

Preview: Browns @ Ravens

Written by {ga=hermanfontenot}

Saturday, September 25 2010 1:00 PM - Last Updated Saturday, September 25 2010 1:09 PM



Kansas City Chiefs @ Cleveland Browns

Time: 1:00 pm, Sunday, September 26, 2010

Location: M&T Bank Stadium, Baltimore, Maryland

Network, Announcers- CBS: Don Criqui and Steve Beuerlein

Line: Ravens by ten-and-a-half

Team W/L Records: Cleveland is 0-2; Baltimore is 1-1

Coaches: Eric Mangini is 28-38 overall, 5-13 in his second season with the Browns; John Harbaugh is 19-15 in his third season with the Ravens.

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Last Week for the Browns: Committed three turnovers and nine penalties in a 16-14 loss to the Chiefs in the home opener. The loss dropped Cleveland to 1-11 in home openers since 1999.

Last Week for the Chiefs: Committed four turnovers- all interceptions thrown by Joe Flacco- in a 15-10 loss at Cincinnati. □

All-Time Series: Ravens lead, 15-7.

Last Meeting- [November 16, 2009](#) : After playing to a scoreless tie at halftime the Ravens used both offense and defense to score 16 third-quarter points and cruise to a 16-0 Monday-night victory in Cleveland. Ray Rice opened the scoring with a 13-yard touchdown run and moments later Dawan Landry picked off a Brady Quinn pass and raced 48 yards for a score. Baltimore's defense held the Browns to 160 total yards on the night.

Out, Doubtful or Questionable for Baltimore: T Jared Gaither (back), LB Tavares Gooden (shoulder) and WR Donte' Stallworth (foot) are out.

Out, Doubtful or Questionable for Cleveland: G Shawn Lauvao (ankle) is out; QB Jake Delhomme (ankle), WR Brian Robiskie (hamstring) and LB D'Qwell Jackson (chest) are doubtful; LB Marcus Benard (ankle), RB Jerome Harrison (thigh) and DT Shaun Rogers (ankle) are questionable.

What to watch for the Browns: The term "like watching old people have sex" is a pretty fair description of Cleveland's second-half offense thus far in 2010. In four quarters of second-half football the Browns have gained 178 yards. They've mounted one serious scoring threat- their first drive of the third quarter at Tampa Bay- and killed that threat with a fumble. Since that aborted drive Cleveland has had eleven second-half possessions. They've parlayed those eleven possessions into 44 plays, 110 total yards (2.5 yards per play) and five first downs. Forget winning- how about scoring a point after halftime?

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The shame of it is that Cleveland's defence has performed pretty well thus far. They aren't that impressive statistically- 13th overall, 25th against the run- but the number-one job of a defence is to prevent scoring, and the Browns for the most part have done that. They didn't allow a touchdown last week against Kansas City and have only given up 26 points in two games.

But it would take a great defence to make up for Cleveland's second-half offensive shortcomings. And although the stop troops have been adequate, it hasn't been enough. Going into a road meeting with a Baltimore team that hasn't given up a touchdown yet this season, the prospects for an immediate revival are not good.

What to watch for the Ravens: Cleveland's offense has at least shown flashes in the first half of their first two games. Baltimore's offense hasn't done anything at any time, other than shoot itself in the foot. The Ravens have scored ten points in each of their first two games, spoiling the efforts of a defence that has yet to give up a touchdown this season. Baltimore is 21

st

in rushing, 26

th

in passing and has turned the ball over seven times.

The biggest factor in Baltimore's offensive woes is the poor play of third-year quarterback Joe Flacco. After improving in almost every major category in each of his first two seasons Flacco was expected to make the leap into elite status in 2010. Instead he's been as ugly as his uni-brow, completing just 48 percent of his passes and throwing five interceptions to one touchdown, good for a sorry 41.2 rating. Flacco's four interceptions- two in the last five minutes- were the biggest culprit in Baltimore's loss last week in Cincinnati.

Of course, both of those games were on the road- and neither was against the Browns. Flacco has a 12-4 career record and an 86.3 rating at M&T Bank Stadium. He is also 4-0 against Cleveland. Indeed, Flacco doesn't have more than two career wins against any opponent other than the Browns. If the Baltimore quarterback is going to have a bounce-back game, this will probably be it- although the Ravens may be content to send Ray Rice at Cleveland's substandard run defense.

Next Week for Both Teams: Baltimore goes to Pittsburgh; Cleveland hosts Cincinnati.

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Trivia: Cleveland has gone nine consecutive quarters without scoring on Baltimore's defence. The Browns haven't found the end zone against the Ravens since the third period of the second meeting between the teams in 2008.