

Preview: Browns @ Bills

Written by {ga=hermanfontenot}

Saturday, December 11 2010 7:23 AM - Last Updated Sunday, December 12 2010 7:57 AM

Cleveland Browns @ Buffalo Bills



Time: 1:00 pm, Sunday, December 12, 2010

Location: Ralph Wilson Stadium, Orchard Park, New York

Network, Announcers- CBS: Don Criqui and Steve Beuerlein

Line: Bills by one

Team W/L Records: Cleveland is 5-7; Buffalo is 2-10.

Coaches: Eric Mangini is 33-43 overall, 10-18 in his second season with the Browns; Chan Gailey is 20-24 overall, 2-10 in his first season with the Bills.

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Last Week for the Browns: Got a hard-fought road win over the Dolphins in Miami, 13-10. Cleveland won it on Phil Dawson's 26-yard field goal at the gun, a score set up by Mike Adams's interception of a tipped Chad Henne pass. The Browns survived despite their second-lowest rushing yardage and total yardage outputs of the season, doing it with a defence that forced three Miami turnovers.

Last Week for the Bills: Collapsed after six consecutive solid performances, losing badly in Minnesota, 38-14. Buffalo's shaky run defence was gashed for 210 yards, including 107 and three touchdowns by Adrian Peterson. The Bills gave up 24 second-quarter points to turn a 7-7 game into a blowout.

All-Time Series: Browns lead, 10-5.

Last Meeting- [October 11, 2009](#) : In one of the most excruciatingly ugly games in anyone's memory, the Browns survived a 2-of-17 Derek Anderson horror show to edge the equally inept Bills at the Ralph, 6-3. Billy Cundiff booted the deciding field goal with 23 seconds left after Roscoe Parrish muffed a punt at his own 16-yard line.

Out, Doubtful or Questionable for Buffalo: LB Antonio Coleman (knee), C Geoff Hangartner (knee), TE Shawn Nelson (illness) and G Kraig Urbik (knee) are out; TE Mike Caussin (illness), DT Kyle Williams (illness), CB Terrence McGee (knee) and S Donte Whitner (knee) are questionable.

Out, Doubtful or Questionable for Cleveland: LB Titus Brown (head), LB Scott Fujita (knee) and TE Evan Moore (hip) are doubtful; LB Eric Barton (shoulder), DE Kenyon Coleman (knee), WR Joshua Cribbs (foot), QB Colt McCoy (ankle), DT Shaun Rogers (ankle) and G Floyd Womack (knee) are questionable.

What to watch for the Browns: The Browns haven't been less than two games under .500 since prior to Week Two, the home opener against the Chiefs. They were 0-3 before winning their first game; 1-5 before winning their second, and uphill ever since, with backward shoves along the way. Cleveland got to within two games of .500 for the first time after the rout of New

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England before falling in overtime to the Jets, then in Jacksonville suffered the kind of gut-wrenching loss that signalled meltdowns in previous seasons.

But this season is different. The Browns didn't melt down. They got a little lucky to beat woeful Carolina, but they followed up that ugly-fest with a very solid road win in Miami. A lot of people called that game ugly, and it was- on the side of the Dolphins. Cleveland, despite not doing much offensively, played well: no turnovers, few penalties, sound defence (much better tackling than in the previous two weeks) and an outstanding Reggie Hodges effort in a field-position battle. At any rate they played better than they had against the Panthers.

This has been a resilient team. The Browns have won games with three different starting quarterbacks. They've lost heartbreakers and come back the next week, win or lose, giving themselves a chance with tough, physical, fundamental football. They've played at least six of the ten best teams in the league, played with all of them, and left two of them twisted. Now, in icy Buffalo against a reeling Bills team, they have a chance to get back to that coveted point they haven't seen since the days of warm September- within one game within .500.

What to watch for the Bills: Buffalo's run defence has been a disaster pretty much since the beginning of the season. The Bills are 32nd in the league against the run and have given up 200-plus yards on the ground a whopping six times, including the last two weeks against Pittsburgh and Minnesota. Game-day weather in Orchard Park is predicted to be a freezing-rainy 36 degrees, and the wind always seems to be a factor in that oversized high-school stadium. I'm guessing that the Browns will attempt to establish the running game early. Call it a hunch.

Even with their record and ramshackle run defence the Bills are home favourites on Sunday. (One of these days I'll find out why this font is encouraging me to spell like a Canadian. This is not that day.) To justify the confidence in Vegas, Buffalo is going to have to do what it does worst. Cleveland is 1-4 when it is held to under one hundred yards rushing. If Peyton Hillis is ripping off chunks, they have very little chance.

This is one of those rare games that the Browns should win handily. They had one of those with Carolina as well and were on their way to a blowout before things went a little sideways. This is a handle-your-business game for Cleveland. Get 150 rushing yards, get a couple of scores from Peyton Hillis, avoid turnovers and win the game. Buffalo has played tough- three losses in overtime- but there's no such thing as a respectable 2-10 football team. The Bills just suck. The

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Browns don't suck nearly as much. They should win their third straight overall and third straight in the Ralph and move to a glorious 6-7 on the season.

Next Week for Both Teams: Cleveland heads to Cincinnati; Buffalo visits Miami.

Trivia: Both of Buffalo's AFL Championships came at the expense of the same opponent- San Diego. The Bills defeated the Chargers 20-7 in the '64 title game at old War Memorial Stadium and whitewashed San Diego in the Balboa Stadium re-match the following year.