



The National Media would like you to curb your enthusiasm.

Yes, as each season springs anew in the NFL, every team - even the most repulsive piles of refuse - glows with the hope of rebirth. Rookie X and Free Agent Y will come in and bring success to Position Z. Young Veteran Q will make a production leap to the Nth degree.

But these are the hopes and dreams of the locals, the people that are understandably blinded by their own optimism.

Nationally, the pundits aren't so optimistic.

[Peter King of CNN.com names the Browns as one of 4 NFL teams with no chance in 2010.](#)

[Clark Judge of CBS Sportsline describes the Browns as an also-ran that will be interesting just to see if Eric Mangini can keep his job.](#)

[ESPN has Cleveland ranked 28th and bemoans their vast lack of talent.](#)

[And fantasy gurus across the country describe the Browns as "Fantasy Siberia".](#)

They might be right. This team might be every bit as bad as the 2009 version, destined for another 4 or 5 win season. They might be able to see things objectively that we cannot possibly see through the trees.

Or they might just be like most national pundits and ignore the Browns almost completely, just regurgitating the opinions of yesteryear in an effort to say "*See, look, I mentioned Cleveland.*"

Personally, I haven't been this optimistic in a long time.

Here's what I perceive to be the Browns strengths: *Offensive Line.* *Running Attack.* *Defensive Pressure.*

If the last 4 games of 2009 are any indication about what this team CAN do once it gels, then I see a run-first assault with many options and an opportunistic Defense that will bring waves of attackers again and again.

Best Case: The Browns end up Top 12 in Rushing, Turnovers Forced, and Sacks.

Certainly, there are talent deficiencies. There are areas where the Browns are just flat under-staffed. But a team that Runs the ball well and makes plays on Defense will be in almost every game they play, and they'll probably win as many as they lose.

Curb your enthusiasm, if you will. If you're a fan of Cleveland sports, it's probably a smart move regardless of the team or season.

But don't be "shocked" like the rest of the nation when the Browns fail to fail.

Regarding Predictions

I am not big on record predictions, just because there are so many intangibles in the season that can not be anticipated: injuries, opponents being better or worse than thought, weather, interest rate fluctuations... It's just a crapshoot.

I am especially small (not big) on going through the schedule and saying "Win. Win. Loss. Win." Every fan of the teams the Browns play this year is going down the list and counting the Browns as a "Win", and yet I would be shocked to see Cleveland go 0-16 this season.

But seeing as I think it is an interesting gauge for me to give a prediction now - before the start of camp - and compare it against a prediction I make later - after the Preseason, I'll go ahead and break it down by Division.

Versus AFC North - Baltimore should be really good this year. Flacco's in his 3rd year, Boldin will help the passing game, and Ray Rice is in his prime. The Defense is always solid. However, I am less impressed with the Steelers and Bengals. The Steelers lost Willie Colon (IR) and Santonio Holmes (trade), and their POS QB will be suspended for the first 4-6. I think they'll be lucky to go 8-8. And just because Cincy managed to sign every available ex-felon doesn't mean that they won't underachieve. Until they prove that last season wasn't a fluke, I'll just keep assuming it was. So, 3-3.

Versus AFC East - Well, everyone has crowned the Jets' asses, and the Pats are always good.

Miami... I suppose they could be good if Chad Henne isn't a joke (which, [according to the Dead Schembechlers](#), is impossible). But Buffalo will basically blow baboons. I'm saying 2-2 against that division.

Versus NFC South - Tampa has been down, but Carolina should be tough, Atlanta's no patsy, and the Saints had a decent 2009 (last time I checked). The conservative bet is 1-3.

Versus Kansas City and Jacksonville - They could certainly lose to either, or both. They could certainly win either, or both. Let's split the difference.

That puts the Browns at 7-9. Which, as I write it, doesn't seem to reflect the optimism I recently professed.

Not true! A record is not necessarily a completely accurate depiction of a team's improvement, or lack thereof. That 2007 team went 10-6, but that was a bit of a mirage. 7-9 against 2010's (perceived) difficult schedule would definitely put the potential for 2011 in a positive light.

If the Browns go 7-9 and stay on the perimeter of the Playoff conversation and end up the season one of those Teams Nobody Wants To Play, then I'll be acceptably satisfied.

Regarding Quarterbacks



Players: ~~Skylar Bell (17) - Louisiana Lafayette~~



Players: ~~Marion Harrison (35) - Bowling Green~~



Players: ~~Marion Harrison (11) - Bowling Green~~



Players: [Cleveland Browns](#) [Ohio State](#)



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