Quickly becoming one of the most popular columns we run all week, Mitch gets loose in this week's edition of "Random Thoughts", lacing into Romeo and Grantham's defensive game planning, the 3-4 defense in general, Scott Player's Fu Manchu and single bar helmet, and the announcing duo of Bill Macatee and Steve Buerlein. On the positive side of the ledger, Mitch shows all kinds of love for Chud, and for the first time in a while, is excited about some things he's seeing offensively.

Worst. Defense. Ever.

Say what you want about Derek Anderson's first half Rex Grossman impersonation or the special teams' inability to block on the final field goal, this defeat lies entirely at the feet of Romeo, Grantham, and the entire mediocre group whose job is supposed to be stopping the other team.

The only things that stopped the Raiders on this day were the goal line, or their own stupidity. The Raiders constantly shot themselves in the foot with fumbles, sub par QB play, and a running back that isn't anywhere near the upper echelon, and yet still managed a win by moving at will against a defense that is clueless, rudderless, and utterly hopeless. Almost 400 net yards, 186 of them coming on the ground.

Oh, yeah...and 28 yards coming from a simple screen pass on a THIRD

AND 23!!!

Josh-Freaking-McCown, playing on one good leg, and then Duante Culpepper, last seen on a milk carton in a Miami-Dade Airport convenience store, were able to come up with a big play every damn time they needed it.

531 yards given up to the Bengals. 365 yards against the Steelers...which would have been much more except for the fact that most of the game, the Steelers were getting the ball deep in Cleveland territory, and didn't have far to go for scores. I suppose we should all be thanking Charlie Frye for that one thing he did for us.

The fact that the Browns are only 31st in a league of 32 is actually quite surprising. It might also have to do with the fact that #32, the Bills, have imploded.

Right now, there is only one player on the Browns' defense that I'd put in the upper third of the league at his position; Kamerion Wimbley. And there are only three others that I'd like to see in the starting lineup of the 2008 Cleveland Browns; Sean Jones, Leigh Bodden, and Eric Wright.

That's assuming Wright continues to grow as a player. As much potential as he's shown, he also totally screws up

sometimes as well, a common thing with a rookie CB in his first few games...and we're hearing now that he might be removed from the starting lineup for awhile in favor of Davon Holly.

Bodden's shown some problems as well, but that might be because of his physical ailments. Then again, Bodden has shown the same resiliency last seen from Courtney Brown.

Jones has the ability...but he needs to stop trying to be Ed Reed by attempting to knock players into next week, and concentrate a little more on pass coverage and wrapping up on his tackles.

The rest of them? Bleh. Antwaan Peek is decent as a pass rusher, but is a complete liability in stopping the run. The other starters?...see the next section.

Of the Same Monetary Value as Mammary Glands on a Sus Scrofa

A new award to be given out on a weekly basis (or whenever the hell I feel like it). I was tempted to thesaurus my way into

naming it The Tepid Pail of Salivary Juices...but that just wasn't working for me. And neither was the Browns' defense.

Legitimate arguments could be given for so many people. Ted Washington, for his performance as a Waltzing Bear while getting manhandled by a center weighing 210 pounds less than him...Brodney Pool for being, as pointed out by Mansfield Lucas, dumb as a box of rocks...Orpheus Roye for showing that men weighing well over 300 pounds truly can be pushed anywhere with relative ease...NyQuill Jackson for living up to his name and putting us to sleep with his mediocrity...the backup defensive linemen for sucking so bad that they can't even beat out Robaire, Orpheus, and the Planet That Ate Parma.

So many candidates...but only one award. And that goes to Andra Davis. The only defense this man needs to be a part of is the French National Defense, because they are best able to truly appreciate someone that retreats this quickly. Two tackles; two assists. Without even going back to the tapes, I'd probably be safe betting my paycheck on all of them being at least five yards past the line of scrimmage. And getting completely pancaked by LaMont Jordan at the goal line.

One particular play brings it all into focus. Andra bursts up the middle on a play action fake, bites completely and gets taken

down by a running back weighing slightly more than Kate Moss. But McCown can't find anyone so he starts to run.

And he OUTRUNS Davis, who had gotten back up.

I need to re-state that. The QB with one bad ankle and one really bad ankle, who later has to come out of the game due to said bad wheels, outran Davis for a six yard gain.

Embarrassing.

Radical Suggestion Time: Scrap the 3-4 Defense

I know this cannot be done this year, but bear with me.

Get rid of the 3-4 base defense next year...start making the plans to do so NOW.

The 3-4 has been popularized by three organizations that run it very well: the New England Patriots, the Pittsburgh Steelers, and the Baltimore Ravens.

All three of these organizations have a few things in common. Foremost is a superior personnel that can RECRUIT the right people, train them in it, and implement it. They also deploy it with a huge amount of blitzing, using some variation of the Zone Blitz...a tactic not employed by Romeo and Grantham. These two bozos idea is to rush Kam Wimbley every single time, from the exact same place.

The 3-4 calls for entirely different types of defensive linemen than the base 4-3. The interior linemen must be HUGE. The defensive ends must be as big as standard defensive tackles, but at the same time almost as fast as 4-3 defensive ends. The nose tackle must be gigantic, capable in tying up at least two blockers on every snap, but still able to generate a push.

Inside linebackers must be extremely fast and

aggressive. Outside linebackers must have the pass rushing skills of a top notch defensive end, but still agile and fast enough to drop into pass coverage.

Let's look first at the defensive linemen. It takes a very special type of player to fit in to those requirements...and there are very few about. Why? Because linemen in a 3-4 don't get near the glory of those in a 4-3. They are supposed to tie up blockers, leaving the fast, aggressive linebackers free to make the plays at or behind the line of scrimmage. So to attract those that are both talented and selfless, you have to offer them something. Money? Bzzt. Wrong Answer. I already said they have to be selfless...and if someone is that motivated about money, they are going to be just as motivated by glory, and therefore you're back at Square One.

No, the best thing you can offer them is Team Glory. What do the three teams I listed above have in common? A reputation for winning.

Phil can't offer that. He also can't seem to draft for it.

And Romeo and Grantham don't seem to be able to teach it. So they end up with a bunch of old men in the starting positions, and backups who know they could never make the roster of a team with a 4-3 (Simon Fraser, Ethan Kelley, and Shaun Smith...are your ears burning?)

By the way...there are five other teams that use the 3-4 as the base defense: San Francisco (ranked 19th in total defense this week), Dallas (21st), San Diego (22nd), the Jets (28th), and of course, Cleveland at 31st.

It's a gimmick...it's been figured out. And I'd have to say that Pittsburgh, New England, and Baltimore could all switch back to the 4-3 in a heartbeat and not miss a step.

Cleveland? No way.

But maybe next year. Unfortunately, after jettisoning all those defensive linemen when Romeo first came over (who all migrated to Denver), I'd have to say that only Robaire Smith could possibly start in a 4-3 at DT. The only other sure starter would be Wimbley playing his natural college position of defensive end...and he might be better on the left side, a la Julius Peppers for Carolina.

Outside linebacking could be adequately filled by the likes of Peek, Chaun Thompson, and Leon Williams. I personally like Leon on the outside in a 4-3 due to his speed and size. The Thompson Project may actually be able to fulfill the potential seen by Butch Davis when he decided to gamble a second round pick reaching for a guy from a Division I-AA team that finished 0-11.

What they'd really need would be a prototypical middle linebacker...someone who WANTS to take charge, dominate the game, and flat out hit people. Right now, there is no way either Andra the MGOASS winner or NyQuill Jackson should even be on that team, let alone being considered to start at MLB. Too bad they don't have a first round pick...because if James Laurinaitis were to come out this year, he could be the home state star for the defense Browns fans are hoping Brady Quinn will become for the offense.

Oh well...we'll find out next year when we have an entirely new staff...with one notable exception...

Chudzinski Is My Hero

This offense is going to be fun to watch over the

next few months/years. Chud keeps throwing in new wrinkles, and a lot of times, they work...without a fullback option pass to be seen.

Anderson lined up far left in trips WR formation with a direct snap to Cribbs? Winslow lining up as H-back, occasionally staying in the FB spot to lead block for Jamal? Heiden in the slot with K2, Edwards, and Joe J as receivers? Great stuff we're seeing here, and I think the players are truly responding to it.

Braylon Edwards is heading for a Pro Bowl season. And while we can credit some maturity being learned at long last by the previously mercurial ex-Wolverine, don't underestimate the contributions from Chud in that progression.

My only concern now is that Grantham has been exposed as a phony and should no longer be considered for Interim Head Coach once Romeo gets canned. But please don't give it to Chud...the Browns need him to keep doing exactly what he's doing right now. Because can you imagine this offense once the rest of the playbook is integrated into it, and Brady Quinn is running it?

One personal note to Chud: Start utilizing Joshua Cribbs in the offense more often! The man is a playmaker, plain and simple. If he's good enough to change the game around with his kick returns (the one on Sunday was exceptional), then find a way to get him the damn ball four or five times a game on offense! He's a former QB...let him even pass once in awhile from that formation. Couldn't do worse than Vickers.

DA. What You See Is What You Get.

I'm not going to go ape feces over Anderson's play this week...at least not in retrospect. What I was screaming at the TV set Sunday afternoon is an entirely different subject. Derek is Derek. He is going to misfire more often than a British sports car, and has the vision of John Daly five hours after walking into a Hooters with an open bar tab.

But he also has a quick release, a cannon for an arm, with just enough pocket presence to move around in the pocket and help out the O-Line. And occasionally, it all clicks for him, and he can make some

fantastic plays. That TD pass to Edwards was a thing of beauty. He went through his progressions, didn't see what he wanted, and then spotted Braylon in the end zone and tossed a perfect laser to him.

And then he can turn around the next drive and throw it fifteen feet past a wide open receiver, or directly into the arms of a stationary linebacker. Or do what he did one time and ignore an open Braylon to throw at Winslow, who only had four people around him.

If Brady Quinn had not been drafted, it's quite possible that after a full year under center, Anderson might turn out to be an

adequate starting QB in the NFL. As it is, he'll be OK functioning as the sacrificial lamb to the Ravens and Patriots until Brady gets his chance (he might even be able to steal a win this week against the Rats). After which, DA will be a very good backup QB...one who is quite capable in coming off the bench into the starting role and producing.

Blurbs From An ADHD Mind:

~Great. Bill Macatee and Steve Beuerline polluting up the airways with their stupidity once again. Give those idiots a GPS...they were wrong every

time they were exclaiming that someone made first down or was short of one. Funny how Macatee credited Wimbley with his sack the first defensive play of the game, and then when Kam got another in the second half, Macadope said, "That's his first sack of the year!" I'd rather listen to Bobcat Goldthwait and Fran Dresher call the game.

~What's the best playcall for a 3rd and 40? (Answer: Not getting into that situation. If it was a 3rd and 23, I'd say a screen pass against a really crappy defense).

~No one should be allowed on a field in the NFL with a white Fu Manchu and a single bar on your face mask that looks like it should be having a gymnast hanging off from it. Even if you're a kicker.

~Are Browns punters going to be the NFL's version of drummers for Spinal Tap ?

~It has now been 10 quarters since the Browns have given up a sack.

That's a line like "hand me that piano." You just don't hear people saying it.

~Psst...hey Eric...I'm not sure how it was at UNLV, but in the NFL, they are allowed to pass on 3rd and four inches. You might want to keep an eye on the WR from now on. That way, you won't be having to stop and pick up your lost jock in front of millions of TV viewers.

~Eight yards a carry by Huggy Bear, Jr.?
There just aren't enough words to describe how wrong that is.

~So the NFL has now come out and warned cheerleaders from warming up too close to the opposing team, as it was viewed as "distracting"? Who knew that the Strippers Turned Cheerleaders from "The Replacements
" were such trendsetters?

They had to stop this before backup Buckeye QB Antonio Henton got to the NFL and solicited one for sex. Dood...you're a QB on the Buckeyes! You don't have to pay for it!

~Speaking of Buckeye QBs, wouldn't it be great to see Troy Smith playing this weekend? Of course it would, because that would mean both Steve McNair and Kyle Boller had been knocked out of the

game. Although Troy could probably torch the Browns for 275 rushing yards. Come to think of it, so could Art Schlichter, even with his leg shackles.

~I saw a television commercial the other day with an NFL player, and it wasn't Peyton Manning, Reggie Bush, or LaDainian Tomlinson. I almost dropped my beer. Isn't that some sort FCC violation?

~Best meltdown of the week: DeAngelo Hall, OK State coach Mike Gundy, or ex-Indian and current headache/IR Padre Milton Bradley? I vote for me, on the back nine at Oak Hollow on Saturday. Golf Law: Every par-three hole in the world has a secret desire to humiliate golfers. The shorter the hole, the greater its desire.

~In case I haven't mentioned it, Romeo Crennel is to coaching as the English are to cuisine. He must

be gone.