So while I'm very disappointed, I will have to be optimistic and hold on to the good things I saw in the game

Hello, Browns Fans!

I went to the Indianapolis game and saw so many Browns Fans that I thought I was in Cleveland!

Don't get me wrong, there were lots of Indianapolis fans but Cleveland fans are everywhere! They are the greatest in the world! On the ride back home after the game (five and a half hours), I was going over in my mind what I had seen, trying to make sense of what happened that caused the Browns to lose that game.

While I was listening to a sports radio talk show, there were some interesting comments and observations by Browns fans calling into the show. One fan said something in particular that I agreed with in trying to describe the Browns. He said, "It was like death by a thousand cuts!" And the caller was right. Every time you tried to put your finger on one thing the Browns were doing wrong, they came up with another way to shoot themselves in the foot. Example: Indy comes out and puts together a long drive that ate up half of the minutes in the first quarter with

help from the Browns – poor tackling and not a good job of containing the quarterback – and the Colts scored. The Browns came out after the Colts scored and put together their own drive (that's what good teams do), but then after getting the hardest part of the drive done, scoring six points, the holder (Reggie Hodges) muffed the snap on the extra point kick and the Browns only got six. So instead of matching the Colts seven points, they answered with six. That one point came back to haunt them and that's what happens to bad teams.

Imagine what would have happened if we were behind by only three points instead of four. We are on the 37-yard line on second and one, which puts us in great shape. We would have been only five yards from Phil Dawson's range (that's what good teams do – you're never out of the game). What did we do? We failed on the next two plays to get one yard to keep the drive alive, which would have put us in field goal range with a chance to tie the game. We punt the ball for a net 20 yards. That's what bad teams do. But despite all of that, like I've said for the past five weeks, and this Sunday being no exception: the Browns still had a chance to win. The Colts tried their best to give the Browns the game, but the Browns tried harder not to take it. Josh Gordon dropped a touchdown pass that would have changed the end of the game.

I am tired of woulda, coulda, shoulda, so let's review.

Quarterback: Weeden attempted 41 and completed 25 for 264 yards. Two touchdowns. No interceptions. He played well enough to win today.

Running backs: The Browns have a serious decision to make at 1-6, and Trent Richardson will not like this at all, since he wants to play, but you need to be smart and sit him down and let him get well. We don't want to take a risk and lose him for the season. Montario Hardesty has shown that he can take up the slack, so that is the smart thing to do.

Receivers: Played reasonably well, but failed to make the play that could have won the game (Josh Gordon dropping the game-winning pass). Don't want the fans to make a big deal out of this, as he has been making good plays. Don't want this to get in his head and don't want to get him mixed up with Greg Little, who is struggling with catching the ball consistently. Josh Gordon took responsibility for not catching a pass he should have caught. No more, no less, which is what good receivers do. The receivers still have to work on down and distance (third and five doesn't mean running four yards when you need five). The tight end caught a pass for a one-yard loss. The receivers have to learn to not cut their hot routes off. They still have to push off of the ball until their hot routes. Sunday, our receiver had a hot route, and he completed on

first and ten and it ended up second and eleven. There is no excuse for that.

Defensive backs: Great pass defense. Not good run defense. Got to do a better job of tackling in the open field.

Line backers/defensive lineman: Started out slow, I know, they are having some injury issues but held the Colts to low enough points to give us a chance to win. However, when Indianapolis was inside their own 25 yard line, and lined up in what appeared to be an attempt to go for it on fourth down, you've got to be smart enough to know – no way are they NOT going for it. And like my guys say on Sportscenter "COME ON, MAAAAN!"

Special Teams: Very bad play today. Started out with mishandling the extra point. Every yard Josh Cribbs earned to start our drives in good field position was nullified by blocks in the back, holding and other penalties we just can't afford. I don't know if anyone else saw, but maybe because I am a former punt-returner, late in the second half of the game, Josh Cribbs came within one player of returning the ball for a touchdown. Maybe the only two people who saw that were me, sitting in the stands, and Josh Cribbs. The first Colt coming down did not get blocked and was able to stop Josh Cribbs from making big yardage, or even making a touch down! This can also get your punt-returner hurt. Overall, the special teams play contributed greatly to Sunday's loss (poor field position all day due to penalties).

Offensive Line: Little improvement. Hopefully, in time, the chemistry will get better and things will improve. With Richardson trying to play hurt, I can understand helping a good block become a great block, but good teams overcome injuries, and if we continue to strive to become a good team we will overcome that.

Coaching: Big question mark on some of the calls and some of the situations offensively. Play selection with five yards from Phil Dawson's field goal range. We had an opportunity at second and one. I think we should have run four times if necessary to get a first down, which have put us in better shape to get a touchdown. Then we chose to punt the ball on a fourth and one and we only got 20 yards out of it. I know the coach is going to say they still had a chance to win the game if Josh Gordon hadn't dropped the pass, which is right. It wasn't just one mistake that cost us the game, but a lot of little mistakes, and I don't even know if you can say little, because a mistake is a mistake. Good teams just don't make a lot of mistakes. I saw where Haslam didn't like some of the play calling late in the game and it was good to see that the owner has the same kind of feeling some of us fans have while watching the game, and he can do something

about it!

So while I'm very disappointed, I will have to be optimistic and hold on to the good things I saw in the game, and still believe we are on the right track. This is all part of our growing pains.

Go Browns!