

Brownie Bits- Week 9

Written by {ga=jonathanknight}
Friday, November 12 2010 4:45 PM -



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

WIDENING THE GAP: Including the 1994 playoff game, the Browns' lead in the series now stands at 13-9. Going into Sunday, the Patriots had won the previous four meetings and six of the last seven. The Browns' last win over New England was 10 years ago this month, a bizarre 19-11 decision that marked Chris Palmer's fifth and final victory with the Browns and the first time they'd faced Bill Belichick as the opposing head coach. (Incidentally, 2000 was also the last time the Patriots posted a losing record – hmmm.)

PEYTON'S PACE: How can you not love this guy? (I, for one, am not at all ashamed to reveal my own man-crush on good ol' No. 40.) Now with seven rushing touchdowns on the season, Peyton Hillis has already topped the Browns' top scoring rusher from 2009 (Jerome Harrison with five) and the entire 2008 team combined (six). If Hillis keeps pace and hits 14 for the year, it would be the most rushing touchdowns by any Browns' running back since Leroy Kelly scored 16 in 1968. By contrast, Brady Quinn - Hillis' trade bait – has yet to throw a pass for Denver. It took us 25 years, but it looks like we finally rooked those damned Broncos.

HINDSIGHT IS 20/20: The 34 points were the most the Browns had ever scored against the Pats - topping the previous best of 30, reached in victories in 1977 and 1983. Making that achievement all the more delicious, the Browns hadn't scored more than 20 points in any of their previous 13 games against New England. What's more, they'd scored 20 points or less in 16 of the teams' 21 meetings. Sunday also broke a string of seven consecutive meetings in which the Patriots had out-gained the Browns in total yardage.

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GRABBING A LEAD...AGAIN: The Browns have now held a lead at some point in 13 consecutive games, winning seven.

BETTER THIEVES: With Eric Wright's icing-on-the-cake interception in the final moments, the Browns have now collected more interceptions (9) than they've allowed (8) for the season. Their turnover ratio stands at plus-2.

IS IT THE LAKE?: In games played outside the city of Cleveland, Bill Belichick has a career head-coaching record of 134-71 (.654). In games played within the Cleveland city limits, his career mark is 20-23 (.465): 1-2 with New England, 19-21 with the Browns.

DOUBLE DIGITS RIGHT OFF THE BAT: This was the second straight game the Browns had scored 10 points in the first quarter, yet only marked the fifth time they'd hit double figures in any period all season (the fourth quarter became the sixth). For the year, the Browns have now outscored opponents 36-13 in the first quarter. At the other end of the spectrum, Sunday was the first time all season the Browns outscored their opponent in the fourth quarter.

MAKING A POINT: The Browns now have a record of 15-18-1 in games played against teams led by former Cleveland head coaches. Ironically, the only former coach against whom they've posted a winning record is Paul Brown (7-5).

SOME BACKUP: With his score on the Little Rascals play just before the half, Chansi Stuckey became the first Brown other than Peyton Hillis to score a rushing touchdown all season. In the third quarter, Colt McCoy became the third. As a team, the Browns have now scored nine rushing touchdowns in 2010 (third-best in the NFL) after collecting a total of 10 rushing touchdowns last year.

AN ODD ANNIVERSARY: Sunday marked an infamous anniversary made even more poignant by the return of Bill Belichick. Seventeen years ago to the day, Bernie Kosar played his final game with the Browns before being released by Belichick the following afternoon. Who's skills are diminishing now, Big Bill?

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THIRD-DOWN MAESTROS: Going into the game with a third-down efficiency rate of 38% for the season, the Browns converted on 8 of 14 third/fourth downs for the game – a clip of 57%. In the same category on the other side of the ball, New England converted 5 of 13 (39%), including just 3 of 11 third downs (27%).

GOOD BYES AND BAD BYES: The Browns' all-time record in games played after their scheduled bye now stands at 7-10 (not applicable are the 1999 and 2000 seasons when the Browns' bye came in Week 17.)

HO-HUM...100 AGAIN: Hillis' career-best 184 rushing yards marked the third time this season he topped the century mark and the 213th 100-yard rushing game in Browns' history. Now with 644 yards at the midpoint of the schedule, he's on pace to become the sixth Brown to hit 1,200 in a season. Currently, he's the 12th-ranked rusher in the NFL – ahead of both Baltimore's Ray Rice and Cincinnati's Cedric Benson. And only Houston's Arian Foster and Chris Johnson of Tennessee have scored more rushing touchdowns.

FOUR BILLS: The Browns topped 400 yards of offense for the first time in nine games – since last December's shootout in Kansas City. Their previous season-high had been 327 in Pittsburgh. For what it's worth, in the three games Colt McCoy has started, the Browns have averaged 25 points per game. In the five games he didn't, they averaged 16.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE: Permitting a season-low 283 total yards, the Browns' defense held the opponent under 300 yards for the first time since the opener in Tampa. The 4.8 yards permitted per play was their best clip since Week Two against Kansas City and almost an entire yard per play less than they'd allowed in New Orleans.

NO. 5 FOR 3-5: Since the advent of the 16-game schedule in 1978, the Browns had reached the midpoint of the season with a 3-5 record four times before – their best finish was 6-10 in 2005, and their worst was 4-12 (2004 and 2008).

WHO'S NEXT?: For the second straight game, Colt McCoy stared down one of the NFL's premier quarterbacks. Tom Brady, tossing for 224 yards and a pair of touchdowns with no picks, scored a very respectable 90.6 quarterback rating, but couldn't match McCoy's efficient 101.6 – buoyed by his 74% completion percentage and 9.2 yards-per-attempt average.

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ANYTHING YOU CAN DO...: After more than tripling the Patriots in rushing yardage on Sunday, the Browns now have more rushing yards than their opponents for the season (938-847) and have an edge in yards per carry (4.2 to 3.9). To put that into a bit of context, the Browns haven't gained more rushing yards than they've allowed over the course of an entire season since 1993.

THE HUNT-AND-PECK OFFENSE: Long-yardage plays make highlight reels and can certainly alter the course of games, but over their past two contests the Browns have shown that they're not necessary to fielding an effective offense. Against New England, the Browns tallied only two plays of 25 yards or more and 41 of their 63 offensive plays totaled five yards or less. A few key reasons why this steady-as-she-goes approach worked:

Colt McCoy wasn't sacked

Only two of the Browns' offensive plays resulted in negative yardage

The Cleveland offense was penalized only twice for a total of 10 yards

ETCHING HIS NAME IN THE BOOKS: The Peyton Hillis Show on Sunday marked the 13th-best single-game rushing performance in Browns' history. He's the ninth Brown to top 180 rushing yards in a game, joining Marion Motley, Jim Brown (seven times), Bobby Mitchell, Greg Pruitt (three times), Earnest Byner, Lee Suggs, Jamal Lewis, and Jerome Harrison.

MAKING HIS MARK: McCoy's quarterback rating for the season now stands at 83.5. He doesn't have enough attempts to qualify, but right now that rating would put him at 21st in the league – ahead of Mark Sanchez of the Jets as well as some guy named Favre. Now with eight more attempts than Jake Delhomme, he has obliterated the veteran starter's season rating (48.2) and at 32 attempts behind Seneca Wallace, he comes up just short of matching his rating (88.5).

CONTROLLING THE CLOCK: Sunday was the second time this season the Browns held an

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advantage in time of possession (38:08 to 21:52) and the longest they've controlled the football in a regulation game since Nov. 16, 2003, when they maintained possession for 39:33 in a blowout victory over Arizona.

FOUR TIMES THE RUN: The last time the Browns scored four rushing touchdowns in one game was Nov. 4, 2007, when Jamal Lewis ran for a quartet in an overtime victory over Seattle.

WHERE WE RANK: After their best statistical performance of the season on both sides of the ball, the Browns naturally moved up in their league rankings. Offensively, they now stand at 21st in the league (up from 26th two weeks ago) at 5.2 yards per play (now ahead of both Baltimore and Cincinnati), including 13th in rushing yards per game. Defensively they jumped from 21st two weeks ago to No. 19, allowing 5.5 yards per play.