The Browns made a couple of long rumored moves official yesterday, dealing Chris Crocker to the Atlanta Falcons for a fourth round pick, and signing former Giants and Ravens tight end Darnell Dinkins. In other news, the Clevleand Plain Dealer reported this morning that the Browns have given the agent of Jeff Faine permission to seek a trade.

The Crocker deal was somewhat unexpected as Chris played pretty well last season, his first as a full time starter. Crocker won a job as a starting safety from Earl Little a month into the 2004 season, then went on to start all 16 games for the team in 2005. Crocker had two interceptions last year, one of which was returned for a touchdown against the Steelers during their Sunday night tilt. He also registered two sacks, and ended the year with 86 tackles, good for sixth on the team.

Crocker was a third round pick of Butch Davis in 2003, and after playing for the Browns for three seasons, has now yielded us a fourth round pick in this years draft. The Browns now have extra picks in the fourth and fifth rounds, and will be well positioned at the beginning of day two.

My thoughts are that the Browns felt Crocker had reached his celing as a player, and that 2004 and 2005 draftees Sean Jones and Brodney Pool have a greater upside potential. The pair figures to compete for Crocker's old starting spot opposite Bryan Russell at safety. However, I fully expect the Browns to target another safety either in free agency, or with a first day pick in the coming draft.

Dinkins has spent the last two years with Baltimore, and the two before that with the Giants as a backup tight end and special teams player. Dinkins played his college ball at Pitt, where he was recruited as a quarterback, and then was

ultimately moved to free safety, the position he spent his entire college playing. In his time in the NFL, Dinkins has added about 50 pounds, and developed into a pretty solid blocking tight end, and has also been an effective contributor on special teams. Dinkins has caught 15 passes over the last two years with Baltimore, and started eight of those 32 games for the Ravens. This addition is yet another attempt by Browns GM Phil Savage to upgrade the teams red zone offense, which figures to be vastly improved with the additions of LeCharles Bentley, Joe Jurevicius, and now Dinkins.

Lastly, the first official word from the Browns organization that they are trying to trade Jeff Faine comes as no surprise to this corner. I believe it is the Browns strong preference to anchor the middle of their line with Bentley, and also believe the Browns want their guards to be bigger and stronger than Faine. Faine can still be a very effective center for the right team, and has value. Look for Faine to be dealt for something in the vicinity of a third round pick, giving the Browns even more assets that they can use to add the final parts for this team, either via draft selections, or trading those picks for veterans that may be able to help out at WR, DE, LB, or S.