Is this the worst Cleveland Browns team of all-time? Obviously, it's way too early to be definitive, and the competition is stiff, but, man, this team's got potential. In this week's Outsider, Chris tackles that question, gives him gameballs for last week to the clock (for running out) and Faith Hill, talks about the possibility of Eric Mangini not lasting the season here in Cleveland, ponders the end of the Brady Quinn Era, and starts to break down McCoy vs. Bradford vs. Tebow. Browns fans, my advice to you is to start drinking heavily.

A View From The Cheap Seats

This may be the worst Cleveland Browns team of all time.

Obviously, it's way too early to be definitive, and the competition is stiff, but, man, this team's got potential.

I'll compare to the years I remember...

1984 (5-11) was bad, but Marty Schottenheimer became coach, and the ground was laid for the late-80's success. 1990 (3-13) sucked, especially in light of the previous success, but it was just a transitional year. 1995 (5-11) was obviously horrible, but the team wasn't as bad as their record - there may have been

some mitigating circumstances there.

1999 (2-14) was a horrible team, but they were an expansion team full of young players that many thought would develop into stars, and most people were just happy to have football back. And the 2000 team (3-13) certainly sucked at the end, but they had started strong only to be derailed by endless QB injury.

However, both those teams knew who their starting QB was. And both those teams managed to beat the Steelers.

2003 (5-11) was a huge letdown from the previous playoff season, and 2004 (4-12) was a horror. But those teams occasionally looked competitive, and even had some nice wins. 2006 (4-12) was the Charlie Frye debacle, but that team was in a lot of those games, especially early. And 2008 (4-12), albeit excruciating, was ultimately as awful as it was at the end because of numerous QB fatalities.

So, yes, I have to say that this season - so far - has all the makings of being *The Worst of All Time* TM. And there're still 13 more games to enjoy.

I don't even know where to begin if I were to try and take a positive, "it's only 3 games people!" approach. I mean, yes, it's very easy to just throw "it's only 3 games people!" out there. But I wouldn't believe it. Not for a second.

I'm a Cleveland Browns fan. I know bad. I know disaster. And this disaster is bad.

I didn't watch the game on Sunday. I taped it downstairs. I normally do this anyway for the sake of this article (and the 3 of you still interested enough to read it - I salute you), but usually also watch the game live. But when the forecast calls for 100% chance of pain, I find it advisable to wait to watch until I know the damage, emotions numbed and armed with a remote control.

Take last year - perfect example. There was really no reason to watch Bruce Gradkowski take on the Pittsburgh Steelers live. That would be as fun as licking a toilet clean. Watch it later on tape so I already know the odorous outcome and can fast-forward through all the

muck to minimize the exposure to suck.

But this is BY FAR the earliest in the season I've ever called it quits.

I was in the living room at 1:10 pm Sunday, where I was watching the start of the Minnesota-San Fran game as I put on my shoes. My girlfriend walked in. She looked at me, looked at the TV, and asked, "*What are you doing* ?"

"*Gonna mow the lawn,*" I said.

"*Are the Browns on*?" she inquired.

"*Yep*."

"*Are you not even gonna watch the game*?"

"*Nope*."

"*None of it*?"

"*Nope*."

"*Already*?"

"*Yep*."

Astonishment.

"*That's sad*," she replied, shaking her head and leaving the room.

Yes, dear. It is sad.

1st Quarter

Game reviews are suspended until the Browns stop causing Paul Brown to roll around in his grave.

End 1st: Ravens 10, Browns 0.

2nd Quarter

Game reviews are suspended until the

Browns stop making the Chernobyl Meltdown look like fun.

Halftime: Ravens 20, Browns 0.

3rd Quarter

Game reviews are suspended until the Browns stop making the Washington Generals feel sorry for them.

End 3rd: Ravens 27, Browns 0.

4th Quarter

Game reviews are suspended until the Browns stop blowing goats.

Final: Ravens 34, Browns 3.

Gameballs

The Clock - It ran out.

Faith Hill - She wasn't at the game, but I'm a big fan of that outfit she wears when she sings the Sunday Night Football theme.

If the Browns play that way again, I think the whole team should have to wear that outfit as their uniform in the next game.

Yes, imagine Shaun Rogers running around the field wearing

that number. Day-um. That puts the "X" in Sexy.

Hey, at least it's better than the Brown Pants.

Honorable Mention

Jerome Harrison - Ran hard and actually ran pretty well. His stats might not endorse that theory, but he was the only thing the Offense had going most of the game, and that's against a really good Defense that had absolutely no respect for the pass.

Kam Wimbley - Had a sack and some pressure. Him failing when covering wideouts is not his fault. Maybe someone loves the theory of "versatility" just a bit too much.

Wall of Shame

Brandon McDonald - For sucking. McD needs to be benched right now. It's bad enough that he gets beat all day every week, but the effort he gave on the McGahee TD run right before half... you know, where he stood at the Goal Line and watched Willis trot right by him... non-forgivable. Usually he

sucks mainly against big WR's, but he sucked pretty bad against little Derek Mason too, so maybe he's embracing equal opportunity suckage. He needs to be replaced by Coye Francies yesterday (and with Francies playing his position at the end of the game, that might actually happen). Let McD take over for Poteat.

Brady Quinn - For sucking. More on this later.

Derek Anderson - For sucking. More on this later.

Eric Barton - For sucking. I can't remember the exact example right now, but I wrote his name down on this here notebook I'm looking at, so he must've pissed me off somehow.

Fate - Certainly not a Browns fan.

1964 - For taunting me from the depths of antiquity. Stupid year. Yes, the whole year. John Glenn had to quit his Senate campaign because he hit his head on a bathtub, Warner Brothers shut down *Looney Tunes*, Courtney Love was born, and someone stole the Little Mermaid's head.

Art Modell - For living.

Conclusion

Time of Possession: Baltimore - 31:18, Cleveland - 28:42

Total Yards: Baltimore - 479, Cleveland - 186

First Downs: Baltimore - 28, Cleveland - 11

Amazing. How the Hell did the Browns lose that game?

Dammit. I guess this means they won't go undefeated in the division.

Well, well, well. It's only been 3 games, and national media sources are starting to name Eric Mangini as "being on the hot seat".

Try this one or this one or this one or
this one
. Some of them have him fired by Halloween.

Wow. That didn't take long.

I think completely giving up on a Coach after 3 games is foolish (kind of like giving up on your starting QB after 3 games). But Mangini has, to date, brought nothing but a whole new level of dreadful. It's probably unfair to call for a Coach's head after only 1 season. The rule of thumb is that a Coach gets 3 years to prove himself - then you flush him.

And I need to make this clear - I am not calling for Mangini's head *at this time* .

I don't care about fines for bottles of water or running laps or painting over murals or moving offices or shutting out the press, and I just don't think 3 games is a large enough data set, and I don't see what alternative is going to make things better this season.

But if you think that I'll give him a pass just because it's only his first year, you're smoking navel lint. If this keeps up much longer, if I deem the situation hopeless, I'll want his head just as badly as the

rest of you. There's no law mandating we should experience 2 extra years of crap just to be "fair".

Let's analyze the pros and cons of the Mangini regime to date:

Pros

1. Intelligent man who is trying to instill a sense of discipline and

accountability in the team.

2. Not afraid to make changes when changes are necessary.

3. Not married to "his players" - keeps and plays the individuals he feels give him the best chance to win.

Cons

1. Bad draft. Yes, I know that it's kind of silly to judge a draft class only 3 games into their rookie season, but I thought at the time that errors were made, and I still think so now. I have no problem with trading down and passing up Mark Sanchez - I don't see how it was logical at that time to take him at that draft slot, and I don't think he'd be successful here.

But Brian Robiskie over Rey Maualuga in the 2nd Round? That's crazy talk. I like Robiskie fine, and

I'm sure he'll be decent, but his ceiling is much lower than Maualuga's. And then taking a 2nd WR and David Veikune when players such as Phil Loadholt (RT - a BIG need) were still available...? Right now, it looks downright turrible.

2. Coaches like he's doing taxes. Have you ever heard one of his press conferences? It sounds like he's reading from a manual. Yes, X's and O's and gap

integrity and interspatial disbursement are all important factors, but being smart isn't the only job requirement. You've got to have heart and soul to go with that brain.

3. The Preseason QB fiasco. Mangini thought one or the other would show superiority, and when both looked blech, he panicked. That's not how he planned it at all. So instead of cutting his losses, biting the

bullet, naming a starter, and giving that guy as many first team reps and as much opportunity to succeed as possible, he played the "make the opposition prepare for 2 QB's" card, which has worked out just groovy.

Here, probably more than anywhere else, is where Mangini screwed the pooch. And he didn't just screw the pooch - oh no. He pinned the pooch against

a wall and whispered in its ear "*This will not be over quickly. You will not enjoy this* ."

4. The Brown pants. They're ugly, and they've got more bad voodoo than a severed rooster's head.

5. Brian Daboll. That is not looking like a good choice,

despite brilliant play calls like a QB sneak on 1st and 10.

6. Hank Poteat is still playing. I saw him out there on the field against the Ravens. I strictly forbade that in my last article.

7. Started another QB carousel. As if it wasn't mishandled enough the first time, we get to

pay for the Preseason sins for the rest of the year. Quinn gets little prep and looks bad, so you yank your starting QB after just 2 ½ games (5 career complete games) in a completely unwinnable situation to re-introduce the QB that fubar-ed the previous season. And surprise surprise, he looks just as bad as the other guy. So, now you've basically got a Ferris Wheel of two useless QB's whom have zero confidence and zero job

stability, and it doesn't even matter because...

8. It looks like you've lost the team. This team is getting worse, and it doesn't seem like they're giving nearly the amount of energy that they did just two weeks ago. I have no problem with fines and discipline and what not, but you HAVE to be able to maintain the respect of your team. They might hate

you, but they HAVE to respect you.

What this team looks like is a bunch of guys that have tuned you out. I'm not saying they're actively trying to suck in order to get you on the fast track to the Greyhound station, but they've given up, and your tofu-flavored speeches aren't close to inspiring them to keep fighting.

And if it's true that you've lost the team, then you're nothing but a liability to this franchise. It doesn't matter if it's fair or not, and it doesn't matter if you're right or not. Deserve's got nothing to do with it.

It appears that the Brady Quinn

era in Cleveland is nearing an end. And we hardly knew ye.

Rendering judgment after only 5 total games in 2 years seems an incredibly sparse opportunity for a young QB in the NFL, but, to be fair, Quinn not only looks vastly lost, it also seems that he's regressing.

It's pretty clear what's happening with Quinn. He's thinking too much. He's like me playing golf. For 4 or 5 holes, he's driving the ball off the tee just fine. But then he duck hooks one badly into the trees. He duck hooks on the next hole too. Then he over-compensates and pushes the ball so far the other direction that it lands on someone's patio.

Every time he goes to drive after that, he just stares at the ball, thinking about mechanics, keep his elbow in, turn his hips, keep his eye on the ball, don't over-swing... and thinking the whole time that there's zero chance that he hits the ball well. He's flustered and his confidence is totally shot.

So where's the ball go? Right in the lumberyard, just like he

was afraid it would.

Since he can't hit his driver anymore, he stops trying. He pulls out a short club that he has more confidence in, figuring it's the lesser of two evils. The only problem being that it takes a long time to reach a Par 5 hitting a 9 iron tee to green.

DA, on the other hand, doesn't have a problem with thinking too much. No, quite the opposite. There's never been a skinny post that he hasn't liked. Triple coverage just adds to the challenge. Interceptions still count as completions, right?

We've got a QB that doesn't have the confidence to go downfield, so he dinks and dunks and doesn't convert 3rd

Downs and punts, versus a QB that has too much confidence in going downfield and thinks picks and punts are interchangeable.

Choosing between the 2 of them is like choosing between being burnt at the stake or being eaten alive by rats. Too high? Too far? Who gives a shit? They suck.

So, what are the implications of the QB situation? What are we left with?

I do think that Quinn deserved more of a chance to prove himself, but now that he's been benched (temporary or not), it's difficult to imagine a

happy ending to Quinn's Cleveland career at this point. And it is impossible to imagine Anderson suddenly "getting it". So we're left with diddly-poo. It's truly a depressing development.

I have no clue why people are bothering to take sides at this point. I don't want to hear the

excuses for either of them. They are responsible for their performances, and their performance in this game neatly encapsulates their many weaknesses. If you put Peyton Manning on this team, do you not think the Offense would vastly improve almost immediately? Certainly, you can't expect either of these guys to be Peyton Manning, but if they're not even performing like a Top 20 NFL

QB, then they're just placeholders, stand-ins, temps.

There is no QB controversy. With Mangini sticking a dagger in the already dying Quinn's back, the Browns are without a legitimate NFL starting QB. Might as well play Brett Ratliff at this point, since it can't get worse, and

he's the only QB on the roster that hasn't proven his ineptitude. Because, in all likelihood:

1. Next year's starting QB is not on the roster.

2. Kiss Taylor Mays and Eric Berry goodbye - we've got to spend another 1st Round pick

on a QB. That means you can label 2010 a *Transitional Year* as well.

3. Both Quinn and Anderson need to be gone in 2010. There is nothing here for them. Even as backups, they will never be successful in this town. Send them elsewhere, somewhere

where they can backup good QB's in good systems on good teams and hopefully salvage something of their careers. But not here.

Gawd, I wish I were wrong about this.

In the end, the Browns as a team were completely out-physical-ed in every aspect of the game to an embarrassing level. I'd say they played like a bunch of vaginas, but that would be insulting to vaginas. And I have a lot of respect for vaginas.

Anyone else experience a pang of jealousy watching the Bengals-Steelers game? Especially if you squint a bit and let the TV go just out of focus, it almost looks like the Browns that were out there beating the scum from Fixburgh and celebrating a huge victory in front of

ecstatic fans.

Maybe I'll watch the Bengals the rest of the season with no contacts in and a bag full of acid.

I hate to say it, but Joe Flacco is really good. His QB rating against the Browns must've been about 212. He was boiling.

In his 2nd Year, he's certainly better than Ben Roethlisberger or Carson Palmer were at that point. Hell, he's better than they are right now. He's the best

QB in the AFC North. Except Brett Ratliff, or course.

QB-O-RAMA - Version 2010!

For a sad and seemingly inevitable reason, we are keeping track of the top QB's that will be available for the 2010 draft. Here's what they did this week:

Sam Bradford - Oklahoma (vs. Bye Week) - Looked unremarkable.

Colt McCoy - Texas (vs. UTEP) - 28 of 35, 286 yds, 3 TD, 1 INT, 15 yds Rushing.

Tim Tebow - Florida (vs. Kentucky) - 5 of 10, 103 yds, 1 TD, 123 yds Rushing, 2 Rushing TD.

Jevan Snead is off this list. In my opinion, he is not an option. I watched the Mississippi-South Carolina game on Thursday, and he did nothing at all to make me think he is anywhere near an elite QB prospect. Yes, it's true, guys are allowed to have a bad game here or there, but I'm a-wagerin' that pumpkin-pie haircutted

freak is ordinary with a capital O.

McCoy beat up on the Miners of Texas-El Paso. Not impressive competition, but you can only play who's on your schedule. 3 TD's is always nice.

Tebow got knocked the *bl eep* out, mainly because his coach was trying to run up his QB's stats to get him another Heisman. A concussion of that magnitude is never a good thing, and that issue will now have to be monitored carefully on a go-forward basis.

But I'm still leaning towards Tebow's leadership skills being essential when coming to a trainwreck like the Browns. You have to have the belief and fire and mental fortitude to overcome the plethora of challenges you will face, and I can - for some reason - envision Cleveland breaking McCoy and Bradford like waffle

cones.

I have no evidence to support that. Call it a gut feeling of a Butch Davis-ian level.

Proofreading this article, I wondered to myself how many times I used variations of the word "suck". Sadly, the question is still unanswered. I lost count. I suck.

Reader E-mail

From Zane Doe, Brecksville: "*If the Browns were to draft Tim Tebow next year, do you think that might entice Urban Meyer to come to Cleveland as the Head Coach?*
"

Woo boy. That's an interesting question. I don't know if I want to touch that one. A big part of me says that Meyer's style would not translate to the Pros, especially when most College Coaches fail anyway. But there is a small part of me that is enticed by that idea.

I think I'll choose to not think about it until it needs to be thunk about.

Next Up

The Cincinnati Bengals

In the past, Cincy was just what the doctor ordered to cure a losing streak. But these don't seem to be your daddy's Bungals. Their Defense is much improved with additions such as some guy that was available in the 2nd Round

of the Draft at # 36 but was passed on by other teams in Ohio. Their Offense seems to have some fire back, and they actually found a way to make Cedric Benson look like a honest-to-goodness NFL Running Back.

If not for the fluke play of

the year, the Bengals would be 3-0 against 3 good teams (yeah, I guess I'll lump Denver in there for now, since they are *technically* undefeated).

Cleveland is not a good team.

Cincinnati 31, Browns 10.

Yeah, I know, it's crazy to have the Browns scoring a TD, but I threw them a bone because, deep down, I feel sorry for those poor bastards.