As is tradition here at TheClevelandFan we again bring you the thoughts and opinions of the site's Browns contributors regarding the 2011 NFL season, the teams who will see the post season and also some quickstrikes on how the Browns will fare.

Football is back. Onto the show:

Jonathan Knight

AFC East Winner: Patriots
AFC West Winner: Chargers
AFC North Winner: Steelers
AFC South Winner: Texans
AFC Wildcard: Ravens
AFC Wildcard: Jets

NFC East Winner: Eagles
NFC West Winner: Seahawks
NFC North Winner: Packers
NFC SouthWinner: Falcons
NFC Wildcard: Saints
NFC Wildcard: Giants

AFC Championship Game: Patriots over Steelers
NFC Championship: Eagles over Falcons

Super Bowl Winner: Patriots

Browns Outlook: Overall, the Browns will be better, though it won't show in the standings. Their lack of depth - combined with their inability to stay healthy - will be a huge issue in November

and December, and while the offense should be much more entertaining this season, the defense has far too many holes for the team to contend for the playoffs.

We should know by the end of the year whether Colt McCoy is the real deal and if Josh Cribbs can contribute with something other than kick returns. Unfortunately, we're also going to learn that Peyton Hillis can only be effective if the Browns have another dependable running back to help carry the load - and right now, it doesn't appear that they do. On defense, Ward, Haden, and Taylor are all good building blocks, but there are just too many unremarkable players on the defense right now to take it seriously.

Pencil the Browns in for another 5-11 season, and we can talk about climbing up to .500 in 2012.

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Chris Hutchison

AFC East Winner: New England
AFC West Winner: San Diego
AFC North Winner: Pittsburgh
AFC South Winner: Houston
AFC Wildcard: Baltimore
AFC Wildcard: New York Jets

NFC East Winner: Dallas
NFC West Winner: St. Louis
NFC North Winner: Green Bay
NFC SouthWinner: New Orleans
NFC Wildcard: Atlanta
NFC Wildcard: New York Giants

AFC Championship Game: Houston over Baltimore
NFC Championship: Atlanta over Green Bay

Super Bowl Winner: Atlanta

Browns Outlook: The roster is too young, thin, and inexperienced to expect too much from them this season. The schedule looks favorable, but you never know who's going to be improved, and the other teams consider the Browns an easy opponent too. I see Cleveland in the thick of the hunt, resting at about .500 coming into the last 5 games of the season. That's where their lack of depth gets them killed as the Steelers and Ravens both sweep them and leave them with a 6-10 record.

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Jason Askew

AFC East Winner: Pats
AFC West Winner: Chargers
AFC North Winner: Ravens
AFC South Winner: Texans
AFC Wildcard: Jets
AFC Wildcard: Steelers

NFC East Winner: Eagles
NFC West Winner: Rams
NFC North Winner: Packers
NFC SouthWinner: Saints
NFC Wildcard: Falcons
NFC Wildcard: Lions

AFC Championship Game: Patriots over Ravens
NFC Championship: Saints over Eagles

Super Bowl Winner: Patriots

Browns Outlook:

For the first time in years, the offense looks like a varsity unit and puts up 24 points a game but

the defense gives up 28 points a game. Looking at the teams on our schedule I say the Browns go 7-9 and easily could have been 9-7, but youth alone will lose a couple games.

Guys who become household names: Colt McCoy,Greg Little, Evan Moore and Brian Robiske on offense.

On defense Titus Brown gets to play and plays well. By season's end Marcus Benard is quick again and racks up 9 sacks, and the UDFA Quinton Spears turns heads with his athleticism. Phil Taylor is a man-child all year long and we realize Ahtyba Rubin is a stout rotational guy in the 4-3 and not a backfield terror. D'Qwell Jackson is near the league leaders in tackles....TJ Ward and Joe Haden have 'league- respect' earning years. We also discover Jabaal Sheard is best at LDE and not RDE while Pat Shurmur proves his worth as an offensive mind and gains the players' trust and loyalty with effective communication and a "game" free approach.

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Jerry Roche

AFC East Winner: New England
AFC West Winner: San Diego
AFC North Winner: Baltimore
AFC South Winner: Houston
AFC Wildcard: Pittsburgh
AFC Wildcard: N.Y. Jets

NFC East Winner: Dallas
NFC West Winner: St. Louis
NFC North Winner: Green Bay
NFC South Winner: Atlanta
NFC Wildcard: Philadelphia
NFC Wildcard: San Francisco

AFC Championship Game: Baltimore over New England

NFC Championship: Atlanta over Green Bay

Super Bowl Winner: Baltimore

Browns Outlook: Unless they are hit with an inordinate amount of injuries, the Browns should finish somewhere around 7-9, thanks to a marginally improved roster but a much improved coaching staff that brings with it solid offensive and defensive schemes. 8-8 is not out of the question. Interestingly, the Brownies should provide plenty of thrills through November -- if Dick Jauron's defense can hold up (and that's a big if, because of a scary lack of talent and depth). It's possible that their overall record will be better than .500 through November, but those last five murderous games should bring them back to earth.

Here's hoping that Colt McCoy lives up to our dreams, because the Browns have no chance to be in the Andrew Luck sweepstakes, as many are hoping. (As a matter of fact, they could end up facing Luck twice a year for years to come -- once here and once in Cincinnati.)

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Brian McPeek

AFC East Winner: New England
AFC West Winner: San Diego
AFC North Winner: Pittsburgh
AFC South Winner: Houston
AFC Wildcard: Baltimore
AFC Wildcard: N.Y. Jets

NFC East Winner: Philadelphia
NFC West Winner: St. Louis
NFC North Winner: Green Bay
NFC South Winner: Atlanta
NFC Wildcard: Tampa
NFC Wildcard: NY Giants

AFC Championship Game: New England over Pittsburgh

NFC Championship: Green Bay over Atlanta

Super Bowl Winner: New England

Browns Outlook: It's a good news/bad news deal on the lake front this fall and winter. The Browns will get off to a solid start at 3-1 and have a chance to pile up a few more wins before the weather and the schedule get equally brutal. That comes at a bad time since the lack of depth will have an effect as guys get dinged and banged up over the first half of the season.

Colt McCoy establishes himself as a top 10 QB in the league while Montario Hardesty proves to be an effective running back in a healthy year. Greg Little will impress as will Evan Moore.

TJ Ward and Joe Haden will have Pro Bowl-caliber seasons but Ward will miss 2-4 games, a price he'll pay for his physical style.

6-10 is what I'd bet on, 7-9 won't surprise me and 8-8 will thrill me.

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Adam Burke

AFC East Winner: New England
AFC West Winner: San Diego
AFC North Winner: Pittsburgh
AFC South Winner: Houston
AFC Wildcard: Chiefs
AFC Wildcard: N.Y. Jets

NFC East Winner: Dallas
NFC West Winner: St. Louis
NFC North Winner: Green Bay
NFC South Winner: Atlanta
NFC Wildcard: Saints
NFC Wildcard: Eagles

AFC Championship Game: Steelers over Chargers

NFC Championship: Falcons over Packers

Super Bowl Winner: Falcons

Browns Outlook: Browns will go 6-10. Lots of moving parts on offense with no go-to guy at WR in a league that is very QB-driven. Inexperienced players will get a good portion of the snaps on the defensive line and that will lead to problems stopping the run.