I had planned on writing a fantastic article this week (as opposed to the planning to fail that most people employ), but I am now on a double-dose of Valium and Vicodin due to a small procedure I had today to ensure that I will never again sire a child, so the world is fuzzy/hazy/sleepy.

To speak briefly on the Browns' coaching situation: Rob Chudzinski is the Brandon Weeden of coaching hires. Everyone wanted Nick Saban. Everyone wanted Chip Kelly. Everyone wanted Chucky Gruden or Chin Cowher. Jimmy Haslam walked in the door and promised A Big Splash. Browns fans expected a New Day. And then they got more of the same.

The Wonder Coach that everyone feels Haslam promised is the RG3. Then they missed on him. So anyone else after that is just a lesser hire, an inadequate panic and/or impatient replacement.

Does this mean that Chud (or Weeden, for that matter) are destined to fail? Hells no. They were good enough to get a Head Coaching job in the NFL/get drafted in the 1st Round. If so much hadn't been promised, if so many hopes hadn't been ignited, either of these guys would probably have been given a lot more latitude with the fan base.

But the perception that they were bargain basement substitutes is stuck to them now, and Chud should ask Weeden about what kind of honeymoon that affords you in this town.

I'm not gonna pretend that I've paid any attention to Chud's exploits since he left the Browns. His stats/rankings have been good in SD and Carolina, but numbers often lie. I do know what he did in Cleveland in 2007 and 2008, however. In 2007, he led the only competent offense Cleveland has known since The Return, making a Pro Bowler out of Derek freakin' Anderson, for Christ's sake.

In 2008, that offense couldn't fight its way out of cell made of toilet paper.

Chud has battled inconsistency and has no head coaching experience at any level, so it's really hard to get excited about what he brings to the table. But he's certainly not the worst hire they could make, so you have to give the guy a chance to actually show something before crucifying him.

Jim Bob and Gollum on the other hand...

Really, they screwed this Coaching Search up at every level. They went into the process employing Coaching Hire Tactic #1 - Go After Your Guy. Their guy was Nick Saban, and if that failed, Chip Kelly. Big names, big splashes. And if that didn't work out, well they had two Lombardi Guys in Bill O'Brien and Doug Marrone waiting in the wings.

Saban was probably a long shot from the beginning, so they went hard after The Chipper and probably thought they had him. Instead, he jerked them around, got a free dinner, and went back to Oregon. In the meantime, O'Brien got a raise to stay at Penn State and Marrone got hired by the Bills.

So Tactic #1 was totally shot. Back to the drawing board.

That meant employing Coaching Hire Tactic #2 - Conduct a Thorough Search. Interview a bunch of lesser name guys. See which one jumps out at you.

Now the optimist in you can say that's exactly what happened, but let's be honest - they were in no danger of losing Rob Chudzinski to another team, whether he wowed them or not. Why not wait an extra week or two and interview Greg Roman (OC - 49ers), Bruce Arians (OC - Colts), or Mike McCoy (OC - Broncos)? Why not allow Mike Zimmer (DC - Bengals) to complete his scheduled 2nd interview? What was the big freakin' hurry to hire Chud that prevented you from properly finishing your search?

Were you panicking because of what happened with Marrone?

So they essentially screwed up both aspects of their coaching search and managed to piss away the goodwill of the fan base in the process. Which further entrenches the bad feeling I got from the very beginning with these guys - **You can't trust them to make good decisions.**

And this is the Owner that we're talking about. He's the guy that hired Banner. He's the guy that was involved heavily in this search. And that's the thing about Owners - YOU CAN'T FIRE THEM.

Better hope Jimmy Joe wises up in a big damn hurry or gets lucky with The Chud.

This ain't over kids - 2 HUGE decisions coming up in the following weeks, which are: 1) Who do they hire as their GM/Director of Player Personnel and 2) Who do you hire as your Defensive Coordinator and what defensive scheme (3-4 or 4-3) will he run?

The answers to those 2 questions will greatly determine just how mired in depression we should be.

NOW... back to our regularly scheduled picks.

Stupid BT went 3-1 last week, whereas DJC and myself went a poor 1-3. DJC I'm sure feels particularly bad as he switched all 4 of his picks at the last moment in an effort to catch BT since they had identical selection. And this means that stupid BT went and usurped the lead from me.

As far as last week's picks are concerned, we have a new weekly best with BT's 12-4. DJC and I managed 10-6 records as well - not too shabby. The season standings are:

BT: 132.5-119.5, **Me**: 131.5-120.5, **DJC**: 126.5-125.5

This playoff week features two fine games in the NFC and two games which will likely be blowouts in the AFC (there's a reason they both feature almost 10 point lines - rare for the Divisional round in the NFL).

All odds are from VegasInsider.com :

BAL at DEN -9.5

Me - *My Line: DEN by 8.5*. I have officially put the HERO (Hutchison Erotic Ranking Orgy) System on hold for the remainder of the Playoffs. The only pick I got right last week was going against the System (GB cover against MIN), and I felt somewhat strongly as well about the Seahawks but listened to HERO and whiffed on that one. HERO is telling me that Denver will win but not cover. And I think that I agree with that. Sure, Denver beat the living tar out of the Ravens a couple weeks ago (in Baltimore, no less). And sure, Denver is just a much better team at this juncture in time. But Baltimore always seems to stymie Peyton Manning... to an extent. *Pick: Ravens*

DJC - Think they miss Tebow? *Pick: Broncos*

BT - I think Denver will win, but Baltimore is going to make a game of it. *Pick: Ravens*

GB at SF -3

Me - *My Line: SF by 3.5*. Geez, this one is hard to read. The Packers - when on - are the better team. But they're so seldom "on". If San Fran is able to control the Time of Possession with their Frank Gore/Colin Kaepernick run game and solid pass rush, then the Packers won't even be able to make it close. If it is close, though, then Green Bay will probably emerge with the win. I think the key to the game is the GB O-Line versus the SF Front 7, and I think the Front 7 wins. *Pick: 49ers*

DJC - Rodgers is still the best. *Pick: Packers*

BT - I drew GB in my random draw and my wife drew the Niners. Go figure. This won't end well for me. *Pick: 49ers*

SEA at ATL -2.5

Me - *My Line: ATL by 3*. HERO is telling me to go with the Falcons and I'm not going with the Falcons until the Falcons win ONE freakin' playoff game. Every year, there is a Wild Card team that puts together a run near the end of the season and into the Playoffs that knocks off the top seed in their conference, and Seattle probably has every confidence that they are that team. For all I know, Atlanta is mortally afraid of the same thing. If this game is close or Seattle has the lead in the 4th Quarter, you will start to hear choking sounds all throughout that stupid dome. *Pick: Seahawks*

DJC - Beast Mode. *Pick: Seahawks*

BT - Rooting for Seattle. Ergo, taking Atlanta. *Pick: Falcons*

HOU at NE -9.5

Me - *My Line: NE by 7*. Here's another one where I'll go against the System (along with the Seahawks game). I don't care what Houston's ranking is - they are in no way playing like the #6 team in the league right now. Hell, the Bengals were AWFUL last week and STILL had a chance to pull that game out. The only description that will likely describe Houston's effort in this game will be: Shit the bed. The Patriots will be treating this like practice by the 2nd Half as they score over 45 and win by over 20. *Pick: Patriots*

DJC - Who would want to live in Houston anyway? *Pick: Patriots*

BT - I spend a lot of time in Houston. Texans fans are down on their team. Hell they barely beat a mediocre Cincy team. *Pick: Patriots*