In a game that set offensive football all the way back to the 2008 Cleveland Browns season the Browns squeaked out their first win of '09 by a score of 6-3 over Buffalo. That's the good news. The bad news is that the NFL doesn't use the system that Euro League soccer uses and that means both Buffalo and Cleveland will remain in the upper division for the foreseeable future. Folks, this one was ugly. Tyrone Hill ugly. Peeks hits on the "win", the Buckeyes victory over the Badgers, the MLB Playoffs, and the 5-0 Broncos in The Weekend Wrap.

My Eyes Are Still Bleeding

What a ball game.

The Browns-Bills game Sunday was an epic give and take struggle. It was a back and forth affair in which the outcome was not decided until the final minute. It was a fiercely and bravely contested battle of wills that came down to the golden leg of Billy Cundiff.

It was an instant classic.

It was either all of the above or it was one of three worst sporting events I've ever watched. But I did watch it. Partly because this column is somewhat dependent on watching the games and partly because my neighbor, Larry, invited me over to his place to sample the Copperhead Red beers he had just finished bottling.

Thank God we didn't drink for every pass dropped by a Browns receiver or for every false start penalty committed by the Bills. I'd have alcohol poisoning and Larry would be scheduling another trip to the brewery to make a new batch of Copperhead Red.

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The bad news is that the NFL doesn't use the system that Euro League soccer uses and that means both Buffalo and Cleveland will remain in the upper division for the foreseeable future. You think I'm overstating how horrendous this game was? To wit;

- Derek Anderson completed one pass in the first half of play. To his credit he was able to duplicate that production by also completing one pass in the 2nd half to finish 2/17 for 23 yards. FOR THE GAME. In between all the misses and dropped passes DA did keep his interception streak going by hitting Jairus Byrd, a Buffalo cornerback, with one of his few catch-able balls on the day.
- Anderson's QB rating on Sunday was 15.1

- Mohamed Massaquoi led the Browns in receiving for the second straight week by virtue of his one catch for 16 yards, narrowly edging out Steve Heiden's one catch for seven yards.

- Massaquoi, TE Robert Royal, "WR" Joshua Cribbs and RB Jerome Harrison combined to drop at least half a dozen thrown footballs.

- Punter Dave Zastudil was easily and clearly the Browns MVP.

But an ugly 6-3 win is much more palatable than an ugly 6-3 loss even if it meant watching Head Coach Eric Mangini and Defensive Coordinator Rob Ryan share a very uncomfortable embrace afterward.

Zastudil earned his game ball on Sunday. He punted nine times and seven of those punts were downed inside the 20-yard line. The Browns special teams were excellent all day. Not only did they combine to force terrible field position upon the Bills all afternoon but they also came up with the key play in the game when Zastudil's 4th quarter punt was muffed by Bills return man Roscoe Parrish and recovered deep in Bills territory by LB Blake Costanzo. It was Parrish's 2nd lost fumble of the day and this one led directly to the winning points.

Jamal Lewis, whose gas gauge needle looked to be firmly buried on "E" until Sunday, ran hard and effectively. Lewis carried the ball 31 times for 117 tough yards and almost single-handedly moved the Browns offense at times.

Hats also go off to the Browns defense. The Bills have struggled offensively for three weeks in a row now but the Browns did not take their cleats of the throats of Trent Edwards, Marshawn Lynch, Fred Jackson and Terrell Owens. The Browns won the turnover battle and harassed Edwards into his own poor day (16/31, 152 yards, 1 interception)) while holding Buffalo to just those three points.

It all added up to a Browns win Sunday in Buffalo. The train is back on the tracks and the next stop is Pittsburgh for the smoking hot Manginis.

Ride the wave.

Don't Look Now

I'm not sure how this Buckeyes team is doing it but the rest of the country is probably looking at the latest polls and saying a collective, "Oh no, please not them and not again." Ohio State climbed to 7th in this week's AP poll and with a road game at Purdue next Saturday followed by home games against Minnesota and New Mexico State after that, Ohio State could be back in the top five by the time things get tough again and they have to finish with Penn State, Iowa and Michigan.

The good news out of Columbus on Saturday was that Terrelle Pryor was not as ineffective as Browns QB Derek Anderson was on Sunday.

But it was close.

Pryor completed just 5/13 passes for 87 yards against Wisconsin in OSU's 31-13 win. The sophomore did hit Devier Posey for a long TD but he did throw a pick on a day that the Buckeyes also only rushed for 97 yards.

So how do you throw for less than 100 yards, rush for less than 100 yards and still beat an undefeated opponent comfortably? You return two Wisconsin interceptions for touchdowns and take a kickoff back 96 yards for another score.

This version of the Buckeyes gets things done on defense while Pryor seems bogged down in his development. Kurt Coleman and Jermale Hines each returned Scott Tolzien interceptions for touchdowns on Saturday and Ray Smalls followed a Wisconsin field goal by taking the

kickoff back for a touchdown.

This 2009 Buckeye defense doesn't seem to me to be as dominant as the 2002 national championship team but maybe I'm just biased toward that 2002 team. The 2002 defense had future NFL players at nearly every spot on the field. The 2009 Buckeyes just ‘feel' smaller and slower but just as willing to step up and make huge plays that are the difference between winning and losing football games.

I don't know if the Buckeyes can keep making those plays over the next six games but until and/or unless Pryor can accelerate his development they're going to have to if the Buckeyes have any aspirations of ruining the nation's post-holiday football viewing in January.

Etcetera

- Back in the day I used to umpire baseball for some ancillary income. Came ‘this close' to attending the Joe Brinkman Umpiring School and giving it a shot as a profession. But one of the first things they looked for in that line of work at that time was size. They wanted umpires who were as big as or bigger than the players they were officiating and I wasn't that guy. But I did umpire games at the CABA High School World Series where players like Manny Ramirez and Alex Rodriguez displayed their talents.

Umpiring is a tough job. Tougher still at the higher levels where balls and strikes, safes and outs are all measured in fractions of inches and seconds. So I understand the difficulties of calling a game and the major league umpires by and large do a great job. You watch replays of close plays and are astounded that the

umpires ultimately get the call right an overwhelming number of times.

But all that considered, umpires Phil Cuzzi and C.B. Bucknor were absolutely brutal in a couple of ball games last week. Cuzzi flat-out whiffed on a fair-foul call late in Friday's Twins-Yankees game and Bucknor blew two fairly easy and blatantly obvious calls at first base in Thursday's Angels- Red Sox game.

It's almost enough to mandate some sort of a managerial challenge process to review egregious errors and make sure the game's outcome isn't determined by a mistake. I understand that baseball is an old-school game and that human error is part of the equation but any errors that take place should be made by the players and not by an impartial arbiter.

The technology is available to review disputed calls and get them right. To have that technology available and not use it is simply unfair to the player and the fans.

- Anyone else watch the Broncos go to 5-0 on the season Sunday? Anyone see the raw emotion displayed by Denver Head Coach Josh McDaniels throughout the game and, especially, afterward as his squad bounced the Patriots in OT?

Anyone see McDaniels' own players greet him with emotion and congratulate him for the win? What about all the Patriot players who sought out McDaniels and offered congratulations and showed how much respect they have for him?

Anyone else look at the disparity between the teams in Denver and Cleveland and at the

disparity between how the newly hired coaches in each city project themselves and not feel a little twinge of jealousy?

*Sigh.....

- The Red Sox are out of the MLB playoffs after being unceremoniously swept by the Califoranaheim of Los Angeles Angels 3-0. I hope that Tribe GM Mark Shapiro had the decency to wait 10-15 minutes before placing a call to Red Sox Pitching Coach John Farrell about the Indians' open managerial position.

- Duly inspired by the heat on their head coach Bobby Bowden, Florida State came out of the locker room Saturday night and gave up almost half a hundred points to Georgia Tech. If word of that defensive effort gets back to Bowden during one of the small intervals of

time when he's not napping he's going to be pissed.

- I know it's been just 5 days or so since Braylon Edwards was dealt to the Jets, but I still can't muster up any give-a-damn about it. Talent and potential at some point have to equate to production and with this petulant, entitled tool the talent and potential just didn't produce positive results often enough.

So much is made of the deal and there are so many people arguing that you have to nurture talent and accept some idiosyncrasies and diva-like behavior from guys like Braylon, but I'd argue you have to accept those things from ***pro ductive***
players. If it's Larry Fitzgerald giving you an ass-ache with a few late nights, a few drunken punches and a few naps in meetings then maybe you look the other way. But it just may be that Larry Fitzgerald produces like he does because he isn't an immature attention whore

who refuses to be accountable or responsible for his deficiencies and because he studies his craft and his opponents as opposed to clubbing and worrying about the number of Twitter followers he has and what he'll do in his career after football.

All that said I don't care what Braylon did in his own time. I cared about what he did on our time when we were down there at CBS or at home watching him. And Braylon Edwards wasted a lot of our time.

He's not worth any more of mine.