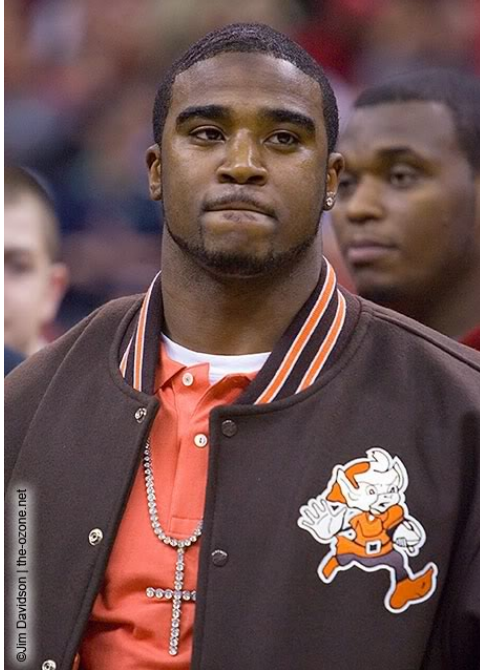


2007: The Year Of The Boar

Written by {ga=pup}

Saturday, December 30 2006 7:00 PM -

Cris Sykes puts on his prognosticator cap for us in his latest, as he attempts to predict what 2007 will bring us as Cleveland sports fans. In this hysterical piece, Sykes makes some truly bold predictions, many of which involve Troy Smith heroics and Eric Wedge hyjinks. Is 2007 the year Cleveland fans misery and suffering finally ends? My therapist and my dogs rib cage certainly hope so.



Close the door on 2006. Please. The year is coming to an end, and not a minute too soon. The Browns are playing out the schedule, the schizophrenic Cavaliers are, well, playing like a bunch of schizophrenics ... and the Indians are somewhere between the 4th best team in their own division and the best team in baseball.

It seems like a great time to look ahead to 2007, the Year of the Boar in the Chinese Calendar (more on this later).

January 1, 2007 – I will wake up with a very bad headache at 7:00 AM, due to some combination of my wife elbowing me in the back and my yellow lab pup licking my face.

January 8, 2007 – Troy Smith plays the second half of the National Championship game with one arm tied behind his back, a tear in his cape and a Cleveland Browns helmet on his head while leading The Ohio State University to a 28-point second half to win the National Championship 56-42 and the end of all the SEC fans telling the country how overrated the Big 10 is.

January 9, 2007 – Jim Tressel accepts a 15-year, \$30,000,000 contract and automatic

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appointment to the Governor's seat once his contract is fulfilled with The Ohio State University.

January 11, 2007 – In a road game at Phoenix, LeBron James score 113 points, but the rest of the Cavs shoot 0-22 and lose 138-113. In Mike Brown's post-game interview, he states the Cavaliers need to work on defending the pick and roll.

January 28, 2007 – Phoenix comes to Cleveland for a rematch of the January 11th game. Mike Brown's team does a much better job of defending the roll, by double-teaming the pick man every time the Suns run it. Unfortunately, nobody ever covers Steve Nash who shoots an unbelievable 21-23 from three-point range as the Cavs lose another one 162-158. LeBron nets 99.

February 1, 2007 – The Cleveland Indians sign Doug Jones to an incentive laden 2-year deal.

February 15, 2007 – The Indians new bullpen fails to get any work in on the first day of Spring Training since none of them are willing to drive faster than 25 M.P.H on the Florida highways, fitting in with the rest of the fogies in Florida.

February 20, 2007 – Eric Wedge goes on record, saying the Tribe is focusing on fundamentals throughout Spring Training.

March 1, 2007 – The Indians commit 5 errors and 4 base running blunders in a 17-16 loss to the Houston Astros in a Spring Training game.

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March 7, 2007 – LeBron leads the Cavs in scoring, but only has 14 points on 3-25 shooting against the Detroit Pistons. Cavs 6 game winning streak is stopped in a 62-48 loss to Detroit. Mike Brown's post-game press conference says the Cavs need to do a better job of moving the ball.

March 8, 2007 – Ohio State begins their run to winning March Madness and becoming the first school to win the National championship in both football and basketball and Greg Oden goes 12-12 from the floor, scoring 30 points to go with his 25 rebounds against 15th seed IUPUI.

March 10, 2007 – The Cavs set yet another NBA record as they make a commitment to moving the ball. Unfortunately they forget to shoot and break the record by having 23, 24-second violations in the first half.

March 15, 2007 – Ohio State advances to play in the Elite 8. Greg Oden is averaging 28 points and 18 rebounds through the first 3 games and has yet to miss a shot from the field in the tourney.

March 18, 2007 – CC Sabathia pulls his left oblique "muscle" and will miss the month of April, or when the weather breaks in Cleveland, whichever comes first.

March 24, 2007 – At the 7-minute mark of the first half in the first Final Four game, Greg Oden misses. Disappointed in his effort, Oden proceeds to block the next 13 shot attempts by North Carolina as Ohio State makes up for one of their regular season losses by eliminating the Tar Heels, setting up a rematch with Florida for the National Title.

March 26, 2007 – Troy Smith plays PG for Ohio State in the National Championship game, wearing a Browns helmet on his head. Ohio State pulls off the double-double when Troy

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Smith scores 28 points in the second half and Ohio State wins 56-42.

March 28, 2007 – One month before the draft, Troy Smith begins camping out in Phil Savage's front yard.

April 2, 2007 – The Opener! Tribe beats White Sox 12-11 on a 9th inning grand slam by Travis Hafner. Opening Day starter Jake Westbrook throws 145 pitches to get through 7 innings, but only gives up 3 runs. Unfortunately, the bullpen is still on its way North from Florida after Wedge allowed them to drive instead of flying up with the rest of the team. David Delucci is called on to pitch the last two innings and records the victory.

April 4, 2007 – The bullpen arrives, but Wedge liked what he saw from Delucci and decided to give him another shot. This time, a Jhonny Peralta error opens the door to a 12 run ninth for Chicago as Wedge accidentally turned his alarm off instead of hitting snooze and he fails to make a pitching change until it is too late.

April 6, 2007 – The Home Opener!! Jeremy Sowers baffles Seattle for 5 innings, but Wedge tries to protect his young starter and pulls him after throwing 61 pitches. Joe Borowski implodes in the 9th, and the Tribe loses 9-8.

April 18, 2007 – The Cavs finish the regular season with a win over Milwaukee to “earn” the 6 seed in the East.

April 26, 2007 – The Indians lose their 22nd consecutive game. Wedge says it is time to stay the course.

April 27, 2007 - Wedge is a genius. Tribe ends the skid by outscoring the Orioles 19-17. Paul Byrd goes 7 solid innings, but Keith Foulke's shoulder falls off and Wedge does not notice until the O's put up 14 runs in the 8th. Grady saves the day with an inside the park grand slam.

April 28, 2007 – With the 3rd pick in the 2007 NFL Draft, the Cleveland Browns select Joe Thomas, left tackle from the University of Wisconsin. Troy Smith threatens to go to the CFL if anyone drafts him other than the Browns and his gamble pays off as he makes it to the Browns with their second round pick. The sun comes out in Cleveland, and Phil Savage drafts more linemen.

May 1, 2007 – The Cavs sneak past New Jersey in the opening round of the playoffs with a 112-111 overtime victory. LeBron averages 42 points in the 5 game series.

May 2, 2007 – The Cleveland Indians trade a couple of their prospects to fix the beleaguered bullpen after a 7-game winning streak in which all 7 games are complete games by

the starters.

May 11, 2007 – The Cavs hold off a charge by the Miami Heat and win their second round series to advance to the Eastern Conference Finals against the Detroit Pistons. LeBron averages 46 points in the 5 game series.

May 24, 2007 – The Indians, with the new bullpen being lead by Houston Street, rattle off their 22nd consecutive win and get back to .500.

May 26, 2007 – The Cleveland Cavaliers advance to the NBA Finals, beating the Pistons in game 7, 98-94. LeBron averages 52 in the series.

May 30, 2007 – LeBron score 61 in Game 1 against the Suns. Cavs win 123-122.

June 1, 2007 – The Cleveland Browns sign Eric Steinbach.

June 3, 2007 - the Tigers, with Gary Sheffield going 10-15 with 4 home runs and 13 RBI in the series, sweep The Indians. The Indians have now lost 10 straight since their 22 game winning streak.

June 5, 2007 – The Cavaliers go up 3-0 on the Suns in the NBA Finals behind LeBron James averaging 68 points per game in the finals.

June 7, 2007 – Phoenix gets a win, as they hold LeBron to 42 points by covering him with all 5 guys every time he touches the ball.

June 13, 2007 – With the NBA Finals now even at 3 games

apiece, David Stern announces that you will no longer be able to cover one player with more than 2 players during any Game 7. LeBron scores 78 and leads the Cavs to the NBA Championship! The win ends Cleveland Fan's misery, winning their first league title since 1948, which just happened to be the last time the Chinese Calendar fell as "The Year of the Boar".

June 17, 2007 – The Indians drop three more games, with Bob Wickman closing out all three games for the Atlanta Braves.

July 8, 2007 – With another season seemingly lost, the Tribe lose 15 out of 20 and head to the All-Star Break 37-50, 16 games out of the division lead and 13 games out from the Wild Card. Eric Wedge gets fired and replaced by Buck Showalter.

July 22, 2007 – With the "pressure" being off, the Tribe rattles off 10 straight wins heading into a 4 game series with the Wild Card leading Red Sox.

August 1, 2007 – LeBron James is named “The Best Clevelander Ever”. Akron sues Cleveland for “custody”.

August 6, 2007 – The Indians lose their first game since the All-Star Break to Johan Santana and the Twins. In winning 23 straight the Indians now lead the Wild Card standings and are within 4 games of division leading Detroit.

August 23, 2007 – Happy Birthday to me, happy birthday to me...Jeremy Sowers throws a perfect game against Detroit to take over the division lead. The Tigers do not seem to be the same team as Gary Sheffield has gone on the DL with sore lips from telling everyone how good he is. Things are looking up during the “Year of the Boar”.

September 2, 2007 – Tribe sweep Chicago out of the division race. Ozzie Guillen calls Buck Showlater a “militant honkey” and gets suspended for the rest of the season by Bud Selig. Jay Mariotti smiles.

September 9, 2007 – The Browns win their home opener behind Troy Smith and their new offensive line, which is not nearly as offensive as in the past.

September 16, 2007 – The Browns win back-to-back games for the first time since the Paul Brown era. Maybe there is something to this “Year of the Boar” thing.

September 19, 2007 – Carlton Charles Sabathia wins his 19th

game of the year by shutting out the Tigers who are still missing Gary Sheffield who is on the DL with “oldness”.

September 30, 2007 – The Browns win for the 3rd time this season, and the Indians win on the final day of the regular season to clinch home field advantage throughout the play-offs. “The Year

of the Boar” is real!

October 7, 2007 – The Indians sweep the Oakland A’s in the first round. Houston Street saves all 3 games.

October 14, 2007 – Troy Smith leads the Browns to a 24-17 win over a division opponent, ending the futility against the AFC North at 13 games and takes the Browns to 4-2 heading into their bye week.

October 18, 2007 – The Indians ride “The Year of the Boar” to a game seven win over the Boston Red Sox to advance to the World Series where they will meet the New York

Mets.

October 28, 2007 – Troy Smith leads the Browns to another division win, starting a new streak on the positive side!

October 30, 2007 – Jake Westbrook pitches the Tribe to a Game 7 World Series Championship by scattering 14 hits over 7 innings, but not allowing a run. Grady Sizemore is named World Series MVP by hitting .444 with 5 home runs, 13 RBI and 12 runs scored in the series. “Year of the Boar” t-shirt sales skyrocket.

November 4, 2007 – The Browns

win again!□ Now sitting at 6-2, there is play-off talk abound for the Browns, who officially change their logo to a boar.

November 5, 2007 – LeBron James and the Cave receive their NBA Championship rings before they open the '07/'08 season. Needing to once again one-up D-Wade, Lebron designs the rings to be exact replicas of the Heat's ring, but twice as big.

November 15, 2007 – Jake Westbrook opens the free agency period by signing a 6-year, \$110,000,000 deal with the Mets.

November 17, 2007 – The Ohio State University takes only their freshman and sophomores up to Ann Arbor and beats

LLLLLoyd Carr and the Wolverines like a drum.

November 22, 2007 – Eat a lot of turkey.

November 24, 2007 – The Browns finish November by winning again and head into December 8-3.

December 1, 2007 – The Cavs finish sleep walking through the first month of the schedule by at 6-6.

December 9, 2007 – Troy Smith leads the Browns to 4th quarter comeback on the same day it is announced the BCS title game is announced, pitting The Ohio State University against USC. The name of the game is officially changed to the “Who is getting beat this year by Ohio State” Bowl.

December 30, 2007 – The Browns finish the regular season 12-4 and have home field advantage throughout the play-offs. “Year of the Boar” t-shirt sales pass X-box 720 as the biggest selling item in Cleveland. PetSmart runs out of dog biscuits.

December 31, 2007 – “The Year of the Boar” ends with 2 titles and a number one seed for

the Browns. LeBron James and Travis Hafner have both been named league MVPs. LeBron James and Grady Sizemore are both named post-season MVP's.

Yeah, I think I could handle that year. Hope everyone had a great Christmas and has a fun and safe New Year. Thanks to everyone for reading throughout the first year here at "The Cleveland Fan" and hopefully we have done a good enough job to bring you back for another exciting year!