A few weeks ago Gary Benz suggested on these very same pages that Cleveland Browns head coach Eric Mangini and staff were in over their collective heads and that the product was as bad as it's ever been. He also suggested that Mangini would be in line for one of the quickest exits in NFL history if not for owner Randy Lerner's serial indifference to the wants and needs of his fans. Now Patrick McManamon of the Akron Beacon Journal has written likewise. In this excellent piece, Gary talks about what he percieves as complete and utter incompetence from the Browns brass.

It's nice to have some company.

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Now Patrick McManamon of the Akron Beacon Journal has written likewise. It would be nice if just a few more in the media, as proxies for the disgruntled fan base, would join the chorus. Maybe, just maybe, Lerner would hear the drum beats banging furiously for the head of his latest mistake.

I'm not suggesting that Lerner run the team based on a vote of the fans. I am suggesting that he stop the abuse.

The Browns performance on Sunday was absolutely the most dispiriting

performance I've ever witnessed and believe me, I've witnessed a whole bunch of bad over the years.

Mangini himself said that the team lacked intensity and, for once, I won't bother to argue with him.

I know Josh Cribbs took a little bit of an issue with Mangini's assessment and, in truth, any assessments regarding the lack of intensity or professionalism always exclude Cribbs. He's the one shining light on this miserable wretch of a franchise.

If Lerner really wanted to do something positive for Cribbs, he'd fire Mangini now and give Cribbs that money.

Instead, in this topsy-turvy world where incompetence is rewarded and faith and persistence is overlooked, Cribbs is made to sweat out a bad contract he stupidly signed while Mangini and his band of merry idiots thrives as if everyday is Christmas. Well, Christmas can't come soon enough for most Browns fans. It means the season will be nearly over.

Sunday was a perfect fall day. From all the various choices that laid in front of most people, inexplicably too many of us wasted 3+ hours watching this franchise find new ways to embarrass itself. Leaves could have been raked and golf could have been played.

Cars could have been washed and kids could have been taken to the park.

Instead on what is likely to be the last decent Sunday until the spring, too many Browns fans had toxic waste dripped on their eyeballs for the 7th straight week.

You could start with the quarterback situation but really you could start anywhere. When it comes to picking apart the carcass of this pathetic

team it's a never-ending supply of rancid meat. Mangini has yet to offer a cogent explanation as to why Derek Anderson is still on the team, let alone its starting quarterback.

Anderson is making JaMarcus Russell look like a keeper.

Anderson is the worst-rated passer, statistically, and even that doesn't do him justice. He has a quick release, yes, but he uses it to get rid of the ball well before the play has developed. Sunday's game was a virtual greatest hits of reasons why Anderson isn't a viable starting quarterback in this league.

He has no touch on mid-range passes, he doesn't throw particularly well on the run (and if you're a quarterback in Cleveland, you better be able to throw on the run), and he's not particularly accurate on anything other than a really deep pass down the middle of the field and even then that's only occasionally.

If he were trying to play this bad on purpose it couldn't get much worse.

The fact that Anderson only completed three passes to wide receivers on Sunday may, to some, be a tribute to the defensive prowess of the Packers' Charles Woodson and Al Harris. But they aren't gods, except when they have the good fortune of playing against a team with quarterback who can't throw.

Anderson isn't a particularly effective leader, either, at least at this point.

I have no doubt that he's working hard or at least he thinks he's working hard.

But that's irrelevant.

Anderson can't work himself into competency.

He's only effective when the talent around him is at a much higher level.

Well, guess what?

The league is full of back-ups with the same story.

As for why Mangini is giving Anderson such a long leash when he virtually yanked Quinn by his after just 10 quarters remains unexplained except in the most generic and meaningless way. The longer Mangini continues to try and rationalize the decision, the less it looks like one he made.

It's well known that Quinn has an incentive in his contract that will pay him $11 million if he plays 70% of the team's snaps this season. It also boosts his salary for next season.

With the Browns falling off the radar screen of even the most ardent fans and late season sell outs looking less and less likely, Quinn's banishment is looking like it has less to do with ability and more to do with money.

And each day that goes by and Mangini continues to play word games while his owner sits mute, the more likely this scenario becomes.

But maybe the real answer in all of this is that there isn't a quarterback

out there that could do much better than either Anderson or Quinn under this regime The offensive line, once thought to be a strength, has played down to the level of the rest of the team.

Jamal Lewis is finished as an effective running back in this league.

The fact that he has an occasional good run is meaningless.

It's like Barry Bonds coming back into baseball and hitting a few home runs.

The receivers weren't very good when training camp started and aren't very good now.

Layered on all of this is an offensive coordinator, Brian Daboll, just learning his craft.

It's an offense that can't even offer hope as a strategy.

If that's the case, then it would be hard to play Quinn given the financial ramifications that decision entails. Businesses and people make those kinds of decisions all the time. Look at it this way: if season ticketholders knew that the price of next year's tickets increased with the number of games they attended this year, do you think they'd continue to go to the games?

On defense, the Browns have been every bit as horrible as they have been on offense and, in some sense, it makes matters worse. Fans are certainly for high-powered offenses, but fans in towns like Cleveland take far more pride in a good defense.

Scoring is nice but it's infinitely more satisfying to punish another team's players.

Watching this defense, with a supposedly Pro Bowl nose tackle, give up huge chunks of yards to the Ryan Grants of the world makes your knees buckle.

Watching Spencer Harvan, a rookie tight end/linebacker (according to the Packers' official roster) run through the defense on a routine outlet pass makes the heart sink.

This defense is actually worse than last year's model which is as hard of sentence to write as it is to believe.

Is all of this on Mangini? Yes and no. No in the sense that only about half the players on this miserable roster are attributable to him.

Yes in the sense that about half the players on this miserable roster are attributable to him.

Throw in the entire coaching staff belonging to Mangini and all of the sudden the scales trip decidedly against his short tenure.

It's not that the Browns aren't trying to work on things. I've tried to be both positive and fair on this front.

You can see them trying to establish a running game, even without the talent.

You can see Mangini trying to establish discipline and rigor in approach.

Those are the right things to establish.

The problem is that week after week the same excuses keep getting made and most of them start and end with the phrase "we just need to execute." Well, it's nearly halfway through the season and the team still can't execute even the most basic of tasks, like blocking and tackling? What that really says is that this regime can't teach and this team isn't listening, if they ever were.

With Mangini at the helm and the product that his weird little machinations creates, there is absolutely no reason to even bother with this team any longer. It has lost all its capacity to either surprise or entertain. People will watch a car wreck on YouTube a few times because of the perverse pleasure it brings.

But they won't keep watching it repeatedly and that's where the Browns now find themselves.

They are a perverse pleasure no longer.

After 7 games, nearly half a season, the weekly wreck that awaits holds no appeal to anyone. Sure, some fans that already bought tickets will show up early in the Muni Lot and party. But they do so for the same reasons friends gather at a wake.

They have absolutely no delusion that this corpse of a team will come back to life, at least not with this Dr. Frankenstein at the controls.

Sure, you can argue for the long-term theory which suggests that patience will eventually be rewarded. But for that to work, the right group needs to be in charge. What is there in this group that would lead anyone to believe that it can eventually bring long-term success.

You can also look at it from the perspective of other cities like St. Louis and Oakland. The fans there must be just as miserable. But there's no comfort in that.

The problems here still remain and have to be addressed.

Mangini was fired from his last job because the owner became convinced that he had lost the locker room. Here in Cleveland, Lerner doesn't even need to worry about the locker room.

Mangini never had it.

What Lerner should be asking himself is the same thing the rest of us are asking: What about the fans?