In the first installment of what will be a Monday morning staple on The Blurbs during the regular season, Papa Cass unleashes his first edition of "The Morning After". Cassano takes a comprehensive look at the Browns first preseason game against the Eagles, pointing out the high points and the low points in this review of Thursday nights game.

Visit the Papa Cass weblog at http://papacass.blogspot.com/

(Side note: if you have started reading my blog just this year, The Morning After is a feature I write the day after every Browns game, picking apart the action, what contributed to the win or loss, and the overall state of the team as it gets ready for the next game.)

Eagles 20, Browns 7

Preseason record: 0-1

Not much can be mined from the first preseason game. The whole point is to just get a couple of series for the first teamers and spend the rest of the time letting the bubble players start duking it out for the final few roster spots.

The offensive starters made it through the first game without any more catastrophic injuries, so that's a step in the right direction. Emergency-backup-turned-starting-center Alonzo Ephraim looked much better than I thought he would. He had workable chemistry with Charlie Frye and never got burned on a sack, which is more than I can say for backup linemen Nat Dorsey and Kirk Chambers, who each allowed an Eagle pass rusher to plant Ken Dorsey in the turf.

Frye was decent, not great, finishing the night 4-for-7 for 23 yards. It became apparent early on that Frye was going to seek out Kellen Winslow Jr. as his primary target. Winslow had a pair of receptions for seven yards, not great, but considering it was his first game action since September 2004, it was just good to see him out there and contributing.

Reuben Droughns looks like he's capable of picking up where he left off a year ago. He pounded out runs of 11 and 8 yards, and finished with 21 yards on four carries.

The offensive starters compiled 39 yards and one first down in the span of two drives. Probably par for the course for a unit with so many new parts, and replacement parts on top of that.

The unit that gave coach Romeo Crennel the most encouragement was the defense. Defense is Crennel's focus, and even with an offense at full strength, Crennel would still be looking to his defense to win the games.

Let's get the bad news out of the way first. Willie McGinest did not play with a sore knee. Gary Baxter, the best player in the Browns secondary, appears unable to shake the injury bug that has been biting him since last year. After tweaking his knee in practice this week, he made a start he probably shouldn't have made and ended up straining a shoulder. His status for next week's game against the Lions remains up in the air.

Now, the good news. The first-team defense was knocked back on its heels on Donovan McNabb's opening drive, but made an excellent recovery with a goal-line stand that forced the Eagles to settle for a field goal. The three points were the only the Eagles first-team offense scored.

First-round draft pick Kamerion Wimbley showed not just speed, but an ability to read a play and react. Several times, he was able to get into the Philadelphia backfield and be a disruptive presence. After years of watching Butch Davis recruits dimly follow orders without adapting to the changing game situation, it is nice to see a Browns draft pick that appears to have the football smarts to be not just a fast player, but a heady one as well.

The second-team defense didn't fare as well, surrendering a pair of touchdowns to old friend Jeff Garcia, now McNabb's primary backup. The lack of depth in the secondary was painfully evident, as the Browns were on several occasions burned on medium-to-deep routes, including a touchdown pass.

The Eagles shut the Browns out until the fourth quarter, when fourth-string quarterback Lang Campbell found rookie running back Jerome Harrison for a touchdown pass. The TD pass, against Philly's defensive scrubs, probably won't escalate Campbell's stock very much, but it's bound to draw attention to Harrison. Many think Harrison can be a undersized, Dave Meggett-type scatback, capable of greasing his way through the trenches, then sneaking around on a underneath route for a reception.

Up next: Detroit, Aug. 18, 7:30 p.m.