It's been a rough 2009 for Cleveland sports. But what a finish to the year for this beaten down fan base. The Browns and Cavaliers put a heckuva bow on this stinker of a year over the past week, as the Browns built off the Steelers win with wins at Kansas City and a home win over the Raiders, and the Cavaliers rattles off impressive wins over the Kings, Lakers, and Rockets. In The Weekend Wrap, Peeker gives us his thoughts on the encouraging play by the Browns, the resurgent Cavaliers, and also takes a look ahead to this Friday's Rose Bowl between the Bucks and the Ducks.

Ho! Ho! Ho! That's Three in a Row!

You know it's that magical time of the year when two days after Santa drops his crap off for all the little kiddies he gives us adults the gift of Derek Anderson versus Charlie Frye down at Cleveland Browns Stadium.

You also now can be sure that Santa has a sense of humor and is a sarcastic old elf.

But I went down there to watch it. Hell yes I did. It was almost like the NFL announced that there would be a huge car accident down at CBS and that ticket holders were welcome to come see it unfold.

The head on collision between two really poor QBs never materialized though. It was more like one car driving repeatedly into a tree as Charlie Frye played like Charlie Frye plays and the Browns accepted his three gift interceptions and gave their fans a 23-9 post-Christmas present on Sunday with their win over the Oakland Raiders.

That makes it three straight for the juggernaut from Cleveland. And I can't help but notice that the team that looked most ready, willing and able to play hard-hitting NFL-caliber football on Sunday was the Eric Mangini-led Cleveland Browns. Mangini's job under new team president Mike Holmgren may very well lie in the balance when the Browns face Jacksonville next Sunday to close out the season, but it's really hard to argue that the team seems to have taken to Mangini's methods and tactics and is still fighting for every yard on both sides of the football.

Pittsburgh, Kansas City and now the Raiders can certainly attest to the fact that the Browns have not quit under Mangini despite a 1-11 start and all the debris that accompanied it.

Jerome Harrison certainly hasn't quit. In fact, he looks like he's just getting started. Fresh off his record setting day a week ago in Kansas City, Harrison carried the ball a staggering 39 times (another week, another franchise record for Harrison) and racked up 139 yards and another touchdown Sunday afternoon. Harrison did most of his

damage in the first half and then watched his yards-per-carry dwindle when the Browns basically ran out the clock in the second half.

For his part, Anderson was steady. He made a beautiful throw to Mohamed Massaquoi for a touchdown right before halftime and then effectively managed the game from there on out. DA made none of those mind-numbing mistakes that have plagued his career and he finished 8/17 for 121 yards, the touchdown pass and no interceptions on the day.

You can chalk up the three game winning streak to a team that's starting to find its identity and buy in to what the coach is preaching, the magic of the holidays or a really weak late season schedule. Maybe even a mix of all three. But however you look at it you have to be happy with a 3-1 December.

What, Me Worry?

It was about a week ago when I wrote that I was concerned about the choppiness of waters that the Cavaliers were sailing after they looked lost and disinterested in a loss to the Dirk Nowitzki-less Dallas Mavericks.

Well, never mind. Those were clearly the ramblings of a bitter, frightened man.

It seems there was no boogeyman under the Cavs' bed as they shook off that loss to the Mavs, went on to roll Phoenix the next night, nipped a young and talented Sacramento team in overtime on Wednesday night and then steamrolled Kobe Bryant and the Lakers on Christmas day. Just for good measure the Cavs came back from the west coast and stomped the Houston Rockets 108-83 at ‘The Q' on Sunday night.

I guess winning nine out of their last ten and going from fourth to second in the Eastern Conference is an acceptable level of play.

I still think the Dallas loss served as somewhat of a wakeup call if one is possible for a team that had won five straight entering the Dallas game. Truth is the Cavs ***did*** look somewhat disinterested and sluggish in the wins leading up to last night's loss.

But I found my faith again in how they reacted.

The Cavaliers collectively came together starting last Monday in Phoenix. Their leaders led instead of just talking about leading and they've since put together their best stretch of basketball since the first two playoff rounds last season.

There are a ton of miles between here and this season's playoffs but color me impressed for the first time all season with the Cavaliers. Maybe it's just a case where coming together and fitting into roles took a little longer than expected or maybe last Sunday night in Dallas was an epiphany of sorts.

I don't much care. I just know that right now the Cavaliers are firing on all cylinders and doing it against quality teams and that it's a lot of fun to watch.

Etcetera

- I don't know about the rest of you but I'm really looking forward to the Rose Bowl next Friday. It's the quintessential match up of a high powered offense versus a tough, dominant defense and it's as intriguing a bowl game as you'll find this holiday season.

I'm not as concerned with Oregon's offense as I am with Ohio State's. I think the Buckeyes will keep the Ducks in check for the most part and Oregon will likely commit a couple of turnovers that will aid OSU's cause.

But the Buckeyes need to capitalize on any turnovers they get and they need to be efficient and productive offensively in order

to keep every Oregon possession from being potentially lethal.

The Buckeyes seemed much more comfortable with having Terrelle Pryor run the football as opposed to teaching him how to better throw it as the season wound down. I'd love to see that trend continue on Friday in Pasadena and see Pryor fully immersed in the zone-
read option offense. Pryor puts an incredible strain on the defense given he's a threat to go the distance every time he takes a snap and the zone-read led by a talent like Pryor stretches a defense to its limits. It will also open up the field for Brandon Saine and Boom Herron when the Ducks inevitably have to devote most of their attention to Pryor.

If the Buckeyes use their weapons effectively and control both lines of scrimmage like their size and skills indicate they should, look for Pryor and Ohio State to have a huge Friday evening.

- Hope all of you had a great Christmas and here's to health, happiness and prosperity for all TCF/STO visitors and their families in 2010.