

An Awkward Glance Ahead: Fancy Math Edition

Written by {ga=motherscratcher}

Monday, May 02 2011 2:00 PM - Last Updated Tuesday, May 03 2011 9:10 PM



Once again, the greatest day event on a Browns fan's calendar has come and gone. The 2011 draft is over and what we are left with is the possibility that this time everything will work out. This time the Browns got it right. This time all will be right with the world come September.

Anyone who reads this column regularly knows that I'm an idiot*, so I'm not going to try to regale you with all sorts of in depth analysis and break down the Brown's draft choices like I have any damn clue what I'm talking about. We have great guys like Gary Benz, Jason Askew, and Chris Hutchison for that. They all have this incredible way of turning their opinion into my opinion upon reading their analysis. I like to think that it's because I'm smart enough to know that those guys are smarter than me. But I will offer my initial reaction to the Brown's draft. After all, it is our Superbowl.

**If you're new to the Glance, welcome. Thanks for reading. I'm an idiot. This will become apparent shortly. I like to think that it's part of my charm.*

There were really 3 guys that I wanted with that #6 pick. Marcell Dareus was a pipe dream. There was no way he was making it to #6, and he didn't. The other 2 guys had a shot, though. I got home from work while Arizona was on the clock. Dareus was off the board, as was AJ Green, another one of my top 3. Patrick Peterson, the guy I wanted the most was still there, as was Blaine Gabbert. I was pumped. Surely, Arizona would draft Gabbert. I mean, what kind of crazy stupid organization would go into yet another season with Derrick Anderson as their QB?

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Arizona would. That's who. Dumbasses. They picked Peterson.

At this point I was hoping with all my heart that the Browns would be able to trade down. And then it happened. Atlanta gave up a giant boatload of draft picks to move up for Julio Jones. I was ecstatic. I thought we got a great haul on that, and was especially pleased at the thought of two #1s next year. This wasn't Eric Mangini moving down the draft list in order to add 6th round picks. This was Tom Freakin' Heckert bending the Falcons over because they have convinced themselves that they are one Julio Jones away from glory.

And they may be. This is a rare trade that works out for both teams. But all of the risk is Atlanta's. And, while I'm not a guy who will actively root for something bad to happen to the opposing players (LeBag-O-Farts excepted), I wouldn't exactly start organizing candlelight vigils should Matt Ryan tear a meniscus or something that keeps him out of a few games next year either.

I was further gratified to learn that Tony Grossi's initial reaction to the trade was one of horror. If Tony thinks it's a bad idea, who bad can it be, right?

I was also delighted to think that I had time to drink 2-3 more beers before the Browns were back on the clock. Nothing wrong with that. I love the draft. Good times.

I was perfectly content to sit in front of my TV and drink beer while I wondered whether Da'Quan Bowers would drop all the way to #27 and whether I wanted him anyway (I didn't) or if the Browns would pull the trigger on my man Cameron Heyward*. Then, the unthinkable happened.

**Who, through no fault of his own, is now dead to me. Suck it Heyward. You go to hell.*

The Browns were back on the clock at #21 having given up a 3rd round pick to Kansas City in order to move up and take...Phil Taylor? Who the hell is Phil Taylor? Are you serious?

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I was more confused than angry. I was really hoping that the Browns would spend a lot of their draft upgrading the D-Line, but I'd barely heard of this guy. I hit the message boards and learned I wasn't alone. People everywhere were wondering what Heckert was doing. Why would he move up to take a guy that would be there at #27 anyway? It made no sense. Look, I'm sitting here looking at the Plain Dealer Draft Special and it says that Phil Taylor is the 29th best player. It's right there in print. How stupid can Heckert be?

This isn't about Taylor, who appears to be a huge, beastly, bulging man. I'm all for huge, beastly, bulging men on the Brown's defensive line. But why give up a 3rd round pick to move up when he would clearly be there at #27 anyway? It says so right there in the Plain Dealer, who stole their draft list from NFLDraftScout.com, which sounds like a hell of a good site. Doesn't it? It's got "Draft" right there in their name.

I was beside myself for a good 20-30 minutes. But then it dawned on me. I'm an idiot. What the heck do I know? What the heck does NFLDraftScout.com know? What does the Plain Dealer know? Nothing, right? We all know nothing. I mean, this is the same publication that actually paid Mary Schmitt Boyer to write about the Cavs. And I'm putting my stock in them? Ridiculous.

I asked myself this: "Is there any way that Tom Heckert trades up to get this guy for no apparent reason?" The answer is obviously "Not, of course he didn't". Tom Heckert didn't just give away a 3rd round pick because he got tired of waiting to make a pick. He gave away a 3rd round pick because Phil Taylor was his guy and he had good reason to believe that Taylor wouldn't be there at #27. Of course that's what happened.

And nobody knows any different. Sure enough, not to long after the pick was made, reports started coming out that the Eagles and possibly even the Ravens where going to take Taylor. Nobody knows for sure except the draft rooms for those teams, but it was concerning enough that Heckert moeved up to get his guy.

And I have no problem with that. Heckert got his guy. His guy is an absolute monster and a position the Browns sorely needed. And we gave up a 3rd rounder to get him.

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Upon a bit of reflection, I was forced to admit that landing the most giant man in the entire draft might actually be worth missing out on a 3rd round player, even if said player was on the level of former third round draft choices Travis Prentice, Travis Wilson, or Travis (Melvin) Fowler. Even Travis Frye.

Basically I decided that Tom Heckert probably has thought about all of this and had good reason to go get his man when he did, no matter what the Sunday section of the Plain Dealer might have said. Of course, that didn't stop a bunch of armchair QBs from declaring that Phil Taylor would have been there at #27 and Tom Heckert is an idiot for trading up.

Yes. Of course. Because Tom Heckert never thought of that.

After I came to this realization, I grabbed another beer and spent the rest of the night thinking about the giant monster standing next to Ahytba in the middle of the Brown's defensive line next season. I thought about large and powerful men in colorful jerseys running into the middle of that line and bouncing backward.

The next night I thought about an All Big East defensive end wreaking havoc in the backfield. And a big receiver named Little overpowering safeties and nickel backs to convert third down and 5. And all was right with the world, because the Browns had once again won their Super Bowl.

Of course, I think that every year. But this year it's true.

Right?

An Awkward Glance At The Browns.

Of course none of that will matter once Gary Benz's dooms day scenario plays out and every player becomes a free agent.

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An Awkward Glance At The Indians

They're for real. I, like many of you, have known it for a while. The grand prognosticators are starting to come around. In fact, the last holdout seems to be Keith Law who, just last night, tweeted:

"they've also faced one of the weakest, if not the weakest, schedules to date."

Don't be mad at Keith. He trusts his numbers. I trust the numbers too. I just trust different numbers. Numbers like 19 (wins), .704 (winning percentage), +47 (run differential (the diff)), 13-2 (record at home), and 6 (number of beers I've drunk so far today). He'll come around. Eventually he will have to, because the Tribe is for real, and he's not a stupid man, just stubborn.

These numbers are impressive if not undeniable. But, the most impressive number to me is

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18/24. That is the Indians record in the last 24 games.

And, that record got me thinking...what does winning 18 out of 24 games, at any stretch, say about a major league ball club? I'm glad I asked, because I looked up that very thing.

A major league baseball season is very long. 162 games means that even the worst teams can have a stretch of good games that disappears into an otherwise terrible season. So I looked it up.

What I wanted to know is this: How bad can a team that wins 18/24 games during a season possibly be? Here's what I found out.

There are 30 teams in MLB and I looked at the last 10 season. That means there are 300 seasons in which a team could win as many as 18/24 games during the season. And that's at any stretch. That can be 18/24 starting with the first game, or starting with the 36th game. The Indians won 18/24 in games 3-26 and now 4-27 as well. They've done it twice already this season.

Out of 300 seasons in the last decade, there are 111 teams that have (at some point during their season) won as many as 18/24 games during a stretch. And here's where it gets interesting. Out of those 111 teams to have a stretch like the Indians have already had (twice) 66 made the playoffs and 7 won the World Series. That's about 60% of teams that have had a run like the Indians making the playoffs.

In contrast, there are 189 teams that went the whole season without ever having a run like the Indians have had* (twice).

**In 2003 the Detroit Tigers had an historic run. In their entire season, they never won more than 10/24 games. Not even once. They never had a stretch where they put together a couple modest winning streaks in a row. They never had a stretch where they had, say, a 4 game winning streak, followed by a couple losses, and then 3 more wins, and then a few losses, and then another win, and then 3 losses, and then 2 more wins. No, nothing that good for the 2003*

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Tigers. Never did they win 11 games out of 24. Never. Never ever. Astounding. Almost impossible.

Out of those 189 teams that did not win 18 games in any 24 game stretch...a whopping 17 of them made the playoffs. About 10%. 3 of them won the World Series.

So, 60% of teams that have had a run like Indians in 2011 have made the playoffs, but 90% of teams that never reached this have missed the playoffs.

Another way to look at it is this: The average amount of wins from a team that wins 18/24 games during a season is 90.56. So, let's say the Indians are right in the middle. They win the average amount of games as a team that goes on a 18/24 streak. That's 91 wins.

Will you take that? 91 wins? What would you have said if you were told on March 31 that the Indians would win 91 games? Do you think 91 games might get it done in the AL Central this year?

How about this: Of the 111 teams that won 18/24 games, two of them ended up at exactly .500. Only 13/111 (12%) ended the season under .500 while 96/111 (86%) finished over .500. I'm just saying that some of this stuff is getting hard for me to ignore. After this incredible, glorious start, it's going to be hard for the Indians to not reach .500, and they'll probably be closer to 90 wins than 81. At least according to history that what will happen.

Maybe it means something and maybe it doesn't, but the Indians have the best record and run differential in MLB. And that's a month into the season. A month is no longer a small sample size. A month is meaningful. The Indians are 10 games ahead of the White Sox and the Twins, the two teams that were supposed to run away with the division.

Does any of this mean anything? Hell, I don't know. Ask Cousineau.

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But, I'm enjoying the hell out of it. It's an Indian summer right now.



An Awkward Glance At Nicknames:

I've hit a bit of a lul in the whole nicknaming project. Despite my best efforts, I still see a lot of "OCabs" and "ACabs". These things make me want to tear my hair out.

I have, however, noticed a few nicknames take hold. I've seen Santana referred to as "The Axe Man". And I'm not giving up on Pasta Vinnie Pestano, Two Flaps Larry, and The Dapper Gent either.

And as soon as Weglarz hits Cleveland, the Baconator will be in full effect.

But, as always, this is a work in progress. The Progress (if you can call it that) so far:

Michael Brantley.....Pudding Jones (Mike Kramer)

Asdrubal Cabrera.....Droobs (Society)

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Shin-Soo Choo.....Big League Choo or BLC (Steve Buffum)

.....Two Flaps Larry (Mike Kramer)

Carlos Santana.....The Axe Man (Owen)

.....Supernatural (Bill Kramer AKA Broscratcher)

Travis Hafner.....Pronk (Society)

.....Hugh Hafner (Dave Regimbal)

Orlando Cabrera.....Orly (Steve Buffum)

Matt LaPorta.....Connie (Owen)

Travis Buck.....Buck Naked (George Costanza)

Shelley Duncan.....Sloth (Society)

.....Hawkman (Nino Colla)

Jack Hannahan.....That Pederast (Fletch)

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.....Supermanahan (Jordan Bastian)

.....Banana Hannock (Timothy Wittig)

Austin Kearns.....The Kearnal (Nino Colla)

Adam Everett.....Dapper Gent (Mike Kramer)

Grady Sizemore.....Cup-a-Joe (Mike Kramer)

Lou Marson.....Tofu Lou (Steve Buffum)

Fausto Carmona.....The Bug Tamer (Owen)

Carlos Carrasco.....Carrot Top (Gary Benz)

.....Car Squared (Nino Colla)

Justin Masterson.....Sidearmy Nelson (Mike Kramer)

Josh Tomlin.....Toots McGillicutty (Mike Kramer)

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Mitch Talbot.....Flapjacks McGoo (Mike Kramer)

Chris Perez.....Kenny Powers (Society)

.....Pure Rage (Chris Gimenez)

Rafael Perez.....Rafael Obama is Perez (Gary Benz)

Tony Sipp.....Sippin-da-Juice (Mike Kramer)

Chad Durbin.....Chaz Badoinkadoink (Mike Kramer)

Vinnie Pestano.....Pasta Vinnie (Mike Kramer)

Justin Germano.....Germano Helmet (Mike Kramer)

Frank Herrmann.....Homer (Owen)

Kelvin De La Cruz.....

Jeanmar Gomez.....Gomez Pyle (Mike Kramer)

Nick Hagadone.....Lanky (Mike Kramer)

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David Huff.....Unpainted Huffheins (Mike Kramer)

Josh Judy.....Judge (Mike Kramer)

Corey Kluber.....Klublaroo (Mike Kramer)

Zach McAllister.....

Hector Rondon.....

Joe Smith.....Marquez Smiff (Steve Buffum)

Jess Todd.....Uncle Jess (Mike Kramer)

Jason Donald

Jared Goedert.....Joe Dirt (Gary Benz)

Luis Valbuena.....Baby Louie (Nino Colla)

Ezequiel Carrera.....Children Of The Carrera (Mike Kramer)

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Trevor Crowe.....Fungus (Steve Buffum)

Nick Weglarz.....The Baconator (Mike Kramer)

Send me your emails with ideas for nicknames. Even if it's just to tell me the ones that you like or the ones that you don't like. All information is useful.