



Oh Yeah...I Remember You

Well, that was ugly.

2009 Jake Delhomme showed up in Tampa Sunday, shoved the 79% passing preseason version of Jake Delhomme out of the way, and proceeded to cough up bile, oil and vomit all over the field in the Browns 17-14 opening day loss to a horrible Tampa team.

Actually, if 2009 injured Jake Delhomme had shown up Sunday he would have done far less damage than the 2010 version did.

You don't get games back in the NFL and this was a game, despite being a mediocre or worse team themselves, that the Browns simply should have won and probably should have dominated.

Instead of a feel good 1-0 record and a home opener with a poor Kansas City team next Sunday, the Browns gave away a 14-3 lead near the end of the first half when Delhomme looked to be taking them in for another score that would have crippled the Buccaneers. Instead he threw an interception on a ball that should have never left his hand, Ronde Barber returned it down to the Browns 3-yard line and Tampa got right back in the game. That was a 14-point swing and two bad teams found themselves in a tight game.

Delhomme would go on to toss another bad INT, Peyton Hillis would fumble twice (losing one) and the Bucs accepted each gift and ended up dealing the Browns a painful loss.

The defense probably played well enough to win. Granted, they were playing a really pathetic offense, but they managed to come up with a couple turnovers themselves and it wasn't until rookie CB Joe Haden was beat for a TD late that the defense yielded.

What I liked about the game:

1. It ended on time at 4pm and that allowed me to cook a nice, big pot of sauce for the week and beyond. I also managed to make some solid breaded pork chops and Spanish rice for Sunday dinner.
2. It inspired me to go to the neighbors and make a nice size batch of Oatmeal Stout that will be ready by week 8 of the season when I really need it.
3. I forgot to DVR it to review it again for future analysis.

What I didn't like about the game:

1. The headache and internal bleeding it gave me.
2. The empty feeling I had watching Delhomme limp around and chuck balls from odd angles into Buccaneer hands.
3. The battle with my conscious over hoping Jake may be hurt enough so that I didn't have to see #2 again for a couple months.
4. The offense and special teams were anemic.

5. Brian Robiskie likes to cuddle with female farm animals.
6. I felt rushed a bit making my spaghetti sauce.
7. When I dropped the spoon on the floor my 9-year daughter turned to me and said, “You Hillis-ed it dude”.
8. The DVR in my head will not turn off.

Bucks Roll Over Miami Tropical Depressions

The University of Miami came into Columbus spewing hot air and hubris, speaking about some type of revenge for a game they lost years ago and how this one would be dedicated to those members of that 2002 Miami team that couldn't win a game in which they were favored by 17 points.

Or something like that.

Too bad for them their offense couldn't score when they actually possessed the football.

Jacory Harris threw four interceptions (two his fault, two the fault of receiver Travis Benjamin who seemed more pre-occupied with locating Buckeye safety C.J. Barnett) and the Ohio State defense shut down the 'Canes in their 36-24 win in Columbus on Saturday.

Other than two plays on special teams (which Head Coach Jim Tressel better fix before it derails what could be a magical season) Miami was never really a threat. And yes, I mean that dismissively because I was disappointed in the 'Canes. I didn't see any of that famous Florida speed advantage (except in the return game) for Miami. If anything the Buckeyes played faster than Miami on both sides of the ball.

Harris may have been the most disappointing Rain Shower of them all. The junior has too many games under his belt to excuse four more interceptions, regardless of how they came about. The Hurricanes, who have historically run QBs like Jim Kelly, Bernie Kosar, Vinny Testaverde, Gino Torretta and even Ken Dorsey out on the field, can't get back to relevance, much less prominence with Harris under center. He's just not good enough when the opponent is beyond Florida International in terms of talent.

But I am not kidding about the special teams needing to be fixed. I don't know if it means removing some of the walk-ons from the squad and putting a few more athletes on the field or if it's a schematic issue, but Tressel needs to fix it before it breaks down in Camp Randall or in Iowa later this season. Maybe you can survive it against a weak-willed, weak offense like Miami but in a close game you'd hate to see it be the reason you walked off the field with an 'L'.

Man Among Boys

That's how Terrelle Pryor makes it look at times. He's just too big, too fast and too talented to be kept under wraps all day. And when he takes off with the football on either a designed run or when a play breaks down, he's about as intimidating a runner at 6'6", 240lbs as college football offers.

Prior was shaky throwing the ball Saturday but he still finished with 233 yards passing, a touchdown pass and, most importantly, no interceptions on the day. He also rushed for 113 yards and a TD on 20 carries.

What may be most impressive is the calm and poise in Pryor's eyes. I watched true Penn State freshman Rob Bolden against Alabama Saturday night and you could see the pressure of the game in his eyes. There's a wild-eyed look a young kid has when their head is swimming and they're facing things they've never faced before at the speed of a big time college football game. Pryor had the look as a freshman when he faced Penn State. Bolden had it last night facing Alabama. But for Pryor the game has slowed down. He's in control and he's leading his team calmly and efficiently. That's what experience and repetitions do for a quarterback that has talent.

And incidentally, when Rob Bolden matures? Look out. That kid has talent to burn.

One More Thing

Let's hope the injury to the knee of Buckeye safety C.J. Barnett is nothing serious. As of Sunday evening there were conflicting reports. But I had the chance to listen to the 'Canes radio feed on

Sirius for a bit on Saturday and the Miami folks were effusive in their praise for Barnett. They wouldn't come out and say it, but they intimated that more than one Miami receiver was more concerned with making sure they knew where Barnett was on the field than they were about the ball.

Damn if that kid won't rattle your teeth and loosen some fillings if he gets a chance.

Enough Said

In the bottom of the 11th inning Saturday night, in a game the Indians trailed 1-0, the scheduled hitters against Twins closer Matt Capps were Luis Valbuena, Lou Marson and Michael Brantley. Combined that trio is hitting a robust .198. I know that batting average isn't the best barometer for production at the plate, but take my word when I say it's an excellent and accurate barometer for the production of those three players.

Brantley is hitting 231/288/310, Marson 196/272/289 and Valbuena an impressive 177/269/237 (vomit). All have at least 215 plate appearances so they've earned these numbers. They own them, deserve them and are pretty much accurately represented by them.

All you need to know in regard to this Cleveland Indians team is that Shelley Duncan, a really shitty hitter in his own right at 229/311/399, pinch hit in the bottom of the 11th against Capps.

And that it wasn't for Valbuena.

This is a bad team if you hadn't yet noticed. Although judging by the thousands of empty FIELD BOX seats Saturday night, you may have caught on.

I still get a kick out of the folks who get bent about the fact that Jayson Nix and Jason Donald can't get bunts down in a bunt situation and in a tight game.

What exactly surprises you there? That guys that can't play aren't adept at the intricacies of the game? That bunting isn't a fundamental part of a major league player's game despite how simple it would appear to do to people that haven't played?

Look, Jayson Nix is mediocre to poor player in general. The fact he's a mediocre to poor bunter isn't surprising. Bad players fill the roster on bad teams. Bad teams don't do the big things right to win games much less handle the nuances glowingly.

You should really be a lot more concerned that a crappy .229 hitter was the best choice to pinch hit in a 1-0 game and that he wasn't even sent up there for the guy hitting .177.

By The Way

Don't mistake my inclusion of Brantley as an indictment of the kid.

He's hitting .231 but you can see the progress he's made in terms of his approach and his success. Since the beginning of August the 23-year old is hitting .290. He's going to be fine and he's a glowing example of why you play your prospects in years like this rather than handing more Abs to the Shelley Duncans of the world.

And I call BS on all the people talking about service time for most of these guys. Unless you've got Evan Longoria or Buster Posey (or Carlos Santana) then you're playing a losing game crying **every single time** about service time.

Find out if they can play and give them the plate appearances to get it right. If they don't then what the hell difference is there in how long you control them?

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