According to Jerry Roche, Cleveland sports fans have lost all patience with the Browns -- and, it would appear, all rational thought with it. He's referring to their utter and complete disgust with the knowledge, intelligence, talent and determination of the three men who can -- more than anyone else on the planet -- have a profound effect on the team's future success: head coach Eric Mangini, offensive coordinator Brian Daboll and quarterback Brady Quinn. Jerry looks at things from these men's point of view in his latest piece.

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I'm referring to their utter and complete disgust with the knowledge, intelligence, talent and determination of the three men who can -- more than anyone else on the planet -- have a profound effect on the team's future success: head coach Eric Mangini, offensive coordinator Brian Daboll and quarterback Brady Quinn.

Judging by comments written on TCF boards and other blogsites across the wide, wide world of sports, Mangini is an ignorant megalomaniac, Daboll is an unimaginative know-nothing, and Quinn is a talentless excuse for a quarterback.

Now, I'm as disgusted about the performance of the 2009 Browns as any other person who's been a fan from the days of Jim Brown and Frank Ryan. But the 1-10 record has separated me from my emotions about the team, so I find myself being a bit more objective than I've been in any years past.

What I'm about to say here is that maybe we should step back from baseless emotional responses and give Mangini, Daboll and Quinn a break. Maybe it's about time that we admit to not knowing as much about professional football as we think they do. Maybe it's about time that we admit the possibility that Mangini, Daboll and Quinn could grow into their roles and eventually bring a championship to Cleveland.

**The Case for Daboll**

The Browns' offensive coordinator has been excoriated time and time again this season for not giving the offense an identity, for not throwing downfield enough, for running Jamal Lewis up the middle too much, and for not being imaginative, among other things.

Could it be possible that Daboll is trying to emphasize what little talent he has at his disposal, rather than attempting to run plays that have little to no chance of working? For instance, why call a long pass deep downfield when (1) Quinn seldom has four seconds to set up and fling one, due to lousy pass protection; (2) the inexperienced receiving corps has little chance of separating from defensive backs in 10 yards, much less 25 yards or more; and (3) the "dropsies" -- and you know what I mean.

Daboll has never been an offensive coordinator before. That means he's going through a period of on-the-job training. He's absorbing new offensive concepts; learning more about the strengths and weaknesses of the current players at his disposal; observing what works and what doesn't work in practices; trying to mix and match; coming to grips with opponents his teams haven't faced before; and

generally feeling his way through his first year as an offensive coordinator.

Does that mean he lacks the potential to become another Tony Sparano or Gary Kubiak or Mike Shanahan or Josh McDaniels -- all highly successful NFL offensive coordinators who went on to become head coaches? Absolutely not. Everyone's got to start somewhere. And that pass last Sunday from Josh Cribbs to Quinn was a sign that Daboll certainly possesses at least a modicum of ingenuity as an offensive coordinator.

Only time will tell whether he will be successful. With just 11 regular-season games under his belt, Daboll's future is still up in the air. But he deserves a longer period of evaluation. (A talent pool that includes at least one game-breaker wouldn't hurt, either.)

**The Case for Quinn**

For some reason -- maybe it's alma mater, maybe it's his Hollywood-league good looks, maybe it's the team's recent history with quarterbacks -- Browns fans have put Quinn on an undeserved short leash.

Yet for all the criticism leveled at him by fandom, Quinn has the potential to be at the very least a serviceable and decent NFL quarterback, according to virtually every professional-level talent evaluator who has seen him play.

Quinn, like Daboll, is a work in progress.

True, he lacks the laser arm that might propel other first-year quarterbacks (Ben Roethlisberger and Joe Flacco, for instance) to immediate stardom. But he also lacks the personnel surrounding him that would hasten his development. (Like, for

instance, receivers who can get open and actually catch the ball. Like, for instance, an offensive line that isn't a half-sieve.)

According to the experts, Quinn's strengths are intelligence, ability to read defenses, leadership capacity, and huddle command. Those are qualities that necessarily grow with age. And eight or nine games as a starter isn't nearly enough experience to write him off. The guess here is that he at least has the arm, intelligence and moxie to lead a team to the Super Bowl, given some decent talent around him.

Let's talk in two years and see how he's doing, whether it's with the Browns or another NFL team.

**The Case for Mangini**

Mangini came to the Browns with some heavy baggage. His hard-nosed attitude toward the press made New York beat reporters quickly change their assessment of him from "Mangenius" to, let's say, something much less flattering. No tears were shed in the Big Apple on the day that he was given the boot. Since then, the national media has led the way with their criticisms, and local fandom has quickly picked up on them, deserved or not.

And let's face it, Mangini has made a whole truckload of mistakes since assuming the reins of the Browns. His most egregious errors involve selecting no impact players in the 2009 college draft, waffling on his quarterback selection, and famously pissing off the media and general public with his self-righteousness and doublespeak.

We said in a pre-season column that Mangini should not be judged by the team's final record in 2009. We stand by that.

"The head coach isn't just thinking about what's happening in the short term," says Herm Edwards, who coached both the Jets and the Kansas City Chiefs and now is an analyst for ESPN. "He has to be thinking about moves that impact next year and the year after that."

This year, Mangini cleared the roster of players who didn't high-step to his authority, no matter their talent level. He added free agents and traded for players who would toe the line and, supposedly, serve as nothing more than "placeholders" until the overall roster could be upgraded in two to three years.

Admittedly, those personnel moves to date have been largely unsuccessful. The roster of 2008 squeaked and sputtered to a 4-12 record; this group will be lucky to win two games.

But Mangini can be partly forgiven for making mincemeat of the college draft, since it came two short months after he changed teams and he was not familiar enough with any front-office personnel who might advise him. Perhaps a new football "czar" in the front office will help make those important decisions in coming drafts.

Ahh, the football czar.

Recently, Mangini showed signs that he's softening his hard-nosed attitude somewhat. Speaking about the impending selection of a "serious, credible leader" to run the club's football operations, he told the *Plain Dealer*: "Anybody that can help us, I embrace 100 percent. It's not about who has final authority. It's about how we can improve."

Could he, too, still be learning? As a matter of fact, aren't we all "still learning," no matter how old or how much experience we have?

We as Browns fans over the past 18 years have exhibited a flawed shortsightedness in our appraisal of head coaches. If memory serves, Bill Belichick, Chris Palmer, Butch Davis and Romeo Crennel all drew our ire to varying degrees. So, just maybe, wouldn't it be in the best interests of the team to embrace the concept of "continuity" that's worked so well for the Steelers and New England Patriots? Wouldn't it be in our own best interests to give Mangini at least three years before making any rash decisions? After all, it's not like he stepped into the same sort of situation as Pittsburgh's Mike Tomlin, is it?