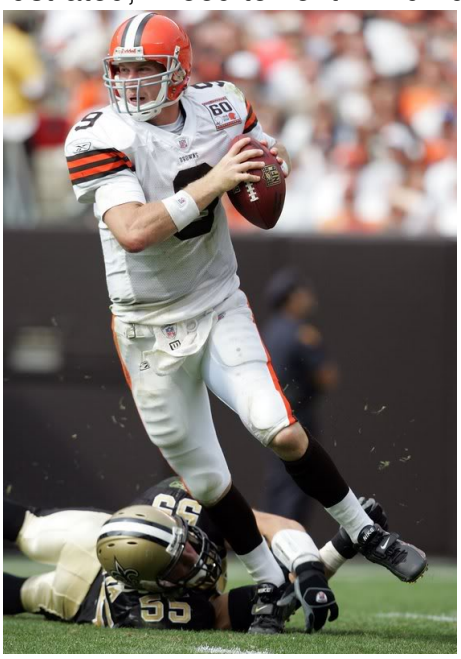
... the more they stay the same. Showing many of the same weaknesses and liabilities of years past, the Browns turned in a thoroughly disappointing performance Sunday afternoon in the season opener. I'm angry, I'm frustrated, I need to vent. And I don't know if my liver will be able to take 15 more games of this.



... the more they stay the same.

Woeful offensive line play. Unthinkable play calling in key spots, and dinks and dunks everywhere else. Penalties in key moments, negating big offensive plays. No pressure on the quarterback. Teams running the ball all over us. Lapses from the secondary on third down plays.

Sound familiar?

Bottom line - New Orleans is one of the worst teams in football. And they came into our house on opening day and took it to us. With a new coach that looks like he's about 26 years old, a new quarterback and offensive system, and three linebackers that weren't members of the team two weeks ago.

Brand new center or not, it's just amazing to me that our offense could come out that horrifically flat and inept after months and months of preparing for this day. There's plenty of blame to be passed around for yesterdays debacle, but I lie the majority of the blame at the feet of head coach Romeo Crennel. The team came out sloppy and uninspired for a game they had been planning for since May. They made dumb penalties in big spots. In short, their play in the first half resembled the shell shocked look Crennel often makes on the sidelines. Which scared the living hell outta me, because I can't go through the whole new coach thingie again anytime soon.

The bottom line is this - Romeo Crennel is ultimately responsible for every play his buddy Mo Carthon calls. And if he wants to take a hands off approach towards this team's offensive strategy and play calling (as it appears he is), then he needs to hire a stronger coordinator. While most of the Browns Nation wants Mo C's head this morning, I find myself wondering how

in the hell Romeo allowed him to call the "rookie fullback sweep" TWO TIMES IN A ROW on third down and short.

Carthon has made a career off of being part of "The Parcells Tree", and I'm still unaware of what made him initially qualified for this job. His ineptitude should certainly be noted, and the decision to bring him back looks unthinkable after even just one game. The Saints, determined to not let Reuben Droughns beat them, had eight men in the box all game against us. Yet the Browns could manage no better than 132 yards passing, and a pathetic 3.2 yards per pass attempt.

Without the benefit of being there live, or having regular access to an end zone camera, it's impossible to know just how mich of the blame should be placed at the feet of Carthon's play calling. Were the recievers just not getting open? Or were they open, and was Charlie just tentative and holding on to the ball too long? Or was the offensive ineptitude primarily a result of the same nauseating dink and dunk offensive play calling that we saw last season?

Certainly the offensive line deserves a large share of the blame for yesterday's debacle as well. Frye was sacked five times, and hurried on nine other occassions. Watching this team get their asses handed to them on the lines has long been old and tiresome, and is now downright infuriating. Football is a physical game that raises all of our testosterone levels to lofty heights. Watching the team you love get manhandled in the trenches for eight years straight is seriously testing the mettle of this Browns fan. I'm not sure how much longer I can take it.

And there's not even one or two guys on the line to vent my frustrations at this morning. They all played like shit. Every man was beaten on multiple occassions, and things wouldn't have been any different had Hank Fraley been here eight years as opposed to eight days. Kevin Shaffer looked weak, and severely unworthy of the seven years and thirty six million the team gave him this off-season. Cosey Coleman looks good sometimes. But most of the time he looks how he looked yesterday. Fraley was abused by Bryant Young a number of times. Joe Andruzzi looked old and uninspired. Ryan Tucker let Charles Grant wreak havoc with the running game.

And it was more of the same old, same old for the defense as well. Absolutely no pressure on the quarterback, the opposing backs running all over us, and the secondary allowing separation by the opposing recievers on key third down pass attempts. However, like last year, it's almost hard to fault the defense given the poor situations the offense is constantly putting them in.

Just two days ago, my optimism for this season was running high. Now, after losing to one of the few teams we will actually be favored against this season, and looking miserable in doing so ... I feel foolish for predicting this team would win eight games.

Despite being just one game into a long season, the other three teams in our division all sit at 1-0, and all looked very impressive in doing so. The Browns travel to Cincinnati, who went into Arrowhead and scalped the Chiefs in the opener. The Browns will likely be ten point underdogs, and longshots not to start the season 0-2. And oh yeah ... Joe Jurevicius is likely

going to miss a big chunk of the season with broken ribs.

It's just so frustrating. This is such a great football town, with such devoted, passionate, and deserving fans. To have gone what we have gone through since 1995 almost seems unfair.