Ending weeks of speculation that he may be moved, the Browns dealt perpetual tease Lee Suggs to the New York Jets today for 2003 Thorpe and Nagurski winner Derrick Strait, a cornerback out of Oklahoma. Strait becomes the third former Sooner to join the teams secondary, and will compete with former college teammate Antonio Perkins for the corner spot opposite Leigh Bodden in the absence of the injured Daylon McCutcheon and Gary Baxter.

Ending weeks of speculation that he may be traded, the Browns dealt injury plagued running back Lee Suggs to the Jets today for cornerback Derrick Strait.

Two separate factors were the driving force behind this trade for Phil Savage and the Browns. The injuries to cornerbacks Daylon McCutcheon and Gary Baxter, and the emergence of rookie fifth round running back Jerome Harrison.

With 'Cutch already on the shelf for about another three weeks recovering from minor knee surgery, the team lost Baxter to a slight pectoral tear in the Eagle game. While both hope to be ready for the season opener, the Browns apparently weren't willing to count on that, and it's likely a wise move. Fellow fifth round pick DeMario Minter, a cornerback from Georgia, is also sidelined due to injury, and won't be able to return until week five of the regular season at the earliest.

Much like starting pitching in baseball, you simply can't have enough good cover men in this league. And the team had little in the way of established help behind starting corner Leigh Bodden, who emerged last year after a previous Baxter injury opened the door for him. Pete Hunter, who the team brought in this off-season, and had some starting experience with the Cowboys, was victimized repeatedly in the teams pre-season opener versus Philly.

In Strait, the Browns get a guy they hope can come in and help right away at the position. As a junior at the University of Oklahoma in 2003, Strait intercepted 14 passes, and went on to not only won the Jim Thorpe award as the nations best defensive back, but also the Bronco Nagurski award as the top overall defender in all of college football. He left school early after initially being projected as a first round pick, then slipped to the middle of the third round due to concerns over his size (5'11, 189), where he was selected by the New York Jets. After seeing mostly just special teams action time as a rookie, Strait played in all sixteen games as a defensive back for the Jets last season, recording 49 tackles, recovering a fumble, and failing to intercept any passes.

Ironically, Strait becomes the third member of the Browns secondary to play their college ball at Oklahoma, joining 2005 draftees Antonio Perkins and Brodney Pool in the teams secondary. All three played together for the Sooners in 2004, and all three were acquired by Phil Savage. Ironically, Strait will battle with his former teammate Perkins for the sttarting role at one corner spot in the absence of 'Cutch and Baxter. Strait has also been seeing some time at free safety for the Jets in camp this year, and could feasibly be moved there by coach Romeo Crennel if Baxter and McCutcheon return healthy, and the young tandem of Pool and Sean Jones fail to emerge at safety.

The trade of Suggs closes the book a disappointing and injury plagued run with the Browns after being selected in the fourth round by former coach Butch Davis. The consumate tease, Suggs showed flashes of incredible talent at times, only to be constantly sidelined with minor injuries. Suggs dressed for just 26 of the teams 48 games in his three years with the team after a prolific career at Virginia Tech. Suggs came on very strong at the end of his rookie year with the team, appearing poised to be the teams go to back in 2004. Suggs had the starting job secured, then pre-season injuries derailed his sophomore season. Last season, Suggs again suffered injuried in camp, and was a non factor for most of the season as Reuben Droughns emerged as the teams workhorse back.

Suggs has a good opportunity in front of him in New York, who may be without Curtis Martin this season. Martin has not recovered fully from a knee surgery last season, and may be forced into retirement. Suggs will compete for a starting job with the Jets with Derrick Blaylock, Cedric Houston, and 2006 fourth round pick Leon Washington ... and will likely be the favorite to win that starting role if he can stay healthy.

Making this a much easier deal to make for the Browns was the emergence of rookie runner Jerome Harrison out of Washington State, who has looked good in camp so far, and now appears to be a lock to leave camp as the teams third down back. Harrison produced the teams only score in the pre-season opener versus the Eagles, hauling in a late eight yeard touchdown pass from Lang Campbell.