"*At least they won*," my wife told me right after the game.

Well, yeah. But that would mean a lot more if the Win mattered.

The goal of the Preseason isn't to Win, it's to Survive. And with injuries to major contributors such as Mo Massaquoi, Jordan Cameron, Scott Paxson, and Dimitri Patterson to go along with the already sidelined Usama Young, Trent Richardson, Eddie Williams, D'Qwell Jackson, Marcus Bernard, Ahtyba Rubin, Ben Watson, Frostee Rucker, and Phil Taylor, they may be surviving but they've got the swine flu.

To review, that's 5 starters (including Gocong) that were missing from the starting Defense - 3 of the 4 starting Defensive Linemen - with 2 of the remaining starters being guys that will likely be suspended come Regular Season. It's almost a certainty that the Browns will be entering Week 1 without at least 4 Defensive starters already.

So at least Defensively, you knew it wouldn't be pretty. And it wasn't. The Browns only allowed 17 points and employed that bend-but-don't-break style they used last season, but they gave up

198 (!) yards rushing. And it wasn't just one unit - it was all units. Depleted at DT and LB, the backups simply couldn't get it done against the run.

Offensively, the Browns looked decent at times. Brandon Weeden was sharp on his first drive, hitting Travis Benjamin on a beautiful pass for 34 and getting the team as far as the DET 23, but it stalled there and ended with a forced fumble from behind by a guy that RT Mitchell Schwartz let through.

And while that turnover probably wasn't Weeden's fault, the interception he threw 2 drives later probably was. That was following a string of passes that were slightly off the mark and one that also should've been picked.

The Weeden pick led to a short 25 yard TD drive by Detroit backup Shaun Hill.

Colt McCoy came in for the 2nd quarter and looked pretty good, showing off his mobility and hitting Jordan Cameron up the middle for 42 yards, the kind of pass he seemed unable/unwilling to make last year. But his drives didn't amount to much either as they were marred by penalties, just a FG to show for his work.

An 80 yard drive by Hill and the Lions ended in a 4th down TD, and a 14-3 Halftime lead.

Seneca Wallace came in for the 3rd quarter and was fairly effective too, finally getting the Browns in the end zone on a nice improvised 12 yard pass to Brad Smelley on a drive that started in Detroit territory thanks to Jordan Norwood's 45 yard punt return. Seneca's next drive also got into scoring range, but backup Kicker Jeff Wolfert missed the 46 yard attempt.

After the Lions tacked on a FG to start the 4th quarter for a 17-10 lead, Thaddeus Lewis came in and showed us what the coaching staff has been so high on, showing excellent pocket awareness and accuracy in leading the team right down the field on a 75 yard drive capped by a 3 yard Adonis Thomas TD run. They went for 2, but that Thomas run was stuffed (like most Thomas runs), leaving the Browns down 17-16 with about 6 minutes left.

For a while, it looked like Kellen Moore and the Lions would be able to run out the rest of the clock, but the Browns D stiffened and Lewis got it back with about 2 minutes left. A few quick passes moved them right down the field, and Wolfert came in and nailed a 45 yard FG to win the game, much to the amusement of pretty much everyone employed by the Cleveland Browns.

"*At least they won*." Sure, why not. In Cleveland, you take wins where you can get 'em.

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Stats

Time of Possession: DET - 31:29, CLE - 28:31

Total Yards: CLE - 429, DET - 368

Yards Passing: CLE - 309, DET - 170

Yards Rushing: DET - 198, CLE - 120

First Downs: DET - 21, CLE - 20

Turnovers Forced: CLE - 2, DET - 2

Sacks: DET - 3, CLE - 1

Final Score: Cleveland 19, Detroit 17

Really, not much of value can be gleaned from Fake Game stats. It's nice to see that Cleveland got over 300 yards passing - it means all their QB's were getting some yards and I can't remember the last time the Browns eclipsed the 300 mark. It's disheartening to see the high rushing total for Detroit, but I think all y'all better just get used to that.

It might be a while before those numbers start to come down.

Game Balls

Thaddeus Lewis - Very impressive in the first extended action I remember seeing from him. Threw a ball with nice velocity and accuracy, plenty mobile enough, good size... he's the reason that one of McCoy/Wallace will be gone by the start of Regular Season. He's got more long term potential than either one of them.

Travis Benjamin - His speed was quite apparent, and the catch he made on the 34 yard pass from Weeden was impressive. Might see a lot of time with the starters if Mo Mass' head issues persist and Josh Gordon develops slowly.

Joe Haden - Wasn't in there that long, but that pass defense of the Stafford pass on 3rd and 1 on the Lions' first drive was All Pro.

Chris Ogbannaya - Making the RB decision very difficult on the Browns, just hits the hole and gets positive yardage, the way a RB should.

Honorable Mention

Montario Hardesty - Didn't have many opportunities, but it was still apparent that he hit holes with a speed and authority he lacked last year.

Jordan Cameron - Great catch on the floater by McCoy and it appears he'll be a big factor in the Browns Offense.

Colt McCoy & Seneca Wallace - Attention NFL! If you're looking for an undersized but mobile backup QB, have I got the guy for you! Both have plenty of career starts and have shown solid play so far this year! But one must go! Call 1-800-HECKERT for more details. No reasonable offer will be refused!

Trevin Wade - Stood out during his time on the field, making solid tackles and providing solid pass coverage.

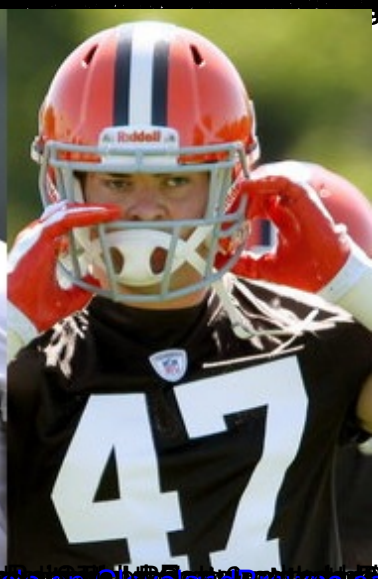
David Sims - That was a helluva one-handed INT, Mr. Sims.

Hall of Shame

Defensive Injuries - I wonder if Michael Dean Perry and Hanford Dixon are available.

Mitchell Schwartz - His growing pains will hurt us all.

Emmanuel Stephens - If he's still starting when the games count, it will be a long long season.

Brandon Weeden - The good news: All the previous Browns QB's that looked good in past Preseasons went on to suck in the Real Season, so maybe it's a good omen that Weeden was bad. If you can call that a silver lining.

Josh Gordon - Seemed to run poor routes. Appeared disinterested and lost, both on the field and off. Displayed none of the speed seen in Training Camp. A complete non-factor.