



**Week 2 – Cleveland vs. Kansas City**

What's left to say?

*Not much.*

How is this any different than all the crap that came before?

*It isn't.*

Any way this freight train to Hell can get turned around?

*I doubt it.*

Is this yet another year where the season is effectively over by the end of September?

*Is the Sahara dry?*

What's most distressing is the sensation that nothing can stop the endless freefall - nothing can stop the tidal wave of suck. No matter who they draft, no matter who they hire in the front office, no matter who they hire to coach... the result will always be the same.

You look at Mike Holmgren and Tom Heckert and logically say: *This is the first truly experienced, successful, professional duo in the front office since The Return.* Give them some time to get this right.

Well, duh. Only a reactionary of the first order would be demanding Holmgren/Heckert's head at this juncture.

But that's logic speaking, and logic can't convince me that my hellish visions won't become truth - that the Cleveland Browns will chew up and spit out Holmgren and Heckert just like all those who came before them.

Romeo Crennell. Phil Savage. Butch Davis. Pete Garcia. Carmen Policy. Chris Palmer. Dwight Clark. George Kokinis.

The Cleveland Browns rocked 'em all.

Hell, the Browns even chewed up and spit out Bill Belichick. And no matter who comes here, the Browns will destroy them too. Bring Cowher in. **Bang!** He's toast. Bring Parcells in. **Wham!**

He's running for the hills. Peyton Manning, Tom Brady, Drew Brees.

**Kaboom!**

Their careers would be over in 2 weeks.

It's a pervading sense of hopelessness that I feel, a sinking feeling that no matter how much we care, how long we "hang in there", that this is an evil Groundhog's Day, that we are Sisyphus, pushing that boulder of fandom up a hill for eternity.

No wonder so many find it so easy to jump ship. Which might be the most frustrating aspect of this whole frustration-fest: The fact that we find it increasingly difficult to convince our children, our friends, our neighbors, that the team we love is worth the effort.

The Glory Days seem so long ago that fire hadn't even been invented. For an entire generation, the Glory Days never existed. And, as that generation drifts away from the Browns, they never will.

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But, hey kids, let's look at the bright side! At least we're not getting blown out! The Browns were right in both of these terrible games against teams just as bad as they are!

In fact, they could as easily be 2-0 as 0-2! In fact, they SHOULD be 2-0 except for blowing both games! And, in fact, those 2 teams they lost to are a combined 4-0 right now!

There. Hope that helps you sleep at night. Hope that helps *me* sleep at night.

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### Game Recap

I could almost paste last week's recap here and it would be close enough.

The Browns and Chiefs traded mostly ineffective drives to start the game, and then Jerome Harrison finally decided to show the crowd how to create some sparks by fumbling at the CLE

26. The Defense, however, held a consistently inconsistent Matt Cassel to a 3 and Out, and KC had to settle for a FG. *Chiefs 3, Browns 0.*

The teams once again went on short drives that ended in punts, KC's landing at the CLE 2. From there, the Browns embarked upon their most impressive drive of the season (which is like a virgin hooking up with "the hottest girl he's ever slept with".) Seneca Wallace was accurate. Payton Hillis ran hard. The screen pass was effective, as was the Tight End (Ben Watson) across the middle. The cruised 98 yards in 10 plays, facing only one 3rd Down, ending with a great effort TD by Hillis to put the Browns up in the game. *Browns 7, Chiefs 3.*

And, after a KC 3 and Out, the Browns appeared poised to get up double digits and take control of the game. And, like last week, they pissed it away via a stupid, horrible, disgusting INT - this one returned for a TD by Brandon Flowers. I don't know what Wallace was thinking: the pass was late, all the way across the field, out in front of the intended Receiver (Chansi Stuckey), and it floated a little bit. You knew it was a Pick 6 the second it left his fingers. Turnovers had now led to all KC's points. *Chiefs 10, Browns 7.*

It didn't take long for Seneca to atone. 3 plays later, and 3rd and 1 from the 35, he threw a perfect ball up and over the coverage to Josh Cribbs, who caught it in stride and avoided the pursuit for a 65 yard TD pass. Now THAT was something we hadn't seen since early 2007. *Browns 14, Chiefs 10.*

Sheldon Brown picked Cassel a couple plays later, but the Browns didn't do anything with it. A couple possessions hence Matt Roth knocked a Cassel pass in the air and Ahtyba Rubin made a beautiful diving pick (as beautiful as an airborne 300 lb man can be) at the KC 27, but Cleveland squandered that opportunity too, with Phil Dawson yanking a 42 yard FG try into the left rough.

Then came Halftime, which, in 2010, means the end of the game.

The Browns' Offense was drunk in the 2nd Half. I mean, that's the only explanation I have for their total inability to do anything at all. The Chiefs weren't vastly better, scoring only 6 points, but they did move the ball enough to score 2 FG's, and they did manage to change field position several times.

It was a carbon copy of the previous week, and Browns fans (well, at least me) had no hope at all when Cleveland took over at their own 7 with 3:41 left, down only 2.

Cuz it's one! Two! Three! Four strikes you're out at the old ball game!

And by strikes, I mean useless plays.

**Final: Chiefs 16, Browns 14.**

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### Conclusion

Time of Possession: Kansas City – 33:13, Cleveland – 26:47

Total Yards: Kansas City – 312, Cleveland - 299

First Downs: Kansas City - 16, Cleveland – 13

These numbers are somewhat skewed by the 2nd Half (again). For the 2nd week in a row, the Browns had a good chance to step on the throats of an - if not inferior, certainly equal - opponent in the 1st Half, but they sabotaged themselves.

For the 2nd week in a row, they were vastly outplayed/outcoached in the 2nd Half.

The turnovers, the penalties, the mental errors... the Browns simply cannot afford to make these even against mediocre teams. And now those games against teams where you can have boo-boos and still be in the game are gone.

Cover your eyes.

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## Gameballs

*TJ Ward* – 10 tackles, 1 assist, several big hits. Any time you see a Browns player in the secondary make a good tackle, you can be sure 43 is on the jersey (which says as much for everyone else as it does for him).

*Josh Cribbs* – I can't believe I'm about to do this, but it might be time for Cribbs to start at WR. That was a great catch he made for the TD, and he's about as close to a deep threat as this team has. Also, his presence was certainly felt in the kicking game, as KC refused to do anything but pooch it short. The Browns should've done a lot more with that.

*Marcus Benard* – Another sack, some nice pass D, and quite apparently (to the naked eye) by far the fastest LB out there. He needs to be starting, veteran stature and contracts be damned.

*Peyton Hillis* - His level of effort is impressive. He made several 1st Downs all on his own, not to mention that first TD. If all our players tried that hard, maybe we'd be 1-1.

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## Honorable Mention

*The Defense* – I struggle with this, because they still don't play well enough for the team to win. But they played better than they did at this time last season, and they are the only thing keeping the Browns in games in the 2nd Half.

*Ben Watson* – If used properly, can be very effective (like acid).

*Ahtyba Rubin* – Why was Shaun Rogers listed as the starting NT? Yeah, I want Rogers starting, but not at the Nose. That's where Rubin - the Browns best D Lineman - should be starting. Always.

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## Wall of Shame

*Phil Dawson* – Sorry to stick ya here, Phil, but that was just a weak-ass attempt on that miss, and the team really needed that. Turned out to be huge.

*Jerome Harrison* – A costly fumble and ran like poo. 33 yards on 16 carries ain't gonna cut it, Mr. Starter.

*Wide Receivers (other than Josh Cribbs)* – Do we have any?

*David Veikune* – Didn't make any plays. I didn't even notice him on the field... oh...

*Run Blocking* – You guys do remember the end of last season, don't you?

*Brian Daboll* – More on this guy later.

*Eric Mangini* – You're 0-2. Again.

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One reason that I have a little hope is that it is clear that several of the Browns best and most talented players came from this year's draft. TJ Ward. Joe Haden. And I have high hopes for Monterrio Hardesty and Shawn Lauvao.

So in a couple more drafts, there might - just might - be enough talent on this team to reasonably expect an 8-8 team.

What is depressing is how big a waste that 2009 draft looks like now. Alex Mack - good, but certainly not great so far this year. Brian Robiskie - a marginal talent at best. Mo Massaquoi - a decent Receiver that should in no way be a #1. David Veikune - cut after just one season, currently jobless.

That's even worse than normal.

I thought that Mangini did a good job of trading off problem children and ne'er do wells and recouping extra picks. I didn't even mind trading down with the Jets (although I have my doubts about whether they got value for dropping, but that's a moot point right now). But all those picks were just... well, pretty much wasted.

Think about the Wide Receiver position. It is devoid of playmaking talent. It is an area that will

sorely need to be addressed in the near future.

And the Browns spent two 2nd Round picks on that position just last year.

That thought oughtta be just as effective as drinking castor oil.

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All right. Who switched Jamal Lewis with Jerome Harrison?

What, you think we wouldn't notice? You think we wouldn't realize that the guy in Harrison's uniform suddenly looked slow and useless, averaging a masterful 2-something yards per carry?

Whoever did this, switch 'em back. Now! I know you think it's funny, but it so isn't, mister.

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Which just re-emphasizes why the Front Office felt the need to trade up to get a potential Franchise RB, and how big a blow that season-ending injury will become. Hurry back, Mr. Hardesty. And make sure they install bionic tendons this time.

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It also makes it easy to see why the Browns have and will continue to have one of the worst Offenses in the NFL. They don't have starting quality players at any of the skill positions on O. Not at RB, not at WR, certainly not at QB. On a really good NFL team, Mo Mass would

probably be a #3. Ben Watson would be a backup.

Good God, we need a major talent infusion.

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And, Mr. Daboll, maybe you can tell me... why is it when Jerome Harrison is so clearly struggling that you went totally away from Hillis for a large chunk of the game and didn't give James Davis any carries to see if he could change things up and didn't run the Wildcat and didn't run the Flash and didn't run the Cyclone and DIDN'T DO ANYTHING AT ALL!

Especially in a game where Seneca Wallace was starting, where throwing in some new formations and running some unconventional plays without sounding alarms beforehand would've been easy.

Your 2nd Half adjustments have been as effective as putting the condom on after intercourse. Your play calling is so predictable that I don't see why you don't just send the enemy a copy of the playbook and the order you plan to call plays. Maybe you can highlight certain plays and make some helpful notes as how to best stop them.

Your decrease in girth did not apparently lead to any growth in skill. You are what we thought

you were.

I will try to say this as calmly as I possibly can: Brian Daboll, you, sir, SUCK.

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Although I bemoan the awful pick that once again killed momentum and cost the Browns a TD, I don't think Wallace played all that poorly. He had some very nice throws, including the scoring pass to Josh Cribbs. It wasn't a good outing, but it wasn't putrid either.

And I guess I could say the same about pre-injury Jake Delhomme last week too. Meh. Blah. But 1000 times better than what we had to watch last year.

When you think it's hit rock bottom, remember: This team could still have BQ and DA.

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Speak of the devil, wow bad is the NFC West?

Bad enough that the Arizona Cardinals, a team that essentially gave up before the season ever started by making Derek Anderson their starter, might have a shot at winning it.

I still think the Cardinals are fools, though. There is nothing that DA brings to the table that any halfway decent rookie doesn't have. If you're going to get brutal and completely ineffective QB play, might as well get Max Hall some reps. Derek Anderson isn't your past, present, or future.

**Reader E-mail**

*Robert, Parma - Mark May is ignorant, annoying, stupid-looking, and has an inexplicable hatred for all things Ohio State. So how's that different than Goldhammer?*

Touché



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*Bradley, Alliance - I like that picture of Mark May that you found. If you look closely, you can see that he's showing how he spent his time at the frat party the night before.*

