Winners of ten games just a season ago, it seems like just yesterday that "The Man-genius" was making guest spots on The Sopranos? Now, just a year later, the J-E-T-S, Jets, Jets, Jets come into this week 14 tilt with the Brownies hoping to avoid their tenth loss ... will a full month left in the season. It goes without saying, this is a big one for the Browns up in the Meadowlands. Can they get it done? Jesse previews the Browns/Jets game.

Time: Sunday, December 9, 4:15 PM

Location: Giants Stadium, East Rutherford, New Jersey

Network, Announcers: CBS- Dick Enberg and Randy Cross

Line: Browns by three-and-a-half

Team W/L Records: Cleveland is 7-5; New York is 3-9

Coaches: Romeo Crennel is 17-27 in his third season with the Browns. Eric Mangini, the Artist Formerly Known as Man-Genius, is 13-15 in his second season

with the J-E-T-S.

Last Week for the Browns: Turned the ball over four times, committed some breathtakingly stupid penalties (memo to Leigh "Tatu" Bodden- if you want to kick the ball so damn bad, go play for Aston Villa), and were beaten 27-21 by a combination of the Cardinals and themselves.

Last Week for the Jets: Took out a season's worth of frustration on the heinous Dolphins in a 40-13 wipeout.

All-Time Series: Browns lead 12-7, including the double-overtime win in the '86 Divisional Playoffs

Last Meeting: Week Eight, 2006- Utilizing the powerful running of Ruben Droughns (a season-high 125 yards), the Browns built a 20-3 third-quarter lead and withstood a furious fourth-quarter rally to garner the rare win. New York closed to within a touchdown in the fourth quarter, but with no time left Chris Baker was ruled out of bounds on a one-handed end zone catch, thanks to a Brodney Pool push-out that was roughly a hundred times more egregious than what the Cardinals got away with last week.

Out or Questionable for New York: WR Jerricho Cotchery (finger) is doubtful; DT Dewayne Robertson (knee), C Nick Mangold (calf), LS James Dearth (foot), and WR Laveranues Coles (ankle) is questionable

Out or Questionable for Cleveland: CB Eric Wright (knee), DT Ethan Kelley (knee) DE Orpheus Roye (knee), LB Antwan Peek (knee), LB David McMillan (knee), TE Steve Heiden (ankle), and WR Tim Carter (illness, route-running) are questionable

What to watch for the Jets: What do you say about a 3-9 football team? You say as little as possible. Next.

What to watch for the Browns: Will DA get an early wake-up call? Derek Anderson has been sensational at a lot of levels, but he tends to play as if he believes he should sleep late, because it's just much easier on his constitution. The slow-stirring Moose is completing barely half of his passes in the first quarter with five interceptions to three touchdowns. In his first ten passes per game, his quarterback rating is 60.4, and within those first ten passes he's thrown seven of his thirteen interceptions- more half of his picks concentrated in barely a quarter of his total attempts. As good as he's been- and he's been outstanding- he's Kyle Orton out of the gate, and it's a peccadillo that has manifested itself most grievously on the road. DA's early follies have led to big early deficits in losses at New England, Oakland, and now Arizona. In last week's a bloody opening stanza, the Moose completed four-of-ten passes, committed an intentional grounding penalty, chucked a pick-six and fumbled away a snap- foibles that helped the Cardinals to what turned out to be an insurmountable lead.

What's true against the Great and Mighty Patriots is true against the league's serfs: to fall behind early on the road is to live dangerously. Cleveland got away with it against the fetid Rams but not against the malodorous Raiders or the questionable Cardinals- or in Foxboro, despite competing well and keeping the outcome of that game at least mildly in doubt into the fourth quarter.

It's a pivotal week. Pittsburgh is a speck of taillights on the divisional horizon, but the Browns are tied with Tennessee for the final wild-card spot and are at least two games ahead of all but one other AFC team- the Bills, who are a lot worse than their 6-6 record and come to town next week. A victory on Sunday would guarantee a .500 overall record, avoid the team's first losing streak of the season, all but eliminate most of the competition in the race, and might even pump some life into the team's expiring AFC North chances, provided New England simply does what it's been doing since the first week of the season. The pace of Derek Anderson's start could mean the difference between kneeling out a convincing ‘W'- thus moving a step closer to the glittering prizes up yonder- and sweating out a white-knuckle extravaganza, or worse.

Good past regular-season win over the Jets: October 27, 2002: Cleveland 24, New York 21- Dedicating the game to the recently deceased Al Lerner, the Browns fell behind 21-3 early in the second quarter but grounded the Jets offense and ripped off the last twenty-one unanswered points to win. Tim Couch threw for 307 yards and a pair of third-quarter touchdown passes and tied the game on a no-look, desperation two-point mini-Hail Mary to Dennis Northcutt as he was being tackled. Phil Dawson's field goal with 3:30 sent the Browns ahead to stay. The victory- along with an ill-advised question from a New York media member- led directly to Herm Edwards's "
You play... to win... the game
!" jeremiad in his ensuing Monday press conference.

Bad Past Loss to the Jets: September 11, 1988: New York 23, Cleveland 3- A Municipal Stadium crowd of over 74,000 caught a glimpse of life without Bernie Kosar, and what they saw was not pretty. Playing without the franchise quarterback, injured in the previous week's opener in Kansas City, the Browns went nowhere, scoring their only points on a Matt Bahr field goal, and were dominated on both lines of scrimmage in a flat, dispirited effort. The Jets methodically built a 9-3 lead on three Pat Leahy field goals, and put the game away in the fourth quarter with a pair of touchdown plunges by Roger Vick.

Next Week for Both Teams: Cleveland hosts Buffalo; the Jets go to New England.

Trivia: The Jets were the final tenants of New York's famed Polo Grounds, the bathtub-shaped stadium located at West 155th and Eighth Avenue. Their 19-10 loss to the Buffalo Bills on December 14, 1963, is the last professional football game played on Manhattan Island to date.