I love my oldest kid to death. He's a quirky kid, which makes him wonderful. He's incredibly intelligent, has a photographic memory, is creative, possesses good leadership abilities, and has a wonderfully advanced sense of humor for a seven year old.

That being said, he's a crappy athlete.

At first, my wife and I thought that he was just missing a little drive, which he definitely is. He's a nice kid, and that extends to the soccer field. He prefers to pass the ball instead of taking it himself, and doesn't challenge the other kids for the ball as much as he could. We always told ourselves that he had the skills, and only needed some drive to be good.

Having watched him play for a few weeks now, and practice this week, I now must admit that simply isn't true. My wife challenged me that I was being too hard on him, but I challenged her back to be objective. That's the hardest thing to do with someone you love – be objective. You give them the benefit of every doubt, and allow every excuse they offer to resonate. But as a parent you really owe it to yourself and your kid to have a completely honest assessment of their strengths and weaknesses, to help guide them in the right direction, and to prevent heartache later.

Okay, he's seven, and a lot can change. And I'm doing nothing to discourage him from playing soccer, which he loves. If he wants to sign up next year, I'll pay the money to watch him chase butterflies, lose every 50/50 ball, and overrun every play, because I want him to have fun most of all, and he does seem to enjoy it. His coach, who is a douchebag, doesn't play him barely at all during the games, and I seethe when he does this (note: I now understand the stories of parents attacking coaches in youth sport. I really do, and I may get arrested Saturday if the coach pulls the same shit I saw him pull last time. Just understand, and contribute to the defense fund I'll setup afterward). Kid is seven, games aren't about winning and losing – everyone gets a fucking trophy (another rant for later), so play the kids equally regardless of ability.

But the fact remains that we should explore other avocations. Like swimming, in which he is quite good. Or chess. And I hate to admit that, and will work my butt off with him to prove that I'm wrong, but identifying this now will make our future less painful to be sure.

In this light, we must admit Browns owner Randy Lerner is a completely incapable professional sports franchise owner.

Let's start with Aston Villa, his first love. In just five years as owner, he's taken this well-funded once proud franchise and mismanaged to the point where relegation is a serious possibility. For those unfamiliar with the term, "relegation" is the process by which the crappiest teams in the Premier League get moved down a level, and replaced by the top performing teams from the level below them. You want to fix tanking in the NBA and NFL for draft picks? Introduce the concept of relegation. Imagine if the Cavs were fighting to stay in the top tier of the NBA instead of a second tier, and imagine if that late December game against the Steelers meant the difference between playing the Steelers and Ravens or playing in Fort Wayne next year. You think we'd see a little more fire and a little less going-through-the-motions type apathy?

And since I know nothing about Aston Villa other than they suck, let's look at the scorched earth Lerner has left in Berea. He's tried every combination of management, from the Policy/Clark years marked by Georgia Frontiere-level endemic incompetence, to the Butch Davis years marked by a William Clay Ford senile abdication of responsibility to a madman, to the Savage/Crennel years marked by Dan Snyder level of overspending, to the Eric Mangini years with Al Davis style personnel mismanagement. Lerner finally gave up, admitting he was clueless, and brought Mike Holmgren in to do all the things Lerner should have the ability to do as owner.

But even though Holmgren is much more knowledgeable and credible, the Browns remain a laughing stock. Positive – Tom Heckert seems to draft well, as is evident from the contributions on the field of the most recent draft classes. Positive – we don't spend money on everyone's trash free agents like your drunk aunt at a garage sale after a box of Franzia. But still, the on-field product is terrible, and hasn't shown any real improvement.

The schedule was released this week. Usually we put our orange-colored glasses on, and see how we can go 10-6, or 12-4 (depending on our blood alcohol level). This year not a one of us saw as many as four wins at the most optimistic. How is this improvement? Pat Shurmur is a joke to appease to Holmgren's ego – a Jerry Jones level error of hubris if you will. And nobody is sure if there is any sort of cognizant plan to rebuild this mess, as if Ralph Wilson is running the show.

Basically Lerner has deployed teams with the quality of every crappy NFL owner, dead or alive, at some point in his career.

So what are we going to do about it? Like my son, I can't not love the Browns, so I'll continue to go at the games. As a result I will want to strangle the coach when he doesn't do things right, and somehow think our guys deserve better. This team will be a mess until Lerner sells it to focus on what he is really good at (I have no idea what this may be), and we as loving parents need to realize that is fact, to protect ourselves from pain. Please do this before Thursday so that when we draft Ryan Tannehill #4, or trade back to #21, or trade up for whomever is this year's Montario Hardesty, you don't hurt yourself, your TV, or any of your loved ones nearby throwing stuff.

Before I get to the questions this week, I wanted to present without comment this anecdote from a reader regarding llamas. It was too fantastic not to share, and it is avowed to be 100% true:

When I was a Sophomore in High School a couple dozen of us students went on a chaperoned Spring Break trip to Peru. One of the kids in my group had an extremely rare condition. He had erectile tissue in his lips. Yes, the same stuff in your junk that makes everyone happy was present in his lips. So whenever he got 'aroused' it was quite noticeable. Needless to say, this

happened a lot when you're 15. Poor kids mouth was covered in blisters and cracks...it was an awful thing for the kid. But...being the assholes that all kids are we dubbed him "Lipus Maximus" to much amusement.

Anyway, during a trip to Sacsayhuaman (pronounced "sexy woman" - seriously) we disembarked from our tour bus to take in the sites. After a minute or so we all heard the squeals of Lipus Maxiumus "Get him off me!!!" and turned around to see that a Llama had mounted him. One hoof on each shoulder, and from behind was 'giving him the business'.

Best part...the kids lips were swollen.

Anyway, off to the questions.

Huey Lewis and the News? –motherscratcher

As you are all probably aware by now, Dick Clark died this week. A side effect of his death was that the media was inundated with clips of his life, and his impact on the world, and a large amount of this focused on American Bandstand. AB was huge in the 50s (my mom was actually on the show once in this era and she still gushes about that), and a lot of the music being played was the Rock-n-roll from the 50s, and that music was a steaming pile of shit.

Back in the 20s Robert Johnson, for all practical purposes, invented blues, and therefore Rock and Roll, and it was incredible. His music is still relevant today: well crafted, artistic musically and lyrically, and intelligent. People seemed to forget about him, though, and decided to reinvent the genre in the 50s. This reinvention was essentially the DOS of music (and the underground Jazz evolution was the Apple of the time), and it sucked like DOS. Look at the lyrics from one of the most iconic songs of the time, Rock Around the Clock:

One, Two, Three O'clock, Four O'clock rock,

Five, Six, Seven O'clock, Eight O'clock rock.

Nine, Ten, Eleven O'clock, Twelve O'clock rock,

We're gonna rock around the clock tonight.

Put your glad rags on and join me hon',

We'll have some fun when the clock strikes one.

CHORUS:

We're gonna rock around the clock tonight,

We're gonna rock, rock, rock, 'till broad daylight,

We're gonna rock around the clock tonight.

When the clock strikes two, three and four,

If the band slows down we'll yell for more.

CHORUS:

When the chimes ring five, six, and seven,

We'll be right in seventh heaven.

Etc. You get the point. Big steaming pile of crap there. It has the mindless repetition of Dora the Explorer, combined with the emptiness of a Kim Kardashian tweet. Compare that with Johnson's Kind Hearted Woman Blues:

I got a kind hearted woman

Do anything in this world for me

I got a kind hearted woman

Do anything in this world for me

But these evil-hearted women

Man, they will not let me be

I love my baby

My baby don't love me

I love my baby, oooh

My baby don't love me

But I really love that woman

Can't stand to leave her be

A-ain't but the one thing

Makes Mister Johnson drink

I's worried 'bout how you treat me, baby

I begin to think

Oh babe, my life don't feel the same

You breaks my heart

When you call Mister So-and-So's name

She's a kindhearted woman

She studies evil all the time

She's a kindhearted woman

She studies evil all the time

You well's to kill me

As to have it on your mind

The depth is not comparable, and neither is the base music. Johnson is the Apple OS compared to the tripe DOS of the 50s.

What happened in the 60s is that Rock and Roll evolved and became a lot smarter. The Beatles revolutionized the pop genre, making it more intelligent and produced some quality music. Later in the decade, Led Zeppelin, Jimi Hendrix, and Keith Richards (among others) borrowed from Johnson's soul and started delivering some of the best music that has ever been made, and may ever be made. Music was right, even if the world wasn't, which is an important point – true soul is derived from pain, not pleasure. "Man learns nothing from succeeding" as it goes. The music from this era drew from this pain.

I'm not exactly sure what the hell happened in the seventies, or if the seventies actually happened. What I do know is that disco killed the soul of the industry, and music had become less of an art and more of a business, and that forever changed the music industry as we know it. This led directly to the 80s, where times were good, pain was low, and promotion became the deciding factor in your success. The music industry banked on safe, clean artists, like Huey Lewis and the News. They sang songs about sports, and even entitled an album "Sports". They went back to the Dora Kardashian roots of the 50s to produce music that was more mind control

and less inspired, and then cross-promoted it with movies like *Back to the Future*. Every Huey Lewis song sounded the same, and that was okay – he was a security blanket for an era that didn't need one, and it helped America develop Stockholm syndrome and identify Huey Lewis as an artist.

Huey's popularity had a fuse on it the moment he produced his first album. He never delivered anything original, innovative, or otherwise noteworthy, and instead was tied to the marketing of the late 80s. When the 80s died, Mr. Lewis walked right to the edge of the earth and fell off it, at the very moment Dick Clark welcomed in 1990.

Lars, do you ever have one of those days where your balls itch constantly for no apparent reason? –Cerebral DownTime

There is an old adage that when your palm itches, you're about to come into money. So… yeah, that's what the old adage says.

I recently became aware of a revolutionary new underwear technology called FRIGO that completely rethinks underwear. They use lasers to make it, and space-age materials, and all kinds of other stuff, charging $100 for each pair. $100 for underwear. Nearest I can figure it, this is completely designed to keep your boys from itching. They get their own happy place that you can tighten, and separate them from the rest of your nether regions where they would get sweaty, hot, and itchy. If this problem is persistent enough for you, maybe spending $700 for a week's worth of britches is a small price to pay for your sanity.

Because there's nothing worse than needing to make *lineup changes* at inopportune times. Itching is one thing, but have you ever had an occasion where the cow has left the barn (staying inside the ranch, of course) at an inopportune time? Nothing is worse. I was in the Philly airport running late and rushing home and through all the running sprinting sitting standing etc. ol Bossy broke the containment den. How am I supposed to cowboy up and get that back home in the middle of a crowded airport? It takes a lot of manipulation and tucking, which is only marginally effective subtly pulling on your pockets from the inside. Pure torture.

On a related note, I also have a tendency to split my pants on occasion. Yes, I typed split with a p. One time I was facilitating a session for a client group of about 20 people. All day session –

flew in the morning, was flying out that night, so I was far from home, on a tight schedule, had spent a lot of money to make it happen, and there was no backing out. When I bent down to plug in the projector… rrrrrriiiiipppp. Not just one of those situations where the seam gave way, the very composition of the fabric on my seat was tattered like a category 5 storm just shot out my rectum. So what did I do? I found some pins and twisted them together to hold my pants together, leaving me with an uncomfortable hunk of metal up my ass like Christopher Walken in *Pulp Fiction*
. And then I faced the crowd the whole time.

You know, maybe $100 for underwear isn't such a bad deal…

Pepsi or Coke?.....I being the Libertarian roll with RC. - pod

Coke or Pepsi isn't a political decision. It is a taste decision.

Back in the 80s, Pepsi launched a brilliant marketing campaign called the Pepsi Challenge. People would literally line up for an hour to taste Coke and Pepsi side by side, as if you couldn't just put two quarters in the vending machine and do it yourself. No, because there was the ever most remote chance that there would be a hidden camera there, and that you would choose correctly, and that you'd get in a commercial. This was back in a time where you needed actual talent to get on TV, as opposed to the reality-TV era where talent usually works against you.

Anyway, Pepsi is sweeter than Coke and tastes better for the first sip, and notably better in contrast to the drier Coke taste. Of course, by the end of a can of Pepsi, you're sick from the sweetness, and your palette is ruined for a week, but that's irrelevant because in a thimble side by side, Pepsi rules. Which is what Pepsi marketing knew, and which is why they issued the Pepsi challenge.

Coke is a far better choice, and Coke Zero really does taste like Coke, which is why when I sin with soda, I choose Coke Zero. And I have no idea where to find RC, not that I ever really buy pop anymore, so I couldn't even comment on it. I do occasionally see Mexican Coke down here, which is a real treat, because it uses cane sugar instead of high fructose corn syrup, which delivers a more natural sweet flavor. That's worth getting every time I find it, diet be damned.

You've got $50 and you want to take a hot girl on a first date. What would you do? Difficulty level: drinking is involved...of course. ? -boo

Let's break down the objective of a date, and try to optimize those goals with the cash allotted.

You're a guy, and you've already mentioned she is a hot woman, so at this point your natural instinct is to do whatever is necessary to convince her to sleep with you, with the date just being an annoying and needless undercard to the main event. That is the wrong attitude though, in every conceivable way.

Look at your date like an interview. Most people see the interview as an annoying formality needed before they get the job they want, and those people disregard the interview process, fail to learn about the job properly, and wind up in a miserable career as a result of it. Your *employe r qualification list*
needs to be broader than "Is hot", "has two X chromosomes", and "will sleep with me", although at this point it likely isn't. In an effort to help you with this checklist, I'll project myself onto you, because it's as good of a starting point as any. Tweak as you must.

First and foremost, you've got to be able to converse with her. Honestly too. Tell her things that you may feel insecure about, have her tell you the same. Discuss your past and where you've come from, and have her reciprocate, so there is full trust. You're going to spend a lot more time talking to her in the relationship than being naked with her, so if those times are unbearable, you will never have a relationship. Your date should put a premium, therefore, on finding ways to talk and learn about each other.

Second, she must be athletic. This works well for a number of reasons, primarily in that she will remain hot for years. Athletic women tend to be less prissy too, and nobody likes a snobby prissy don't touch me bitchy woman. She'll have more self-confidence as an athlete, and therefore she'll be more fun to be around. So find ways to test her love for sport.

Third, she must be a child at heart. Goofy sense of humor, loves to play, loves to be crazy and do fun and crazy things. Last thing you want is her rolling her eyes every time you want to do

something fun.

So let's use these three "interview questions" as the foundation of the date.

First off, start the date early. This sounds counterintuitive, but the longer the date is, the less money you will have to spend. Pick her up around 10 or so (AM) and then either go on a long run together, or ride a bike together, or rent a kayak or canoe and paddle together. Whatever gives the two of you time to be next to each other for an hour or two sweating. This will do a number of things: first, you'll know how snobby she is by how sweaty she gets. If she holds the kayak paddle like a dead fish, jump overboard and swim for shore. If, conversely, she gears down and tries to race past you on your bike, you know you've got a winner. Chase is a favorite kid game, plus she's not afraid to sweat. I love her already! Oh, and you can talk to each other as you sweat with each other, which will naturally tear down some of the barriers. Total cost: $20 maximum, $0 if you run in the Metroparks.

Next, it is time for the picnic lunch. Make sure you ask her about her dietary restrictions prior to the date, telling her you are going to do this, so you can procure appropriately. Note: UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES ARE YOU TO GO TO SUBWAY! That shows a complete lack of class, thought, and couth. Go to a local Italian deli and have them make you a sandwich properly. In a thermos, have a vodka, lemonade, and muddled mint ready. She won't drink illegally in public at noon? Sorry, your consolation prizes are backstage. Total picnic cost: $20.

Okay, you're fed and buzzed. Time to improvise. By now you know how the date is going, and you know whether it is time to call it or extend it. Assuming the answer is "extend" you should head to the Metroparks to hike in the woods along one of the rivers. Gives you a chance to splash and play, and maybe a chance to sneak in a kiss in a secluded romantic spot (DO NOT TRY THIS UNLESS IT IS 100% RIGHT). Make absolutely sure there is a playground nearby so you can act like kids – swing, slide, etc. gives you playful opportunities to touch each other and continue to have fun. Have a football, a Frisbee, and a soccer ball in the back of your car, just in case she wants to play with those. This should extend the date to around the 4:00 time frame if you do it right.

Still going good for both of you? Great! Because you've got $10 left to get through the night. Say to her that you were just planning on going home, watching a movie, and she is more than welcome to come over and join you should she desire. Even offer to her to make dinner – if you can't cook, make breakfast for dinner – that's quirky and fun, and it is likely to amuse her. Plus,

breakfast is cheap, and between that and the booze for the evening (vodka based for economy and for blending with breakfast), you can easily skate under the $10 price tag.

And you've just had an epic day for $50, and you should know after all that if she's right for you or not. This will also save you countless thousands of dollars in bad dates afterward should things not be right – just be sure to resist her feminine charms should you come to this conclusion and she not. Yeah, I know, impossible for you, try anyway.

Please email questions to lars.hancock@yahoo.com , or DM them to me in the forae to LarsHancock.