In a season where so much has gone wrong so spectacularly, Cleveland Browns' head coach Romeo Crennel's Wednesday press conference was pretty mild stuff. Gary hits on the Romeo presser in this week's Lingering Items, focusing specifically on The Big Man announcing Brady Quinn as the 2009 starter right after pulling him out of his third start. Gary also hits on the Browns recent roster moves and Randy Lerner's comments this week after what seemed like years away from Cleveland.

In a season where so much has gone wrong so spectacularly, Cleveland Browns' head coach Romeo Crennel's Wednesday press conference was pretty mild stuff. Still it was interesting to see the beleaguered coach get a little testy with the media over the whole Derek Anderson/Brady Quinn equation. Maybe it was simply that Crennel had finally had enough with a media that has pretty much written his epitaph and has moved on to speculating about the Browns' next head coach.

After it was clear that Quinn would be shelved for the rest of the season, Crennel announced that Quinn was still the starter and would be going into next season. To some it seemed like a strange announcement for any number of reasons, not the least of which is the fact that it was prefaced by Crennel saying that he had seen enough in Quinn's few starts to warrant that pronouncement. What made that strange is that about 72 hours prior Crennel had seen enough of Quinn against the Houston Texans to yank him in favor of Anderson.

Never mind all that, what Crennel was really saying was that Quinn already was a starter and thus wouldn't lose his position simply because of an injury. It's the kinds of things coaches are supposed to say, frankly, and the kind of things players need to hear. It's why the players have so much respect for Crennel in

the first place. From that standpoint it shouldn't have struck anyone as all that dramatic.

But the media pressed on, asking Crennel whether that could change if, God forbid!, Anderson "lit it up" the last five games of the season. Finally, Crennel signaled he had had enough. Showing about as much fire as he ever has during his tenure in Cleveland, Crennel said "I'll tell you, you guys are really something. You really are. DA, he was the starter. You guys hated him. Alright? Quinn goes in and plays. And now you're saying if DA lights it up, you want him to be the starter. I've decided Quinn is going to be the starter, and Quinn is going to be the starter, and I'm sorry if you don't like that."

Crennel's mini-outburst, as out of character as it was, also was a bit of an over interpretation of the actual question. No one said they hated Anderson. What most fans hated was Crennel's overly long leash for Anderson despite game after game of missed throws and indifferent decision-making. What most fans hated was the overly short leash Crennel had for Quinn when his sins were far less dramatic. But hating Anderson himself? Hardly.

Further, no one was suggesting that Anderson should be next year's starter if he suddenly finds his mojo in these last few games. All that the fans, through the media, were asking is what does a good Anderson performance mean for next season? Will it in any way change Crennel's thought process? Will it be an open competition during training camp? Are there more coin flips in the offing?

Of course, at least as good a question is why the media was bothering to ask that of Crennel anyway. Right now it's hard to imagine a scenario where Crennel is the head coach next season. It was probably a question better asked of general manager Phil Savage, but there, too, it's getting hard to imagine a scenario where he remains as well.

The bottom line is that the Browns have no choice but to start Anderson right now

with Quinn finished for the season. How he performs is mostly irrelevant in determining next year's starting quarterback. Its relevance lies in whether he'll enhance his status and make him attractive trade bait. Anderson was a far hotter commodity at the end of last season, but Savage over played his hand and now he's stuck hoping Anderson can get hot in order to extract anything even approaching what he might have been able to get last year. If one thing is clear, the Browns still have a pretty large talent deficit on this team and if Anderson can bring something valuable in return, the end of this season won't be a total failure.

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The one guy you may want to feel sorry for in all of this is receiver Steve Sanders. On Tuesday, the Browns' off day, Sanders was seen distributing turkeys to the needy on behalf of the Browns. On Wednesday, as the domino effect of Quinn landing on injured reserve, Sanders found himself out of a job and in need of a turkey himself.

Not that it much matters, but once Quinn was lost, the Browns elevated a practice squad linebacker, Titus Brown, to the active roster, signed a quarterback, Richard Bartel, to the practice squad and then waived Sanders.

Unless Sanders somehow resurfaces somewhere, the first year player out of Cleveland's East High and Bowling Green State University, will end his NFL career with exactly one reception for 18 yards and, as far as I know, no dropped passes.

In case you're wondering, Brown was a starter at Mississippi State last season, was an undrafted free agent signee by the Miami Dolphins and was eventually signed to the Browns' practice squad in September. Bartel was an undrafted free agent signee by Dallas in 2007, waived and then signed to their practice squad from which he was cut in early September, 2007. He was re-signed as a free agent in February, 2008 and waived again once training camp came. He spent a

week on the Cowboy's practice squad in September and then cut again. He has not been on any NFL roster until the Browns picked him up this week.

In case you're wondering, Tarleton State is a small college in Texas and, perhaps coincidentally, perhaps not, is nicknamed the "Texans." From the looks of it, the Cowboys signed Bartel for the same reason, for example, the Browns might have signed Sanders-it's a nice public relations move to bring a local star to a big league camp. In two years as a starter for the Texans, Bartel threw 28 touchdowns and completed 59% of his passes. Not bad, but nothing great. One wonders exactly what Savage saw in Bartel, other than his availability, which warranted his signing, even to the practice squad.

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The local television and radio personalities all were fuming over Browns' owner Randy Lerner's decision to hold a non-recorded press conference, and for good reason. Lerner, as the caretaker for what even he terms a community asset, has an obligation to the fans and speaking to a bunch of print reporters is hardly fulfills that duty.

Lerner is such a reluctant presence in the first place it's almost as if he doesn't exist to most fans. All they really know about him is that he's willing to write checks, almost carelessly, and that he doesn't like to be the center of attention.

No one said Lerner had to become the next Al Davis. But standing at a podium in front of a few television cameras is hardly too much to ask. The fans deserved to see whether there was any passion behind Lerner's words. To this point, all they know is what's been reported second hand. Lerner may be sickened by what he's seen on the field, but the depth of that feeling is still a major question. In short, Lerner didn't do himself much good by shying away from the cameras, again. If anything, he unintentionally created another story by that reluctance.

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We made it this far in this week's column without even mentioning Braylon Edwards, which qualifies as a Thanksgiving miracle of sorts given his rather spotty performance last Sunday. But so much else transpired that picking again at Edwards' problems just seems like piling on at this point. So in honor of Edwards, this week's question to ponder: Who will lose his job first, Edwards or Michigan head coach Rich Rodriguez?