It's here!!! Browns season bay-bee!!!! And we've got a GREAT piece for you here this morning from Brian McPeek, who takes a stroll down memory lane to help prep us for another season of Browns football. In it, Brian takes a look back at the construction of the 1985/1986 Browns, and sees some paralells in how this years team was put together. USFL infusion? Meet the '07 draft class. A QB with Ohio roots that cost us our #1 next year? We've got one of those too. GO BROWNS!!! BEAT THE STEELERS!!!

In the summer of 1986, 19 was huge. You could legally drink at age 19. Which was important as I sat there at Gatsby's in Mentor drinking a few beers with Mike Pagel, Jeff Gossett, Herman Fontenot, Bob and Jackie Golic and Reggie Langhorne, amongst others. It was likely mid August and the Browns players (and their wives/girlfriends/both) had been given a very rare night off to enjoy themselves by Head Coach Marty Schottenheimer. Camp was set to break the following week with players and gear leaving Lakeland Community College to their in-season home at Baldwin Wallace.

I was off work too. As a ball boy with the Browns that season my schedule was pretty much dependent on theirs. I had gotten the job because my best friend was the godson of Head Equipment manager Chuck Cusick, and we started about 4 days after the death of safety Don Rogers.

There was an excitement with that group and that team that extended into the regular season. The Browns had come off a playoff season the year before, blowing a 21-3 halftime lead in Miami before bowing out. They had laid a lot of personnel groundwork through the draft and by raiding the USFL rosters of major talent. Players like Dan Fike, Kevin Mack, Mark Harper, Frank Minnifield, Gerald McNeil and Mike Johnson all came out of the USFL to lift the Browns to the point that in 1986 they felt ready to make a run further into the post season.

But 19 was huge for more than being the legal drinking age. 19 was huge because it was the number worn by Bernie Kosar who had also joined the Browns in 1985, by way of the NFL's supplemental draft. Kosar had stepped in at QB for an injured Gary Danielson in 1985 and immediately won over anyone not already enamored with the gangly QB from the University of Miami after he basically manipulated the supplemental draft system to get to Cleveland.

Kosar had won a national championship at Miami, graduated early with two degrees and had acquitted himself extremely well on the field after stepping in for Danielson. Cleveland fans fell in love with a successful, smart college QB from Ohio who wanted to be here (and manipulated the supplemental draft process to get here) and who got the job done in his own unique way. He was already a rock star by the summer of 1986. He wasn't at Gatsby's. That would have been a mob scene. More likely, he was at some dive bar in Kirtland with Danielson given that two were seemingly joined at the hip.

In fact, to illustrate how difficult it was for Kosar to step out in public, I recall being at a Dylan/Petty/Grateful Dead show at the Akron Rubber Bowl that summer when the temperature was well above 90 degrees. On the field it was so hot that area fire crews came in and sprayed down attendees with fire hoses and water. Walking around the concourse I bumped into a very tall dude wearing jeans, dark sunglasses and a hooded sweatshirt. It was Kosar. Bernie was apparently a Dylan/Petty/Dead fan. Either that or some of the things you drank, ate or breathed in at those shows had me seeing him everywhere.

The seeds of 1985 having been planted with USFL players and draft picks like Kosar, Herman Fontenot and Brian Brennan, the Browns started their season with what might have been the most encouraging opening day in loss on franchise history. They lost 41-31 to the defending world champion Chicago Bears in a game that wasn't decided until very late. The Browns lost the game but served notice that they were going to be a very tough out.

Even after losing the heart and soul of that team, RB Earnest Byner, in the 7th game of the season against the Packers, the Browns rolled to a 12-4 record, winning the last 5 games of the season, and clinched home field advantage throughout the playoffs.

The epic double-overtime game against the Jets capped off the feel-good portion of the season. Kosar threw for nearly 500 yards in what may be the most exciting sporting event in Cleveland history. All that despite the fact I was dangerously close to personally strangling kicker Mark Mosely when he missed a potential game winner in the first overtime period.

Obviously it all went downhill the next week after Brennan's TD catch put the Browns up 20-13 and the ensuing kickoff pinned the Broncos on their own 2 yd line with 5 minutes left. From the top of the mountain, emotionally peaking, to the pits of despair.

But as we embark upon another season, there are some similarities between how that 1986 team evolved and the 2007 version of the

Browns. Cleveland fans hope that the USFL and draft infusion of 1985 and 1986 are paralleled by what looks to be an infusion of talent this season in the names of Eric Steinbach (Paul Farren), Jamal Lewis (Mack), Eric Wright (Minnifield), Joe Thomas (Fike) and, maybe most importantly, Brady Quinn (Kosar). Quinn has exhibited some similar traits to Kosar in that he comes from Ohio and a prominent major college program, wanted to play here and he also seems to have the poise and presence that Kosar had in the huddle.

Obviously, time will tell on whether that plays out. The Browns lost their first round pick in 1986 (and still acquired WR receiver Webster Slaughter in Rd 2 of the 1986 draft) after obtaining Kosar's services in the '85 supplemental draft, much like they lost next year's 1st round pick by trading for Quinn this past April.

What is clear is that Quinn's time is coming. Not to place more pressure on the young QB than he's already under, but if Quinn evokes comparisons with #19 again on the field, we may be in for another renaissance of Cleveland Browns football.