

**WARNING:**

Viewer Discretion is Advised.

*The following article has been rated 'R- Mature Audiences Only' by the Blogging Society of America. The article deals with mature subject matter and may be too graphic in nature for children under the age of 17. The ensuing article contains strong language, violent images and strong sexual suggestion involving anatomical positions and acrobatics that may not be physically possible but will certainly be recommended.*

*Keep in mind that the thoughts expressed in this article are completely those of the author who truly doesn't give a shit if anyone agrees with them or is offended by them. They may not, however, reflect the opinions or beliefs of the site itself.*

*If you are easily offended or opposed to angry, American colloquial, vulgar expressions that convey complete anger and disgust then please stop, head over to Cleveland.com and click on Terry Pluto's sappy, flowery bullshit that he either poaches from people who actually have original thoughts or has spoon fed to him by a needy Cleveland Indians public relations staff.*

*You've been warned.*

**"I have since heard of people under extreme duress speaking in strange tongues. I became conscious that a steady torrent of obscenities and swearing of all kinds was pouring out of me as I screamed.**

**-Ralphie from "A Christmas Story"**

I believe I have figured out the problem with Cleveland sports. And when I say 'Cleveland Sports', I'm talking about present day Cleveland sports encompassing all elements of our local sports teams. I'm talking about the ownership, the players, the media and, to a certain extent, the fans.

The problem is that the Cleveland sports scene is full of gutless, cowardly losers. The Indians and Cavaliers are not immune from my anger, rage, despair and this moment of self-loathing, but for now, let's stick with the current horseshit team of the day, the Cleveland Browns.

There is absolutely nothing to be proud of with this team at this time.

Nothing.

The owner is a quirky billionaire who spends the better part of his time across the pond doing whatever quirky billionaires do in England. He's the Greta Garbo of NFL owners who would rather throw huge piles of cash at a toy he doesn't seem to want or care about rather than actually sitting down and spending some time with his toy to see why the fuck it doesn't work. He'd still rather watch money being applied like Band-Aids to a product that's still bleeding like the stuck pig it's always been since 1999.

If I was a quirky billionaire who preferred ascots and scarves to ball caps and hoodies I might well choose to spend my time in Birmingham, UK as well. But you know what I wouldn't do? I wouldn't sit over there looking for ways to slink away and hide from the spotlight of owning an American football team that has become a colossal joke in America.

I wouldn't also sit over there on my wrinkled, spoiled ass spending inherited money I had nothing to do with making while the bloated Team President I hired to finally get the people of Cleveland off my back fucked up everything six ways to Saturday with my NFL team. An NFL team, by the way, that was my old man's pride and joy and one that he manipulated into existence by first being complicit in the murder of the original goddamn team.

No, if I was a squirrely, old billionaire who had inherited a team my old man helped create by

stealing the other one out of town in a deal brokered on his private jet on some runway, I'd like to think I'd give a shit about how it actually performed, even if I wanted absolutely nothing to do with the city where the team was located.

And what about that fellow that was hired to make sure an organization that's been a running joke for a dozen years wasn't a running joke much longer? What about the venerable Mike Holmgren? What about the man with the Super Bowl curriculum vitae and the knowledge and experience with building winners everywhere he ever went?

Where is that guy? I mean, not so much in a physical sense. Anyone as big as Holmgren should be relatively easy to find, in a geographical sense. I'm talking about where is he in terms of actually getting shit done that turns this football team around?

Is this Pat Shurmur thing for real? Is that the Walrus's answer? Are you honestly telling me that not only did Holmgren wait a year to fire a coach who appears to have been more capable than the one who replaced him, but he hired a guy with no head coaching experience under his belt? And not only did he hire a head coach with no experience running a football team or dealing with the media but Holmgren also decided that that very guy (the inexperienced guy with the deer-in-the-headlights countenance) would also be his own offensive coordinator?

Experienced head coaches spend 80+ hours a week during the season preparing game plans and their teams for each Sunday. Experienced offensive coordinators spend 80+ hours a week during the season preparing their offenses' for each Sunday. Yet Mike Holmgren, the biggest swinging dick in the football organization, decides that Pat Shurmur, a novice head coach with a mediocre track record as an offensive coordinator, is ready to do both those jobs upon his hiring back in February?

Are you fucking kidding me?

Why? What in the character and disposition of Pat Shurmur am I missing? Is there a steely resolve hiding beneath that scared and overwhelmed expression he wears every time we see him? Is there a General Patton under that shell that shows us basically just General Chaos and General Panic?

Pat Shurmur is a caricature. He's a goddamn walking, talking Dudley Do-Wright cartoon come to life. He certainly doesn't give any indication whatsoever that he's ready to lead men and motivate men and discipline men to the point where they have any respect for him at all. Those guys in that locker room may not be saying 'shit' even though they're eating mouthfuls of it right now, but it's because they value their paychecks. It's not because they have any respect or sense of duty when it comes to Shurmur.

He's the god damn hand-picked puppet of Mike Holmgren. And Holmgren is yet another in the long line of Randy Lerner hires who have been given too much authority and too much freedom. Holmgren is also, even more worrisome in my opinion, yet another Lerner hire who seems to be convinced that he's smarter than everyone else in the room and that he owes no one an answer or an explanation for what the fuck is going on with this football team.

How smart is Holmgren? Smart enough to hire a never-been like Shurmur and shackle him with the offensive coordinator job? Why? Fucking because, that's why. How dare anyone question the Walrus? Especially here where you should be thankful for an owner who overpaid to get him to Cleveland where he'd most certainly rather not be.

How smart is Holmgren? He let special teams' guru Brad Seely leave with the rest of Eric Mangini's staff. Why? Fucking because, that's why. Hasn't Chris Tabor done just a terrific job replacing Seely's excellent special teams? Other than a few blocked field goals, botched snaps, punt returns for TDs and no meaningful returns from Josh Cribbs this season. Other than all of that, of course, who needed Brad Seely when Holmgren and Shurmur had Chris Tabor up their sleeves?

And while I could choke on the bile building up when I think about this team and the condescending pricks running it, there's also a special place in my personal hell for the chicken shit media in this town. These nutless humps walk around like they're amongst the Pope and his apostles in Berea. They act like abused wives who are grateful just to be allowed to ask questions of these deities who look like they'd rather be crawling through the Andy Dufrain Tunnel of Shit than speaking to lowly reporters.

How dare you question the strategies, tactics and results? And you know what? With as meek, toothless and ball-less as many of those media members are, I can't blame the overmatched

and meek and ball-less Pat Shurmur from feeling momentarily empowered when he's in front of them.

The Cleveland media is a pussy cat. It has been for years. Even before Terry Pluto lost his fastball you didn't have anyone in the Cleveland media holding any player or manager accountable with tough or persistent questions. You have assholes and slackers like Bill Livingston turning in the occasional rip job from afar when they don't have to stand face-to-face with the tree they're chopping down. You have Bud Shaw trying to be Norman Chad with some weak-ass slop that he finds funny and most just find sad and pathetic.

As bad as these teams are, the people we have covering them are actually more pathetic. Sadly, the teams are fine with that. They don't want difficult questions or shrinking violets like Pat Shurmur actually being interrogated by reporters who know what they're talking about and who are motivated to actually dig deeper than cliché-level for explanations. No way. Give them their softballs and their pushovers. The media here isn't interested in accountability. They're interested in advancing themselves in the good graces of these assholes who are continuously fucking up our sports franchises.

But you know what? We let it happen. We do it. We buy the tickets year after year and some people out there apparently still buy the Plain Dealer. We don't demand accountability because we have some of that abused spouse syndrome working ourselves. Instead of actually making some noise and making a difference we look nervously at Berea and can't help but see empty offices and moving vans. Too damn many of us seem to think any football, no matter how fucking perennially sad, laughable and pathetic it is, is better than this city without football.

We're so quick to sacrifice our common sense and our pride and turn it over to people that have no right to it in the simple and misguided hope that they can bring us a winner.

There's a price to that. There's a huge price to that. Not only financially but in terms of the respect we've all lost and the dignity we've all sacrificed over the past 12 years or so. I'm personally disgusted with myself for getting sucked up in it. I'm old enough to know better than that and I'm old enough to do something about it.

I'll tell you what the final fucking straw was for me. I went down there Sunday to watch that

Ravens game. But it wasn't just the fact that I went down there and spent money in the form of the ticket and parking and food.

Nope. That would have been par for the course and no different than me stupidly having done that for the better part of the last ten years. What was different this time was the fact that I was taking Kacie, my youngest, 11-yr old daughter, to her first regular season NFL game. She knew about it for a couple weeks and anticipated that game like kids anticipate Christmas. The day before (not the night before, mind you) she laid out all her cold weather gear and asked me to show her how to layer it to stay warm, what boots or shoes she should wear, whether to go with the gray Browns stocking hat or the brown Browns stocking hat and whether or not her Peyton Hillis jersey would fit over all of those layers. She watches hours and hours of football with me asking questions and trying to figure the game out.

She was excited for Sunday. I was actually excited because she was excited.

And so we grabbed our cooler and we headed down in the rain and we met up with our normal tailgating and ticketed friends. We ate, I had a beer or two, she tried to stay warm and have fun in the rain and the cold and when it was time we headed down the stadium. We walked from E13th and Lakeside to our gate and into our seats in section 119, row 16, seats 5 and 6 and we watched the Browns and Ravens warm up as the rain got harder and the night got colder.

And then the game started and you know what happened? Nothing. There was absolutely nothing for an 11-year old girl at her first NFL game to get excited about until late in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter when a fucking squirrel ran 110 yards from the west end zone to the east end zone. That squirrel paused at the 5-yard line and people groaned. And then the squirrel looked around and dashed across the goal line and people went crazy.

That was the highlight for my 11-year old football fan: watching a goddamn squirrel cross the goal line when the team she supports just can't do it. I could have taken her to the Metro Parks to watch squirrels. I was actually heartbroken watching her sit on the edge of her seat waiting for a big stop that never came or a big offensive play that this team just isn't capable of making.

And that's when it became really clear to me that this just isn't acceptable. If the Browns want to take the money of the adults who willingly hand it over to watch your shitty, inferior product then

that's on me and those like me who march like lemmings toward the fucking lake every other Sunday no matter how bad they are and no matter how goddamn stupid the moves they make turn out to be.

But to sit there and watch my kid, excited as if it were Christmas Eve the night before the game, with a look of disappointment and a "Is that what this is about?" look on her face was crushing. Just crushing.

To Randy, Mike and Pat: you're losing more than games with these asinine moves and the general cluelessness displayed every Sunday. You're losing your current fan base because even the most loyal asshole is going to get sick and goddamn tired of you guys having your heads up your ass. No one, no matter how dedicated, drunk or stupid is going to put up with this shit forever.

You've already lost the casual, bandwagoning fans and all of their cash to Pittsburgh. You're losing the younger generation who are exposed to their parent's rantings and ravings and who also experience your suck first hand in their formative years.

It doesn't take a great deal to make amends. I'd personally start by sending out a memo advising someone, anyone or everyone in the organization to actually look and act like they give a shit and maybe having someone in the front office also intimate that this fucking pathetic excuse for a football team embarrasses them like it does us.

Monday media gatherings with George McFly 'awww shucksing' and 'good grieving' his way through press conferences just doesn't fly here. Find someone that can demand the respect of this team or at least look like he has it. Let me see Shurmur or someone on that team go apeshit crazy arguing a call or dressing down an official or, God forbid, a teammate or player.

Because if fucking squirrels are all you have to offer me and my 11-year old then I'll take the goddamn money I spend every year on season tickets and get a family membership to the freaking zoo.

