



**Preseason Week 2 – Detroit at Cleveland**

Now that's what a Fake Season game is supposed to look like.

Penalties all over the place, backups blowing their opportunities, die hard fans bored out of their minds by the 3rd Quarter... Oh yes, that is more along the lines from what we have come to expect from the NFL's Ransom Games (as pertains to the season ticket holder).

It's hard to take away very much from a contest like that (other than a sense of impending doom, but that is probably just my bruised subconscious trying to lower expectations in an effort to minimize disappointment). Brandon Jackson's not a starting RB? Our LB and DL corps are not very deep? Turnovers lead to losses?

Let's move along, people. Nothing to see here.

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### Stats

Time of Possession: DET – 36:51, CLE – 23:09

Total Yards: DET – 407, CLE - 271

Yards Passing: DET – 231, CLE - 136

Yards Rushing: DET – 176, CLE - 135

First Downs: DET - 24, CLE – 15

Turnovers Forced: DET - 2, CLE – 1

Sacks: CLE – 1, DET - 0

Final Score: Detroit – 30, Cleveland - 28

Looking at these stats... how was the game even that close? The Lions reamed Cleveland in almost every major statistical category (they even had more penalty yardage, 14 for 128 compared to the Browns measly 12 penalties for 88 yards).

Reading into this, I realize that Preseason stats mean as much as promises made to a high school girlfriend in the back of your parents' minivan.

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### Gameballs

Evan Moore – 3 catches, 40 yards, 2 TD, one a beauty, outright gorgeous grab for the 2nd TD. All signs point to this guy being one of the major offensive contributors this year.

D'Qwell Jackson – Every other Linebacker on the field with him appears to be moving in slow motion. I think the move to the 4-3 will benefit DQ greatly.

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### Honorable Mention

Titus Brown – Once again stood out making plays.

Jabaal Sheard – Still not really getting as much pressure on the QB as I'd like, but made a very intelligent play when he stripped the ball out of the Detroit RB's hands, leading to the Browns' first TD.

Colt McCoy – Not as sharp as he was in Game 1, but managed to throw 3 TD passes despite getting harassed like he was an American hiker in Iran.

James Dockery – He's not a star by any stretch, but he does stand out as one of the few competent when the 2nd and 3rd teams take the field.

Armond Smith – That was impressive speed on the 81 yard TD run.

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### Wall of Shame

Armond Smith – Those were unimpressive fumbles to essentially lose the game in the 2nd Half.

Joe Haden – Toasted for 2 long passes in the 1st Half. Would've been toasted for a long TD in the Green Bay game had the ball been thrown well. I'm hoping that this is just lockout rust and he'll work his way back into the shutdown QB that he was at the end of last year.

Jarrett Brown – I dub thee Black Derek Anderson. Couldn't hit water if he fell out of a f-ing boat. I understand that he has enticing potential (size, athleticism, arm strength), but none of that matters if every pass he throws has a miniscule chance of actually going where he's aiming. God forbid Colt & Seneca both go down.

Eric Gordon – Once again stood out for getting twisted up like a pretzel. Not what I'd call "good in space".

Run Defense – Yeesh. This ain't gonna be good.

Derek Anderson – Stop trying to possess Jarrett Brown. Nothing else to do while mired at 3rd QB in Carolina?

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### Regarding The 2011 Draft Picks

Phil Taylor - Did he play? This is probably one of those Butch Davis-Gerard Warren moments where I don't realize how much his inactivity influenced the game. That being said, I don't worry about him regarding the Regular Season action.

Jabaal Sheard - The strip-fumble was a great play. He also spent a significant amount of time

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attempting ineffective spin-moves. Still, a B for him.

Greg Little - First TD catch in 2 years. Mr. Little looks like a good prospect to me.

Jordan Cameron - Saw his clone catch 2 TD's. Caught 3rd Down pass short of the sticks, made no great effort to get the 1st.

Owen Marecic - Meh. Not half the blocker that Vickers was. Supposed to be a greater threat out of the backfield, but has dropped 2 of 3 passes (both could've been disastrous).

I respect your gambling heart, Mr. Heckert. Let's hope you're right.

Buster Skrine - He'll make the team. He's noticeable, and that's saying something come the 2nd Half of Preseason games. But it'll be another year before he contributes.

Jason Pinkston - As soon as the announcers pointed him out, he got nailed with a penalty. I'm actually a bit disappointed that he didn't get the start at LG (in place of injured Eric Steinbach). It would've been interesting to see if he held up better than John "The Greek" Greco.

Eric Hagg - Still MIA. Likely Practice Squad fodder.

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### **Regarding the New Kickoff Rule**

I humbly retract last week's opinion. The new rule Sucks. Capital "S".

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### **Regarding the Offensive Line**

The Detroit Lions, even without rookie Nick Fairley in the lineup, have a stellar Defensive Line. Kong Suh is already one of the best in the league and demands a constant double team (as was produced by Tony Pashos and Shawn Lauvao). So this was certainly a challenge to the Browns' supposedly solid Offensive Line.

On one hand, they didn't give up a sack. On the other, Colt McCoy was getting nailed on seemingly every play. That pocket was collapsing far too quickly, preventing Colt from stepping into his throws in many cases (as in the failed drives).

Was it that their D Line is that good, or should we be worried?

And it's probably just me, since he's an Untouchable All-Pro and everything, but is anyone else getting sick of watching Joe Thomas missing blocks and getting pushed around? He's certainly good, but not nearly as good as many would make him out to be. 2010 was probably his worst season as a pro, and I dearly hope that it doesn't become habit. Especially seeing as he just signed a contract extension to become basically a Brown-for-life.

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## Regarding MMQB

Peter King writes this in his latest [MMQB article](#) :

I think if you look at Cleveland's schedule -- the Browns play the AFC West this year -- you can see them winning eight games. At least I can. I mean, you look at the schedule in the first 11 games and you think: Somebody at 280 Park Avenue is very fond of Randy Lerner.

The slate includes one team, Indy, with a winning record in 2010: 1. Cincinnati, 2. at Indianapolis, 3. Miami, 4. Tennessee, 5. at Oakland, 6. Seattle, 7. at San Francisco, 8. at Houston, 9. St. Louis, 10. Jacksonville, 11. at Cincinnati.

Not saying they'll go 10-1, and you gotta think the other teams are looking at Cleveland on the schedule and thinking it's an eminently winnable game. But the point is, no other team in the league has the kind of chance to start strong and stay strong as Cleveland has. The problem with the first 11 weeks for the Browns is the season isn't 11 games. It's 16. And the last five games include two with Baltimore and two with Pittsburgh. But when you face one strong returning playoff team in the first 11 games (Seattle, at 7-9, will forever be asterisked, even with the decisive win over New Orleans), you think it might just be your year.

This is all well and good, and thank you for remembering us, Peter, but let us not forget that we all looked at the Tampa Bay-Kansas City opening last year and thought ourselves 2-0. Teams improve, some inexplicably. I don't know the teams on our schedule well enough to guess as to which ones they might be, but I know where this team stands, and I'd be shocked to see it win 8 games.

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## Regarding Tee Hee Hee Hee

So sayeth Tony Grossi of the Plain Dealer [when answering his Browns-related e-mail](#) :

Hey, Tony: Does the success of the Paul Brown offense of the '50s really translate into a projection of success for the West Coast offense in Cleveland now? Don't forget that the weather the Browns now face is much more severe than in those days. During Paul Brown's career with the 12-game schedule, the season generally ended on the third Sunday of December, followed by only one postseason game. Also schedule-makers generally put snow-belt teams like the Browns and Packers on the road the last two, or sometimes even three weeks. I specifically remember one season when the last home game was in November. Otto Graham was great, but he almost never had to face the conditions the Browns deal with week after week in December and January. -- Norman Cox, Indianapolis, Ind.

Hey, Norman: What about global warming?

Legitimate and well thought-out question. Sarcastic answer.

Tee Hee Hee Hee.

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## Regarding Terrell Pryor

I'm a little sick of the whining regarding whether or not the NFL has the right to enforce the NCAA's 5 game suspension.

The answer clearly is that they do not.

However, the NFL also did not have to let Pryor into the Supplemental Draft. The rules of the Supplemental state that the situation for the player had to have changed from the last day that players can declare for the Regular Draft to the current date, and what had changed for Terrell Pryor? His coach got fired? By the letter of the law, that doesn't constitute a "change" to Pryor himself. Had he received the 5 game suspension after the NFL draft declare date had passed, that's a change of situation. But he was suspended well before the draft declare date and chose to (at that time) return to school anyway.

So the NFL could have easily said "Too bad. See you in April." Which would have made 2011 a lost season for Mr. Pryor.

It seems to me that the NFL bent its own rules to let Pryor into the Supplemental Draft with the caveat that he be suspended those 5 games, thus going out of its way to reduce the number of games that he would miss by 11 (16 games he would miss by waiting for the 2012 draft minus 5 games he misses due to suspension).

The NFL did Terrell Pryor a favor, and yet his lawyer can't shut up (a common trait in lawyers).

It's not like he'd be playing in those 5 games anyway. It'll be years before Pryor is ready to start at QB in the NFL. If ever (I'm among those that think he should convert to a pass-catching Tight End as soon as possible to give himself a shot of actually mattering).

I do wonder if Pryor can read between the lines and recognizes what Roger Goodell did for him. Today's athlete isn't known for his/her ability to use reason and/or wisdom.

If I were Goodell, the amount of slack that I'm getting for trying to be a good guy would incline me to let the next case like this sit the year out. No good deed goes unpunished, especially where Goodell is concerned.

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## Regarding Whatever

\*\*\*What in the Sam Hell were the refs looking at on Evan Moore's first TD? This new review-every-scoring-play thing is just annoying.

\*\*\*Enough with the injuries already, people. Evan Moore has a concussion, Josh Cribbs hurt his hammy, 37 starters are already out with ouchies... I vote that the Browns just take the next

game off.

\*\*\*This Defense is thinner than a strand of DNA and not overly talented even at full health, so do expect them to get run on mercilessly and have a tough time getting off the field. Thank Vishnu we're getting Andy Dalton and the Bungals in Week 1.

\*\*\*Cardinals rookie RB Ryan Williams is out for the year. Mr. Beanie Wells just moved up a bit on my fantasy draft chart.

\*\*\*Don't you cave to Chris Johnson, Tennessee Titans. Don't you do it. He's a top-tier RB, but productive RB's are a dime a dozen, and you're not going to the Super Bowl this year anyway. If you wanna make him the highest paid RB in the league, be my guest. But don't you go bending over backwards to meet his ludicrous demands. You'll just get every other jerkoff that has a good year or two thinking he needs to hold out as well.

\*\*\*And that's why I'm one of the few that likes Mike Brown's move to call Carson Palmer's "trade me or I'll retire" bluff (and liking a Mike Brown move doesn't happen often for me). Could he get something back for Carson? Sure. But then you send the message that you can be bullied, and Palmer would just be the start of the "trade me or I'll retire" flood. By telling him "go ahead, retire", you ensure that no one else tries that crap, unless, of course, they're really ready to walk away.

\*\*\*Jarrett Brown does indeed look awful, but why in the Hades not give him a shot to convert that 4th and 2 play at the end? You don't get it, you lose, but who cares? You punt, you probably lose anyway. It just seemed to me there was really no Fake Season justification for not giving him that opportunity.

\*\*\*Two fumbles notwithstanding, Armond Smith is a playmaker and the Browns need to find some way to stash him on the roster.

\*\*\*I could care less if the Browns scouted Pryor. Or even if they had taken him. He's probably a better developmental QB than Jarrett Brown. I don't blame Terrell for the disaster that went down in Columbus. Boys a lot bigger than him knew what they were doing there.

\*\*\*School starts for my girls this Wednesday. Where O Where did the Summer go? This march towards death does indeed seem to speed up on the way.

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### Next Up

Philadelphia Eagles (Fake 1-1).

Make no doubt about it, this game is huge for the Eagles and Mike Vick. Vick sucked like a Hoover last week, and Game 3 of the Fake Season is when teams typically play their starters longest (who makes up these rules?).

So Vick will come out looking to light up the Browns to validate his viability and his superiority from the Get. Fantasy owners everywhere will want to see how the Eagles' "vastly supreme" Offensive squad performs against Cleveland's band of ragamuffins and vagabonds.

It can be nothing but good that the Browns are warming up for the Real Season against teams that think they have a legit shot at the crown.

Eagles 31, Browns 19.

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### **Something I Like Aaron Goldhammer More Than**

Tired Efforts

That is what I've been giving to this section lately. I just don't have the energy to hate as much as I used to. Even Goldhammer... I mean, he's a douche clearly trying to "controversial" his way into ESPN's good graces, but can you blame him? He just wants to be someone important. Clearly, he never was before. Why can't we suffer him this chance at something special (to him)?

Thus, I retire this section as well. And so I leave you with a quote from the immortal classic Red Dawn:

The Colonel: All that hate's gonna burn you up, kid.  
Robert: It keeps me warm.

Fact is that it didn't keep him warm. He died shortly thereafter. Then he was cold.

There's a lesson in there somewhere. It's not my responsibility to point out where.

