So much for being excited for the pre-season opener, says Chris Hutchison in this week's Browns Outsider. Chris says there are those that will tell you that the pre-season games do not matter. He says they are wrong. The scores of the pre-season games do not matter. Wins and losses do not matter. But how your team plays in the game does. Especially how your 1st and 2nd strings play. Chris gives us his usual informative and hysterical look at the team and Saturday's performance in this week's Outsider.

A View From The Cheap Seats

I was excited to watch THAT? The game wasn't even 15 minutes old and I was wishing there were another game I could switch to.

The ocular assault just wouldn't end. It kept going and going like that freakin' battery bunny, going and going and draining all my limited hope with it.

There are those that will tell you that the Preseason games do not matter. They are wrong.

The *scores* of the Preseason games do not matter. *Wins and losses* do not matter. But how your team *plays* in the game does. Especially how your 1st and 2nd strings play.

Even in the Preseason, you can tell who will be a solid team and who will sink in suck. When every single unit of your team gets DOMINATED by every single unit of their team - even when your 1st string is playing their 2nd string - then maybe, just maybe, you have a problem.

What is particularly disheartening about that performance is that the new, disciplined Browns played just like the old, country-club Browns - heartless, gutless, brainless, nutless. No pressure

on the QB on obvious passing downs. No protection for our QB's. No running lanes for our RB's, while their OL had our DL pushed downfield 5 yards before their RB would even meet any resistance. Defense couldn't get off the field, Offense couldn't stay on it.

Just like last year.

I will give you that the schemes and formations in the Preseason are going to be vanilla, especially against a team that you have to play later in the Regular Season. But the same goes for Green Bay, so unless Mangini can exponentially out-coach Mike McCarthy (which won't happen), we can expect at least one team to be able to whip the Browns collective asses physically.

Gee, I wonder if they'll be the only one?

The problem is that the Browns squad is devoid of talent in almost every area. Sadly, I don't think the Mankinis draft did much to quell that. All things being equal, it's better to go smart. But if things aren't equal, sometimes you need to pick the big, fast, talented douchebag. It reminds me of the part in *Robocop* where Emil asks the gas station attendant: " *Hey, college boy! You think you can outsmart a bullet* ?"

How many bullets will the Browns be able to outsmart this season? If this game is any indication (and it is), they'll look like Sonny Corleone at the toll booth by midseason.

1st Quarter

The Pack got the ball first and had a 3rd and 10 around midfield. My gut instinct - my fear - after watching 4 years of Romeoball was that the Browns would be passive and try and reach the QB with the down linemen.

Well, this happened, and, predictably, there was the opposite of pressure on Aaron Rodgers (it almost looked like the defenders were running away from him), and all he had to do was step up and zip a 50 yard TD to Donald Driver, who realized the D Backs can't cover for an eternity. *Packers 7, Browns 0* .

Brady Quinn started and drove the team nicely down the field, but Phil Dawson's 31 yard FG was called back because of Hank

Fraley Holding, and the subsequent 41 yard attempt wasn't even close.

The Browns appeared to stop GB on the next drive as a 4th and 2 pass fell incomplete, but Corey Ivy got nailed with Defensive Holding, and the Pack sealed off the rest of the drive with surprising ease. The Browns players all hung their heads in shame and the game was effectively over. *Packers 14, Browns 0*

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Derek Anderson came in on the 2nd Browns drive and managed to do absolutely nothing.

End 1st: Green Bay 14, Cleveland 0

2nd Quarter

Matt Flynn was in and he was driving the Pack a'gin, but penalties killed the GB hopes (they had plenty too), and Mason

Crosby's game 60 yard FG attempt hit the upright.

With great field position, Derek Anderson got hit as he threw and the ball floated harmlessly into the eager arms of some random Packer defender.

Flynn continued to look good, taking GB on a long frustrating drive that ended with another

missed FG (55 this time). The Packers were having mercy.

Quinn came back in for the 2 minute situation, and drove the Browns quickly down to the GB 6, thanks in large part to a nice 22 yard completion to Josh Cribbs. On 2nd Down, he threw a TD pass to Braylon Edwards, except Braylon would have none of it, dropping the easy pass like it was 3rd period French. The 3rd Down pass on the run to Braylon

was slightly behind him, and Braylon made the kind of effort to fight for the ball that I normally make towards doing the laundry during a football game. Pick.

Halftime: Green Bay 14, Cleveland 0

3rd Quarter

I kinda stopped paying attention at this point, and not much that happened here was good. Brett Ratliff got sacked and fumbled (he recovered), then threw a bad pick on his 2nd series. I otherwise lack the wherewithal to stick the tape back in to watch the 2nd

Half of an awful Preseason game.

End 3rd: Green Bay 14, Cleveland 0

4th Quarter

More of the same, with another Ratliff pick, and the Pack, who were running at will at this point with Tyrell Sutton, performed the ultimate indignity of taking a knee at the CLE 3 yard line to

kill the clock and put the Browns out of their considerable misery.

Oh, and there was a Field Goal in there somewhere.

Final: Green Bay 17, Cleveland 0

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Conclusion

Time of Possession: Green Bay - 39:56, Cleveland - 20:04

Total Yards: Green Bay - 392, Cleveland - 191

I wonder who won?

Note to Browns fans - watch lots of Florida, Oklahoma, and Texas games this year. You can guess why.

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This was the second time the Browns have worn the brown pants in a contest. The first time was last Preseason, when the Giants blew out Cleveland and pretty much everyone got hurt and the expectations and confidence of the team went straight into the crapper.

Yes, I think it safe to say the brown pants should be retired now.

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Uh... what about less

penalties?

And better tackling?

We were told the that this team was working hard so at least they would play smart, sound,

fundamental football, cutting down on the costly errors that turned close competitions into blowouts. I didn't see any of that.

A penalty prolonged Green Bay's 2nd drive after the Defense had

stopped them on downs. A penalty took 3 points off the board when Phil Dawson missed the longer attempt after making a 31 yarder. Not just lots of penalties (7 for 50 yards), but BAD ones.

On paper, the D Line looks like the strength of the team. They pretty much had their way against the O Line at Family Night. However, in this game they looked pretty non-descript, often

getting pushed around like an 8 year old in a mosh pit.

True, they were playing without Shaun Rogers, but that says loads about the perceived depth of the Defensive Line if they could look

great with him and completely overmatched without him.

Or maybe it's just the fact that they were beating up the sorry Browns O Line (or, as I like to call them, the *O Lie*)

on Family Night, not a real NFL line like what they have in Green Bay.

I've said it before and I'll

say it again, the problem is this: There are no true pass rushers on the team. This team can't beat the other team straight up on a pass rush. The only player who has above average pass rush skills at all is Shaun Rogers, and he'll get doubled all game at Nose Tackle.

So in order to make up for the pass rushing deficiencies, the team must blitz and show exotic formations and do it early and often. Which puts us in distinct danger of getting burned or run on, two things which happen with vomitous regularity.

2nd year LB prospect Titus Brown is getting reps with the 1st string D, so I watched him carefully to see if the Browns had unearthed a diamond in the rough.

After watching him out of position and missing a couple tackles, I must conclude that he is not starting because he is good, but because the Cleveland LB Corps SUCKS.

There were a precious few players that actually stood out, almost as if they were the minority of players that didn't eat a dozen

raw eggs and a volcano burrito right before kickoff. They are listed hereafter:

Mike Furrey - made a few nice catches in traffic, looks to be a good slot receiver/3

rd

down option.

Kam Wimbley - got pressure from both sides, and I even saw him use (successfully!) his new bull-rush tactic.

Ahtyba Rubin - he ain't no Shaun Rogers, but he played fairly solid in the middle and made a couple nice tackles. Too bad those behind him reek.

C. J. Mosley - got

some penetration, albeit against GB's 2nd

Unit O. Got a sack, albeit on an 11 man blitz.

Josh Cribbs - showed decent hands and his

ever-present penchant for making positive yard running the ball/after the catch. Not much on kick returns, but you're gonna have that now that the NFL did away with the wedge.

Marcus Benard - was playing late, but made the most of his time, getting some good pressure on the QB.

I hope Mangini's post game speech to the team went something like this:

"*OK. Raise your hand if I think I'm working you too hard.*

Raise your hand if you think you sucked tonight because Training Camp has been too draining. Because you sucked last year, and you were getting pedicures during Camp. I'm trying to

run the suck right out of you. I'm trying to work the failure right out of your pores. I can see we're not there yet. So get ready to run some more bitches, because that was a putrid performance,

and like it or not, you WILL run until you get it right! I will run you until you DIE rather than have you play like that crap ever again! You will run in the morning! You will run in the night! You will run over the

*mountains and through the deserts! You will run by land and sea! I will run you so fast and so far that you will actually go back in time ! And then we're gonna play this game over and not F*** it up*

this time

!"

And because new legislation mandates that I speak about the QB competition, I shall now speak about the QB competition.

Round 1 winner - Brady Quinn.

Brady Quinn led the team to 10 points in his 2 drives. I cannot fault him for Dawson missing the Field

Goal or Braylon being a dumbass. His release and recognition were quicker, his decisions generally good, and his passes had a nice zip.

Derek Anderson did nothing. I think he got a negative passer rating, which is hard to do. In his defense, he got hit as he threw on 2 of the few opportunities he had. But I felt that familiar shiver go up my spine

every time he dropped back, and it wasn't a shiver of joy.

The Brett Ratliff Bandwagon pulled into station... and no

one got on. Actually, a few people got off. Not a good outing for Ratty, as he solidified his spot on the lower rungs of the roster ladder. 2 picks, looked rushed, harassed, not in control. Against GB's

3rd and 4th stringers.

So here's to you, Mr.

Veikune.

We've been searching two-a-days for you.

Woo woo woo.

Where have you gone, Alex Mack?

We'd like to see you

attack someday.

Hey hey hey.

Hey hey hey.

Hey hey hey.

I have vowed to

maintain some decent vestige of sobriety during games this year, but, I must admit, about halfway through the 2nd Quarter I was spending more than a passing thought wondering what was

in the liquor cabinet.

The Browns owe me a new liver.

Generally, I wait until a few weeks into the season to select my "alternative team", which

is an NFC team that I root for as a 2nd option to the commitment to putrocity that dwells in Berea. But I must say that I'm leaning toward Green Bay this year. I've

always appreciated their rabid, blue collar, Midwestern fans and their small market survival and their socialist ownership ways. And brats and beer. I like those things

too.

I mean, the 6-10 Packers had 51,000 show up for Family Night. Fifty-One-Freakin'-

Thousand. We had 15,000, and that was being generous.

You are witnessing the slow death of

Hope in the greater Cleveland area.

I'd like to encourage you otherwise, but I too feel the drain. It's

very difficult to emotionally invest year after year with an institution that you know will squander your funds.

Reader E-mail

From Ron Doe, East Liverpool: "*I liked your response to that Steelers fan in [last week's] article. I hear that [squadoosh] all the time. They don't*

know what pride is! It's easy to be the fan of a team that wins all the time.Try being a fan of a team that sucks year after year, and yet you stick with them no matter

what. *That's pride, and that's something to be proud of* !"

Amen, brother. Amen.

Next Up

The Detroit Lions in the *Great Lakes Classic* .

Although calling any game between the lowly Lions and Browns a "Classic" is certainly false advertising. How about the *Great Lakes Sham*

or the *Great Lakes Exercise in Futility* ?

Other than that, I do not scout

upcoming opponents during the Preseason, as there's absolutely nothing to go on.