

What do the Cleveland Browns have in common with this popular breakfast pastry? Neither one has a center. In the latest disturbing development with the Browns, center Alonzo Ephraim was suspended by the NFL for the first four games of the season for violating the league substance abuse policy back in 2005. The Browns are left with just castoff Ross Tucker at the center position ... and Papa Cass is here with his take on this mess.



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Let's face facts: the Browns simply aren't going to have a center for the Sept. 10 opener against New Orleans.

Something will happen to every single guy who snaps the ball to the quarterback. By Sept. 10, the Browns are going to have to resort to flag football tactics and have Charlie Frye hold the ball out in front of him and yell "hike!"

Alonzo Ephraim is reportedly the latest Browns center who won't be active for the start of the regular season. If you smelled a fish when you saw Ephraim available for the taking in late July, your nose wasn't deceiving you.

Ephraim has reportedly violated the NFL's substance abuse policy for the second time and will be suspended for the first four games of the season, [The Plain Dealer reported Wednesday.](#)

Ephraim will get a chance to appeal the suspension. He will reportedly still be active for the remainder of the preseason.

However, despite the fact that Ephraim had a solid game in last Thursday's preseason loss to the Eagles, the Browns apparently aren't about to give increased playing time to a guy who won't be active for the first month of the season. Ross Tucker, acquired less than a week ago from the Patriots, will reportedly start Friday night against the Lions.

Once again, we have to brace ourselves for fumbled snaps and miscommunication, and hope that it all turns out as well as it did against Philadelphia.

Tucker follows LeCharles Bentley, Bob Hallen and Ephraim onto the hot seat. Let's see how fate turns against him. Will he get injured? Will he get caught doing/trafficking drugs? Will he

get arrested for a DUI? Will he pull a Ross Verba combo platter?

Tucker shares a first name with Verba, and a last name with another Browns offensive lineman who can never stay healthy. That's two strikes right there. Our phantom curse is cracking its knuckles, cackling wildly. So many ways to ruin Tucker's season, so little time.