Derek Freaking Anderson. Wow! 18-25, three passing TD's, one rushing TD's, and NO interceptions. DA has 14 TDs, and is on pace to chuck almost 40 TD's this season, and put the cappers on a monster fantasy football season. And after starting the season atop Nick Allburn's "Zeroes" standings ... DA is now making a run at the offensive line, Braylon, Cribbs, and K2 atop the "Heroes" standings. Nick takes a look at last weekend's standouts and disappointments in his latest installment of "Heroes & Zeroes".

Although the Browns fell to New England in Foxboro, they apparently learned one thing from the Patriots: at home, good teams find a way beat inferior clubs. With the parity of the NFL, if you can't take care of your "gimme" games at home, you can kiss the postseason goodbye.

The Browns are still a long shot to qualify for the playoffs, but they beat the Dolphins, a team they should have beaten, without bringing their A-game (at least on one side of the ball). In a season of marked progress, that represents another step in the right direction.

Heading into the bye week 3-3, the Browns have exceeded all realistic expectations, particularly after they were thrashed on opening day by the Team-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named. The balance of the schedule now looks relatively weak, save a pair of high fear factor games at Baltimore and Pittsburgh.

With the strides the Browns have made so far, the rest of the season should be awfully fun to watch.

## *This Week's Heroes*

### Five Dog Bones: Derek Anderson

Two Face"s coin flip must have landed "heads" up on Sunday morning, because Derek Anderson played his best game as a professional. Statistics back this up, as Anderson's rating against Miami was a staggering 142.5 (career-high).

Anderson"s two biggest weaknesses, turnovers and accuracy, weren't issues against the fish. DA didn't turn the ball over and he completed 18 of 25 passes (72 percent).

The biggest play of the game for Anderson may have been an incompletion. In the final seconds of the first half, the Browns were deep in the Miami red zone, ready to take one final shot at the end zone before kicking a field goal. Anderson dropped back, found nobody open, and threw the ball away. As insignificant as that play may have appeared, it was one of the biggest of Anderson's career.

If (and it's still a big "if") Derek Anderson can limit his turnovers, throwing the ball away when all his targets are covered, then he can be more than just a backup. Nobody will ever question DA's rocket arm, but if he can develop some consistency, particularly with his decision making, he could be a viable NFL starter.

### Four Dog Bones: Braylon Edwards

Speaking of consistency, Braylon Edwards is a slam dunk for Dog Bones almost every week.

Edwards grabbed a career-high three touchdowns against the Dolphins, which ties him for second among receivers with seven scores on the year. Braylon also ranks third in the league in receiving yards.

One small criticism: Edwards often jumps unnecessarily when he's catching the football. Instead of catching the ball on the numbers, Edwards leaps and catches it waist-high. In the end zone, I'll give him a free pass, because jumping can prevent defenders from coming over the top to disrupt the pass. However, in the middle of the field, jumping is a bad move, and makes Edwards a sitting duck for a pot shot from a sniping safety.

**Three Dog Bones: The Offensive Line**

Like Edwards, the five up front have been worthy of praise on an almost weekly basis.

With Jamal Lewis still bothered by a sprained right foot, the Browns made the cautious decision and kept Lewis in street clothes against Miami. Jason Wright and Jerome Harrison platooned at running back for the Browns, and they filled in admirably, combining for 116 yards on 28 carries.

The success of Wright and Harrison is a testament to how far the offensive line has come. The Denver offensive line is famous for its ability to make any running back look good, and the fact that the Browns did likewise on Sunday is very encouraging.

Joe Thomas' play has exceeded my expectations. During the next game, just watch Thomas for a few plays, because he's a remarkable technician.

Thomas isn't just a 350-pound load, he's a very muscular 313 pounds, which allows him to not only be a powerful blocker in the running game, but also makes him equally effective in pass blocking. Most NFL defenses have pass rushing specialists who are basically big, fast linebackers that are far more athletic than the average tackle. Thomas' quickness, athleticism, and outstanding footwork allow him to stay with these speed rushers, and I sleep better at night knowing that Thomas will be anchoring the left side of our line for the next decade.

It's worth noting that Ryan Tucker saw significant time at right tackle. We'll see who ends up the starter on the right side, but regardless, both Tucker and Kevin Shaffer should get significant time in each game. Depth is a wonderful thing.

**Two Dog Bones: Kellen Winslow**

Very quietly, Winslow has moved up to seventh in the league in receiving yards. You just can't say enough about Winslow's toughness, as he's played hurt for the majority of the season. Nobody needs the bye week more than K2.

Winslow has become particularly adept at finding the soft spots in zone coverage, and that"s the sign of an experienced receiver. When the Browns have the ball with time winding down, Winslow always seems to make a play, like his 33-yard catch and run late in the second quarter.

With Edwards, Winslow, and Joe Jurevicius all standing 6-3 or taller, the Browns' receivers are a nightmarish match up for any secondary.

## One Dog Bone: D'Qwell Jackson

D'Qwell Jackson just might be coming into his own this year, and his 51 total tackles leads the team.

Jackson was one of the few guys who didn't phone it in defensively against Miami, making a team-high nine tackles. Although Jackson doesn't have ideal size for a 3-4 inside linebacker, he's made up for it with speed and sound tackling.

Where would the Cleveland linebackers be without the 2006 draft class of Jackson, Leon Williams, and Kamerion Wimbley?

## *This Week's Zeroes*

## Five Demerits: Andra Davis

Starting inside linebacker Andra Davis had one tackle on Sunday. You read correctly: one freaking tackle.

Honestly, during the course of a game, Andra Davis bounces off of more people than Will Ferrell and Chris Kattan during their old SNL night club skit.

Davis" speed, or lack thereof, is also becoming problematic. The guy simply can"t pursue from sideline to sideline. Enough already, the bulk of Davis" playing time needs to be given to Leon Williams, who is faster, a better tackler, and superior in pass coverage.

## Four Demerits: Nose Tackle De Jour

Ted Washinton didn't play for the third week in a row. At this point, Washington biggest contribution is as a patron of local steakhouses.

Ethan Kelley is a decent reserve, but he's not a franchise nose tackle. Why has Shaun Smith been moved to end, wasn't he supposed to be the heir apparent to Big Ted at the nose?

As great a player as Kamerion Wimbley is, I wanted the Browns to take Haloti Ngata on draft day 2006, and I still wish they had.

Nose tackle is the single most important position in the 3-4 defense. There's a reason that the Steelers call Casey Hampton, not Troy Polamalu, their best defensive player. Franchise nose tackles are extremely hard to find, there simply aren't enough to go around.

The Browns are being beaten at the point of attack, especially up the middle. Until the Browns upgrade the defensive line, particularly at nose tackle, they will still have difficulty stopping the run. Deficit or not, there was no reason for the Dolphins to throw the ball on Sunday, because Ronnie Brown was picking up easy yardage in chunks.

## Three Demerits: Romeo Crennel

How can I rip Crennel for a win? It's easy: the prevent defense.

Two weeks ago against Baltimore, the Browns played a very effective prevent

defense; Baltimore had no big plays, they had to sustain long drives to score, and the Browns kept the Ravens in bounds.

The prevent was pretty ineffective against Miami, who burnt the Browns' prevent scheme for 21 points in the second half, making a game out of what should have been a laugher.

Crennel should have called off the defensive scheme which allowed the Dolphins to climb back into the game. Adjustments don't appear to be Romeo's strong suit.

**Two Dog Bones: Phil Savage**

There"s no way to know who was most responsible for the release of punter Scott Player, but as GM, Savage is as culpable as anyone.

Dave Zastudil was noticeably rusty against the Dolphins, and with the bye week coming up next, why not give Zastudil more time to rest and return to playing form? Instead, the Browns rushed Zastudil back, and it showed.

The Browns should have kept the Silver ‘Stache around for one more week.

**One Dog Bone: Miami Fan**

You know who you are, sitting one row in front of me, wearing no Miami gear, standing up and clapping whenever the Dolphins do anything positive, begging for attention. Apparently your father didn't have time for you in your youth. Nothing's worse than that random visiting fan who wants to make trouble.

"The Jerk Store called, and they're runnin' out of you!"

## Standings

Dog Bones

Offensive Line---18
Braylon Edwards---13
Joshua Cribbs---7(t)
Kellen Winslow---7(t)
Derek Anderson---6(t)
Kamerion Wimbley---6(t)

Demerits

Romeo Crennel---13
Derek Andeson---9
Andra Davis---8
Rich Gannon---7
Willie McGinest---6

## Bradywatch

I kept close tabs on BQ from the 525 section (seriously), and he was noticeably anxious on Sunday. The guy deserves credit for being one of the handful of players who went down to salute the Dog Pound prior to the game.

Brady"s time will come, but the pleasantly surprising play of Derek Anderson will

delay Quinn's NFL debut. If the Browns are in contention, can they make the switch to Quinn? Almost certainly not.

If you"re looking for a revised Quinn timetable, week 12 at home against Houston looks like your best bet.

**Up Next: 10/28, St. Louis Rams, Edward Jones Dome, 1:00**

The Rams, picked by some to win the NFC West, are battling the Dolphins for the league"s worst record, and are winless at present.

The Rams are pretty beat up, especially on offense, where a preseason injury ended the season of stud left tackle Orlando Pace before it got started. Marc Bulger, Steven Jackson, and Isaac Bruce have also been banged up for St. Louis. Their availability for next week's game is unknown.

There"s no reason the Browns should lose this game, but the Rams can still score points, and their dome gives them one of the league's biggest home field advantages. It might be a little too close for comfort, but the Browns will win their first road game of the season in St. Louis.

**My Call: Browns 31, Rams 27**