Cleveland Browns @ Miami Dolphins

Time: 1:00 pm, Sunday, December 5, 2010

Location: Sun Life Stadium, Miami Gardens, Florida

Network, Announcers- CBS: Greg Gumbel and Dan Dierdorf

Line: Dolphins by five.

Team W/L Records: Cleveland is 4-7; Miami is 6-5.

Coaches: Eric Mangini is 32-43 overall, 9-18 in his second season with the Browns; Tony Sporano is 24-18 in his third season with the Dolphins.

Last Week for the Browns: Got a win, but it was hardly satisfactory. The Browns committed three turnovers, gave up a(nother) pick-six, vanished offensively for most of the second half and needed a doinked attempt by 400-year old kicker John Kasay to hang on over Carolina, 24-23.

Last Week for the Dolphins: Went to 5-1 on the road with a convincing 33-17 victory over the Raiders in Oakland. Chad Henne returned after a one-week injury hiatus and threw for 307 yards with a pair of touchdowns while Ronnie Brown and Ricky Williams ground out 185 combined yards. Miami compiled a season-high 471 total yards in the victory.

All-Time Series: Dolphins lead, 7-6.

Last Meeting- October 14, 2007 : Derek Anderson threw for 245 yards and three touchdowns- all to Braylon Edwards- as the Browns jumped out to a 24-3 lead and hung on to beat the one-win Dolphins, 41-31.

Out, Doubtful or Questionable for Miami: LB Channing Crowder (knee) and CB Al Harris (hamstring) are doubtful; WR Brandon Marshall (hamstring) is questionable;

Out, Doubtful or Questionable for Cleveland: LB Scott Fujita (knee) and QB Colt McCoy (ankle) are doubtful; DT Shaun Rogers (ankle), LB Eric Barton (shoulder), DE Kenyon Coleman (foot), WR Josh Cribbs (foot) and S T.J. Ward (thigh) are questionable.

What to watch for the Browns: After a stretch of good football Cleveland's defence has hit the skids lately, especially against the run game. In the last three weeks the Browns have given up 172, 145 and 151 rushing yards to the Jets, Jaguars and Panthers. Not surprisingly, they lost two of those games and were fortunate to get a victory over Carolina last week.

Injuries to Robaire Smith and Scott Fujita have hurt, but the biggest culprit has been awful tackling. Whether it's poor angles to the ball-carrier, too much emphasis on stripping the football instead of wrapping up or just plain bad technique, the Browns have struggled mightily in the

tackling department- and the cost has been dear. Poor tackling allowed Maurice Jones-Drew to travel 75 yards with a screen pass to set up Jacksonville's winning score two weeks ago; it also allowed Mike Goodson to go 32 yards with a dump-off on Carolina's final drive last week- a play that nearly cost Cleveland the game.

Now here come the Dolphins, a team with two good running backs in Ronnie Brown and Ricky Williams. Suffice to say if the tackling remains at the same level it's been for the last two weeks, the Browns are going to lose this football game. Cleveland practiced in full pads this week, unusual for this late in the season. We'll see if that makes a difference on Sunday.

What to watch for the Dolphins: It's hard to know what to make of this Miami team. It's a team that is 1-4 at home, 5-1 on the road. It's a team that has been embarrassed in several games (lopsided home losses to New England and Chicago), inspired in several others (road wins at Green Bay and Oakland.) It's a team that went from 187 total yards against the Bears to 471 total yards against the Raiders in the span of just one week. It's a team that has already fired an assistant coach,
yet stands at 6-5, still on the fringes of playoff contention in the tough AFC.

Defensively is where the Dolphins have found some consistency. They've given up well under 300 yards in their last three games- two of them victories- and were impenetrable against the run last week at Oakland, giving up just 16 yards to one of the league's top ground offenses. Peyton Hillis's fellow Hog Darren McFadden had two yards on eight carries against Miami's defence, which is anchored by a superb linebacker corps featuring Channing Crowder, Karlos Dansby and CFL import Cameron Wake, who leads the AFC in sacks.

The trends aren't working in Cleveland's favour. While Miami's stop troops have stiffened the last three weeks, those of the Browns have begun to crumble. This is Cleveland's third trip to the State of Florida this season and the first two results, the defeats in Tampa and Jacksonville, were downright tortuous. Miami itself is a historical house of horrors: the Browns have lost four straight down there, including Playoff games in 1972 and '85, and in all four Miami scored the winning points in either the last five minutes or in overtime.

Next Week for Both Teams: Miami goes to the Meadowlands to play the Jets; Cleveland visits Buffalo.

Trivia: The Browns haven't played in Miami since October 8, 1989. They lost that game to the Dolphins in overtime, 13-10.