Preseason Week 1 – Cleveland at Green Bay

The following is a transcript of an actual conversation between my girlfriend and myself on Saturday night as I watched the Browns game for the 2nd time. I do hereby swear that this transcript is completely accurate (or at least the way I remember it):

Me: *Oh! Here it comes! Watch this play!*

She: *Don't do this...*

Me: *Blam! Look at that! That's the way you make a tackle!*

She: *You shouldn't do this.*

Me: *Do what?*

She: *Don't get excited.*

Me: *But look at that tackle! One on one in the flat, and he's a rookie. I'd be impressed if he just managed a regular tackle, but, no! He slams him down! Here, watch it again...*

She: *It's only the Preseason.*

Me (watching the play again): *Well, no [expletive] that it's only the Preseason. Slammo! And, here! Watch this pass! I just need to rewind it a few seconds...*

She: *You're getting excited.*

Me (watching the recording scan in reverse): *It's that good.*

She: *You're getting your hopes up.*

Me: *No, I'm not. I'm not stupid.*

She: *Yes, you are.*

Me: *I'm stupid?*

She: *No, well, you're that too... I meant you're getting your hopes up.*

Me: *I'm not getting my hopes up. I never get my hopes up!*

She: *These are the Browns. They will only let you down.*

Me: *Well, no [expletive] that they'll let me down! What do you want me to do? Cry you a river? [Expletive] and moan that our doom is inevitable and that fate/God/karma hate us? They played a solid game against very good competition. Our ones hung with their ones! Do you remember the [expletive]-raping Green Bay gave them in the 1st Half last year?*

She: *No...*

Me: *Well, it was bad! And this year they looked light years better, and even though I'm perfectly aware that this is only a [expletive] Preseason game, I'm not gonna sit here and sigh mournfully and wait for Hell to break loose. Hell's gonna break loose whether I wait for it or not! And... Wham! Did you see that? He threw that with zip on the dead run against his body while going out of bounds! Do you know how hard that is to do?*

She: *OK, but you're setting yourself up for disappointment...*

Me (finally looks at her): *No, I'm not. I know that every road leads to death. Don't mean I can't stop and smell the flowers. 'Specially if the flowers are few and [expletive] far between. Dammit, woman!*

(Turns back to the TV)

She: *Did you just call me "woman"?...*

Me (interrupting): *Touchdown! Bingo bango! Can you imagine Quinn or Anderson making that play? [Expleeeeeeeetiiiiiiiive].*

She (getting up and walking away): *You're going to be let down...*

Me (ignoring): *Let's watch that again in slow motion!*

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Game Recap

Before I could even get my sarcasm revved up, the Browns took the opening kickoff 80 yards for a TD. Jake Delhomme looked sharp, and Mangini demonstrated some early urgency by going for it on 4th Down (and converting). And when Jerome Harrison ran it in easily from 4 yards out. *Browns 7, Packers 0.*

The Packers fumbled on their first Offensive play, and Cleveland took over at the GB 13. Seneca Wallace came in already and threw 2 straight passes to Brian Robiskie, which the latter dropped (although the 2nd was tough). On 3rd and 10, Seneca rolled right to avoid pressure and threw a sick, sick, sick pass against his body to Robiskie in the corner of the end zone. *Bro wns 14, Packers 0.*

The home crowd began to boo their beloved Packers. In the 1st Quarter. Of a Preseason game. And here I was led to believe that the only "mean" fans lived in Northeast Ohio...

I guess it must be that lack of "social networking" that makes these populations so "angry". But I digress...

Being down 14 to the lowly Browns woke the Pack up, and Aaron Rodgers came in and sliced and diced them in a way that very few QB's can do. Rookies Joe Haden and TJ Ward were victims of Rodgers' passes, but you can hardly blame them - some of those throws couldn't have been placed better if Rodgers ran down the field and handed it to them. Like the 25 yard TD pass to Greg Jennings just past Ward's earhole. Ward could've picked it had he turned

around, but that's a rookie Safety on a Top 15 WR, and that is why I'm taking Rodgers if he drops to me at 10. *Browns 14, Packers 7.*

Cleveland went 3 and Out, and Rodgers put on another passing exhibition (dude ended up 12 of 13 for 159 yards, a TD, and a passer rating of 392). A few plays later, some GB Fullback barreled over several defenders (including Ward) for a hard-earned 2 yard TD. *Browns 14, Packers 14.*

Normally, this is when the Browns realize that their early lead was a mirage and fold like Ohio State in a post-2003 Championship Game. But Seneca wouldn't have it, hitting Peyton Hillis on a beauteous 26 yard screen. Seneca then nailed Ben Watson on an equally beauteous 20 yard TD pass. It took me a while to realize what I was seeing, but then it dawned on me: This was what a real NFL passing attack looks like. Whoa. *Browns 21, Packers 14.*

Cleveland managed to stop the Rodgers-led Packer O on the next drive, due in large part to Mr. Ward, who had a great tackle on the GB RB on 2nd Down and took Donald Driver rudely to the turf in a one-on-one situation along the sidelines on 3rd Down. That was impressive.

Then Colt McCoy came in, and anything interesting really happening in the game came to an end.

Then Matt Flynn came in, and anything interesting really happening in the game came to an end.

Then Brett Ratliff (or Radcliff, as Bernie calls him) came in, and anything interesting really happening in the game came to an end.

Then Graham Harrell came in, and anything interesting really happening in the game came to an end.

In the end, the Browns were down 3 with 1:33 left when they trotted Phil Dawson out for a FG attempt. Normally, this is taboo - the last thing you want to do is go to OT in a Preseason game. But, I think this happened for 2 reasons:

1. How often do you get to simulate a late game situation like this where Phil was going for a 58 yarder?

2. Preseason or no Preseason... Mangini wanted to win.

Phil, of course, nailed it. Then the Browns stopped GB, got the ball back, and Radcliff did just enough (to be fair, his Receivers dropped a lot of balls) to get Phil back in position to win it - which, of course, he did. *Browns 27, Packers 24.*

Final: Browns 27, Packers 24.

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VINCE LOMBARDI
TROPHY
SUPER BOWL XL
AFC vs NFC

[illegible]

We'll Get Over It
When We're
Damn Well
Good and Ready