Cleveland Browns fans have always been prone to mood swings based upon the latest evidence on the field. But this season more than most, those mood swings have been more dramatic, as if the entire fan base is on anti-depressants and occasionally forgets to take its meds.

Just a week ago the fans were essentially celebrating a loss to the New York Jets. They were buoyed by the play of rookie quarterback Colt McCoy. They were enthralled that the team seemed to be able to not just take a punch but deliver a few as well. There was also the context of a particularly 4 tough weeks against arguably the league's 4 best teams and the Browns emerging from it 2-2.

Sure there was the usual grousing about cornerback Eric Wright who is in the midst of the worst free agent season on record. But that was tempered by the overwhelming positives, the usual comment being that this team is fun to watch again.

Fast forward a week and the pendulum has certainly swung in the other direction. The fans still like McCoy (what's not to like?) but for the love of God how do you get 6 turnovers and lose the game? The grousing about Wright and the rest of the defense grew more vocal as it let Jacksonville's Maurice Jones-Drew turn an almost meaningless screen pass into a 75-yard run. The run game sucks again and Brian Daboll is also, again, an idiot.

Time for some perspective:

This team is neither nearly as good as the fans thought a week ago nor is it as bad as it appeared to be on Sunday. This is a team that simply doesn't have enough talent to win more games than it will lose.

The criticism of Daboll and his play-calling on Sunday is actually a good jumping off spot for this larger point. Terry Pluto and Tony Grossi gave voice to the frustration that many later expressed when they both wondered in print why Daboll kept running Peyton Hillis despite the fact that it wasn't really working. Hillis had 21 carries for 48 yards on Sunday so there is some support for the premise.

The answer is simple. Let's start with the micro view.

The Jacksonville defensive line hadn't played like that at any other point in the season. They are mediocre at best and have the statistics to back that up. Moreover, a running game doesn't develop in just one play or one series. It often doesn't develop in just one quarter. Often times those 3 and 4 yard gains early in the game turn into 6 and 7 yard gains later in the game. To get to that point you have to demonstrate a level of commitment.

Hillis has run well all season. His style is such that at any moment he's likely to break through the usual arm tackles and take off chunks of yardage with each carry. Moreover, Hillis did have 6 receptions for 95 yards, so that demonstrates in some fashion that he was causing problems for the Jacksonville defense. That kind of running would make any offensive coordinator continue to stick with running Hillis into the line and around the edges.

Now for the macro view.

The real story is that the game plan looked like it did because what options did Daboll really have? Sure there are guys on the roster that have certain titles, like running back and receiver. But that doesn't mean they actually perform those functions. You could put a helmet on Fatty Arbuckle and call him a running back but that doesn't mean he's going to gain you any yards.

Daboll really had no one to rely on other than McCoy and Hillis in the first place. Hillis'

replacement, Mike Bell, may be the worst running back I've ever seen play in the NFL. The Browns got him when they traded Jerome Harrison to Philadelphia in a deal in which it was suggested that all either player needed was a change of scenery.

I don't know about Harrison, but Bell doesn't just need a change of scenery, he needs a change of vocations. The Browns would be no worse off running Shaun Rogers into the line occasionally to spell Hillis.

And Bell is the second best back on the active roster! Behind him is Thomas Clayton, a practice squad pickup from New England, and someone named Clifton Smith, a player whose status is so tentative that the team hasn't even assigned him a permanent jersey number. The injury to Montario Hardesty was a bit of a blessing for the development of Hillis but it absolutely ruined the running back depth on this roster and hence the options that come with that.

Then there was the fact that the best receiver on the roster is Josh Cribbs, a converted kick returner still learning the job. He carries the moniker of someone who is dangerous when he gets the ball, but he can't get it often enough to be considered a consistent weapon, someone other teams have to worry about every play. Besides, he was out Sunday further limiting Daboll's options.

In his place were Chansi Stuckey, Mohamed Massaquoi and Brian Robiskie. Stuckey and Massaquoi are essentially the same receiver, just different names. Neither has the top end speed to ever be a number one receiver in the league. Indeed neither has the speed to be the number two receiver on most teams. That relegates them to what on other teams would be the third option. But on this team they are the first option which means that each week the other teams' best cornerbacks are essentially doing the work of a typical nickel back instead. No wonder they can't get open.

As for Brian Robiskie, I like him for what he did at Ohio State. But it doesn't look like he'll be anything other than a decent college player. As a professional opposing teams don't take him seriously because he doesn't appear to have the requisite quickness off the line to gain an advantage on whatever linebacker or defensive back is put on him. Indeed, our own quarterbacks don't take him seriously. It's almost as if he's an avatar, existing in theory but not reality.

That leaves the tight ends and there the Browns have a decent complement. But the reason they stand out this season has everything to do with the fact that the Browns don't have a decent complement of receivers. Ben Watson is a nice option as is Evan Moore. Robert Royal has mostly been a disappointment. Still, in terms of offensive options, this group ranks second behind Hillis.

What you have then is a quarterback who can throw and the only ones open tend to be tight ends in the middle of the field and Hillis out of the backfield. In that scenario it almost doesn't matter who is calling the plays. The options are painfully limited.

The real lesson here is that you can let the moods swing all you want but in context the fact that this offense has scored as many points as it has demonstrates that Daboll is hardly the problem. Arguably he's gotten more out of this offense then fans have a right to otherwise expect. It's just that the fans are too angry at the moment to realize it.