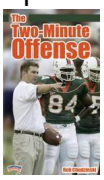
The Browns hiring of Rob Chudzinski as offensive coordinator has illicited an impassioned array of opinions from our staff of writers here at The Blurbs. Papa Cass takes time out to chime in on the hiring, wondering aloud if Phil Savage and the Browns haven't taken the whole "bringing in Ohio guys" thing a little too far. And he asks the question - is this truly the hire of an offensive cooridnator? Or a Kellen Winslow II coordinator?



Fans love it when teams think like them. Judged purely on that, the Browns are the darlings of Cleveland.

We love it when the local team brings in local guys. It gives a sense that the team is truly comprised of "our boys," players and coaches who truly know the pain we've been through as fans these past four decades.

Give Browns management credit for trying to play up the local angle as much as possible. From Charlie Frye to Joe Jurevicius to Dave Zastudil to LeCharles Bentley, the roster is overflowing with native Ohioans.

GM Phil Savage and coach Romeo Crennel both had prior ties to the Browns upon accepting their current jobs.

Now, add newly-minted offensive coordinator Rob Chudzinski to that mix. A Toledo native and Browns assistant under Butch Davis, he eschewed a chance (albeit a small one) to coordinate the high-octane offense of his most recent employer, the Chargers, to take over the Browns offense, one of the league's worst.

Why? He "likes challenges," he said.

Before we go any further, let's step back for a moment to that whole "local guy" angle, and ask what does being a local guy bring you among us xenophobic Clevelanders?

Time. And, uh ... time.

When someone is from around here, we Clevelanders tend to be a little more forgiving. OK, a lot more forgiving. Every time Frye struggles, all the media has to do is remind us that he idolized Bernie Kosar growing up, and we'll collectively say, "Aw, the kid can't be that bad, then."

The Browns might have tapped into something here. Give us local guys to satisfy our need for perceived empathy. It won't necessarily lead to more wins, but it will at least soften a fan base ready to boil over at the prospect of another losing season, which 2007 almost certainly promises to be.

But before we swallow the rhetoric of "liking challenges" from yet another Brown with Buckeye blood and zero experience in his current position, let's air out the concerns that

have surfaced, or will soon surface.

With open coordinator positions in San Diego and Miami and connections in both places, why did Chudzinski rush to accept the Cleveland offer?

Could it be that he wasn't very high on the list of candidates for either the Chargers or Dolphins for one reason or another? We already know he was probably the third or fourth choice for the Chargers.

The Browns' current regime was reportedly very high on Chudzinski upon conducting exit interviews following the changing of the guard two winters ago. But if we've learned anything from watching the Browns since their return, it's that their perceptions aren't exactly spot-on most of the time.

I'll be honest. I'm concerned the Browns haven't hired an offensive coordinator so much as they have hired a Kellen Winslow Jr. coordinator.

Chudzinski and Winslow are tight. Two legumes in a pod. They were tight at the University of Miami, and Chud plans on getting even tighter with him in Cleveland. Already, Chud is promising to use K2 more in short passing and run-blocking schemes.

Perhaps we've all been burned before, but I smell a Maurice Carthon redux emerging.

Carthon, as you might remember, was all about the fullbacks. Any way he could utilize Lawrence Vickers and Terelle Smith, he wanted to do it. Almost without fail, it blew up in his face because Carthon's perception of what a fullback is capable of and the reality of what a fullback can actually do were miles apart.

Now, in Chudzinski, I fear we might see an offense by Kellen Winslow, of Kellen Winslow and starring Kellen Winslow. Granted, Winslow might be the single most talented player on the offensive side of the ball, and deserves to be a key player, but I'm already having nightmarish visions of Frye forcing passes into triple coverage because the play calls for getting the ball to Winslow at all costs.

Think I'm overreacting? Have you forgotten how every coach the Browns hire seems to swallow a crazy pill upon signing his contract? Comprehensive, rational thinking has not been a strong suit of Browns coaches recently.

Worse yet, imagine the very real possibility of Winslow getting hurt again. Chud might have a panic attack on the spot if Winslow is carted off the field.

An unhealthy obsession with Kellen Winslow Jr. is one of the few reasons I could think that Chudzinski would jump at the chance to coach the Browns offense when other teams with better offenses were still mulling over candidates. If that's the case, the Browns just landed another coach with

suspect judgment skills, and another disastrous year for Frye and the Browns offense likely awaits.

But, hey, at least Chud will be back home where he belongs, alongside people who are willing to give anybody with "Ohio" on their birth certificate a second chance. And third. And fourth.