

In the matter of just a couple weeks, Browns fans expectations of this years team have changed drastically. After back to back stinkers against the Giants and Lions, it is now abundantly clear that this years Browns still have a lot of work to do if they want to be playing games in January. In The Weekend Wrap, Peeks hits on the Browns disappointment Saturday night, the Indians torrid streak, and the Buckeyes first game this Saturday.



Mission Accomplished. You Can Stop Now.

Dear Mr. Savage,

Please consider the fans' expectations regarding the 2008 Cleveland Browns reduced from ridiculous visions of a deep playoff run to, well, complete rubble. We get it: you're club isn't all that good and still has a lot of work to do. That seed was planted last Monday night against the Super Bowl champion Giants and cemented on Saturday against the Great Lakes Classic defending Detroit Lions.

Message received sir. Now make it stop.

Sincerely,

The 'Kick Me' sign-wearing lemmings/Browns fans who should damn well know better.

P.S- Thanks so much for Terry Cousins. He's been terrific.

Brutal.

I understand the meaningless nature of preseason games as well as anyone. No one will ever get me to care about the final results. But the score at the end of the 1st quarter last Monday night and the final score of Saturday's game against the Lions were perfect reflections of how the Browns played in those ballgames and, more noteworthy, how they prepared for those two ballgames.

This is a team that is not prepared to play football games right now. Neither meaningless nor meaningful football games.

And that's a reflection of the man charged with preparing them, Head Coach Romeo Crennel. Crennel's Camp Snoopy approach to training camp has this ball club flailing and faltering and in a death struggle to right the ship before the Cowboys

come to town on September 7th.

The watershed moment for Phil Savage may come sooner rather than later when he's forced to analyze Crennel's training camp methodologies and determine whether Crennel is the right man to lead the Browns to the next level. Romeo appears to be a nice guy and a players' coach but if this lack of preparation and readiness extends into the regular season hard decisions will need to be made about RAC's future.

Savage gets a pass with me until that time. He had a finite number of dollars to spend this past season and he spent them to upgrade the defensive line. His rationale was that loading up the defensive line with more talent would free up his disappointing collection of linebackers to make more plays and also limit the amount of time a thin group of defensive backs would have to cover opponent's receivers. In theory there's nothing wrong with that philosophy. In reality it hasn't yet worked.

The defensive backs are young and their ranks are thin.

So thin that the Browns traded yet another 2009 draft pick to Miami for defensive back Travis Daniels, a player who would likely have been cut by the Dolphins in the next two weeks.

This team is simply sputtering in every regard right now. Their offensive line has been pushed around the field by the Giants and the Lions, their quarterback play has been erratic regardless of who has been under center, the linebackers are still anonymous and injuries are spreading through the Cleveland locker room like the flu.

The best news is that after Thursday night's final preseason game against the Bears in Cleveland this team has 10 days to regroup and get their act together. But the three weeks they wasted in a hail of autograph sessions and light practices can't be recovered. That valuable time has come and gone and not enough was accomplished to ready this team for the regular season.

The day of reckoning for that oversight beckons if the

ship keeps taking on water.

In Case You Missed It

Take that Kansas City.

When August began the Indians were dead last in the AL Central, trailing Kansas City by 2 games in 'The Race for Ignominy'™. But pride has kicked in and just in time too. The Indians have run off 6 straight wins and 14 of 20 in August to completely blow the doors off the Royals and put 6 games between the Tribe and Kansas City.

Guys are suddenly hitting and the bullpen is suddenly pitching closer to the level of expectations Tribe fans had for the pen to start the season.

Jensen Lewis, while not the prototypical closer (and maybe not even the future closer) has solidified the back end of the bullpen and saved 6 games. Sadly, that ties Lewis for the team lead in saves. Look no further than that little nugget to understand just how horrific the Indians bullpen has been in 2008. Lewis's emergence has allowed others in the pen to settle in to familiar roles, work through their issues and improve upon some very disappointing performances thus far.

Winning is the best deodorant. But this team still needs a shower this off season. We'll take the wins because it beats the alternative, but the Indians are still going to need a middle of the rotation starter and a 2nd or 3rd baseman heading into '09 if they hope to get back among baseball's elite. Those additions and some health would be a great way to head into next April.

Here We Go

Ohio State kicks off their 2008 in the 'Shoe this coming Saturday. I'm not sure where the hell summer went but if Buckeye football is the door prize for falls imminent appearance I'm just fine with it.

Youngstown State is the sacrificial lamb on Saturday to start the OSU campaign and kick off is at noon. You'll need the Big Ten Network to watch it. Many of you don't yet have it. I do. I've met and corresponded with many of you over the last year or so, so no invitations are

forthcoming. We'll be all over it at TheClevelandFan.com though. Stay tuned for intensive analysis and coverage of Saturday's opener right here.

Perfect Day

Huge props to Rich Swerbinsky for this past Saturday's inaugural TCF golf outing at beautiful Little Mountain Country Club in Concord, Oh. What a great day for golf on one of Ohio's premier golf courses.

Jimmy Hanlin and his staff at LMCC went out of their way to accommodate the 100 or so golfers and dinner guests. Great food, great golf and great people make this a 'must attend' event next year for anyone who reads the site and isn't opposed to playing a little bit of golf.

As the saying goes, "You can't win 'em all if you don't win the first one" and Jason Penrose, Tom Penrose, Greg Wilson and Griff Wilson took down the title and all the hardware on Saturday afternoon. The Penrose and Wilson foursome edged

the Rich Swerbinsky, Brian McPeek, Chris Trem and George (Goose) Johns group to take the inaugural title. Both groups shot -12 from the tips at LMCC with the Penrose/Wilson group edging the Swerbinsky foursome on tie-breakers.

The victors left with a huge travel trophy that will bear their names and require them to come back next August to defend. They also were awarded individual plaques and rounds of golf at LMCC.

Thanks to the tons of sponsors who donated prizes. And thanks to Mr. Swerbinsky and Mr. Hanlin for coordinating a great event.