

BROWNIE BITS: WEEK THREE

Written by {ga=jonathanknight}

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Useless nuggets of information from Sunday's Browns game that you can certainly live without...

STRUGGLES IN MARYLAND: Sunday's loss was the Browns' fifth straight to Baltimore. Their last victory over the Ravens was the overtime thriller in November of 2007 defined by Phil Dawson's game-tying pinball field goal on the final play of regulation. The Ravens now lead the all-time series, 16-7, and are 9-3 against the Browns in Baltimore.

A BIT OF A DROUGHT: Peyton Hillis' score in the final minute of the first half on Sunday marked the first touchdown the Browns had scored against the Ravens in almost two years. The last was on a seven-yard pass from Derek Anderson to Jason Wright in the third quarter of the Browns' 37-27 loss to Baltimore on Nov. 2, 2008. They would fall just a few seconds shy of 11 straight touchdown-less quarters before scoring another against the Ravens. Over that period, Baltimore outscored the Browns 81-6.

DECIDEDLY BETTER: Seneca Wallace put forth the best performance by any Browns quarterback so far this season, posting a QB rating of 103. It was the highest rating for any Browns quarterback since Brady Quinn's 304-yard, four-touchdown performance in Detroit last November (133.1).

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SEE YOU IN SEPTEMBER: For whatever reason, the Browns and Ravens tend to match up early in the season, and it rarely turns out well for our Erie warriors. The teams have cracked helmets eight times in September, with Baltimore winning six. The Browns are 0-5 in Baltimore in the month of September, while going 3-4 in October, November, and December.

BETTER, BUT STILL...: Naturally, it would have been difficult for the Browns offense to match Week Two's second-half ineptitude. To their credit, there was marked improvement – in Baltimore the Browns collected roughly twice the yardage they gained against Kansas City in the second half: a whopping 111 total yards (please note sarcasm). Put together the Browns' three second-half performances, and they're averaging a ridiculously mediocre 101.3 yards per game in the final two quarters. Placing that number in proper context, they're averaging 213 yards per game in the first half. Now if only we could petition the league to eliminate halftime...

BAD MEMORIES: Sunday's game marked the 11th anniversary of the first-ever Browns-Ravens game – not surprisingly, won by Baltimore, 17-10.

THIRD-DOWN MISERY: A continuing theme for the Browns' offensive struggles in the second half in the first three games has been their third-down ineptitude. Against the Ravens, the Browns were 1 for 6 on third downs in the second half, bringing their second-half, third/fourth-down tally for the season to a miserable 3 for 19 (16%).

MORE SEPTEMBER FUN: Since 2003, the Browns are now 6-21 in the month of September and have lost nine of their last 10 September games. The good news: no more September games until 2011.

SNATCHING DEFEAT FROM THE JAWS OF VICTORY: Not that anyone needs to be reminded, but this week marked the third straight game the Browns blew a fourth-quarter lead and lost. The last time the Browns matched this highly unenviable accomplishment was in November of 1991 when they yodeled away fourth-quarter advantages to lose games to Cincinnati, Philadelphia, and the Houston Oilers in consecutive weeks. That string still takes the prize since the Browns also led by double digits in all three losses.

LANDING THE FIRST BLOW: Over the history of the series, the Ravens have dominated the Browns in their first meeting of the season, winning nine of 12 games. The Browns have fared

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slightly better in the season's second matchup, going 4-7.

TWICE 300: It's been three years since the Browns have topped 300 total yards of offense twice in the month of September. They played seven September games in 2008 and 2009 without topping 300. Conversely, by allowing more than 300 yards for the second straight week, it marked the 16th time in the last 20 games that the Browns defense has permitted the opposition to roll up at least 300 yards.

TAKING OUT A WEAPON: Four of Baltimore's five kickoffs were placed in the Cleveland end zone, with three becoming touchbacks. Josh Cribbs only returned two kickoffs for an average of 23.5 yards each. For the season, Cribbs is averaging only 18.7 yards per kickoff return.

THE CENTURY CLUB: Peyton Hillis' 144-yard performance was the 211th 100-yard rushing game in Browns' history. Now with 220 yards on the season, Hillis is currently the NFL's 10th

-leading rusher.

WOE IS ME, OH-AND-THREE: For the third straight year, the Browns have started the season 0-3. It's only the seventh time in team history they've lost the first three games of the season. The best record any of those teams posted was 5-11 (2009 and 1984 – though it's worth noting that in both cases, four of the five victories came in the final seven weeks of the season).

HOW THEY RANK: After three games, the overall efficiency of Browns' offense continues to top much of the league. They're averaging 5.4 yards per offensive play, ranked 14th in the NFL (yet their 45 total points put them 27th in scoring). After its worst game of the young season, the Cleveland defense slipped a bit, dropping from ninth to 17th in the league, now allowing 5.1 yards per play.