If it wasn't the signature win that Browns GM Phil Savage dreamed of, it was awfully close. Turning the tables on what to this point had been abject futility against their fellow competitors in the AFC North, the Browns soundly defeated a flat Baltimore Ravens team on Sunday 27-13 and won their second divisional game in just three weeks. Gary Benz opines on the Browns big win today.

If it wasn't the signature win that Browns GM Phil Savage dreamed of, it was awfully close. Turning the tables on what to this point had been abject futility against their fellow competitors in the AFC North, the Browns soundly defeated a flat Baltimore Ravens team on Sunday 27-13 and won their second divisional game in just three weeks.

Now the question is, when will the Browns lay waste to the other albatross hanging around their necks—the inability to win two consecutive games. We'll all have to wait another week for that, but for once Browns fans get to enjoy a resounding win against a legitimate upper tier team. Savor the moment.

With a dearth of wins on which to draw from experience, it's hard to actually know what a signature win feels like. But if this is one, and it sure feels like it, to most the signature play came with just under six minutes left in the first quarter in the form of quarterback Derek Anderson's 78-yard touchdown pass to Braylon

Edwards.

Seizing a moment in uncharacteristic fashion, the Browns went deep immediately after Leigh Bodden's interception of Ravens quarterback Steve McNair. Edwards, doing nothing fancy except running straight ahead and hard, somehow convinced Ravens cornerback Chris McAlister that he was heading inside instead. McAlister bit and Anderson found the streaking Edwards all alone, laying the pass in perfectly and allowing Edwards to more or less waltz into the end zone to give the Browns what became a 14-0 lead.

And while the Edwards touchdown will be shown repeatedly, as it should be, the real signature play came with 3:34 left in the fourth quarter, the Browns clinging to their 14-point lead and McNair trying to drive the Ravens to within a touchdown.

As McNair dropped back to pass, linebacker Kamerion Wimbley blew past the Ravens right tackle for what should have been the first sack of the game. McNair threw the ball away as he was heading for the turf and was flagged for intentional grounding, essentially giving Wimbley the benefit of the sack with an extra 10 yards tacked on to boot. It gave the Ravens a second and 20 which they immediately made a second and 25 by false starting, essentially ending any hope of getting back into the game.

What made this victory particularly satisfying were two things. First, it was nice, for once, to see someone other than the Browns be ill-prepared for a game. Ravens head coach and self-anointed offensive genius Brian Billick's Ravens were out of sync all day. They were the team committing boneheaded penalties, blowing assignments, missing field goals, calling time outs because they were confused by defensive schemes and otherwise misfiring when they could least afford it. If the Ravens were looking to take a play out of Cleveland's playbook, they picked the wrong one.

Second, it was nice to see Billick and Ravens linebacker Ray Lewis get a little comeuppance. After Jamal Lewis' one-yard touchdown run with 4:57 left in the second quarter, watching Billick try to convince the officials that he threw the red challenge flag timely when he knew he clearly hadn't and then giving up without much of a fuss was a small but revealing moment of his character. If Billick were on the golf course, he'd be that guy claiming he made a bogey on a hole and then reluctantly agreeing it was a double the minute you asked him to recount the strokes with you starting with the drive. Patriots head coach Bill Belichick may be a snake, but if Billick doesn't share the same cage with him at the zoo, he's in the same section nonetheless.

As for Ray Lewis, maybe it's time for some to start questioning just how much he has left in the tank. He was a non-factor. Statistically, he was credited with four tackles and two assists but frankly it's hard to recall any of them. It may not be time to close the book on Lewis completely, but his act as the screaming loudmouth cheerleader wannabe that makes him one of the more disliked players in the league anyway is starting to look more like parody than inspirational.

For the Browns, the game featured the usual cadre of contributors—Anderson, Edwards, tight end Kellen Winslow II and kick returner Josh Cribbs. Though the Browns have been plagued by rabid inconsistency through four games, especially defensively, all of the aforementioned generally have acquitted themselves well each week.

Statistically Anderson wasn't brilliant, merely effective. He was 10-18 for 204 yards, two touchdowns and one interception. It's all Anderson really needed to do. In fact, it's the kind of line that Pittsburgh Steelers quarterback Ben Roethlisberger turns in each week and he's now considered one of the elite quarterbacks in the league. The same ultimately may not hold true for Anderson, but the point is that it's more myth than reality that NFL quarterbacks need to throw for 300 yards each week to be considered great. More times than not, and today being a prime example of the more times, a quarterback who piles up gaudy statistics does so because his team is behind. Steve McNair's line: 34-53, 307 yards, 1 touchdown, 1 interception.

The difference today between Anderson and McNair was not in the throwing, but in the leading. Anderson was able to make the big plays and McNair was not. Indeed, while there were some nice runs by Willis McGahee, by and large Baltimore simply couldn't find the one big play against a defense that's done nothing but give up big plays all season.

As for Edwards and Winslow, if they keep playing like this someone's going to notice. Edwards had three receptions for 97 yards and one touchdown while Winslow had four receptions for 96 yards. More importantly, Winslow was able to answer the bell despite a partially separated shoulder, proving again that he possesses one of the highest pain thresholds in the league. Cribbs did nothing to hurt his run toward a Pro Bowl berth on special teams, consistently putting the Browns in good field position with his kickoff returns.

One statistic that should not go unnoticed, indeed someone ought to skywrite it across the lakefront, is that the Ravens didn't get to Anderson. Not once. In fact, Anderson has only been sacked twice in 3+ games. An improved offensive line helps, of course, but the lack of pressure he's getting is as much attributable to Anderson's quick release as anything else. Still a work in progress, you can nonetheless see his progress each week. With Charlie Frye it was always hard to tell. Anderson still throws into coverage way too often, his interception to Baltimore safety Ed Reed being the perfect example. He still has a tendency, too, to wildly overthrow receivers. But his decision-making is getting measurably better each week, his nifty shuffle pass to Edwards that ultimately led to the Browns' first touchdown being the perfect example.

Many are likely to start playing the "what if" game, as in "what if the Browns had beaten Oakland last week?" Well, with the win Sunday that would have given the Browns a 3-1 record and more than a few mentions as the season's surprise team thus far. It probably would have caused CBS to broadcast more games in high definition. But a win last week would have masked the problems with the defense and may have let the players and coaches falsely believe that changes didn't need to be made.

Indeed, in many ways last week's loss set up this weekend's win. For example, it forced the hand of head coach Romeo Crennel to come to the belated conclusion that simply being as bloated as a luxury liner does not mean that Ted Washington Monument can stop the run. His replacement at nose tackle, Ethan Kelley, wasn't great but on the other hand he didn't need to do much to look significantly better than Washington. And the adjustments defensive coordinator Todd Grantham made to overcome the significant shortcomings of defensive back Eric Wright may not have been made until after quarterback Steve McNair singed him for a few more touchdowns.

Where the win against the Bengals was a thrill ride barely survived, this win can rightly give the entire team a healthy dose of confidence, something they'll need in abundance next week in New England. And whether the Browns win next week or merely lay another egg probably won't matter much. This was a win, a signature win, which no one can take away.