Of all the sentences I imagined myself writing about the 2010 version of the Cleveland Browns, the least likely was “now starting for the Browns, Jake Delhomme.” Ok, that's not true. That's the second least likely. The most unlikely was “now entering the game at quarterback, Seneca Wallace.”

Yet that's where the Browns now find themselves a week or so into free agency and still several weeks from the 2010 draft.

The agreement the Browns reached on Saturday with Delhomme on a two-year deal makes some sense in that it was obvious that nobody associated with the new Browns' regime, team president Mike Holmgren or general manager Tom Heckert in particular, seemed to have much fascination with either Brady Quinn or Derek Anderson. Inside of the span of just a few days, both quarterbacks who couldnt' wrest control of the starting position here find themselves elsewhere. For Quinn, that's Denver. For Anderson, who knows.

Whether Holmgren and Heckert are right or wrong is irrelevant for the moment. The two were brought in exactly for this reason--to make the hard decisions and move the franchise forward. You can't criticize a bird for flying.

But lest anyone think that the signing of Delhomme and Wallace settles the quarterback position, it doesn't. All those signings really represent is a stop gap measure for a season or two while Holmgren and Heckert go about fixing the league's worst defense.

Delhomme is 35-years old, which isn't ancient when compared to someone like Brett Favre who, I believe, is 164 years old at this point. But Delhomme is on the back side of a career that has seen some decent highs and fairly typical lows. This past season was a struggle for Delhomme illustrating how a team's golden goose can suddenly look expendable as the number of golden eggs laid decreases precipitously.

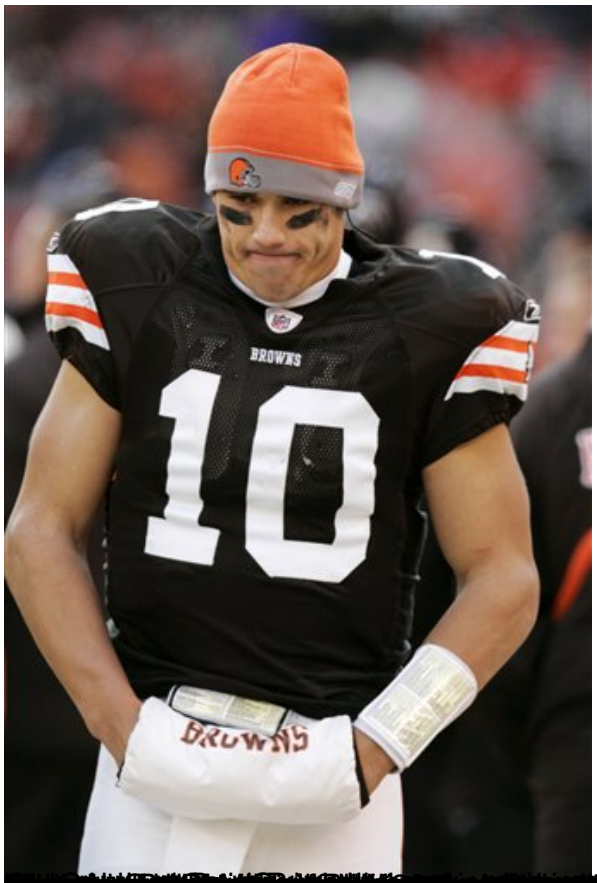
Indeed Delhomme seemed nearly ready to ride out his last few years as a backup for Drew Brees, so despondent was he following his release by the Carolina Panthers. But the Browns' willingness to pay him starter's wages for 2010 changed him mind in the way only money could and now Delhomme gets a chance to spend his next few summers and falls in Cleveland instead of his hometown of New Orleans. At least he's no stranger to humidity.

There's a theory that perhaps Delhomme may be coming in to mentor Wallace, but no matter what Holmgren says about Wallace's upside it's doubtful even Holmgren sees him as the long-term answer either. More likely is that the intention with Delhomme is that he starts in 2010 and then mentors whatever young quarterback Holmgren and Heckert eventually set their sights on.

Maybe that young quarterback is Brett Ratliff, a third stringer that head coach Eric Mangini actually traded for last season. But I doubt that, too. Holmgren may have been impressed enough with Mangini's coaching acumen, if not results, to give him another year but everything both Holmgren and Heckert have done since arriving screams that they didn't think much of Mangini's personnel decisions or acquisitions.

All of which means, of course, that the Browns probably are on a quest for a young quarterback at some point soon. With the options that their stockpiled draft picks gives them this year, maybe the Browns have targeted someone like Dan LeFevour from Central Michigan or even Cincinnati's Tony Pike as a second or third rounder. If that's the case, the Delhomme signing makes even more sense.

But how the Delhomme signing actually fits into the longer range plan won't become completely clear until the draft. Meanwhile, Quinn, finds his career once again overshadowed with uncertainty as he heads to Denver. It's been that way since draft day in 2007.



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