Furls checks in to wish us all a Happy New Year (five days late), and takes his turn putting on the prognosticator hat to predict what lies ahead for Cleveland sports fans in 2007. Furls is a realist. And as much as it pains him to say it, he sees nothing but another turd sandwich in the offerings for us in the coming year. Close misses for the Cavs and Indians, and another year of misery for Romeo Crennel and Browns fans.

Let me be the last to wish you a happy effin' New Year. I know this column is late, but what would Swerb do if I sent him one that was on time? I am pretty sure that he wouldn't know what to do with it and would be forced to sit on it for a few days until it was late, so I figured I would save him the trouble. There is something nice to be said for consistency, even bad consistency, and it is with this flavor of consistency that I will steal away all the hope and good feelings that I gave you for Christmas with my article, Merry Effin' Christmas.

I am an old friend of Cris Sykes, but apparently years of watching the Cleveland Indians and Browns have eroded his sanity. As I read his piece , his diminishing faculties were obviously clear. I am here today to offer you a much more pragmatic look at 2007 based on the histories of the Cleveland sports teams because unlike the mutual fund disclaimer, past performance actually is indicative of future returns.

I guess the best place to start is the Cleveland Browns, while the taste of the big turd sandwich that they served in 2006 is still fresh in my mouth. I have never felt compelled to flush my eyes with one of those Chem Lab safety bottles after watching a football game, but I felt like doing so after nearly every Browns' game this year. That was about the only first I experienced while watching the Browns this year. The play of 2006 was everything that we expect to see from the Browns since their return, and the coaching reverted back to what we have grown to expect here in Cleveland. I guess there is a lot to be said for consistency, so much so, that the I am now beginning to feel that Romeo Crennel will be back for 2007 for the sake of consistency.

I am not sure if Randy Lerner has ever read R.W. Emerson, but I have. Emerson said, “A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds.” If this is in fact true, than I suggest that we Clevelanders pull out our swords and get ready because, I have a feeling that with all the hobgoblins that will be running around, we are going to have to pull some Lord of the Rings stuff (I get to be Legolas, just calling that right now). What Emerson is really saying that maintaining an unacceptable consistency for the sake of consistency is foolish. Hmmm, that sounds familiar. So, for the sake of consistency, I predict that in 2007 the Browns will go 4-12 under Romeo Crennel, put off drafting linemen another year (addressing the line through free agency again), and in a stunning move, they will attempt to unseat the Detroit Lions as the worst drafting team in the NFL by drafting yet another offensive skill player (to be crushed behind the Browns meager O-line).

Now for the Indians, this is much tougher because they are not quite as consistent as the Browns, but my history in cryptology has allowed me to break the Indian’s Code. The Indian’s Code is a lot like the movie the Da Vinci Code, but Mark Shapiro could not shell out the bucks to get Tom Hanks (small market financial constraints), so he got Ralph Macchio instead, citing his history as a successful teen star and his recent efforts to regain that form. Dolan has promised to shell out the bucks to sign a big name for the sequel, I am hoping he gets Jenna Jameson to play Macchio’s love interest.

Here is the gist of the Indians Code, they only seriously compete in odd numbered years (1995, 1997, 1999, 2001, 2005), so I am predicting that even in spite of a rather luke-warm offseason, the Indian’s will find a way to make this season interesting into September, but in order to stay true to form, the Indians will need to fall just a couple of games short based on questionable calls from Eric Wedge. Again we must stay consistent!

Consistency is a hard word to use when discussing the Cleveland Cavaliers, the only thing that is consistent about them is that they seem to consistently stand around and wait for LeBron to do something, Larry Hughes seems to be consistently hurt, and Damon Jones consistently plays horrific defense. Wait a minute, they are pretty consistent.

My expectation for the Cleveland Cavaliers in 2007 is that they will go deep into the Eastern Conference playoffs only to be out-teamworked by the Detroit Pistons, leaving us, the fans, saying the same things that we have been consistently saying, “Man, the Cavs are just one or two players away from having a team around LeBron.” Then we will look at the cap situation (particularly Z’s contract) and realize that the Cavs will always be one player away, but at least the Cavs will remain consistent.

So there you have it, a pragmatic series of predictions for 2007 based largely on consistency. After all, isn’t running a sport’s franchise all about consistency?