O.K. football fans, let's talk ball. I have a ton of topics to talk about including this week's loss to the Pitts-burg.

The first thing I want to address is the Colt McCoy concussion fiasco. The entire process was screwed up after that play. McCoy was not laying there because his hand hurt… he was not contemplating whether he could stand the pain on his non-throwing hand. He was clearly trying to gather his bearings and get his head straight.

I don't expect Pat Shurmur to make medical decisions but the facts of the situation indicate he should have at least paused before putting McCoy back in the game. Backup Senaca Wallace is a veteran QB who just threw a pass on the money on his first attempt. Wallace was more than capable of getting the job done and, to be honest, Wallace is probably a better NFL QB at this stage of McCoy's career and in this offense.

To take my stance of keeping Wallace in the game a bit further, from a pure football standpoint Senaca Wallace's superb athleticism actually makes him a better option in the redzone.

I am not going to beat a dead horse, but that situation just continued the "I'm overwhelmed" theme that has followed Pat Shurmur around in his rookie season like the cloud of dirt that follows Pigpen on Charlie Brown.

Game/Player Notes

The last two games, although losses, should provide a bit of hope that the Browns defense is well on its way to playing winning defense. Some would say the 290 yards the Ravens chewed up is an indicator that the Browns defense still has a long way to go. I actually think it is more of an indicator of how bad the offense is.

If the offense was effective in the Baltimore game, the defense wouldn't have been in the position of constantly being on he field. Points are a better barometer than yards and the defense only game up 17 points, which isn't great. But against a top caliber team it is not bad either.

The Steelers game on the road really showed me where the defense is headed and what it will be with a few more additions. Holding the Steelers to 14 points in their own stadium, getting hits on Big Ben, and forcing turnovers in a game that was nationally televised is something to build on.

The offense in both games continued to be stuck in quick sand and unfortunately that is exactly what I expected. The offense has been putrid all season and I didn't expect them to fix it against two of the best defenses in the NFL.

**Speaking of the offense, that leads me into the first rant. I am still waiting for the fact that we have a head coach with an offensive background to pay off. The offensive performance (or lack of) shouldn't be placed on any one individual. It should without a question be shared between the inaccurate throws of Colt McCoy, the inconsistent O-line play and the fact that we lead the league in dropped balls, but the head coach/offensive coordinator should also be on that list.

When you look at the play calling itself you wonder why certain plays are used once and never seen again and you wonder why in the world Greg Little who is supposed to be good with the ball in his hands is yet to catch any type of screen passes or hitches. You also wonder how the TE position which started the year as a strength has become irrelevant. You ask yourself how running plays like the toss-crack that Peyton Hillis runs so well has disappeared.

Pat Shurmur being the head coach hasn't allowed him to perform his best as a play caller and he has certainly not done a good job of devising schemes to fit our personnel. I don't see the guy being let go after one year but it is pretty clear so far that he is not making a positive difference in the offense at all.

As bad as the offense has been in previous years in Cleveland it is sad to say that Pat Shurmur and his WCO have not been an improvement over what we have seen in previous years and it doesn't help Shurmur's case when you look at a defense that changed schemes while starting young and inexperienced players but that has still outperformed the offense by leaps and bounds.

In my mind I feel like I have to give Pat Shurmur a full and regular offseason in order to make an accurate judgment on what he is bringing to the table from an offensive standpoint but if he can't get the offense to look like a varsity outfit come 2012 he must go immediately.

As a head coach if you are going to take on the role as coordinator and that side of the team is a hot mess then what are you really doing for the team?

**Alex Mack is simply a road grader. One of the multiple times I watched the Steelers game I watched only the line play and he had an epic battle with Casey Hampton.

I sometimes wonder if a center can be "wasted" by playing the position and players like Mack are the ones that make me have those thoughts. I think if he was playing somewhere else on the O-line and the Browns ran behind him on a regular basis, their running game would be having much more success. Either way, the guy is tough as nails and plays the game exactly like you want an offensive lineman to play it.

**Colt McCoy is still on a roller coaster. I see marked improvement in his pocket presence and his ability to settle his feet but he is still having ball placement issues. Don't make the mistake of saying that the Browns lead the league in drops just because they have Greg Little on the team, because that simply isn't true.

Although the raw rookie Little has clearly shown he is not ready to be a lead WR in the NFL, Colt McCoy consistently puts the ball in locations that make catching the ball more difficult, and when you aren't throwing to elite players that is a recipe for failure more times than not.

The one thing sticks out in my mind more than anything about Colt and his play this year is the fact that he doesn't have a signature game. I understand that maybe he would have had one by now if some more balls are caught but part of me says that stance is a cop out.

The fact that you can't find a game so far that the young QB carried us on his back or made many plays that stick out is a problem to me. You can't point at any one game and say "look, even though the team stunk record wise this game is clearly an indication Colt McCoy is the guy for our future."

He still has time to have a signature game but his time is running out to make a statement and maybe the reason is simply the weapons around him, but I'm not betting my paycheck on that either.

**Greg Little has looked like a player who is questioning everything he does. As a WR the second your confidence wavers and any sort of doubt seeps in… you're in for a long day. There is a reason it usually takes rookies longer to become effective at the WR spot, and unfortunately Little not playing at all last year, and only playing the WR position for one year, puts him even further behind the 8-ball.

You can tell he is thinking and pressing, which to a WR is a death sentence. You have to be comfortable and confident with what you are doing so you can relax and catch the ball. In college really good offensive players have the confidence that no matter what the defense is doing it won't be enough to stop them. When you get to the pros even the elite talents take time to find their way at that position.

If you want some stats to reinforce the fact that Little needs more time to see what he is capable of once the game slows down for him, just look at players like Larry Fitzgerald, Andre Johnson, Calvin Johnson…..if you take their rookie years. LF-58 catches 780 yards 8TDs…AJ-66,976,4td, CJ- 48,756,4td….Then you compare the numbers so far for the rookie Little (52 rec 538yards 1td) and you see he is not having a failing rookie year at all.

Little has dropped a ton of balls and some have been in crucial spots but there is no way in the football world you can say that he is going to be Jason Avant instead of Anquan Bolden because of his performance after his rookie year.

The facts read like this….no football last year…played the position for 1 year, no conventional offseason, rookie WR. It is not his fault he is counted on while playing for a team with no other WRs with elite skills.

As a fan, watching a player drop a pass on 3rd down that would have gained a first down is torture. Seeing your young QB finally put the ball on the numbers and it not being caught is even more frustrating, but don't let that frustration allow you to throw a rookie WR into the scrap heap.

Once Greg Little's mind stops spinning, he will be a better player and history has shown that WRs have big jumps in productivity in year two. If the same conversations are being had next year then fans can prime the eject button but not on a rookie WR….oh yeah by the way, who is showing him the ropes??? The Browns don't have a WR on the roster with more than 36 catches in a season.

**Sheldon Brown's days of being a starter in the NFL should officially be coming to an end. In the Steelers game I almost felt sorry for him on that first series. They purposely attacked him in the passing game and the running game…must be rough playing opposite Joe Haden. He looked old and stiff especially on that smoke screen to Antonio Brown.

1-10-PIT 27 (9:17) B.Roethlisberger pass deep left to M.Wallace to PIT 49 for 22 yards (S.Brown).

1-10-PIT 49 (8:40) B.Roethlisberger pass short right to D.Johnson to CLV 49 for 2 yards (C.Gocong, D.Jackson).

PENALTY on CLV-J.Sheard, Illegal Use of Hands, 4 yards, enforced at PIT 49 - No Play.

1-10-CLV 47 (8:13) R.Mendenhall up the middle to CLV 44 for 3 yards (A.Rubin, C.Gocong).

2-7-CLV 44 (7:34) B.Roethlisberger pass short left to A.Brown to CLV 32 for 12 yards (D.Jackson).

1-10-CLV 32 (6:52) M.Wallace left end ran ob at CLV 11 for 21 yards.

1-10-CLV 11 **(6:19) B.Roethlisberger pass short left to J.Cotchery for 11 yards, TOUCHDOWN [J.Mitchell].**

**Speaking of Joe Haden for those who say he is not playing as good as he was earlier in the season because he gave up a play to A.J. Green on a great catch and slipped on the Antonio Brown play against the Steelers, I say “BS”. He is dealing with adjusting to the treatment that all of the really good CBs get in NFL. He is dealing with QBs throwing away from him virtually all game.

He has to learn to stay focused so when he finally does get a ball his way he is on his game, but he is not playing at a lower level than he was earlier in the year. Imagine the treatment he will get when he actually catches some of the interceptions he has dropped this year! He won’t get any action at all.

**Chris Gocong has played really well since taking over the strongside LB position. He probably is better suited to play closer to the line of scrimmage so he doesn’t pay as much for his lack of instincts. I am, however, a bit bothered by what I saw in the Steelers game. Honestly it really bothers me when I see players, especially defensive players, turn up their “want to” levels.

Why in the world hasn’t he played with that level of passion from day one? When defensive players play better because they look like they have more desire on a certain Sunday I can’t

help but to ask ….”How come you don’t give effort like that every game?”….If I was the coach you better believe I would be in his ear from here on out.

**Jabaal Sheard is healthy again and he is definitely over any rookie wall he may have been behind. He has his explosion back and he has been in the QB’s lap on most passing plays.

Sheard’s explosion off the line is a great complement to his really good inside move and vice versa. With a year under his belt, I expect great things from Jabaal Sheard next year, RTs struggle to block him one on one and his anchor against the run is getting better every week.

This defense will be ridiculous once they get a RDE who can bring fire off the other edge.

**I have nothing personal against Montario Hardesty but it is frustrating to see what I consider another unproductive season for a 2nd round pick that you gave up draft picks to acquire. Some said he was an injury risk coming out of college and you see why. He desperately needs a healthy offseason so he can gain confidence and spring back into his step.

He really looks uncomfortable on the field. Almost like he is trying to play too fast and force plays. I hope another year gives him the burst and explosiveness he showed at Tennessee his senior year.

**Just like I said in previous articles, I figured once Jordan Norwood got consistent playing time he would quickly become one of Colt McCoy’s favorite weapons. He is really quick so he is usually open after the initial break in his route and once a QB gets comfortable in a WR being able to do that he can begin to anticipate some throws, which is exactly what McCoy needs to do in order to compensate for his average arm strength.

**Nice to finally see Evan Moore running routes from the conventional TE position. Moore needs to be able to do that so he doesn’t become a gimmick.

Speaking of TEs, what in the world has happened to Ben Watson this year? He has been a non factor this year after being the team's best weapon last year.

**To add to Owen Marecic's title of being what a lot of people consider a wasted draft pick, the word must be out about him. I don't know if I have seen LBs attack a FB the way I have seen guys attack him this year. If you saw the hit that knocked him silly against Pittsburgh you would understand what I mean when I say "attacking" him. Farrior blew him up in every sense of the word.

Draft

I know most fans have turned their attention to the offseason and player acquisition so I just wanted to remind everyone that this offseason will be a normal one and it will allow teams to fill some holes before the draft, which in turn will help to narrow down team needs.

As you can tell from the roster composition, the Browns have started a full blown youth movement so don't expect free agency to bring a boat load of players, but you can expect the GM Tom Heckert to look for some good young players coming out of their first contracts and you can also look for the Browns first move to involve re-signing LB D'Qwell Jackson.

For all the people demanding the Browns to draft a QB from this year's QB class I think they should just step back and wait. Most thought Andrew Luck was going to come out last year and he didn't. Most of the good QBs are underclassmen so we need to wait and see who declares before we start saving money for new jerseys.

The next thing I would say is remember President Mike Holmgren has had more success with QBs he got from other people's roster than one's he has taken in the draft, so that is always a strong possibility.

The last point I will make about the draft is take into consideration Tom Heckert was not in Philadelphia yet when the Eagles took Donovan McNabb and Pat Shurmur was. That really doesn't mean anything special. Just note that Heckert wasn't the guy who drafted McNabb if

you are trying to figure out what he will think of a dynamic QB like Robert Griffith III.

Tom Heckert is not the type of GM to mortgage the future of the Browns and the roster hasn't been overhauled enough that we can afford to give up picks over the course of the next two years. With all that being said, if the Browns do ultimately give up picks for one of the QBs coming out, you couldn't blame them for being aggressive and getting their guy.

As far as competition for drafting QBs it looks like two other teams drafting in the top ten will have their eyes on QBs…the Dolphins and Redskins need QBs for sure.

Like I said before, the Colts can sell that they would have no problem taking a QB if they want but I am not buying it no matter what they say.

I understand taking a QB for the future but Peyton Manning is back throwing a football and if he is healthy and plays for 4 or 5 more years the Colts can't afford to pay Andrew Luck a $25-million dollar guaranteed contract to hold a clipboard…it just doesn't make sense.

They will claim they are taking him until the moment they trade the pick, that is how they will get a king's ransom, but I don't think they will actually pull the trigger on drafting him.

If you followed my "Feeling A Draft" series last spring then you already know I am a certifiable draft junkie and I have been studying a gigantic list of prospects throughout this college season.

I plan on doing the same type of series this year but I will expand it with some more pre-cursor type of articles. I hope you enjoy it as much as I enjoy putting it together.

Around the league

*I love when the end of the season matter for playoff seeding. There are 4 teams atop the AFC vying for home field advantage. Two of those teams are the AFC North's own (Steelers, Ravens) who are also battling for a division title. The Browns play both teams still and it would be great to be a spoiler, but if the offense stays on strike we will more than likely just be a tune up.

*This Tim Tebow stuff is way past out of control. People keep talking about him being 7-1, but were people Kyle Orton crazy when he started the 2009 season 6-0? It's amazing what praying can do…..Tim better pray Von Miller and Elvis Dumervil play out of their minds this week going up against Tom Brady and the second ranked offense in the league…If the Broncos "Tebow" Hoodie then I guess I might have to buy some stock in this prophet QB.

*Everyone keeps saying things like chemistry has a lot to do with the Eagles not winning games…I don't think chemistry is their issue at all. Ball security is their issue. They have a -12 turnover ratio and not many teams can overcome numbers like that. Not even explosive ones like the Eagles.

*Almost every week I hear Jon Gruden on MNF I have day dreams of him coaching the Browns. I think this city is craving a passionate coach like that. He really gets fired up and isn't afraid to talk about the things that make him passionate. I love the line this past week when he was talking about how good he thinks RG3 can be when he said "I would walk to Waco for a chance to coach that guy". I love guys like him and Rob Ryan who are not afraid to be themselves in front of people they don't know, even though there is a possibility of criticism.

*I have noticed that the 3 interim coaches all satisfy the Rooney Rule requiring a minority candidate to be interviewed for head coaching vacancies….could be just a coincidence but it is probably going to be a popular thing to do so owners can get target "their" guys and quickly offer them the job.

Well Browns fans, I know these articles haven't been coming at the most consistent rate as of late but rest assured it has nothing to do with the Browns record or outcomes of the games. Fortunately (or unfortunately depending on how you look at it) my passion for the orange and brown doesn't fade, but when you don't do this for a living sometimes life gets in the way of typing, so I appreciate you still reading…..Enjoy the game on Sunday and…..Go Browns!