Once known as "mini-camp", the Browns held their first OTA's (organized team activities) this past week, and 'ole Mansfield checks in with us this morning to update us on what the heck happened there. Mansfield's takes are as raw as they come, which we love, and he gives his unabashed opinions on Braylon no-showing, the quarterback competition, Joe Thomas not working with the first team, K2's progress, and the defense being ahead of the offense.

Ever get the feeling that the NFL was permanently infused with the spirit of the Federal Government from 1933 to 1980? Everything and anything is centrally controlled. There are policies on helmet radios, how players can wear their shoes and sox, and now how many mini-camp practices can be covered and how many seconds of video can be shown on independent internet sites. And absolutely everything has an acronym. Ever get the feeling that Tags used to like to dress in drag like J Edgar Hoover…. allegedly?

I refuse to use the letter's "OTA" anymore. It's freaking mini-camp for cryin' out loud.

I used to get all obsessively stoked for mini-camp when I was more naïve and foolish a whole 5 years ago. "OH MY GAWD DIDJA SEE THE PICTURE OF COURTNEY STRETCHING ?!?! WHAT A BEAST HE'S GONNA BE! WE GOT OUR BRUCE SMITH!" This is in no way intended to diss any fans that are still into

this stuff or any of the fine sites that do a marvelous job of providing obsessive Browns' coverage 365/24/7. Nuh-uh. They certainly have their place and they very are good at it. It's just that after all these years and how mini-camp is presented to me, I still see that same old bull crap that is on display in September and October when they play for keeps. I have long since lost any faith in anything that happens this time of year that is reported as positive. On the other hand, there are occasionally a few verbal baubles that make yah go "huh"? Here's all the Browns' mini-camp news that's fit to rant about.

Braylon, are you serious?

Here's Etwards talking: "Blah blah blah one…. meeeelllion dollahs….. blah blah blah blasé shplee."

Here are Etwards actions: "It is more important for me to play golf in Ann Arbor and continue to revel in my college days than go to work."

Yo – Braylon – here's some free advice from Middle Aged Man . Instead of working all day, there's a few days that I'd MUCH rather go to Ray's Place in Kent at noon and eat a double Mofo wit fries and mail in the afternoon salting away many of their fine draft selections until I look up and see three mooses on that ugly old wall. Yah know, recall my college years as you like to stay fixated in yours? I call those days "weekdays". But you know what? I work for 8, 9, 10 hours instead because I have pride and passion in what I do and I owe my employer an outstanding effort because I appreciate the opportunity I have and what they do for me. Capice already?

Get your ass to work and STFU.

Memo to the entire Browns' organization: shame on you for allowing this episode to kick off the 2007 season. You insult us and disrespect our integrity as fans. Zero tolerance this fool already.

Open QB Competition: Baghdad Bob Style

Quoth Patrick in the Leakin’ Urinal:

"Call it an education for Brady Quinn, the second of the team's first-round picks. Each quarterback got two sets of three plays, and Quinn needed more. Hard to remember a good throw. It's not easy going into a new system with new teammates on the first practice, but Quinn spent extra time on the field after the practice for a reason. He looked tentative, indecisive and inaccurate, and yes, it was just the first practice.

Frye wasn't a lot better. His "marching orders" this off-season call for fewer forced throws and fewer turnovers, but he threw three interceptions on six passes.

The best quarterback of the day? Dereck Anderson. Don't ignore him in the quarterback derby."

Let's see… DA looked the best in the X games last year, looked the best last season in real games, and is looking the best in mini-camp. Frye continues to play shitty and talk like he's a legit NFL starter. Chas, you are a poseur. I think you are the only one who was left off the distribution list, but ask someone else to send you the e-mail. I think David Humm can forward you a copy. Brady Quinn sounds like he's a complete mess who will need lots of time before he's ready for an NFL X Game. So much for the "most NFL ready quarterback in the draft". Phil says "no" to a real vet. Can we just acknowledge reality so we can get ready for the season with our best/only chance not to suck?

Joe Thomas on the Bench

OK, so I know that RAC has his code about rookies. I know that he has to keep face. I get that. All you readers out there in cyberland who expect Kevin Shaffer to be the starting OLT this season, please raise you hands. OK, now keep them up if you also think JT is going the way of Gallery due to anything you see that indicates the kid has a big head that will explode ala Edwards if he's "given" the starting job?

Bueller? Anyone? Anyone?

Thought so. Look, all we hear and read about is how offensive lines need time and reps to gel. We hear about how guys need to get used to playing next to one another. Eric Steinbach talks about it this week on the Official $ite. So why in the hell are they even wasting a single snap to not make this happen? This is the type of nonsense that makes me want to put my head through a plate glass window about the NFL at times. Stupid is as stupid does.

Kellen Winslow: The anti-Braylon. And other tales of Strength and Conditioning

Zach on The $ite says that KW2 is massive. It appears The Souljah is bucking for a change to John Cena in *The Marine*. There are also reports that the risky micro-fracture procedure is looking positive from his lack

of any limp and mild running – and even mall walking. If he's put in the time to make himself more durable, improved his strength to block players such as Joey Porter, and his knee is better, then KW2 will be the best tight end in the NFL entering his second full season of play. Wish another certain Browns' receiver could say that. Or at least show up for work instead of golfing.

Jamal Lewis is coming in at 240 pounds instead of the 255 he was at last season. His reported goal is to be at 235. He says he's been told he'll be used extensively this season. If by

“extensively” he means as often as a designated driver for Lindsay Lohan, then yeah, I agree. And that’s a good thing.

Eric Steinbach has also gone out of his way to offer propers to the Browns strength and conditioning program. Presumably, it differs from the Bengals’ off-season program of breaking rocks in the hot sun, or cutting grass and picking up trash on the roadside in leg shackles, so I can see why he’s enthused. The rock breaking sounds strenuous enough, but it also seems a bit low tech and suspect in helping improve quickness. No word on how the jailbreak cone

shuffle would help that or if the Bengals' training table consists of how many eggs can be ingested in one sitting while the rest of the team bets.

As always, the proof will be in the injuries and performance of the team once they swap paint. Thus I remain Billie Joe. Wake me up when September ends .

Shocking: The Defense is Ahead of the Offense!

OK, so reports on the Official $ite are that the D is flying around and having

their way with the offense. Good. But this would seem to be not unexpected and is thus fairly meaninglessness. If it were anything but this way with a new offense being installed, bad quarterbacks, and one veteran wide receiver, it would make me worry. But the reports of Robaire Smith being a ton, just like Ted and Orpheus, are very encouraging. The starting backers are the same as last season, and reports are NyQuil Jackson is healthy. Leigh Bodden still being plagued by injury is a bit troubling though. Ankles can be really underrated as far as how they linger. All that’s said, I am really looking forward to seeing the defense when it

matters. They are the unit that gives me hope, the one that allows me to be optimistic about this coming season. If they are ineffective, it will be a crushing let down and a real concern related to the Phil Savage Era.

Wrapping up this non-coverage of the non-season, I hope you enjoy all the information you'll receive from a single practice. If you haven't been keeping tabs on the new NFL policies as they relate to the media and coverage, including mainstream media and the independent sites that have become so important to so many fans, you might want to do some

homework. There are policies in place about how many practices can be covered and even how many seconds of video non-official $ites can run. While I am definitely of the belief that the Official $ite and the NFL Network has really stepped it's game up as far as quality of coverage, the monopolistic direction of these new policies should concern you as a fan.

We are nearly a dozen seasons removed since the NFL owners allowed Art Modell to do what he did with The Betrayal, and for some it is

like a passage in a history book. Not for me. It is still fresh and I'll never forget anything, from the summer rumors on WHK, to that horrible Saturday morning interview with Mike Schneider and Art Modell, to the 95 season and the Bengals' game, to the whole Save Our Browns movement from internet/fax day to the Hall of Fame inductions when we were "asked" to leave. (For the last time, officer, that cross was just sitting there. Born again dude left it there. I didn't steal it from him. About 5 people will understand that.) This isn't a case of that stranded Japanese soldier on an abandoned atoll still fighting the war in 1950. This is about

fan access through the media, boxing style pay-per-view for all games, higher ticket prices, you name it. If we as fans forget that and splinter or don’t stay vigilant, we deserve to be bilked. It all bears YOUR watching and I hope that franchises like the Randy Lerner Browns, who seem to have a shred of integrity and want to do the right thing by their fans, try to influence the NFL to take a middle ground with the media and fans as partners. End of soapbox, end of non-update.