It's time once again for our weekly dose of Hiko, and his veritable hodge podge of all things Cleveland Browns. This week, Hiko addresses the Cowher/Marty rumors, and give his thoughts on whether the two could co-exist together here in Cleveland. Hiko also gives a rather humorous recap of last week's game, calls D'Qwell a core player, and talks Knowshon Moreno vs. Beanie Wells if the Browns decide to take a RB off the board with what is sure to be a high first round draft pick.

A View From The Cheap Seats
Week 13- Cleveland at Tennessee

All right, raise your hand if you want to talk about this game.

Anyone? Don't be shy. Go ahead and raise it up.

No one? Huh.

OK, well, if no one wants to talk about the game, then lets leap right into what we do want to talk about: the next Head Coach.

Just before the game on Sunday, Chris Mortensen, who's taken it upon himself to break all sorts of "stories" about the Browns this season, announced that the Browns were "*looking very hard*" at bringing back Marty Schottenheimer as Head Coach for next season. He further said, " *Schottenheimer has been out of coaching since he was fired by the Chargers after a 14-2 season, but his resume and his desire to coach a team with some playoff potential could entice him to return, even though he has not stated publicly he's ready to come back* ."

Marty, a possible candidate? This revelation was almost as shocking as Mortensen's previous "scoop", the one that announced that Romeo was on the hot seat and was likely to be fired at the end of the season.

(Other shocking disclosures from Mortensen have included the fact that a football is often referred to as a "Pigskin", that Ben Roethlisberger had a gerbil removed from his hindquarters, and that Ohio is gray in the Winter. But I digress.)

Asked about what he thought of these reports, Marty responded, "*I don't ever say 'never' if I don't have to, but I don't see that as being likely at all. I really don't*

."

But Marty then told Sirius Radio that he might, in fact, be interested in joining the Browns in some Front Office capacity with Bill Cowher as coach. "*That would be very interesting for a couple of reasons. You know, Bill and I have remained very, very close friends throughout our NFL careers, and it goes back to when he was a player and I was an assistant. I would be less than candid if I didn't say that that is, at the very least, intriguing* ."

This idea hadn't been discussed previously, and the fact that Marty seemingly floated the concept out there himself makes it interesting. Obviously, Schottenheimer and Cowher have worked well together before. With two such successful and experienced NFL minds heading your franchise, the opportunity for team accomplishment would be greatly enhanced.

Now, I'm not toting Marty as GM. Dear me, no. Marty's never been the best talent evaluator out there. Who can forget Mike Junkin, for Pete's sake? (Answer - lots of people)

But if you put Marty in a President type role, the kind of position Bill Parcells has with Miami, hire a GM whose only job is talent evaluation, a guy with the same kind of role that Scott Pioli has in New England or that Phil Savage used to have in Baltimore, and make Cowher the coach... well, that just seems like a pretty strong leadership group right there.

Phil would have to go, because he wouldn't want a diminished role, and, frankly, I think that the new regime would like to wash their hands of him. The players don't respect Phil. The fans want him metaphorically dead. Not many people would miss the glorified scout, and Marty/Bill would probably want to bring in their own people, people they trust.

Honestly, the key to the whole thing is Cowher. Without him, Marty as President or GM or anything is much less interesting. In fact, it's scary. And Marty as coach is just a temporary retread. Without Cowher in the mix as Head Coach, the whole scheme falls to pieces. With Cowher as Coach, I'm not sure I care if Marty is involved or not.

Ah, but wouldn't it be nice to see the Marty/Cowher combo finally bring a Championship to Cleveland, 20+ years later?

Fairy tale? Maybe. But that's all we've got at this point. That someday Princess Lerner will kiss the magical frog, which turns into a Prince and leads our nation to glorious victory over the cave trolls of Western Pennsylvania-Land.

And we all live happily ever after.

Pregame

I put up the Christmas tree while the game was going on. And some lights too. And when that was done, in the 3rd Quarter, I turned the channel to watch parts of other games - games in which I had fantasy players in action. It's fantasy playoff time, after all.

That's right, I didn't even bother to watch the whole thing. Yeah, I said it! Call me a bad fan if you want - I don't care. I did it, and I'd do it again.

Besides, I taped the game. I was able to watch it at my leisure, when the re-runs of 9 Ball Tournaments from 1983 were over on ESPN Classic. Watching on tape allowed me to fast forward through the commercials and certain plays, and thus shorten and reduce my irritation.

First Quarter

Ken Dorsey, under duress, made an incredible throw, a heave so mighty and accurate that it actually flew all the way around the world and landed back in the stadium. However, due to its planetary circumnavigation, the ball

had lost its former velocity, and fluttered harmlessly to the ground about 2 yards past the line of scrimmage.

Phil Dawson kicked 2 Field Goals, both of them NFL records: the first was a 74 yarder into the wind, the second was an 81 yarder through a dense fog.

End of 1st: Browns 6, Titans 0.

Second Quarter

Kam Wimbley sacked Kerry Collins 5 times in this Quarter alone. On the 3rd sack, Wimbley literally ripped the Left Tackle in half before smashing into the QB, coating the field with blood and gore. The crowd applauded politely as one stretcher took off Michael Roos' head and torso and another took off his groin and legs. He gave the fans the thumbs up, and they began to chant "

Fear the Roos
!"

On the 5th sack, Wimbley hit Collins so hard that the ball flew 20 yards forward, fortuitously landing in Ahmard Hall's hands for a TD. The refs, obviously paid off by mobsters and anarchists, awarded Tennessee 14 points for the feat.

Halftime: Titans 14, Browns 6.

Third Quarter

Jamal Lewis, like a barbarian dinosaur, crashed through the line of scrimmage, averaging 92 yards per carry. He scored 7 TD's in a 10 minute span, but those blasted refs once again trumped the might of the Cleveland Browns by awarding *the Titans*
a point for each of the Browns' 7 scores! Senate subcommittees are forming as we speak to investigate this travesty.

End of 3rd: Titans 21, Browns 6.

Fourth Quarter

In one of the most incredible feats of recorded human athletics, Andra Davis rushed the QB on the Titans 1st possession of the final Quarter, leaping over the line, flipping at least 10 yards off the ground and landing feet first upon Collins, pulverizing him into the dirt and popping the ball into Davis' waiting hands. Without hesitation, Davis pounded down the field towards

the Goal Line, oblivious to the fact that Collins was still stuck to his cleat, using the QB as a giant snowshoe.

Naturally, the vile refs penalized Davis for *Excessive Awesomeness*
and awarded Tennessee 7 more points.

With 2 seconds left, the ball on

their own 1 yard line and down by 22, most teams would have meekly knelt. Not Romeo Crennel! He defiantly trotted out Phil Dawson, who calmly banged home the 116 yard FG - with room to spare!

Final: Titans 28, Browns 9.

Offensive MVP: Jamal Lewis. 7 yards in 7 carries is about as solid a showing as a Running Back can have. If Jamal doesn't go to the Pro Bowl this year, it's a sham.

Defensive MVP: Kamerion Wimbley. Once again dominated the line of scrimmage, finishing with 2 huge tackles and 0 more sacks.

Conclusion

~~~How ‘bout them Cavs?

~~~My girlfriend, who was originally from Miami, bet me a sushi dinner at the beginning of the season that the Dolphins

would have a better record than the Browns in 2008. Naturally, I jumped at it.

There are 3 weeks still left in the season, and I already owe her the dinner. Sigh.

At least I get sushi.

~~~I like the announcing team of Dan Fouts and Don Criqui. They were sarcastic and appropriately irritated by the Browns coaching decisions, making almost bitter comments from time to time, as if they were outraged Browns fans themselves.
~~~

"*Change is coming*," Criqui said frustratedly at one point.

After the long-bomb-that-wasn't, Fouts exclaimed, "*This is a 50 yard gain, and you're not going to challenge it? My goodness! Somebody's asleep on the sidelines* !"

To which Criqui responded, "*There's no team in the league that has a better fan base than the Browns. If there was a game on the moon, they'd find a Cleveland Browns Fan Club when they got there. There's one everywhere. But this has been a very, very disappointing year, and this kind of capsulizes the futility of it all* ."

Don't it ever.

~~~Josh Cribbs lined up 7 times behind Center, 4 in the 1st Half, 3 in the 2nd. He had runs of 7, 6, 6, 1, and -2. Another run, a 30 yard gain, was wiped out by Holding.

Include that run, and he rushed for 48 yards on 6 carries - an 8 yard average.

Slightly more effective than Jamal Lewis' average per carry, eh?

Cribbs also threw the ball once, a 44 yard bomb along the sidelines to Braylon

Edwards that was ruled incomplete. Replays showed that Edwards might have had both feet in bounds, but Romeo, dreaming about a Double Whopper, didn't deign to challenge it. I could rail on and on about this awful decision, but there have been far too many to count, and I've grown weary from the effort.

Back on point, Cribbs was vastly more effective at QB than Ken Dorsey. And the throw he made - dag! What an arm! 44 yards on a rope from flat on his feet. Now, I'm not at all arguing that Cribbs should be the starting QB. No, I don't think he has the grasp of the patterns and check downs and decision making to effectively play the QB position over an entire game. But when your starting

QB is Ken freakin' Dorsey, you've got to take more chances and be bolder with your Offensive play calling.

And if you have a weapon like Cribbs, YOU FREAKIN' USE HIM!

After the game, Crennel said, "*It looked like Cribbs*

was a spark, and so I think that we'll have to give him a chance to be more of a spark and try to manage his other duties as well ."

That's all well and good, but A) couldn't you see that DURING the game? And B) I don't trust you to get it done. You talk about getting Harrison more involved each

week, and it just doesn't happen.

I really don't get Romeo at all. Even though the season is over, he refuses to give playing time, and, ergo, experience, to rookies such as Martin Rucker and Beau Bell. Romeo claims that he will continue to play the veterans because they give

him the best chance to win, and winning is the most important thing.

And then he goes and gives Jerome Harrison only 3 or 4 touches a game, refuses to bench Anderson for Quinn until he is forced to, and steadfastly avoids employing Josh Cribbs and the Flash Package all year, even when

the team is down to Ken Dorsey and has nothing to lose.

If he's really trying to win, he's doing a good job of hiding it.

Sadly, I DO think that he is trying to win. He's just such a bad coach that he doesn't have any clue how to go

about doing that. He opens his *Conservative Coaching Handbook*, reads the passages he highlighted in pink, and figures that those wise platitudes will carry him eventually to a championship... if only the franchise is patient enough.

130 years oughtta do it.

~~~Great game, D'Qwell Jackson.

He's been standing out as of late, and I think he would look amazing if he weren't handcuffed on the inside to the likes of Andra Davis. Imagine him next to a Ray
~~~

Lewis. Yipes.

Therefore, I am officially adding D'Qwell to the list of Core Players. I'm gonna throw Brady Quinn on there too... not because he's done enough to deserve it yet, but, as the only possible hope for a Franchise QB in the foreseeable future, he HAS to be.

Thus, these are the Core Players of the Cleveland Browns heading into the Offseason:

Eric Wright, Sean Jones, Brodney Pool, Shaun Rogers, Joe Thomas, Eric Steinbach, Braylon Edwards, Kellen Winslow, Josh Cribbs, D'Qwell Jackson, Brady Quinn.

Not Championship caliber, but the cupboard isn't exactly bare, either. Hopefully, our new coach will know what to do with these guys.

~~~There's a new commercial on TV that is mystifying me.
~~~

Here's how it goes:

Tired of online dating sites dominated by fast-paced, two-faced, educated, sweet-smelling City Slickers?

Well, now there's a new online dating site for genuine, down-to-earth singles. FarmersOnly.com.

(singing) You don't have to be lonely at FarmersOnly.com. (end singing)

City Folks just don't get it!

What don't they get? Incest? Bestiality? The shingles?

How many people are on this site? 24? Log on and see if you can't hook up a date with one of the 4 females listed - all from Nebraska. One of them even has her real teeth.

And do people really still use the term "City Slickers"? If they do, then, yes, this is one City Folk that "just doesn't get

it".

My grandfather was a farmer, and my final home will be in the ground on his farm, so I respect the farmer and his turf... but I am amazed that farmers need their own dating site. Isn't that why the state forced them to go to high school - so they could knock themselves up a good wife?

Or just mail-order a Russian bride like everyone else. They know farming.

~~~Another commercial I could do without - some little girl talks about her favorite Christmas present, the year she got a pony. Ah, but flash
~~~

forward to her as an adult, and she's getting a Lexus.

There're similar commercials with boys. One gets a Big Wheel, which is his favorite present until his Lexus, 30 years later. The other gets an Atari, which is his favorite present until his Lexus, 30 years later.

I can understand those two. Those were cool, realistic presents back in the day.

But a pony? Who the F ever got a real pony as a gift?

I'll tell you. Some spoiled bitch that gets a Lexus as a gift 30 years later.

"*Let them eat cake*."

~~~Jamal Lewis is done.

He can still be useful in a limited capacity, but his days
~~~

as a starter should end after the Pittsburgh game.

Most likely, another starter will have to be brought in, because Jerome Harrison hasn't had the opportunity to prove that he can shoulder the burden of 25-30 carries a game effectively, and, at his size, there would be a tendency to break down as

the season went on.

Besides, all good running teams have the dreaded tandem these days. Carolina has Stewart and Williams. The Giants have Jacobs and Ward. Tennessee has Johnson and White. Minnesota has Peterson and Taylor.

And I don't think that Lewis is safe to be considered as part of a tandem any longer. Not to mention that he's an extremely expensive backup, and probably is unwilling to take a demotion.

In other words, put Jamal on the list with DA, K2, Sean Jones, Willie McGinest, Andra Davis, and Donte Stallworth

of players that probably won't be back next year.

~~~The Offensive Line is culpable as well. They have outright sucked in several games this year. Defenders are in the backfield before you can say
~~~

"Popcorn!" Kevin Shaffer, in particular, has struggled, but Rex Hadn't and Hank Fraley have also had their share of suckage. Even the once invincible Joe Thomas has lost his Superpowers.

When a season goes as badly as this one does, and exposes as many holes as

have been exposed, it gives one little hope that this can be turned around in a short period of time.

Sorry.

~~~Interesting tidbit from the Plain Dealer:

On the sidelines: Brady Quinn made the trip despite a splint and heavy wrapping on his surgically-repaired right index finger. He was on the sidelines in street clothes and communicated with Ken Dorsey between series. Derek

Anderson, who had a torn left medial collateral ligament, did not make the trip.

What does that tell you about the mindset of the two damaged QB's? Hmmmmm...

~~~I was going to vent on the ineptitude of the Offense of the 2008 Cleveland Browns, but Terry Pluto wrote a really good column about it this week, and it's much easier for me to link to his article then attempt to write basically the same thing.

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~~~The Ohio State Buckeyes will be playing the Texas Longhorns in the Fiesta Exhibition Game. Woo hoo.

Obviously, I'll watch. But this game means less to me than any OSU game all season, even the one against Youngstown State. Why? The outcome has no bearing on anything at all.
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Only one of these gum-blasted "Bowl" games means anything at all, and all that that game really does is crown a pretend champ. The rest are Exhibition Games, exhibiting how pathetic the NCAA Football postseason is. Unless your favorite team is competing, there are only 2 reasons to watch any of these make-believe contests:

1. You're in a Bowl pool. I'm in 2. In one, you pick the winners straight up, and the 2nd

against the spread. I believe that the winnings for either is over $150, so, yes, I have a monetary interest in the outcome of the Exhibition Games.

2. You're scouting players

for the NFL Draft. These NCAA Exhibition Games are a good opportunity to take a look at the players the scouts and pundits have been hyping, that the Mock Draft gurus have been giving to your team, and that you rarely get a chance to see otherwise.

That's it. Why else give a

flying copulation about any of them? The teams don't matter, the games don't matter, and a lot of the players don't matter. It's not like I'm at all interested to watch Virginia Tech-Cincinnati. I might if the winner matched up against the victor from OSU-Texas. But, no, the winner gets to hold up a trophy that says "2009

Orange Exhibition Game Champion", and I get to yawn and wonder what's on NFL Network.

~~~How ‘bout them Cavs?
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Draft Update

Ha ha! The Browns climb up the boards is steady but perceptible. Yet another loss, yet another spot towards the top. The Cleveland Browns check in at # 8 this week, and most of the updated Mock Drafts I've seen out there have

them taking a RB.

A couple have them passing on Rey Maualuga to snatch Chris "Beanie" Wells, a proposition that I am highly uncomfortable with. But the one I'm going to use this week is from Draft Tek :

1. Detroit - Andre Smith, OT, Alabama

2. Cincinnati - Malcolm Jenkins, CB, Ohio State

3. St. Louis - Eugene Monroe, OT, Virginia

4. Kansas City - Matt Stafford, QB, Georgia

5. Seattle - Michael Crabtree, WR, Texas Tech

6. Oakland - Brian Orapko, DE, Texas

7. Jacksonville - Aaron Curry, OLB, Wake Forest

With the 8th Overall pick in the 1st Round, the Cleveland Browns select:

Cleveland - Knowshon

Moreno, RB, Georgia

I would prefer Moreno to Wells. I think he is more explosive, has more potential to be the kind of back that is worthy of a Top 10 pick. But, aye, there's the rub, for I do not believe that there is a

RB in this draft class worthy of taking that high, especially when good RB's can consistently be obtained in the 2nd Round and the Browns have so many holes to fill. Especially when Maualuga is still on the board.

So I do not give my stamp of approval to the selection of a RB at # 8, and I'm sure that fact will surely dissuade Phil Savage/whoever takes his job.

Nevertheless, here's what Consensus Draft

Services says about Knowshon:

Overview

What can this kid not do? Willing runner who has 1st round written all

over him. Was named as the SEC Offensive Freshman of the year and has been an AP, SEC Coaches and Rivals All-SEC First Team selection.

Prior to this season, he was named as an ESPN

Preseason First Team All-American and was selected to the All-SEC Preseason First Team.

Strengths

Moreno has an innate

ability to break off big runs. Uses his stiff arm well to hold off guys trying to bring him down. Breaks tackles on a regular basis. Great vision. Always secures the football well to avoid fumbles.

Weaknesses

Comes off the field a lot on 3rd down, so there may be questions about his catching ability. The fact that his career high to date is 3 receptions in one game could also point to that.

Projection

Moreno is a different type of back to both Adrian Peterson and Darren McFadden, guys who have gone in the top 10 in recent drafts, but Moreno certainly deserves that label too.

Could even be a top 5 guy.

I'm somewhat intrigued. But I'd be more intrigued by Run Defense and Pass Rush.

Next Up

~~~The Philadelphia Eagles

Offense: PTS - 26.1 (6th), YDS - 354.8
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(7th), PASS YDS - 249.8 (5th), RUSH YDS - 104.9 (22nd)

Defense: PTS - 20.2 (10th), YDS - 280.5 (4th), PASS YDS - 187.4 (6th), RUSH YDS - 93.1 (8th)

I'll probably watch this game live, but only because it's the only game on TV on Monday night, and I am bound by personal credo never to miss football, for the season is fleeting. However, watching Ken Dorsey get murdered by the

Philly pass rush has less appeal than you might think. Even my credo gets worn down watching weak 3 and Outs for 3 hours.

The Eagles Defense is good and the Browns

Offense is bad. The Eagles Offense is good and the Browns Defense is mediocre. Gee, I wonder how this will end?

The Browns are 2-0 on Monday. There will not

be a 3rd.

Eagles 23, Browns 6.