Legend has it that a bus driving Paul Brown's Cleveland Browns became lost en route to its destination and the bus driver began profusely apologizing to Brown. Brown allegedly told the driver, "I don't blame you, sir. I blame the man who hired you."

Flash forward 60 years or so and it's Pat Shurmur playing the role of metaphoric bus driver and leading this team in circles, short of any preferred destination. But I have to tell you, I don't blame Shurmur for where the Browns are or aren't headed. I blame the man who hired him.

Mike Holmgren helped build and lead two franchises to one Super Bowl title in Green Bay and to another Super Bowl appearance in Seattle. Along the way he also helped form and shape a number of NFL quarterbacks including Joe Montana, Steve Young, Matt Hasselbeck and Brett Favre. Aside from the three Super Bowl appearances Holmgren's Green Bay and Seattle clubs won a total of 8 division titles and he compiled a career record of 161-111.

He has an impressive resume to say the least.

But that's doing this Browns franchise seemingly no good at all right now.

This team, led by Holmgren's first ever head coaching hire, is spiraling out of control and has again regained its laughingstock status in the NFL. 2011 has seen the Browns compile a record of 4-9 while also seeing dissension and chaos reign on the field and in the locker room.

The entire Peyton Hillis saga, from contract talks to strep throat to numerous, nagging injuries

has been a storyline all year. Josh Cribbs has made his displeasure with his role and the team's struggles public after nearly every loss. A TE took his first ever handoff in a critical situation because Shurmur wasn't aware his fullback wasn't in the game and his QB didn't tell him. There were nine Browns on the field for a punt return a couple Sundays ago against Baltimore and now, maybe worst of all, Colt McCoy was allowed back into the most recent loss in Pittsburgh after sustaining a concussion.

But Mike Holmgren hasn't stepped up to address much, if any, of these issues this season. Holmgren remains mysteriously quiet and apparently tucked away waiting for things to either get better or worse, but he definitely doesn't appear to be in a hurry to discuss any of this turmoil publicly.

And that's puzzling to me.

This latest debacle with McCoy and his concussion is a great example of Holmgren abandoning his duties and responsibilities and hanging his ill-gotten head coach out to dry, at least publicly. There was clearly a systemic breakdown in terms of the McCoy concussion. The Browns have been lauded for their aggressive and proactive adherence to the NFL's head injury standards and, even in that same Pittsburgh game, they removed FB Owen Marecic and TE Ben Watson for head injuries they sustained and did not allow them to return.

So why was McCoy callously tossed back into the fray? Shurmur awkwardly danced around that question at his Monday press conference as if his feet were on fire. He stuttered and stammered and ultimately said nothing about the process that allowed McCoy to return after two games despite the fact the Browns QB admitted right after the game that he didn't remember the play on which he got hurt nor the remainder of the game.

Shurmur is, in all likelihood, taking bullets for something he had nothing to do with and no responsibility for. First of all, Shurmur is a football coach and not a physician. I have no doubt he was being honest when he stated that he was told that McCoy was fit to re-enter the game. Being a football coach and not a doctor, Shurmur had no business gazing deep into McCoy's eyes to check the validity of the report he had received from his medical staff and providing (or asking for) a second opinion.

What likely happened (and this is simply a guess from yet another guy who's not a doctor and who wasn't on the sidelines) is the Browns training and medical staff were checking McCoy's hand which was caught between McCoy's and James Harrison's helmet when Harrison laid him out. When McCoy came off the field he was holding that hand and shaking it and that may have led the Browns training staff to focus on his hand while completely ignoring the fact that McCoy was hearing the ringing of non-existent phones.

Some have wondered why Shurmur wasn't on the field checking on McCoy's status when the QB was laying flat on his back and writhing on the Heinz Field turf. In all likelihood that's because Shurmur, at the allowance of Holmgren, has no offensive coordinator and he's solely responsible for calling plays and making sure the Browns 'offense' is in place and functioning (that being a relative term and all, but they were driving for a potential go-ahead score). Shurmur was focused on the Browns scoring drive, got word that his starting QB was deemed fit for duty and put McCoy back in the game.

I understand that and I can almost live with it. I still have to question what the hell the medical staff was doing and I still wonder why no one on else Holmgren's hand-picked staff saw fit to tell anyone on the sideline that McCoy needed a second look. The lame excuse is that McCoy exhibited no signs of a concussion is just that; lame. McCoy's father admitted to the Plain Dealer that his son told him he remembers nothing of the play that he got hurt on, nor the remainder of the game. That is not a delayed a reaction or late onset of concussion systems.

McCoy was injured then and there when Harrison's helmet met his own and yet no one caught it until McCoy exhibited slurring and sensitivity to light a half hour later in the post-game press conference.

Mike Holmgren is as culpable as anyone in this matter. Despite no OTAs and an abbreviated training camp, despite no rookie camp and despite hiring a rookie head coach who had never assembled a staff or put in time as the HMFIC, Holmgren didn't get or insist that Shurmur have an offensive coordinator to lighten the load on the inexperienced rookie head coach.

Despite the fact that Shurmur has been clearly overwhelmed when dealing with the losing and the press and the player distractions presented by Hillis and Cribbs, Holmgren allowed Shurmur to stand up at the podium today and try and dodge the questions the press tossed his way.

Despite the fact Shurmur's team has been disorganized on the field, as evidenced by the TE handoff, nine guys on punts and Cincinnati's quick snap TD in the first game, Holmgren has not been in any hurry to stand up in front of the assembled masses and take some of the burden off of his beleaguered head coach.

If the main man isn't willing to stand up and address the mistakes being made why should anyone in the organization feel a need to be accountable?

Where is Mike Holmgren while Rome is burning?

Much of the allure in hiring Holmgren was that the city and fans finally felt like an actual football man was here in Cleveland to run the show. Here was a respected football coach and GM coming to Cleveland to sort through a mess left by amateurs like Dwight Clark and George Kokinis and egomaniacs like Phil Savage, Butch Davis and Eric Mangini. Here was a man who took a bad Seattle team and shaped them into a Super Bowl-caliber football team.

When Holmgren waited a year to fire Mangini many of us said, "Cool. He gave Mangini a shot and now he's going to go with his system."

When he hired Shurmur we said, "Hmm…not much of a search but the man knows what he wants and he hired someone he's comfortable with".

Now we're forced to wonder whether Holmgren just took Randy Lerner's money and mailed the rest in because that's what it looks like to the layman.

Now that rebuild isn't only in doubt but it doesn't seem like there's any direction at all. Holmgren hired a coach who knows one way and one way only. Good coaches build a system around their talent. Shurmur and the Browns are instead pounding players into a system. It's not working. In fact, it's failing miserably and all the trappings of a losing locker room are on display with disgruntled players and pissed off fans.

It's to the point where I'm actually hoping the Browns don't give up multiple picks to draft a flavor-of-the-day QB like Robert Griffin III. Not because I don't think RG3 isn't a remarkable talent and a worthy QB but because Shurmur's offense will neuter RG3 like it neutered Sam Bradford (Fun Fact- St. Louis is the lowest scoring team in the NFL and Pat Shurmur was their OC last season while Cleveland is the 3rd lowest scoring team in the NFL this season and their OC is...well, you know). Also because, at this point, you probably have to sacrifice additional picks to move up and get Griffin III. Holmgren's one bright spot is GM Tom Heckert (who also apparently has an aversion to public speaking). Heckert has put together a couple of decent drafts and there's no indication he wouldn't continue to do so if armed with the picks necessary. I don't want to see those picks traded away in order to grab a QB who will be forced out of what he does so well and into a system that features a majority of passes that travel 10-yards or less.

No thank you. There are so many holes on this team from a talent perspective that, although I know you can't win without an elite QB, I'd prefer to let Heckert swing with a full complement of picks to infuse this team with OL, LBs and WRs that are currently lacking. Another QB du jour will be here next year or the year after when the Browns may have some talent around him. And while I have seen nothing to show me that McCoy is elite I do think he's a viable option while more talent is brought in.

If you can get a guy like RG3 in the flow of the draft and without giving up additional picks for him then go get him. But don't give away picks to go out and get an unknown commodity that your overwhelmed coaching staff can't let loose to use his multitude of skills.

This is NOT what we were looking for when Holmgren took this job. Perhaps the depth of our depravity wasn't conveyed by Lerner to Holmgren but Browns fans are sick and tired of there being ego-driven failures and no accountability in Berea. And while it's not in Holmgren's job objectives to pacify fans after every bad spell, the circumstances of the last 4-6 weeks clearly demand that a leader step up and lead.

That leader is not Pat Shurmur. That leader was supposed to be Mike Holmgren. It'd be really nice if Holmgren actually stepped up and performed like the leader of this franchise he was hired to be instead of just getting paid like one.

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