Cold rain coming down sideways. Wind. Sloppy field. Little to no pass attack. Little to no offense. Final score in the single digits.

If you don't love games like that, you don't love football.

At least not the kind of football that I grew up with.

Maybe you just prefer Arena/Big 12/Video Game football, where the Defense is just a formality and the game is played in neutral conditions that are as sterile as a mule. That's fine. That's your prerogative, and you're probably part of a growing majority of football fans.

But I personally consider that a bastardization of football; a putt-putt course compared to Augusta. Likely just further evidence of my increasing stodginess and out-of-touchness, but there you have it.

To me, if you go outside and the sky is caked with black clouds of impending doom and the wind is blowing leaves sideways and raindrop daggers are smacking you in the face and occasionally a cow flies by above the trees... that's a great day to play/watch some football.

Not that the game wasn't frustrating. After the initial Touchdown, the combination of errors and conservatism joined forces to stymie the Offense, and solely relying on the Defense to win the game generally leads to losses like they had in Week 1.

Trent Richardson was greatly improved from last week and ran with authority, pounding out 122 yards on 24 carries including a 26 yard TD run. Brandon Weeden only amassed 129 yards passing - a low amount helped greatly by yet another slew of "The Drops" - but then again Phillip Rivers only had 154 yards in conditions best suited for the Wishbone. All in all, I thought Weeds played a decent game.

Up 7-0 after their first drive culminated in Richardson's TD, the Browns basically traded punts with San Diego in a tug-of-war for field position. The Chargers managed a FG just before Half and another midway through the 3rd Quarter, one possession after Robert Meachum dropped what would've been a sure 51 yard TD pass from Rivers.

That was the only time San Diego even remotely threatened to score.

Cleveland got more and more conservative as the game went on and the value of existing points rose. And despite the paltry Offensive numbers, they did just enough to keep the Time of Possession in balance and move the Charger field position back. Their penultimate drive was a perfect example - they started at their own 3 with 7:37 left and only a 1 point lead, and then managed a 10 play drive that moved the ball about 50 yards and ate up about 5 minutes. Huge under those circumstances.

The Defense, which played aggressively and well all day, took over from there, digging in their heels when Rivers drove his team to the CLE 44 and forcing 4 straight incompletions, the last of which was a ball batted away harmlessly by Buster Skrine on 4th and 10.

Which led to the Browns final drive being a kneeldown - the only drive since the first one that didn't end in a Punt.

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Stats

Time of Possession: SD - 30:52, CLE - 29:08

Total Yards: SD - 265, CLE - 250

Net Yards Passing: SD - 148, CLE - 117

Net Yards Rushing: CLE - 133, SD - 117

First Downs: SD - 17, CLE - 15

Turnovers Forced: CLE – 1, SD - 0

Sacks: SD - 2, CLE - 1

Final Score: Cleveland 7, San Diego 6

The only surprise here is laying 133 rushing yards (5.08 yards/carry for Richardson) on San Diego's 2nd ranked Run D.

The rest is about what you expect in a monsoon.

Game Balls

Robert Meachum – Thanks for the drop. 'Bout time someone returned the favor.

Trent Richardson – Can't wait until this guy is playing at 100%, but, unfortunately, I don't think we'll see it this year.

The Defense – Any time you hold a team without a TD, that's a damn fine effort, no matter what the conditions.

James-Michael Johnson – 5 tackles, 5 assists, 1 forced fumble, 1 really solid game.

Honorable Mention

Shawn Lauvao – His assistance on the Richardson TD run (as if I needed to specify who had the TD run on a day with one total TD) did not go unnoticed.

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