To those who think former Cleveland Browns general manager Phil Savage blew it when he failed to trade quarterback Derek Anderson prior to the start of last season, there is now more fuel in the fire in the form of disgruntled Denver Broncos quarterback Jay Cutler. And in Gary's latest, he talks about how he feels the Browns impacted the Cutler situation, and how what the Broncos do with their disgruntled signal caller could have a direct impact on what the Browns do with their QB situation.

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The back story on Cutler is rather straightforward. Despite Cutler having put together a Pro Bowl year in 2008 for the Broncos, new head coach Josh McDaniels isn't particularly impressed. Indeed, McDaniels is so unimpressed with the former first rounder that he tried to engineer a trade that would ultimately have landed former New England Patriots' back up, Matt Cassell, in Denver while Cutler went to Tampa Bay. In the parlance of "Cush" from *Jerry McGuire* , if McDaniels had his way Cutler would surf not ski.

It may end up that way for Cutler but if it does, it will certainly be because the Browns had something to do with it, one way or another. The Browns, too, have a quarterback problem to solve between Anderson and Brady Quinn. As it stands, new head coach Eric Mangini and his hand-picked general manager, George Kokinis, are publicly non-committal on the Anderson/Quinn issue. Of course, Mangini and Kokinis are publicly non-committal on what they had for lunch yesterday so the fact that they aren't saying much about either quarterback is a marker for nothing.

But the Browns did pay Anderson the roster bonus he was due last week in order to keep their options open as draft day approaches. The most likely option to most fans is that the Browns trade Anderson for draft choices. Exactly what he could garner at this point is hard to say in light of the clunker of a season that Anderson had last year and the relatively paltry sum the Patriots got from the Chiefs for Cassel.

That's where the enmity toward Savage comes in. If Savage hadn't dithered last season, the Browns would not now find themselves in a scenario in which their ability to move Anderson is impacted by what the Broncos do with Cutler.

Savage, ever the gambler, may have just overplayed his hand. Thinking that two good quarterbacks are always better than one Savage stuck with Anderson and Quinn for an additional season and, in the end, it ended up being part of the reason Savage now has "former" in his title. What Anderson showed last season, more than anything, is that he couldn't find another path to success when teams figured out the path that he was on. Take away the long passes and expose his inability to throw short. Making adjustments is what separates the Andersons, Kelly Holcombs and Scott Mitchells of the world from the Tom Bradys.

Perhaps that's what has McDaniels so spooked in Denver as well. While Broncos fans may see Cutler as a first round pick that's just starting to round into form after only a few seasons, McDaniel obviously sees enough flaws to want to send him

packing, at least if the return on it was Cassel. This isn't the moment to get into McDaniel's stilted thinking on this issue, but it is worth noting that Cutler with less around him, accomplished just as much as Cassel did with a better supporting cast. But I digress.

Having made what is essentially a "no turning back" decision, it was imperative for McDaniels to get that trade done. He didn't and now he's stuck with a player occupying the most important position on the team in whom he has basically and very publicly said he doesn't have confidence. To tell Cutler "bygones" and act as if it never happened rarely works, which means Cutler will be gone.

The question then is who makes the first move, Cleveland or Denver? It's an interesting question without an obvious answer. Even with the collateral problems that befall either team if they maintain the status quo, moving a quarterback in each case is probably more of a "nice to do" than a "have to do." When you factor in the collateral circumstances, though, the Browns' need to make a move is less immediate. Cutler has been publicly disrespected and has asked for a trade. Neither Anderson nor Quinn has gone that route. Advantage, Denver.

But the suggestion that the Browns can keep both Anderson and Quinn in 2009 without it impacting the team is the kind of folly that coaches often embrace when they can't make a decision. In the first place, both quarterbacks are paid "starter" money, which means that having both on the roster dedicates too much money to one position for a team that needs to spread the wealth better in order to get better. Secondly, because both quarterbacks are viewed as starters by their teammates, the team will ultimately divide into two camps if/when Mangini lands on one of them. It's an unhealthy situation on a team that is already sick. In that sense, advantage Browns.

The only saving grace, perhaps, is that there are enough teams with needs at quarterback to accommodate a market where both Anderson and Cutler are

available. Right now, Tampa Bay still needs a quarterback. Minnesota has Tarvaris Jackson, which means they, too, need a quarterback. Mangini's former team, the Jets, could use one as well unless they believe Kellen Clemens is the answer. Of course, if they thought that, why'd they sign Brett Favre last season? Even the Chicago Bears could be in the market. Kyle Orton is a modern-day Mike Phipps. Don't forget that if Denver does trade Cutler, they develop an immediate need as well.

Interestingly, Denver, by virtue of its draft position (12th and 48th picks) and its needs becomes the most likely trade partner, but probably as part of a multi-team swap. It would be a surprise if McDaniels saw Anderson as a worthy successor to Cutler. That's like leaving the Hertz office and walking across the street to Avis because you think the color selection on the mini-vans at Avis is better.

The same goes for the Browns. Trading Anderson for Cutler is to substitute one twin of a different mother for the other. As each team probably sees it, there's a lot of potential to fall in love with and a lot of warts to live with when it comes to each.

Thus, to make it happen with Anderson, either or both teams will have to find a third team. It's really the same kind of scenario McDaniels was cooking up originally, but this time it's complicated by the fact that there isn't a Cassel readily available. Thus McDaniels has to be convinced that he can find a quarterback in the draft or another team has a Cassel-like backup that can step right in. Given the teams with quarterback needs, the chance of finding one from that bunch is nil. There is a chance that other teams have a swan hiding in the background, but none are readily apparent.

That's where Quinn enters the picture. While McDaniels may not have

an interest in Anderson, he may feel much differently about Quinn. Still possessing an impressive pedigree and with a limited body of work to judge, Quinn falls in the alluring category. Frankly it's a far more plausible scenario to see Denver and Cleveland enter into a multi-person trade featuring Quinn going to Denver and players and picks coming to Cleveland and Cutler landing, for example, in Tampa Bay than any trade involving Anderson.

Are Kokinis and Mangini ready to take that on? They might. Neither has any investment in Quinn. The same goes for the fans. They may like Quinn, but he's not Bernie Kosar. Kokinis and Mangini won't have to worry about their flagship radio station hanging them in effigy if they trade Quinn. There will be blowback, but after everything else that's gone down with this franchise in the last year or so, it will probably feel like a light breeze in comparison.

But if there's one reason above all others that might make dumping Quinn attractive to Kokinis and Mangini is the signal it would send. Nothing says "new regime" quicker than the public execution of the previous regime's signature trade.