

I'm not sure what's worse; watching yet another Browns loss or being somewhat satisfied in not feeling completely embarrassed by it. Either way you look at it the Browns are now 1-11 and the death spiral continues. In The Weekend Wrap, Pecker talks about the Browns 30-23 loss to the Chargers and also hits on what was a great week for the Cavaliers, Delonte West, Evan Moore, Texas/Alabama, TCU/Boise State, Joakim Noah, Tim Tebow, and more. Enjoy ...



What Passes for Progress

I'm not sure what's worse; watching yet another Browns loss or not feeling completely embarrassed by it.

Either way you look at it the Browns are now 1-11 and the death spiral continues. The main parachute failed and got all snagged up in the lines weeks ago but on Sunday it appeared that the reserve chute deployed for a moment and briefly slowed the descent toward nailing down the worst record in the NFL.

I'm not about to get all giddy regarding a 30-23 loss to the San Diego Chargers but there were times, however brief in duration, that the Browns actually looked like they belonged on the same field with San Diego.

Brady Quinn wasn't bad. He was actually pretty good all day. He also, unfortunately, wasn't as good as Charger QB Philip Rivers. Quinn was 25-45 for 271 yards and three touchdown passes. He did not throw an interception. He did, however, fumble the football away inside the Chargers' 10-yard line when the Browns were driving for a tying or go ahead score, and that ultimately may have been the difference in the football game.

You can't cough up scoring chances against any team if you're the Cleveland Browns. You especially can't cough them up against playoff-caliber teams like San Diego when Rivers is on his game. Rivers only completed 18 balls all day. But those 18 completions in 25 attempts went for 373 yards and two touchdowns.

What was encouraging was not only the play of Quinn for most of the afternoon but also the fact that the Browns didn't fold up the tent and mail in their effort when they were down 27-7 with a quarter and a half to play.

They scratched, they clawed, they recovered a well-executed onside kick and they kept fighting until the final minute when a second onside kick attempt was recovered by the Chargers' LaDainian Tomlinson to seal their fate.

Still, when the dust settled, the Browns limped off the field with their eleventh loss in twelve games and still firmly entrenched in the race for Ndamukong Suh or one of the top two or three college players in April's NFL draft.

At least on Sunday they didn't look like a cinch to be making that first pick.

Feeling Their Way

Last week in Cavalier-land felt an awful lot like last season. The Wine & Gold played three games, two at home, and won all three of them by double digit margins. The Cavs laid waste to Phoenix, Chicago and Milwaukee during the week and ran their overall record to 15-5.

They held the high-scoring Suns to 90 points, danced and preened their way past Chicago and then went to Milwaukee on Sunday afternoon and threw a 29-0 run at the Bucks en route to an easy 101-86 victory.

Sunday also reconfirmed just how important a mentally healthy Delonte West is for the Cavaliers. West scored 14 straight Cavalier points starting the second quarter and energized the

Cavs during that 29-0 run.

The Cavaliers are talented and deep enough to enjoy the luxury of being patient with West while he sorts through his various issues. But there is no disputing that while James is clearly the team's backbone West, at his best, is the heartbeat and the soul of the Cavaliers.

Etcetera

- Who the hell is Evan Moore and where has he been all season for the Cleveland Browns? It turns out Moore was a practice squad player for the Browns (signed in early November) who was signed to the active roster for Sunday's game with San Diego. If Sunday was any indication, his days toiling in anonymity on the practice squad are over. At least for the remainder of the season. Or until his injury history catches up with him. Whichever comes first.

Moore, a second year, 6'6" , 250lb TE from Stanford, was all over the field on Sunday afternoon. He caught six balls for 80 yards and displayed hands that Robert Royal can only dream about. Brady Quinn found Moore early and then didn't stop looking for him. Quinn

targeted Moore 11 times on Sunday and the kid made nearly every play you could have expected and a few you wouldn't have expected. He did have a Royal moment late in the game when Quinn drilled him right in the helmet after Moore failed to recognize that he was the 'hot' option on a throw, but overall he was quite impressive.

You want more on Moore? At Stanford he was a wide receiver who was productive and effective but who couldn't stay healthy. After choosing Stanford over UCLA, Notre Dame and USC, a hip dislocation and a stress fracture in his foot cost him a season plus six games of another. Moore went undrafted coming out of Stanford but was signed as a free agent by the New Orleans Saints. After failing to catch on with the Saints he went to Green Bay in May of 2008. The injuries affected Moore in Green Bay as well and he was on IR for the Packers throughout the 2008 season. Moore broke his hand before this season started and the Packers reached an injury settlement with him and released him.

He now finds himself in a pretty good situation. Kellen Winslow is long gone, Steve Heiden is done for the year

and Robert Royal blows. If Moore can stay healthy and Quinn keeps finding him he might be one of those guys you read about that other franchises stumble onto.

If not, Moore can always fall back on his Political Science degree and his Masters degree in Sociology, both of which he apparently earned in four years at Stanford.

- Man, I hate the BCS.

I'm not going to bitch and moan about Texas-Alabama in the BCS Championship game but more so the TCU-Boise State Tostitos Fiesta Bowl game that the BCS geniuses set up. Talk about taking the low road? How convenient that the BCS boys decided to pit these two teams against each other as opposed to lining them up against teams from other conferences.

Yes, it's nice that they both get the press and cash that comes with a BCS bid, but college football fans would have liked to see those two teams play automatic qualifiers from other conferences to see where they truly stand in the grand scheme of college football.

I know schools like TCU and Boise State can't complain too loudly but I'll do it for them. I think they got sat at the kids table at Thanksgiving dinner. They got nice place settings but it just looks to me like they were relegated to second class citizen status by pitting them against each other.

- I don't like Joakim Noah. I haven't since his days at Florida. He reminds me of Alice the Goon of 'Popeye' fame. But I agree with him in regard to the Cavs yukking it up on the sidelines and on the bench during games. I might not agree with him chirping or whining about it during a game, but I can't argue with his take.

It's too much and it lacks professionalism when that shit's going on during a game. In pre-game introductions? Fine. Do what you want to do and have some fun. But save the clowning and the picture taking and the air guitar for then or during practices. You look like a bunch of obnoxious, immature clowns when you bring it to the floor during a game.

- I'm also not a Tim Tebow honk. I think he was an outstanding college football player and he looks to be an even better person off the field but his Florida pedigree and the media spotlighting his every game, mission and

trip to church just turned me off. But I can't get all over the guy for the public display of emotion (read: crying on camera) after his Gators were thumped by Alabama on Saturday evening in the SEC championship game.

The kid is indisputably the leader of that team. He takes that responsibility very seriously and he didn't live up to it Saturday night. He took it hard. He felt he let down his teammates and his school. He realized that the SEC championship was his last opportunity to drive Florida to the championship game and he failed to get it done.

Then he cried.

He gathered himself afterward and said all the right things about letting down his team while praising the efforts of the Alabama group. But people want to hang the kid for the tears.

And most of them are the same people who lauded ex-Tribe catcher Victor Martinez for shedding tears in the visitor's dugout in Boston after the Indians lost Game 7 of the ALCS in 2007. Then lauded him again when he cried

back in July of this year when he was dealt to those Red Sox.

When Victor cried it was "because he cared" and because "he wears his heart on his sleeve and loves his team and the city". But when Tebow cries it's because he's a baby?

Shake yourselves people. Put down the Cleveland and Buckeye-colored glasses and shake yourselves. Aspire to have your kids be as solid an athlete and a person that Tebow is. We'll all be better off.