1 to 2 million and get at least a 1st Round pick in return if someone tried to steal him.

Now, we all know that no one is dumb enough to give up a 1st Round pick for Braylon the way he's playing now, but keeping him for an extra year at 1 or 2 million ain't that painful.

Whatever

In the end, I don't really feel one way or the other about this. Like the rest of the country (seemingly), I'm about 50-50 if this was a good move or not. This team sucked plenty before Braylon left, so I really can't work up righteous indignation because the Browns jettisoned that bee-otch. I certainly won't miss looking at him and throwing sno-cones at my television because he just dropped a pass my daughter's fish could catch.

Then again, I don't look forward to the potential for 6 points, 20 minutes of total possession time, and 156 net yards. If you thought this O was bad before, hang on

boys and girls.

I'm not gonna sit here and bitch that the Browns didn't get enough. The market is what it is. Mangini's been trying to trade Braylon since before the draft, and I would think that the offers haven't varied very much. No matter what BE did in 2007, he's been sucking copious amounts of gluteus since. It doesn't really matter what YOU think he's worth - it matters what THEY are willing to pay. A little magazine may tell me my Dan Marino rookie card is worth \$200, yet I haven't found one damn person willing to pay half that for the stupid thing.

I guess, in the end, I think 2 things:

1. This is a Lost Season anyway, so play the kids and see if their 2nd Round designations were worth a damn thing.

2. Braylon may very well succeed in New York, but there was no way in Hell he was gonna succeed here.

1st Quarter

Typical Browns. They allowed two long drives and Cleveland spotted the Mildcats 7 points while holding the ball for all of 77 seconds.

End 1st: □ Bengals 7, Browns 0.

2nd Quarter

Immediately, Jerome Harrison fumbled, and it was returned a long, long way for a TD, and the game appeared headed for despicable territory. *Bengals 14, Browns 0.*

And then everything changed. The Browns had a decent drive, then held Cincy to a 3 and Out, then forced Carson Palmer into a pick (a bad one). Finally, right before Half after a long Josh Cribbs punt return, Derek

Anderson hit Mohammed Massaquoi on a long pass to the Umph Line, and Steve Heiden caught the 1 yard TD on the next play. *Bengals 14, Browns 7.*

Halftime: □ Bengals 14, Browns 7.

3rd Quarter

The worm had turned, and the Browns dominated the 3rd Q as well. Anderson drove the team all the way down to the CIN 8, then threw his mandatory Horrible Pick

TM

, but CLE drove again after a 3 and Out under the quality runs of Harrison and tied the game up with an artistic... uh...

effective... DA bootleg TD.
Browns 14, Bengals 14

.

On the following Kickoff, my boy Kaluka Maiava forced a fumble, and it looked like it was to be - finally - the Cleveland Browns' day.

End 3rd: □ Browns 14,

Bengals 14.

4th Quarter

Tragically, the Browns
could not convert the 3rd

and 1 from the CIN 9, and that seemed to spell doom for the porcelain confidence of the Offense. But they had a lead... for now.

Browns 17, Bengals 14.

The teams traded ineffectual drives, then Cribbs returned another

punt 50 yards to the CIN
14. From there, the
Brown roared to life... oh,
who am I kidding?...
sputtered to another
disappointing FG. *Brown
s 20, Bengals 14.*

If you refuse to shoot a
rabid dog in the head,

eventually he's going to bite your ankle. Well, after seemingly a game-full of 3 and Out, the Bengals O suddenly found its sea legs and drove down for a TD, converting on 4th and Goal with a pass to the detestable Chad Johnson.

And just when it seemed that the Browns had blown another close one, Shaun Rogers blew through the line and blocked his second kick of the day. Sans extra point, the score of the game was... *Browns 20, Bengals 20.*

The Browns had 1:52 to work with, but they ran a piss-poor 2 minute drill (which DA is famous for), and had 4th and 10 at the CIN 40 with 23 seconds left. Instead of trying a 57 yard FG attempt from there, Mangini chose to punt and try his luck in OT. Man, I love

Conservatism.

End Regulation: □
Browns 20, Bengals
20.

Overtime

Cincy got the ball first in
OT, and you (me)
thought that would do it,

but the Defense nobly rose up and stopped the Bengals 3 times in a row. Unfortunately, the Offense did absolutely nothing with their 3 chances (unless you count punting as "something").

Like true Browns warriors, the Defense politely laid down on the 4th possession, snatching Defeat from the jaws of Victory, giving up a 3rd and 10, a 3rd and 10, and a 4th and 11 en route to

allowing Cincy to kick a 31 yard FG (which I thought missed at first) with 7 seconds left.

Still, I'd rather Lose than Tie. Who the F*** Ties? This isn't hockey. Ties suck.

Someone fix the NFL
Overtime system,
please.

**Final: □ Bengals 23,
Browns 20.**

Gameballs

Joe Thomas - Antwan
Odom led the league

in sacks. What did
Joey T do? Shut him
down. Odom did have
one sack, but that was
when DA didn't know
what to do, so he ran
out of the pocket
directly into the
comforting arms of
Uncle Antwan. Plus,
did you see what

Jared Allen did to the Packers on Monday night? And Thomas shut that guy down too. Joe Thomas is actually playing like a Pro Bowler this year.

Mohammed

Massaquoi - Rook got his first start and didn't disappoint, showing what can happen when you start a bona-fide WR instead of a Wildcat guy at the # 2. 8 catches, 148 yards, and apparently looked good enough to make a certain

someone suddenly
expendable.

Shaun Rogers - You
block 2 kicks, you get
a Gameball.

Josh Cribbs - 212

combined return yards and good coverage as a gunner. This is why, Mr. Cribbs, that you are no longer starting at WR. That, and you shouldn't start at WR.

Honorable Mention

Jerome Harrison -
Fumble aside, he

played fairly well, racking up 152 total yards. He may not be Adrian Peterson, but The Ghost can handle starting in this league, if need be, and I can't imagine Jamal Lewis circa 2009 doing better.

Alex Mack - I noticed him making several nice blocks downfield during run plays, and the Browns line was solid up the middle (it was actually pretty solid everywhere).

Derek Anderson - If you make the Browns Offense look somewhat competent, then you get some props. The pick in the End Zone, and, well, being generally DA-ish kicks you out of Gameball zone.

Kam Wimbley - I still don't think Mr. Wimbley is an elite pass rusher or... elite anything, really... but he is much more effective this year as he plays from different positions, and I know I've seen him trying more than one move.

His sack in OT
would've been huge
had the Offense not
blown it.

Mike Furrey - For
playing both ways, and
for playing both
decently. One might

ask how bad a team
this must be if he has
to be playing DB, but I
think we all know the
answer to that.

Brodney Pool - I don't
often give props to the
Human Disappearing

Trick TM,
but he had 6 tackles
and a key pick. Mr.
Pool, when they
actually call your
name, I notice that
you're in there, and I
might be apt to bestow
this kind of honor more
often. Just an FYI.

Eric Mangini - Takes balls of steel to pull the trigger on a trade that makes your Offense weaker than a kitten. I'm not even convinced it was the right move - it might've been horribly wrong - but I give the

HM because of the
guts it took to do it.



Wall of Shame

Braylon Edwards - He had 0 catches for 0 yards in 75 minutes of play. That, and he just flat-out gave up out there. The only

time he showed any life at all was when he picked the fight with the Cincy lineman. And, if it weren't for the luck of the "offsetting penalties" that would've been stupid too.

Robert Royal -
Coming soon to a
theater near you
starring as "
The Ball-Dropping
Goat Part Deux
".

Conclusion

Time of Possession:

Cleveland - 31:10,
Cincinnati - 28:50

Total Yards:

Cleveland - 395,
Cincinnati - 375

First Downs:
Cleveland - 22,
Cincinnati - 21

That would be the
first time that
Cleveland has owned
all 3 major categories

this season. It may very well be the last, so enjoy, good folk.

And yet it still resulted in an L. Certain franchises just have that *je ne sais quoi*...

By the way,
Gunga-Ga-Lunga,
one of my, er, *friend's*
fantasy teams,
wishes Braylon well in

New York. Earn that
conditional 2
nd

Round pick, pendejo.

Ah, to be a fly on the wall when Mangini informed Braylon that he was traded.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Eric Mangini, an expanding man in his 30's, sits at his desk with a stoic expression on his face, smoking a cigarette, blowing smoke rings towards a lamp. A knock comes at the door,

and he jumps,
quickly opening a
drawer and putting
out his smoke in an
ashtray within.

Mangini (clearing his
throat): *Who is it?*

Voice (from outside door): *It's me, coach*

.

Mangini shuts the drawer and sprays some Lysol that he has resting on his

desk, waving his
hand about to diffuse
the fumes.

Mangini: *Come in!*

The door opens and Braylon Edwards, a pretty boy prima donna in his mid-20's, enters the room, looking bored. Mangini smiles at him uncomfortably.

Mangini: *Have a seat, Braylon*

.

Braylon sits down,
looking
disinterestedly out
the window.

Mangini: *How you
doin', Braylon
?*

Braylon: *I'm OK, you
know... OK... and
stuff ...*

Mangini (not really listening): *That's good! You didn't... hurt your hand punching that guy, did you?*

Mangini chuckles

like he made a joke.

Braylon: *Nah, I was
too drunk to feel
anything, you know*

...

Mangini: *I hear ya! □
Been there a million
times. □ But let's
keep that between
you and me, huh? □
Don't want the
missus finding out,
you know what I'm
sayin' ?*

He smiles in what he feels is a friendly way. Braylon glances at him, then looks back out the window, thinking about gold watches.

Mangini (getting
down to business):
*So, you probably are
wondering why I
asked you here*

.

Braylon (sighing): Y

*ou want me to tell
my side of the story*

.

Mangini (holding up
a finger): *You'd think
so, but... no. I've
already heard all*

*about it.▯ Massive
insecurity does have
its perks.▯ I heard
about you punching
that... man... and I
also heard about
how you called me a
limp-wristed
cockwad .*

Braylon (horrified):
*What? How did you
find out? Who told
you
??!!*

Mangini laughs and
points his finger at

Braylon.

Mangini: *Gotcha!* □ *I was just guessing.* □

Based on... you

know ...

(smile fades)

stuff other people

have said

...

There is a moment
of uncomfortable
silence.

Mangini: *Anyway, the reason why I called you here.□ I've had some calls... from the owner, and... from someone higher up than him... and, well, I don't know how to say this, but... Braylon,*

you've been traded

.

Braylon stops
looking out the
window and stares at
Mangini in disbelief.

Braylon: *What???!!!*

Mangini

(sympathetically): *I*

know.□ This is the

hardest job a coach

has to do.□ It's just

that we as an

*organization feel we
have to go in a new
direction, to explore
new horizons*

...

Braylon (an insane
smile slowly

creeping over his
face): *WHERE???*!!!

Mangini (confused):
Where what
?

Braylon: *Where am I traded? (suddenly scared)*

You didn't trade me to Oakland, did you?

Say you didn't trade me to Oakland. I'll kill you right where you sit is you tell me you traded me to

Oakland!

Mangini (taken
aback): *We didn't
trade you to Oakland*

▪

Braylon (screaming
with desperate

hope): *WHERE*

THEN? WHERE

*MUTHAF***A?*

TELL ME NOW OR

I'LL... I'LL... I'LL...

PLEASE TELL ME!

Mangini (adjusting his collar, trying to maintain dignity): *We traded you to the Jets*

.

Braylon just stares at

Mangini for a moment, then screams in primal joy.

Braylon: *NEW YORK! NYC! THE BIG APPLE! HOLY*

SHIT!

Mangini holds up his hand, slightly confused.

Mangini: *Now, I know that being traded can be traumatic, but we're in this with you, we want to help you every step of the way...*

Braylon: *BROADWAY*
Y! 5 TH
AVENUE! TIMES
SQUARE! THAT
BITCH WITH THE
TORCH!

Mangini: *Please*

*remember, we all
still appreciate
everything you've
done here, and we
don't want to go out
on bad terms...*

Braylon walks over

to a filing cabinet in
the corner and
starts gyrating on it
like a bulldog in
heat.

Braylon: *CENTRAL
PARK! MADISON*

*SQUARE GARDEN!
THE EMPIRE
STATE BUILDING!
BUNKER HILL!*

*Mangini: Well,
that's not in... never
mind. You seem to*

be taking this pretty well.

Braylon runs over to the chair and sits down, leaning forward, staring eagerly at Mangini.

Braylon: *When can I leave? Can I leave now? Right now? Like, this second?*

Mangini: *Well, there's some*

*paperwork that has
to be signed...*

Braylon (holding up
both hands,
pleading): *But, if I
get on a private jet,
like, this instant, can*

*this paperwork that
you're speaking of
be done by the time
I land?*

Mangini (thinking): *I
t's hard to say, but
probably...*

Braylon jumps out of his chair and runs out of the room faster than he ever has on a Sunday, laughing maniacally. Mangini stares after him, shaking his head.

Mangini: *Kids.*

LeBron James'
head pops around
the edge of the
open door, and he
looks after Braylon.

LeBron: *Is it done?*

Mangini: *Yep.*

LeBron: *How'd it
go?*

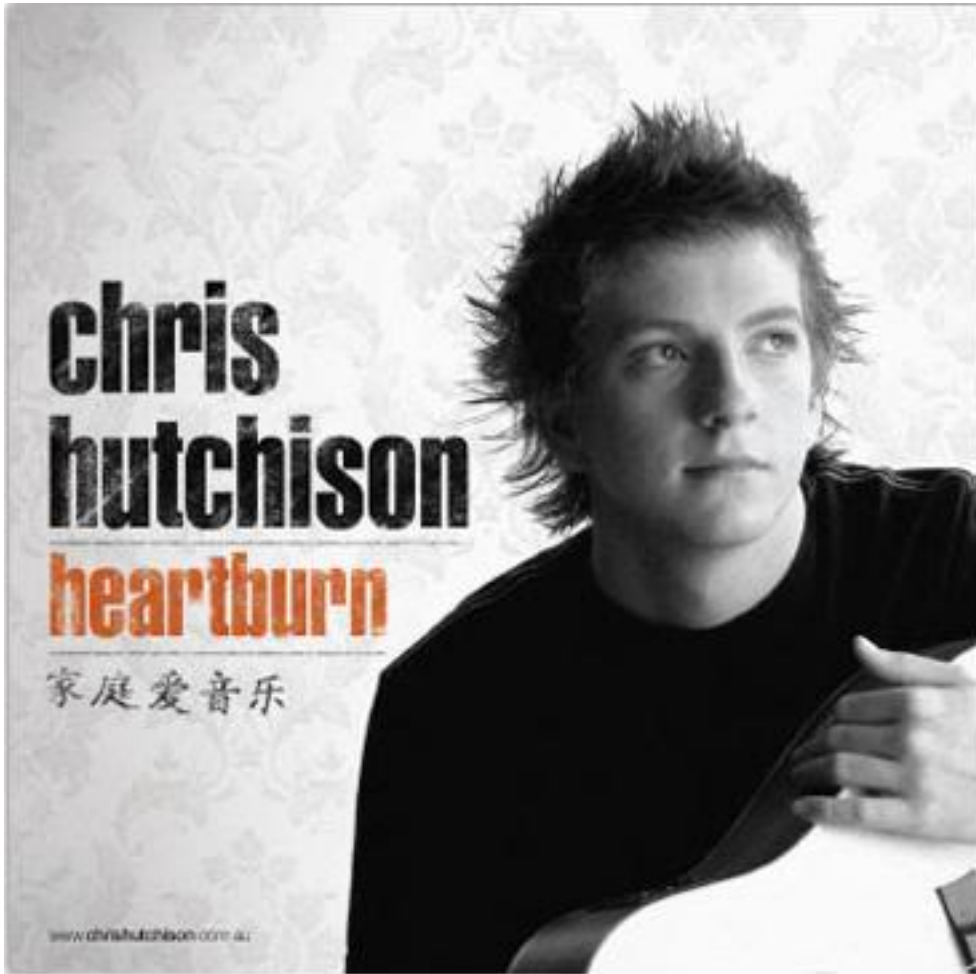
Mangini (smiling in a self-satisfied kind of way): *Pretty well, I think, all things considered.* He was upset at first, but he came to see that this was the best thing for

everyone.

LeBron: Huh... I still think you should've let me fit him for a new pair of cement boots, like we do it in the A-K.

Mangini (looking up and smiling): *No worries.□ If he plays like I think he'll play, I know plenty of guys in New York that'll take care of that themselves.*

With all the drama
and disappointment,
even some imposter
out there feels...



After just toweling off from a good swim, he came in for this photo shoot, but apparently got distracted by ESPN's Braylon coverage on the TV to his left.

Yes, you can see that he's thinking, "What a tool." In fact, I'm pretty sure that's what it says in Chinese there.

With 6:34 left in the
4th Quarter, when
the Browns kicked a
2nd FG from
starting field

position inside the
Cincy 20, I jotted
down in my
notebook: "
*Inability to put
Bengals away will
kill them*
"

I was not afraid to write this. I was confident of its validity, and although some small part of me felt like writing it doomed to be true, my logic preaches

against
hocus-pocus. My
prophecy comes
solely from the fact
that I've watched a
lot of Cleveland
football over the
years and it never
changes. It's just

so pathetically easy to predict. If my words actually held the kind of power to sway events, I'd be writing "Playing lottery results in \$3 million dollars" and

watching the
Browns at 2 am
from my palace in
New Zealand.

*"All Steelers
fans in Northeast*

*Ohio attempt to
bungee off a 400
foot bridge with a
500 foot cord*

." Let's see if
that works.

With that
results-based
familiarity being
noted, let us group

the typical outcome
of Browns games:

Blowout Loss: 50%

*Close, excruciating,
inexplicable
only-in-Cleveland
loss: 25%*

*Lame win against a
horrible team: 20%*

*Unexpected,
soul-lifting win
against a solid
team: 4%*

Blowout win: 1%

Let us now admit
that Derek
Anderson looked
MUCH better than

Quinn had in the first 3 games. The excuses would be, of course, that DA had the benefit of Mo Mass starting instead of ineffectual Josh Cribbs, and Robert

Royal was place on
semi-permanent
duty helping out
semi-useless St.
Clair.

Oh, and the

Defense came out to play over an entire game in a way they hadn't even come close to previously.

But like I always
say, Excuses Be
Damned . I
don't want to hear
excuses. I want to
see results. And
DA's results were
superior to Quinn's.
He wasn't

necessarily

markedly

better, but he was

noticeably

better.

However, he wasn't

any better than
anyone really
expected him to be.

He was DA, the
same DA we all
know and bleh. He
made some plays,
made some really
good throws, threw

his obligatory pick
in the End Zone,
and sputtered in
crunch time.

Yet, because DA
looked mercurial in

comparison to
Quinn, tons of
people - some even
intelligent - have
decided to
disregard the last 3
years and proclaim
that DA is
"good

enough" for
the future, and that
the Browns don't
need to draft a
Franchise QB in
2010.

This is one of the saddest developments I've ever seen. This fan base is so downtrodden that suddenly DA's herky-jerky inconsistency is

acceptable
because at least
we can "make
games close".

Holy Imhotep,

Sphinxie!

People! Attention
please! You are
SO beaten down
that you have
forgotten that the

goal is NOT to
"make games
close". It is to
WIN A
SUPERBOWL.

Don't support

decisions based upon the fact that the Browns might go 8-8. Suffer through Hell - if you feel that the summit is being attempted - to get to a Championship.

Things have been
so bad around here
that people
mythologize **THE**
FREAKIN'
PLAYOFFS.

I know a Lombardi Trophy feels light years away, but that's really, truly what the end goal should be. *What moves should the Browns make to win us a Superbowl*

?

*Not what moves
should the Browns
make so that we
aren't the worst
team in the league*

anymore ?

So, to sum up -
yes, DA was much
more effective than
Quinn. But for all
those of you that

are suddenly
rationalizing that
DA might be
"sufficient&qu
ot; for the future of
this franchise, let
me quote Brad
Pitt's character
(Jeffrey Goines)

from *12 Monkeys*:

*" You are a
total nutcase,
completely
deranged,
delusional,*

*paranoid. Your
thought process is
all [jacked] up. Your
information train is
jammed, man
!"*

Please stop calling
Cincinnati vs.
Cleveland " *The Battle of Ohio*

".

Sincerely,

Ohio

I watched *Observe
and Report*
the other night, and
Seth Rogan's

character in the
movie inexplicably
reminded me of
Eric Mangini. But
how? Physically?
The
over-authoritative
manner? The stern
look of disapproval

for the
wrong-doers?



No, it's that they
both are huge fans
of that magazine.

QB-O-RAMA - Version 2010!

For a sad and
seemingly
inevitable reason,
we are keeping

track of the top
QB's that will be
available for the
2010 draft. Here's
what they did this
week:

Sam Bradford -
Oklahoma (vs.
Miami) - Still hurt,
he sat there and
watched his team
lose to Miami, and
now I have to hear
about how Miami is
back, blah, blah,

blah. Stupid Sam
Bradford.

Tim Tebow -
Florida (vs.
Concussion State) -
Took the week off

so that ESPN could
spend endless
hours discussing
his situation.

**Colt McCoy -
Texas (vs. Bye**

Week) -

Apparently, no one
played last week.

Jake Locker -

Washington (vs.

Notre Dame) - 22

of 40, 281 yds, 1
TD, 33 yds
Rushing, 1 Rushing
TD.

Hey, who's this
new guy?

According to all those people that make a living gauging such things, Locker is a Top 10 QB if he comes out this year (he's a Junior). I watched him in the

Washington-Notre
Dame game, and
I'm very impressed
by how much he
has developed from
the run-only QB
that I first saw
when Ohio State
played the Huskies

a couple years
back.

Good arm, good
mobility, good
tough runner...
basically looks like

Tim Tebow with maybe a bit better passing skill. So I'm throwing him in the mix because he's obviously got an above-average skill set.

Another guy that people have been touting (if he comes out) is ND QB Jimmy Clausen. I am not including him, because he bores the crap out of me. I watch him

play and I think of
10,000 college
QB's I've seen play
before. Not that
he's bad, but he's -
to me - utterly
inordinary. If you
want to pine after
him, that's fine with

me. He doesn't go
on my list.

Reader E-mail

From Yanni Doe,
Wadsworth: "What do you think
of Shaq being a
Steelers fan?" Do

*you think he's a
traitor?*

"

No more so than
98% of Northeast
Ohio. I can't fire

my crossbow
without hitting a
Steelers fan, and,
believe me, I've
tried (well, not that
hard).

It's not like Shaq is Ohio born and raised. The odds that he's gonna like the same teams we do is slim and bupkiss.

Obviously, he's a bandwagon fan like

so many other
people out there.
But if he can help
bring a
Championship to
Cleveland, he could
come knocking on
my door selling
Jehovah's Witness

for all I care. And
I'll take his little
pamphlet about the
end of the world
with a smile on my
damn face.



Next Up

The Buffalo Bills

Well, here's a team
that the Browns
can beat.

The Bills have a bad 7th-worst (26) Offense, just a couple spots above Cleveland. Trent Edwards is ineffective, and TO is doing jack-poo. Only Fred Jackson

is really to be
feared at this point.

And their Defense
is actually worse.
They're 6th-worst
(27) in that

category.

But the Browns
rank 29 in Offense
and, sigh, dead
last in Defense
(32).

It's true that the combined records of the Browns first 4 opponents is 14-2, and some would argue that has skewed their rankings. I say that Buffalo

should've beaten
New England in
Week 1, and hung
with the Saints for
a while in Week 3.
Only last week did
it look they've
finally succumbed
to suck.

So, in the battle of
Awful and Putrid,
home field wins.

*Bills 20, Browns
16.*