

1. Cleveland Browns

Week	Day	Date	Time (ET)		Opponent	Score	W/L/T	Stories
1	Sunday	Sep. 11	1:00 PM		Bengals	17-27	L	Recap Box
2	Sunday	Sep. 18	1:00 PM	at	Colts	27-19	W	Recap Box
3	Sunday	Sep. 25	1:00 PM		Dolphins	17-16	W	Recap Box
4	Sunday	Oct. 2	1:00 PM		Titans	13-31	L	Recap Box
5								Bye Week
6	Sunday	Oct. 16	1:05 PM	at	Raiders	17-24	L	Recap Box
7	Sunday	Oct. 23	1:00 PM		Seahawks	6-3	W	Recap Box
8	Sunday	Oct. 30	1:15 PM	at	49ers	10-20	L	Recap Box
9	Sunday	Nov. 6	12:00 PM	at	Texans	12-30	L	Recap Box
10	Sunday	Nov. 13	1:00 PM		Rams	12-13	L	Recap Box
11	Sunday	Nov. 20	1:00 PM		Jaguars	14-10	W	Recap Box
12	Sunday	Nov. 27	1:00 PM	at	Bengals	20-23	L	Recap Box
13	Sunday	Dec. 4	4:05 PM		Ravens	10-24	L	Recap Box
14	Thursday	Dec. 8	8:20 PM	at	Steelers	3-14	L	Recap Box
15	Sunday	Dec. 18	2:15 PM	at	Cardinals	17-20	L	Recap Box
16	Saturday	Dec. 24	1:00 PM	at	Ravens	14-20	L	Recap Box
17	Sunday	Jan. 1	4:15 PM		Steelers	9-13	L	Recap Box

Browns stumble in 27-17 opening loss to Bengals CLEVELAND (AP) -- On a day of mistakes, the Browns' biggest error was unforgivable. They weren't ready. Cleveland's defense got caught napping in the huddle by Cincinnati backup quarterback Bruce Gradkowski , who threw a 41-yard touchdown pass to rookie A.J. Green in the fourth quarter and rallied the Bengals to a 27-17 win Sunday over the sloppy Browns in coach Pat Shurmur's debut. The Browns overcame a horrid start but were done in by dropped passes, shanked punts, bad decisions and too many penalties, including one on Shurmur, who accidentally knocked down an official in the first quarter. "It's unacceptable," said Browns cornerback Sheldon Brown . "We're going to find a way to fix it." After overcoming a 13-0 deficit, the Browns were protecting a 17-13 lead in the fourth when Gradkowski, who came in for injured rookie Andy Dalton , outfoxed them. Facing a third-and-11, Gradkowski and the Bengals lined up quickly and snapped the ball before the Browns, some of whom had their back to the Bengals, could react. Gradkowski then lobbed the ball to a wide-open Green. "It took forever for it to get to me," said the first-round pick. Once in his hands, there was no catching Green. He sprinted into the end zone untouched and the Bengals tacked on some insurance when Cedric Benson scored on a 39-yard TD burst. Benson said the Bengals' trickery was planned. "The play is designed to catch them napping," he said. "We caught them napping." Browns cornerback Joe Haden was the closest to Green, but couldn't do anything to stop him. "We weren't ready, everybody was scrambling," said Haden, who knocked down five passes. "We were all in the huddle, trying to get the play and didn't realize everybody (the Bengals) was already lined up. Not a good look for us." Cleveland fell to 1-12 in season openers since 1999, and afterward, a red-faced Shurmur wasn't convinced the Bengals didn't at least bend the rules. "They quick snapped us," Shurmur said. "I'll have to watch the tape, but it's my understanding they changed personnel, lined up and then quick snapped. There's rules that go along with that, so we'll see." According to Rule 5, Section 2, Article 10 in the league's manual, if the offense makes a substitution, it can not snap the ball "until the defense has been permitted to respond with its substitutions." Shurmur will likely ask the league to review the play, but it won't be overturned. There's nothing the first-year coach can do but prepare his squad to play better next week at Indianapolis. The Browns were penalized 11 times and looked disorganized on more than one play. "We've got a game in seven days," Shurmur said. "There's plenty of stuff to clean up." Colt McCoy threw two TD passes for the Browns, but Cleveland's second-year QB went just 19 of 40 and never got into a rhythm. His first pass was batted back to him for one of his completions, he tried to dump a pass off to center Alex Mack and McCoy's final throw was intercepted. "I certainly had my bad plays," said McCoy, who dropped to 2-7 as a starter. "It's not one person, it's all of us." The Bengals, thought by some to be on their way to an 0-16 season, showed resiliency and grit. Dalton didn't play in the second half after injuring his wrist just before halftime. The second-round pick from TCU had some nice moments early on and provided hope for Cincinnati fans worrying the club would fall flat without Carson Palmer , who continues his stare-down with team ownership. But Gradkowski came in and picked up the slack. He wasn't flashy, but managed the game and did just enough to pull out the victory. And then there was Benson, who rushed for 121 yards on 25 carries. Just a week ago, he was in a Texas jail serving a sentence for an assault conviction. It's just one game, but for the Bengals it was an ideal start. "We are not worried about what people say," said Green, whose only catch was for the TD. "We are a team and we know what we have." Shurmur's not there yet. Expectations were high following a strong preseason by the Browns. Shurmur has a young team, but he's not going to tolerate mental errors. "No excuses," Shurmur said, his voice rising. "I don't care if you're a rookie. I don't care if you've been in this thing for 12 years, and I don't care if this is your last game. You can't make mistakes. ... I've got to do a better job coaching and we've got to play better and then we'll win games." Brown said Shurmur had every right to be upset with his team. "He's ticked and I don't blame him," he said. "We're all ticked." © 2012 STATS LLC

Struggling Colts fall to Cleveland 27-19 INDIANAPOLIS (AP) -- Peyton's Place is starting to look a lot more like a one-man act. The Browns don't seem to mind. With one Peyton (Manning) out, another Peyton (Hillis) overpowered the Colts' defense for two touchdown runs Sunday, leading the Browns to a 27-19 victory over reeling Indianapolis. For the Colts, it doesn't get much worse than this. They already lost Manning for at least two months because of neck surgery and are now 0-2 for the first time since 1998, Manning's rookie season. The four-time MVP quarterback's absence seems to have stripped the Colts of any aura of superiority - Sunday's loss to Cleveland was Indy's first in the series since 1994, Manning's freshman season at Tennessee. Without their franchise quarterback, the Colts didn't have much of a chance - even at home against a below-average team. "We did some things better, but that's not what we're measured by around here," Indy coach Jim Caldwell said. "We're measured by winning." By that standard, the start of this season has been an abject failure. Indy could have been

expected to struggle without Manning. This is more like a collapse. Few expected things to look this bleak this fast. "We don't have much time left," Reggie Wayne said. "We've got to figure it out fast, even though it's just the second game. We have to figure out a way to win the close ones. I feel like that's what it's going to be from here on out." From the middle of the third quarter until Indy's final desperation drive, the Colts didn't pick up a first down. That stretch included four straight three-and-outs, one that ended with a third-down interception after Pro Bowl receiver Wayne fell down. Kerry Collins, Manning's replacement, started the game 9 of 12 but completed only 10 of his last 26, most coming after the outcome was decided. He finished 19 of 38 with 191 yards, one interception and another lost fumble. He didn't get the Colts into the end zone until 24 seconds remained. Fans even began leaving early, a rarity given Manning's propensity for pulling out miracle comebacks. Some in Indy might believe a miracle is needed to turn things around without Manning. And next week, defending AFC champion Pittsburgh comes to town for a prime-time game that could expose more flaws. "The facts are what they are," Collins said. "We didn't do what we needed to do." Cleveland (1-1) did, and the victory ended a tough week for Cleveland. It simplified the game plan by relying on Hillis, who carried 27 times for 94 yards and the game-sealing score with 3:55 left. He wore down the Colts with his strong runs and repeatedly converted in short-yardage situations to help the Browns play keepaway. "That's Peyton," Browns quarterback Colt McCoy said after throwing for 211 yards and one TD. "He's going to run and run and run. Eventually, he's going to run over someone and go." Last week against Cincinnati, the Browns' defense got caught napping on a long touchdown pass, and punt returner Josh Cribbs got knocked down when a teammate leveled a Bengals defender. Then Saturday, as the Browns got ready to depart Cleveland, the team plane got stuck in the mud. Some thought it might be a harbinger. Hillis made sure it wasn't against the Manningless Colts. "Maybe we should get stuck in the mud every week," Cribbs said, drawing the kind of laughter usually heard in Indy's locker room. The Browns changed the dynamic by trading touchdowns for field goals. Without Manning, Indy couldn't keep pace. Collins led the Colts on two long drives in their first three series before settling for field goals. Cleveland answered midway throughout the second quarter when McCoy scrambled to his left on third-and-11 from the Colts 16 and hooked up with Evan Moore in the back corner of the end zone to make it 7-6. Indy came right back with a 52-yard field goal, Adam Vinatieri's longest kick since 2008. But McCoy has enough time to take the Browns down to the Colts 1. Hillis' plunge with 15 seconds left made it 14-9. The Colts closed to 14-12 midway through the third quarter, but Phil Dawson kicked two short field goals and Hillis' decisive 24-yard TD run sealed it. "I don't know if we adjusted. We probably would have seen some different things," with Manning on the field, coach Pat Shurmur said after his first career win. "Don't underestimate this (Colts) team. For us to get our first victory against them is good." Notes: Colts right guard Ryan Diem left in the second quarter with an ankle injury and was replaced by Mike Pollak. Defensive tackle Fili Moala also left in the first half with an ankle injury. ... Moore was the first Browns player to score a TD against Indy in four games, dating to William Green's TD run in 2002. ... Browns cornerback Joe Haden was called for pass interference and illegal contact on the same play during the Colts' first series and later drew a defensive holding penalty after giving up a first-down catch. ... Cleveland right tackle Tony Pashos (left ankle) missed his second straight game. © 2012 STATS LLC

McCoy, Browns finish strong to edge Dolphins 17-16 CLEVELAND (AP) -- Not long after orchestrating Cleveland's stirring comeback, Colt McCoy stood behind a podium and dissected the improbable win. He smiled and shrugged. Did it really happen? It seemed strange, almost surreal. Because despite a litany of mistakes, playing without their star running back, with two wide receivers battling through injuries, a woeful offensive display and a skeptical crowd waiting for something else to go wrong, the Cleveland Browns somehow won. Maybe, after all these years, it's their turn. "We had to overcome a lot," McCoy said. "As ugly as it was, it's a huge win for us." McCoy drove the Browns 80 yards in the final three minutes, capped by a 14-yard touchdown pass to Mohamed Massaquoi with 43 seconds left to rally Cleveland to a 17-16 win Sunday over winless Miami, a deflating loss sure to intensify the pressure on Dolphins coach Tony Sparano. With the Browns trailing by six and less than four minutes left, McCoy walked up and down Cleveland's sideline telling his teammates to believe. "We need one drive," McCoy recalled telling them. "One drive and we can win this thing." They bought in, and three weeks into a new season, the Browns are 2-1 for the first time since 2002. "We put one together," said McCoy. "We got in the two-minute offense, guys got open, guys made plays. We played like garbage for most of the day." Before his game-winning TD toss to Massaquoi, who was limited in practice this week by an ankle injury, McCoy had overthrown, underthrown and flat-out missed receivers. But when it mattered most, he completed nine of 13 passes for 75 yards to six different receivers on Cleveland's climactic 13-play drive. Browns first-year coach Pat Shurmur said the win reinforced a constant message to McCoy and his other players. "Just hang in there," Shurmur said after getting his first home win. "Hang in there because you're going to get your opportunities all the way to the final gun, and he (McCoy) found a way to lead us on a drive. "Colt knows how to win games." Getting the ball back with 3:23 left, McCoy worked the ball down to Miami's 14, picking up a key fourth-and-4 conversion and was helped along by an offsides penalty on Dolphins end Jason Taylor. On first down, McCoy made the defining play of his still budding NFL career. Dropping back, he pump faked before lofting a perfect pass to the right corner over rookie cornerback Jimmy Wilson and to a leaping Massaquoi. "My best throw of the day," McCoy said. "Mo did a nice job and got that guy (Wilson) to bite just a little bit. He wasn't that open, but in the NFL, when they're like that, you just gotta make a good throw. Mo did a great job of getting his feet in. It was a great feeling." The Browns played without running back Peyton Hillis, who was sent home with strep throat. Montario Hardesty started and ran for 67 yards on 14 carries in his first full game since undergoing knee surgery last year. Hardesty added three catches for 19 yards, including a 10-yarder on fourth down on the last drive. For one of the few times in years, the final moments went the Browns' way. "We lost a lot of games like this last year, but that is a thing of the past," said Josh Cribbs, who caught a 33-yard TD from McCoy despite playing with a groin injury. "We're starting to win the games that we should win. We went out there and got it done." The Dolphins (0-3) are in a bad way. With upcoming road games at San Diego and the New York Jets, they're staring an 0-5 start in the face. Sparano was already under fire for the slow start, and the heat only figures to rise in the days ahead. "I do believe the group in that room believes we're going to win," Sparano said. "I do think we are going to win. Now all that being said, we're 0-3. That's what we have to show for it. At the end of the game, we didn't make a play." After Massaquoi's acrobatic TD grab, the Dolphins caught two breaks. First, the Browns were penalized for excessive celebration and then flagged for a horse-collar tackle on the kickoff. Dolphins quarterback Chad Henne took over near midfield, but threw three straight incompletions before he was picked off by Mike Adams on a pass intended for Brandon Marshall. Henne knows the Dolphins must regroup quickly to salvage the season. "It starts with believing you can win," Henne said. "We have to put the right mental attitude out there, knowing we are going to win. If you have the right attitude, you're more confident in yourself. We're going to find out what kind of team this is." © 2012 STATS LLC

Hasselbeck helps Titans blow past Browns 31-13 CLEVELAND (AP) -- No quarterback in Cleveland Browns history has ever thrown as many passes or completed as many as Colt McCoy did against Tennessee. He broke two team records. He couldn't stop Cleveland's from getting worse. Matt Hasselbeck threw three touchdown passes in the first half, safety Jordan Babineaux returned a foolishly forced pass by McCoy 97 yards for a touchdown and the big-play Titans rolled to a 31-13 win on Sunday over the Browns, Tennessee's third straight under first-year coach Mike Munchak. On a blustery day in Cleveland, the Titans (3-1) blew past the Browns (2-2) with ease. Considered to be in rebuilding mode when the season started, Tennessee is making progress - quickly. "I'm not surprised we're 3-1," said wide receiver Nate Washington. "We've been working hard. We still have a few wrinkles that we need to iron out, but guys have stepped up" No

one more than Hasselbeck. The 36-year-old quarterback continued his great start with Tennessee. He went 8 of 12 for 194 yards in the first half, when his short completions turned into huge gains as the Titans streaked through a stunned Cleveland secondary that blew coverages and forgot how to tackle. Hasselbeck finished 10 of 20 for 220 yards - 26 on just two completions after halftime. When the Titans signed Hasselbeck, who spent the previous 10 seasons in Seattle, to a three-year free agent deal in late July, the decision caused some head scratching around the league. Now, other teams may be kicking themselves. "We thought he had a lot left in the tank from watching him in the playoffs last year," Munchak said. "We didn't bring him here to retire. Our plan was to bring him here and do exactly what he is doing. We feel great about him not only on the field, but with a young team and he has done a great job since he has come in here. "He has set the tempo in how we practice, expectations, how he leads, how he teaches and that crossed over to the whole team." Many of the Titans were playing with heavy hearts. On Saturday, they learned that Mike Heimerdinger, their beloved former offensive coordinator known as "Dinger," died of cancer at 58. Heimerdinger died while in Mexico to receive experimental treatments for a rare form of the disease. Heimerdinger and Munchak spent several seasons on former Titans coach Jeff Fisher's staff. Tennessee's Chris Johnson finally broke out of his early-season funk, rushing 23 times for 101 yards, three more than his total in the first three games. "It is a start," Munchak said of Johnson, who missed training camp in a contract holdout. "I think we are heading in the right direction there, which was good. He had some runs and we saw some glimpses of good things." Playing his first game without injured wide receiver Kenny Britt, Hasselbeck threw a 12-yard TD pass to tight end Craig Stevens, hooked up with tight end Jared Cook on an 80-yarder and lobbed a 4-yard score to Damian Williams - all before the half, and all but ending Cleveland's chance to go 3-1 for the first time since 2001. "Big plays killed us," Browns linebacker Scott Fujita said. The Browns didn't build momentum following a comeback win last week over Miami, and Cleveland enters its bye with renewed problems the club hopes don't worsen. Cornerback Joe Haden, arguably Cleveland's best player, sprained his left knee and will undergo further examination on Monday. Also, wide receiver Mohamed Massaquoi hurt his shoulder. "Disappointing loss," coach Pat Shurmur said. "This was a team loss. There's a lot of things we need to get better at, and it starts with me. We just didn't play extremely well. That's my responsibility." McCoy went 40 of 61 for 350 yards and one TD against the league's No. 1-ranked defense, which sacked him three times and chased Cleveland's second-year QB all afternoon. But as he tried to rally the Browns in the second half, McCoy forced a pass that was picked and taken all the way back by Babineaux. "I should have thrown it away," McCoy said. "I was just trying to make a play. It's one of those things you learn from and you wish you could take back. That was a dumb play on my part." Browns running back Peyton Hillis returned to action after missing last Sunday's game with strep throat and flulike symptoms. He rushed for 46 yards on 10 carries against the Titans. During the week, Hillis explained that he lost weight while he was ill, and that he chose not to play after arriving at the stadium because he couldn't help the team. On Sunday, ESPN's Adam Schefter reported there were whispers in Cleveland's locker room that Hillis' decision was influenced by his contract. Hillis is making \$600,000 and wants an extension. "That shouldn't be an issue," Hillis said when told of the report. "That's not an issue in my brain. I'll go out there and I'll play. But if I know I'm not 100 percent and I can hurt my team, I'm not gonna risk myself." Shurmur said he was made aware of the report following the game. He didn't exactly defend Hillis. "Peyton was sick," he said. "That was my understanding." Notes: Titans S Chris Hope broke his arm in the first quarter. Munchak did not know if Hope will need surgery. Stevens injured a rib and OL Leroy Harris twisted a knee. ... Browns C Alex Mack got a personal foul for hitting Titans rookie DL Karl Klug. "I tried to pull my hand away and banged him on the face mask," Mack explained. ... McCoy broke the club marks for completions previously held by Tim Couch (36 in 2011) and attempts held by Brian Sipe (57 in 1981. McCoy's 40 completions were five shy of the league record set by Drew Bledsoe (1994). © 2012 STATS LLC

Raiders honor Davis with 24-17 win over Browns OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) -- Jason Campbell had been knocked out with a broken collarbone and the offense was stagnating - so it was the perfect time for Oakland Raiders coach Hue Jackson to turn to his tricks. Kevin Boss caught a 35-yard touchdown pass from punter Shane Lechler on a fake field goal and the Raiders overcame the loss of their quarterback to beat the Cleveland Browns 24-17 Sunday in their first home game since the death of longtime owner Al Davis. "We'll do whatever it takes to win football games," Jackson said. "Every week there's going to be something there to give us a chance to win a game." Darren McFadden capped Oakland's opening drive with a touchdown run and Jacoby Ford returned a kick 101 yards for another score to give the Raiders (3-3) the win on a day that started with tributes to Davis and ended with questions about Oakland's future after Campbell's injury. But in between, the Raiders did what Davis always wanted more than anything in his nearly half-century as the face of this franchise. "We all understand what he would have told each and everyone of us: 'Win. Winning. Play winning football,'" Jackson said. "A year ago, we didn't find a way to win these kinds of games. Two years ago, we didn't find a way to win these kinds of game. The team is now believing in each other and fighting like he always thought it could. And they're winning football games." Oakland did it despite losing Campbell, who was knocked out late in the first half when he landed hard on his shoulder after being hit by Chris Gocong and Scott Fujita on a scramble. Kyle Boller entered in relief and struggled at times, but the Raiders got enough big plays on special teams to hold off the Browns (2-3) and win consecutive games for the first time this season. "I hate that it happened to (Jason), because that was our guy," Ford said. "It's just part of the game, something you have to adjust to. Kyle stepped up and made some great plays today. Now we know that Kyle's our quarterback and we have to step up for him." It was an emotional day at the Coliseum with many old-time Raiders coming back to honor Davis, who died Oct. 8 of an undisclosed illness at age 82. Coaches and team officials all wore black shirts with a simple two-letter message supplanted on the Raiders shield: "AL." The most poignant moment came during a halftime ceremony with dozens of former players standing in a circle around the Raiders emblem at midfield. Super Bowl-winning coach John Madden then lit a cauldron on the plaza level in the corner of the stadium with the public address announcer saying the fire will "burn forever" for fans to remember Davis. "We all knew the task at hand and we just made sure we made the most of it," cornerback Stanford Routt said. Boller completed a 27-yard swing pass to Ford that set up Sebastian Janikowski's 48-yard field goal that made it 17-7 late in the third quarter. Oakland then took over again at the Cleveland 25 after a botched handoff between Colt McCoy and Montario Hardesty. That's when Jackson and special teams coach John Fassel once again went to their book of tricks. On fourth down from the 35, Lechler - the holder - threw to a wide-open Boss in the flat and Boss raced to the end zone to make it 24-7. "It's just taking advantage of what the defense is doing," Boss said. "It's a pretty simple pass and a pretty simple catch. I think all the credit goes to Coach Fassel for being able to recognize it's something we should take advantage of. And to Coach Jackson for having the guts to call the play." That lead proved to be enough for the Raiders, who harassed McCoy and held Cleveland's running game to 65 yards. McCoy completed 21 of 45 passes for 215 yards and two touchdowns, including a 12-yarder to Mohamed Massaquoi that cut it to 24-17 with 1:06 remaining after Jackson bypassed a chip-shot field goal to go for it unsuccessfully on fourth-and-1 from the 5. The Browns recovered the onside kick, but were unable to generate a first down. "We fought 'til the end," McCoy said. "Eventually, we thought, we're going to catch a break. In the huddle, after we got the onside kick, we thought we had a chance. We had a minute, that's a long time. We got it on the 50. We just didn't capitalize." Notes: Browns RB Peyton Hillis was limited in the second half by an injured left hamstring and will have an MRI on Monday. ... Fujita left with a concussion. ... Raiders C Samson Satele sprained his knee but told Jackson he likely will play next week. © 2012 STATS LLC

Browns edge Seahawks 6-3 on 2 FGs by Phil Dawson CLEVELAND (AP) -- In 13 turbulent seasons with the Browns, kicker Phil Dawson has learned all wins

- the good, bad and ugly - are to be savored. No matter the blemishes, they're all beauties. Even Sunday's field-goal snoozer. Dawson converted two field goals over 50 yards and had two others blocked, but booted Cleveland to a dull 6-3 win over the sloppy Seattle Seahawks, who came in missing starting quarterback Tarvaris Jackson and lost running back Marshawn Lynch to a back injury during pregame warmups. "We'll take this one," Dawson said. "We're probably not going to brag about it in 15 years, but we'll take the win." The Browns (3-3) didn't reach the end zone, but Dawson bailed them out with kicks of 52 and 53 yards, his first career game with two makes over 50. Despite weeks of drama and injuries for first-year coach Pat Shurmur, Cleveland has a .500 record after six games for just the fourth time since its 1999 expansion rebirth. "Whew, huh?" Shurmur said, opening his news conference. "You do what you have to do to win the game." The Seahawks (2-4) couldn't do much. They managed 137 yards of offense, and Seattle had the ball for only 17:04. Backup quarterback Charlie Whitehurst, filling in for Jackson, completed 12 of 30 passes for 97 yards and couldn't get the Seahawks moving at all. Making matter worse, Seattle was penalized eight times, and its biggest play was called back by a penalty as Leon Washington's 81-yard punt return for a TD in the third quarter was nullified by a blocking-in-the-back infraction - one of several mistakes the young team made that annoyed coach Pete Carroll. "It was a very difficult loss," said Carroll, who also had some issues with referee Mike's Carey's crew. "The guys took it hard. It was really close. The margin of error became a factor that amplified every call and every play. Unfortunately, we couldn't get enough going to get the win." Carroll didn't blame the officials, but he wants to take a closer look at a few calls. "When a game is this close, a call can make a difference," Carroll said. "Whether they did or not, we'll see the film and take a look. In this game, those calls are magnified. I kind of hope they're right, to tell you the truth. I hope they made the right choices because it's pretty hard to live with if they didn't." Dawson's 53-yard field goal with 11:18 left gave the Browns a 6-3 lead, and the 36-year-old was set to give Cleveland a six-point lead but his 24-yard attempt with 3:05 left was swatted away by Seahawks defensive end Red Bryant, who earlier blocked a 48-yarder in the first quarter. However, Seattle couldn't move the ball as Whitehurst had four incompletions and had a pass dropped on the Seahawks' final possession. In the final minute, a frustrated Bryant was ejected for head-butting Cleveland tight end Alex Smith. "Dumb move on my part," Bryant said. "I take full responsibility for it. I'm supposed to be a leader. I lost my composure. You never know what could have happened if we got the ball back on offense. He (Smith) was talking the whole game. He was taking cheap shots at me. That's what guys do when they can't block you." The Seahawks' only points came on a 20-yard field goal by Steven Hauschka in the third quarter. Other than that, their offense was abysmal. "We never got going," Carroll said. The victory was forgettable on so many levels, but the Browns will gladly take it. Earlier in the week, team president Mike Holmgren, who took over in Cleveland after 10 seasons in Seattle, had to defend Shurmur's early performance and pleaded patience from Browns fans. Shurmur's West Coast offense remains a work in progress, but quarterback Colt McCoy managed the game, made a few plays and protected Cleveland's slim lead in the final minutes. "I don't feel we are regressing," Shurmur said of the offensive woes. "They (Seahawks) have a pretty good defense. We just need to get more points." The Browns defense did their part. Dawson did the rest. "Phil's a stud," Shurmur said. Seattle's chances took a big hit before kickoff, when Lynch, the team's leading rusher and top offensive weapon, had back spasms. Lynch remained on the sideline and at one point appeared ready to enter the game. "He's had an ongoing thing with his back since he arrived with us," Carroll said. "It came up right before game time and he couldn't get loose. We tried to work with him the whole game and keep him going. He was about ready to take a shot at going after it, but he had sat too long." The Browns played without running back Peyton Hillis (hamstring) and lost wide receiver Mohamed Massaquoi and tight end Benjamin Watson to concussions. Also, starting right guard Shawn Lauvao injured his right knee and Shurmur said the second-year player will undergo an MRI on Monday. Running back Montario Hardesty started for Hillis and had 33 carries for 95 yards. He also caught two passes and didn't drop a pass - a problem for him the past two weeks. Notes: Seahawks starting CB Walter Thurmond broke his leg and is done for the season. Carroll said strong safety Kam Chancellor injured his knee. ... Browns RB Chris Ogbonnaya, signed earlier in the week of Houston's practice squad, had a team-high five receptions. ... Browns CB Joe Haden played despite being listed as questionable all week with a sprained knee.

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49ers beat Browns 20-10 for 5th straight win SAN FRANCISCO (AP) -- Frank Gore received regular calls and encouragement from Roger Craig all offseason as he recovered from a fractured hip. Craig shared training tips, too. When Gore charged up the middle with his signature burst for a 2-yard gain Sunday, he took another step forward in franchise history by moving past Craig into second place on the 49ers career rushing list. Gore ran for both 125-plus yards and a touchdown in a fourth straight game, Michael Crabtree made his first TD reception of the season, and San Francisco beat the Cleveland Browns 20-10 for its fifth straight victory. "It's a blessing to have my name mentioned next to his," Gore said. "This last year, we got to be close. When I got hurt, he called me every day. He was telling me I was going to be all right, to keep working." Now, San Francisco's star running back is determined to chase another of Craig's accomplishments: those three Super Bowl rings. And this is Gore's best chance yet to get there. He is making his case for a third Pro Bowl while pushing his team toward its first playoff berth in nine years. "It's fun. We're right here in the middle of it almost at the halfway point," defensive end Justin Smith said. "We've got a decent thing going on. We've got to continue to go. We've got a long grind ahead of us." Alex Smith completed 15 of 24 passes for 177 yards for the first-place 49ers (6-1), who haven't lost since falling in overtime to the Cowboys on Sept. 18. "Not perfect, but beautiful," coach Jim Harbaugh said. No handshake flap this time for Harbaugh, either. And no post-bye letdown for his 49ers - even if it was far from flashy. This marked Harbaugh's first game since his seconds-long greeting and firm backslap of Lions coach Jim Schwartz following San Francisco's 25-19 comeback win at Detroit two weeks ago. Harbaugh says he practiced during the bye week by high-fiving with his toddler daughter, Addison, whom he carried out of the stadium Sunday night. Harbaugh was polite to fellow first-year coach Pat Shurmur when they met at midfield. "It went well," Harbaugh said. The 49ers - who were made aware by Harbaugh during the week that teams were 3-9 after their byes coming into Sunday - are off to their first 6-1 start since 1998 in the days of greats Jerry Rice, Terrell Owens and Steve Young. For Colt McCoy and the Browns, it's 0-for the Bay Area. They lost two weeks ago in Oakland, then floundered across San Francisco Bay at Candlestick Park. Cleveland's D'Qwell Jackson committed a costly facemask penalty against Gore that would have stopped San Francisco on third down 2 yards short in the waning minutes. David Akers sealed it with his second field goal of the day, a 26-yarder. Gore already had 103 yards on 19 carries by halftime, then got the other 7 yards he needed to pass Craig and move up the list with 7,089. Gore wound up with 134 yards on a career-high tying 31 carries, his most rushes since Dec. 31, 2006, against Denver. San Francisco has a five-game winning streak for the first time since 2001 and wrapped up its first unbeaten October since 1997. The next big task will be ending an eight-year stretch of frustration in which the team hasn't had a winning season or made the playoffs. The Niners increased their comfortable cushion to four games in the division nicknamed the NFC Worst last year, when Seattle won with a 7-9 record. "It was an ugly win, but we ain't putting no points on it. This ain't the BCS with the style points you need to be No. 1," defensive lineman Ricky Jean Francois said. Harbaugh's big brother, John, helped the sibling cause by rallying to beat Arizona 30-27 earlier Sunday. The banged-up Browns (3-4) improved on special teams, but went without their top two running backs. Peyton Hillis didn't play for the second straight game because of a hamstring injury and Cleveland then lost Montario Hardesty to a strained right calf in the first half. McCoy and Co. managed only Phil Dawson's 52-yard field goal on the final play of the first half before Josh Cribbs' 45-yard TD catch with 6:17 to play. After last week's lackluster 6-3 win over the Seahawks, it didn't get much better for the Browns. They failed to reach the end zone for seven quarters before Cribbs

scored. "Back home, I hope they don't go into a frenzy like the world is going to end," Cribbs said. McCoy accounted for four of Cleveland's five fumbles, one of which was lost and helped set up Gore's early 4-yard TD run. McCoy - sacked four more times after five last week - lost the ball on the second play from scrimmage after he was stripped by Ahmad Brooks. Isaac Sopoaga recovered at the Cleveland 20. San Francisco's lopsided first half told the tale far before the clock finally wound down. First downs: 15-6. Total yards: 253-93. Time of possession: 18:58-11:02. Rushing yards: 145-25. Crabtree caught a 2-yard pass to put the Niners ahead 17-0 just before halftime. Dashon Goldson made his first interception of 2011 in the end zone in the third quarter. Left tackle Joe Staley even was in on the action, catching a 17-yard pass from Smith for a first down midway through the first quarter for his first career reception. He jumped up in celebration and signaled the first down by emphatically pointing down field with both hands. "A little prima donnish for a lineman," Smith quipped. Notes: 49ers WR Braylon Edwards returned against his former club in his first action since right knee surgery after getting hurt vs. the Cowboys. He had four catches. ... The Browns had won the three previous meetings, including 20-7 in '07. © 2012 STATS LLC

Foster, Tate top 100 yards in Texans' 30-12 win HOUSTON (AP) -- The Houston Texans are feeling good about themselves after another commanding win without star receiver Andre Johnson. Arian Foster rushed for 124 yards, Ben Tate ran for 115 and both scored touchdowns in leading Houston to a 30-12 victory over the Cleveland Browns on Sunday. "We felt like going into this game, that this is a game we should dominate," tackle Eric Winston said. "I feel like we did. We're finding our groove. Right now, we're feeling pretty good, and we've got to keep it moving." The Texans (6-3) finished with a franchise-record 261 yards rushing and had a pair of 100-yard rushers for the second time in three games. They moved three games over .500 for the first time, and have now won three in a row without Johnson, who's missed five games with a right hamstring injury. Houston used the same formula it employed in a 41-7 win at Tennessee two weeks ago. Foster and Tate also both ran for 100 yards in that game, and the defense held the Titans' offense to 11 first downs and 148 yards. The Browns (3-5) totaled 10 first downs and 172 yards. Houston's defense has held the last three opponents under 200 yards, continuing its transformation under new coordinator Wade Phillips. "This defense is very motivated," linebacker Brian Cushing said. The Texans kept constant pressure on Colt McCoy, who was making his first NFL start in the state where he starred in college. McCoy was sacked four times and completed only 14 passes for 146 yards with an interception. "They came from the first snap to the last and it's frustrating," McCoy said. "They were able to create a lot of pressure up front. At times, it was hard to overcome." McCoy also got little support from the Browns' running game, hit by injury and controversy in recent weeks. Chris Ogbonnaya, signed off the Texans practice squad less than a month ago, fumbled on his first carry and finished with 28 yards in place of injured running backs Peyton Hillis and Montario Hardesty. Browns coach Pat Shurmur said Hillis will undergo treatment Monday after aggravating his strained left hamstring Friday. Shurmur said the Browns "have not discussed" putting the beleaguered Hillis on injured reserve, a move that would end his stormy season. Hillis, in the final year of his rookie contract, spoke publicly about negotiating a new deal. He missed a game with strep throat, then was injured a few weeks later. Shurmur dismissed the notion that Hillis has become a distraction. "When a guy's not there for whatever reason, and in Peyton's case he's injured, you move on," Shurmur said. The Texans scored on their opening series for the sixth time this season. Matt Schaub went 4-for-4 and Tate weaved his way through the Browns' defense for a 27-yard touchdown run. Ogbonnaya lost the ball on Cleveland's first play from scrimmage, defensive end J.J. Watt recovered at the Browns 28, and Schaub scrambled for another score for a 14-0 lead less than 8 minutes into the game. "We started very fast, both sides of the ball," Houston coach Gary Kubiak said. Joshua Cribbs had Cleveland's biggest play of the half, a 63-yard kickoff return. But he was flagged for grabbing Brice McCain's facemask, and the Browns settled for Phil Dawson's 50-yard field goal. The Browns have scored only six points in the first quarter this season, and McCoy said Cleveland had to scrap its original game plan when Houston took the quick lead. "We spend the whole week working on the run game, play-action, things that you're going to do," McCoy said, "and then both times you have to completely abandon that and get into something else because you're down two touchdowns. We're not good enough to overcome that." Houston's final rushing total surpassed the team record, set in last year's opener against Indianapolis, when Foster rushed for 231 yards by himself. Tate and Foster traded carries in this one, with each breaking his share of long runs. Texans safety Quintin Demps intercepted McCoy on the second-to-last play of the half, setting up Neil Rackers' 28-yard field goal that made it 24-3. Notes: Foster has 24 career rushing TDs, a team record. ... Houston has outscored its opponents 148-45 in the first half this season. ... The Browns have been outscored 58-6 in the first quarter this year. ... Browns LB intercepted a Schaub pass, his first pick since December 2008. ... Former President George H.W. Bush performed the ceremonial coin flip before the game. © 2012 STATS LLC

Rams edge bungling Browns 13-12 CLEVELAND (AP) -- When Phil Dawson trotted onto the field, the Cleveland Browns seemed moments from victory. In a snap, they were seconds from despair. Dawson's 22-yard field goal attempt sailed wide left following a bounced snap from Ryan Pontbriand with just over two minutes left, giving the St. Louis Rams a 13-12 win over the bungling Browns, who again failed to score a touchdown at home and couldn't count on their steady kicker to bail them out. "You leave with a helpless feeling. It's tough," Browns quarterback Colt McCoy said. "We should have won - more than once. You kind of scratch your head and wonder, 'Where is all this bad luck coming from? Why?'" Dawson made four field goals in blustery conditions, but his attempt with 2:13 remaining fluttered left of the upright, capping a series of late gaffes by the Browns (3-6), who were booed by their fans as they left the field. "That's the maddening part," said Dawson. "It's not about how many you made. It's about how many you missed." Pontbriand, a Pro Bowler considered the NFL's best long snapper, accidentally hiked the ball off the right foot of center Alex Mack, who lines up at left guard for field-goal attempts. The ball skipped back to holder Brad Maynard, who did a great job of placing it for Dawson. However, the 13-year veteran's timing was thrown off and Dawson missed the chip shot. "It's on me," Pontbriand said. "My fault. It's my job to get the ball back there and it didn't get there. On those plays, I'm always upside down and never see a thing. From my point of view, everything was normal. But as soon as it came out, I knew something was wrong. It looked like a snap I had never snapped before." It was an especially painful loss for first-year Browns coach Pat Shurmur, who spent the previous two seasons as the Rams offensive coordinator. Following the game, Shurmur was noticeably upset, mostly because of his young team's costly mistakes. "What can I say?" Shurmur said. "We were in position to win. I'm disappointed we lost. It hasn't sunk in enough to go through my head yet. I've got a thick head." Steven Jackson rushed for 128 yards for St. Louis (2-7), which got a TD pass from quarterback Sam Bradford and two field goals by Josh Brown. As Dawson lined up for his final kick, the Rams, who had five players sustain game-ending injuries, were already planning their strategy for a last drive. They didn't realize they were in Cleveland, where the beleaguered Browns have a habit of horrid losses. "I thought this stuff only happened to the Rams," Jackson joked. "I didn't think it happened to other teams." Brown's 34-yard field goal gave the Rams a 13-12 lead with 7:42 remaining. That score was set up by a fumble by Browns return specialist Josh Cribbs, who was stripped trying to get extra yards on a punt return by Rams linebacker David Nixon. Brown, though, knocked his kickoff out of bounds, giving it to the Browns at the 40. McCoy, helped by a personal foul for horse collaring by the Rams, moved Cleveland to the St. Louis 9. But that's where the Browns, who haven't scored a touchdown in more than 123 consecutive minutes at home, got conservative. After a run by Chris Ogbonnaya, starting because Peyton Hillis and Montario Hardesty are hurt, picked up 1 yard, McCoy handed off to tight end Alex Smith on second down, a questionable call given Smith hasn't had a rushing attempt all season. Smith fumbled as he

neared the line, but it was recovered by Cribbs. Ogbonnaya picked up 3 yards on third down, setting up Dawson to put the Browns ahead. But what seemed like a routine kick for Dawson, who made attempts from 44, 32, 43 and 27 yards, turned into another bizarre moment for the Browns. And, it was the latest special teams breakdown for Cleveland, which had two field goals blocked and gave up a touchdown on a fake field goal earlier this season. Bradford finished 15 of 26 for 155 yards with a TD and interception. Jackson went over 100 yards for the third game in a row. McCoy went 20 of 27 for 218 yards, but the Browns can't find the end zone. They are the only team in the league that hasn't scored a TD in the first or third quarters. Notes: Five Rams did not return after getting hurt. Coach Steve Spagnuolo said CB Al Harris and TE Michael Hoomanawanui have "significant" knee injuries. Both will have MRIs on Monday. RB Cadillac Williams strained his calf running onto the field. ... OT Rodger Saffold suffered a head injury and S Darian Stewart hurt his neck. ... Dawson has converted four field goals in a game 10 times. ... Ogbonnaya got a career-high 90 yards, including a 32-yarder, the longest by a Browns back in 2011. ... McCoy's 74.1 completion percentage is his best this season. ... Jackson has 30 career games over 100 yards, second in team history to Hall of Famer Eric Dickerson's 38. © 2012 STATS LLC

Browns edge Jaguars 14-10 CLEVELAND (AP) -- Colt McCoy took a knee on Cleveland's sideline, closed his eyes and the young quarterback asked for some help from above. This week, the Browns got it. "There's nothing wrong with praying," McCoy said. Jacksonville rookie quarterback Blaine Gabbert's pass into the end zone on the game's last play was incomplete, allowing the Browns to escape with a 14-10 win over the Jaguars on Sunday. As McCoy watched helplessly, Gabbert rifled a 3-yard pass high over the middle that was off the mark and caromed off wide receiver Mike Thomas' outstretched hands, and the Browns (4-6) celebrated a win they nearly gave away. "We deserved this one," McCoy said. "Our team deserved this." Last week, the Browns lost 13-12 to the St. Louis Rams when Cleveland botched a snap and reliable kicker Phil Dawson missed a 22-yard field goal try. This one nearly ended under similar circumstances as Jacksonville's final drive was set up by Dawson missing a 38-yarder that sailed over the top of the right post. "Everybody played their hearts out and it's about time it went our way," said Browns linebacker D'Qwell Jackson, who covered Thomas tightly on the final play. "We knew it was up to us. Right there. We had to make the play and we did." McCoy shook off an apparent shoulder injury and threw a 3-yard TD pass to Josh Cribbs in the fourth to give Cleveland a 14-10 lead. But Dawson's stunning miss with 2:49 left gave the Jaguars (3-7) a final chance and Gabbert, who had some good and bad moments, nearly pulled off the comeback. "It's not the ending we were looking for," said Jaguars coach Jack Del Rio, who defended his use of the clock in the final minute. "It's not the first time this year we've had the opportunity. We're really looking for that breakout, game-winning drive. We had a chance for our quarterback to take us down. He took us down. We were knocking on the door. We just couldn't close it out." Chris Ogbonnaya rushed for 115 yards and scored on a 1-yard run for Cleveland, ending a TD drought at home that lasted more than 158 minutes. The Browns had scoring drives of 87 and 85 yards, rarities in the offense's first season under coach Pat Shurmur. But Shurmur knows he can count on his defense, and the Browns' didn't disappoint. "I did trust that we would get them stopped," Shurmur said. "I trust our defense." The Browns appeared in control when Dawson booted his 38-yarder toward the goal post. However, the officials standing directly under the uprights ruled the high kick went wide right. Dawson argued that his kick should have counted, but referee Terry McAulay announced the attempt could not be reviewed because it sailed above the post. "The way we saw it was part of the ball was outside of the outside edge of the upright," said McAulay, whose crew had a few other tough calls to make. Gabbert then drove the Jaguars down the field and Jacksonville caught a break when Browns cornerback Joe Haden was called for interference in the final minute on third down. Maurice Jones-Drew was stopped twice inside the 5, and the Browns were fortunate when Gabbert's pass on second-and-goal went off wide receiver Jason Hill's chest in the back corner of the end zone with 3 seconds left. Haden believed he got a hand on Gabbert's throw. That set up a dramatic finale, and this one went Cleveland's way, giving the Browns a much-needed win before their schedule gets rougher. Jackson said he was ready for the pass. "I anticipated the play and that's a tough route to cover because he's kind of going away," Jackson said. "He came into my zone and I went with him. His arms went up, I saw that. I put my arms up. He didn't catch it, that's all I know and all that matters." Del Rio was asked why he didn't hand the ball to Jones-Drew on the last play. "You can make a case for doing that," Del Rio said. "You can guess any number of plays when you don't connect. We had two guys with the ball in the air in the vicinity - missed opportunities." McCoy completed 17 of 24 passes for 199 yards. And while his numbers were efficient, the second-year QB again showed he's a gamer by staying in despite hurting his right shoulder. Afterward, McCoy said his shoulder was "OK" but didn't know if he would need an MRI. Shurmur doesn't need any proof that McCoy, who was down on himself following a key interception near Jacksonville's end zone in the third, can handle himself physically. "Colt has taken some licks this year," Shurmur said. "He bounced back well. He is learning to forget a bad play and move on." Gabbert was 22 of 41 for 210 yards, and Jones-Drew rushed for 87 yards on 21 carries. Josh Scobee kicked a 42-yard field goal to bring the Jaguars within 14-10 with 5:39 left. The Browns finally found their way into the end zone in the second quarter, when Ogbonnaya's first career TD, a 1-yard run, tied it at 7. It was Cleveland's first touchdown at home since Oct. 2, a drought of 158 minutes, 15 seconds - or 2 hours, 38 minutes and 15 seconds, nearly the length of time it takes to play an entire NFL game. "We're starting to do things right," McCoy said. Jones-Drew powered up the middle for a 6-yard TD run, capping Jacksonville's 92-yard scoring drive that devoured 9:32 off the clock. Jones-Drew dragged two defenders into the end zone and followed with a celebration designed to irk Cleveland fans by imitating the powder toss NBA superstar LeBron James started while he played for the Cavaliers. Notes: Browns rookie WR Greg Little had 5 catches for 59 yards. ... Browns WR Mohamed Massaquoi had 2 catches after missing the previous two games with a concussion. ... Jaguars LBs Clint Session, Matt Roth and RB Kevin Rutland left with head injuries. Del Rio provided no details on the injuries. © 2012 STATS LLC

Green's catch sends Bengals over Browns 23-20 CINCINNATI (AP) -- A.J. Green's bruised knee kept him on the sideline for the final minutes of Cincinnati's past two games, when the Bengals came up just short against AFC North rivals. Finally up-and-running on Sunday, the rookie receiver made all the difference in the final minute. Green made a leaping catch across the middle of the field and kept going for a 51-yard play, setting up a field goal that rallied the Cincinnati Bengals to a 23-20 victory over self-destructive Cleveland. The surprising Bengals (7-4) stayed right behind Baltimore and Pittsburgh in the AFC North with another second-half comeback forged by their rookie big-play combination. "I like my chances with A.J.," rookie quarterback Andy Dalton said. "You just put it around him and he makes plays. He's a special player." The Browns blitzed on third-and-8, and Dalton threw it down the middle just before he got hit. Green adjusted, leaped high above cornerback Joe Haden for the catch at the 30-yard line, then kept going until he was pushed out at the 2. "That's why he was the fourth pick in the draft," coach Marvin Lewis said. "He's the best first-round draft pick I've ever been around. He continues to amaze me. He's a phenomenal athlete." The Browns (4-7) forced Cincinnati to settle for Mike Nugent's 26-yard field goal with 38 seconds left, the Bengals' first lead of the game. Cleveland's last possession went nowhere. Cincinnati's turnaround season started in Cleveland, where the Browns failed to line up promptly and were surprised by a quick snap that led to Green's uncontested 41-yard touchdown catch. That one was easy. This one was amazing. "I did play basketball when I was younger," Green said. "It's like rebounding. A lot of it just timing and going up strong." Green's game-turning play gave him 110 yards against the Browns, who along with the Steelers had been the only teams in the NFL that hadn't allowed a 100-yard receiving game. "It was an amazing catch that won the game for them," Browns quarterback Colt McCoy said. And a gut-wrenching gaffe set it up. For the second time in three games, a botched snap cost Cleveland an opportunity to take a late lead. Phil

Dawson was well short on a 55-yard try with 1:51 left after the snap skipped along the ground. Dawson had already connected from 32 and 54 yards, his longest field goal of the season. On this one, he never had a chance. Only weeks earlier, the Browns had the same thing happen. A bad snap caused Dawson to miss a 22-yard kick with 2:13 left, allowing St. Louis to close out a 13-12 win in Cleveland. "It was a very bad snap," long snapper Ryan Pontbriand said. "I'm in a pretty tough slump right now." It was a familiar outcome for the intrastate rivalry - Cincinnati has won 12 of the past 15 games and six of seven at Paul Brown Stadium. Only 48,260 showed up at the 65,500-seat stadium to see a game decided by the bad snap and the great catch. It was the third time that the Bengals had overcome a halftime deficit of at least 10 points to win, tying the league record for a season. The 1980 Chiefs, 1984 Patriots, 1986 Colts and 2011 Lions also had three such comebacks. Cleveland was buoyed by the return of running back Peyton Hillis, who missed the past six games with a strained left hamstring. He carried 19 times for 65 yards, helping the Browns put together long drives and score 20 points for only the second time all season. It wasn't enough. Down 20-10 late in the third quarter, Dalton helped the Bengals get a win that kept them in the thick of the playoff chase. He was 21 of 31 for 270 yards and his 16th touchdown pass of the season, topping Greg Cook for the Bengals rookie record. Cedric Benson carried 21 times for 106 yards, his second 100-yard game against the Browns. McCoy was 16 of 34 for 151 yards with a pair of touchdowns. His fourth-down pass was knocked away at midfield with 10 seconds to go, sealing Cincinnati's win. McCoy's 24-yard pass to Jordan Norwood capped Cleveland's opening drive and gave the Browns their first touchdown in the first quarter all season. They'd managed a total of nine points in the opening quarter until then. The good start was followed by another crushing finish. Notes: Browns LB Scott Fujita likely broke his right hand in the fourth quarter but expects to keep playing. The Browns also had injuries to DL Emmanuel Stephens (strained chest muscles) and second-string LB Kaluka Maiava (knee). ... McCoy's TD pass to Greg Little made it 17-7 at halftime, more points than the Browns had scored in any of their past five games. Little dropped numerous passes, including one on Cleveland's last possession. ... Green's third 100-yard game tied the club rookie record, shared by Isaac Curtis (1973) and Eddie Brown (1985). ... The Bengals lead the intrastate series 41-36. © 2012 STATS LLC

Ray Rice runs Ravens over Browns 24-10 CLEVELAND (AP) -- The game had no business being close, and suddenly grew tight. Baltimore's lead had slipped on a slick field. That's when Ray Rice ran wild. Rice broke loose for a 67-yard run in the third quarter on the way to a career-high 204 yards as the Ravens kept pace with Pittsburgh atop the AFC North by running roughshod over the Cleveland Browns 24-10 on Sunday. "It was critical," Ravens coach John Harbaugh said of Rice's career-best scamper. "That was the key to the game, to come back and answer like that. It was a huge answer for us." Rice and Ricky Williams had short touchdown runs and Lardarius Webb returned a punt 68 yards for a TD in the fourth for the Ravens (9-3), who toyed with the Browns (4-8) on a dreary, drizzly day. Baltimore racked up 290 yards rushing, and was in such control that quarterback Joe Flacco took a knee three times to run out the final two minutes. "They just flat out whupped us up front," Browns linebacker D'Qwell Jackson said. "They embarrassed us. It was a slap in the face." With Flacco's passes affected by gusty winds that pushed two Billy Cundiff field-goal attempts wide, the Ravens turned to Rice, who followed his blockers and posted the third-highest rushing total in franchise history. "I give it all to the offensive line," Rice said. "I get the glory because I get the yards. But the line, what they do, that's how things happen" Cleveland lost for the fifth time in six games, and the banged-up Browns have just three days to prepare for the Steelers, the division's other resident heavy. Browns wide receiver Josh Cribbs believes Cleveland has a long way to go to catch the North's leaders. "It's a big gap," he said. Picking up huge chunks of yardage with almost every carry, the Ravens should have been up by three scores in the third quarter. But when Phil Dawson kicked a 21-yard field goal following a Baltimore turnover, the Browns were within 10-3. Rice then broke their backs. Taking the handoff from Flacco at his own 27, Rice swept left, found a seam and cut back to the middle of the field. He was able to pull away from a bunch of pursuing Browns near midfield, getting a big block from wide receiver Anquan Boldin before being pushed out of bounds at Cleveland's 5. Williams then plowed in from the 1 to put the Ravens ahead 17-3. For the third straight week, the Ravens were without Ray Lewis, their motivational leader and star linebacker who has been slowed by a nagging toe injury. But the 5-foot-8, 212-pound Rice, who has become one of the NFL's best all-around backs, carried the load and made sure Baltimore didn't miss a beat. "Getting this win without No. 52 is a blessing," Rice said of Lewis, who prowled the sideline yelling encouragement at his teammates and taunting the Browns. "When I came off to the sideline, he was coaching me as well. He said he was a running back in high school and was giving tips." The Ravens hadn't played since Thanksgiving and were out of sync at times. However, they were finally able to beat a weaker opponent following a quality win. Three times this season, they had stubbed their toe on the road following victories. But despite two botched field goals, and a costly fumble, the Ravens pushed toward the playoffs. The Browns have major problems. Quarterback Colt McCoy finished 17 of 35 for 192 yards and a TD. But he fell to 0-7 in his career against division opponents, and did little to convince team management that he should be their QB of the future. He's got four games left this season to make a favorable impression, assuming he's healthy enough to play. McCoy injured his right knee early, came back after missing one play and took several hard shots in the second half. After throwing a short pass in the first quarter, McCoy was hit by Ravens defensive end Arthur Jones. At first, McCoy, whose white No. 12 jersey was smeared with grass stains and dirt, appeared to be seriously injured. Backup Seneca Wallace came in for one play, but McCoy returned the next time Cleveland got the ball. "It think it's going to be all right," said McCoy, who didn't know if he'll have an MRI. His teammates didn't help, dropping at least four passes. With the Browns down 10-0, tight end Evan Moore let a sure TD slip through his hands in the end zone. "Critical mistakes at critical times," McCoy said. Browns running back Peyton Hillis also sustained an unspecified leg injury. The Browns don't believe it's related to the strained hamstring that sidelined him for five straight games. Cundiff's misses from 34 and 41 yards prevented the Ravens from having a bigger halftime lead. Following Cundiff's second miss to the right, Cleveland had a chance to run out the clock and escape to the locker room trailing just 7-0. But McCoy was intercepted by Jimmy Smith, who returned it to the Browns 15. The Ravens, who inexplicably stopped giving the ball to Rice in the final minutes of the first half, had to settle for Cundiff's 21-yard field goal with 13 seconds left. Notes: Flacco improved to 7-0 against the Browns. ... Rice has four of his 12 100-yard games this season. Boldin had two catches, giving him 700 for his career. ... Browns RB Montario Hardesty was active after missing four straight games with a calf injury but was in for only three plays. Three of the Ravens' top four rushing performances have come against the Browns. © 2012 STATS LLC

Roethlisberger hurt, Steelers hold off Browns 14-3 PITTSBURGH (AP) -- Ben Roethlisberger laid on the Heinz Field turf, convinced his left leg was broken. The Pittsburgh Steelers huddled around their franchise quarterback, concerned their promising season was in jeopardy. Not quite. Same old Big Ben. And same old Cleveland Browns. Roethlisberger added to his burgeoning reputation as one of the toughest players in the game by returning from a gruesome second-quarter sack to pass for 280 yards and two scores - including a 79-yard strike to Antonio Brown with 2:52 remaining - to lift the Steelers to a 14-3 victory Thursday night. "You can't say enough about our quarterback," Brown said. "It's amazing to play with a guy like that who exemplifies that type of toughness." Not that Roethlisberger felt particularly tough after getting his left leg caught underneath Cleveland's Scott Paxson midway through the second quarter. "It was one of the most painful things I ever felt," Roethlisberger said. "It felt like the middle of my leg was just, cracked ... it felt like my foot was outside of my leg." He went to the locker room for X-rays while veteran Charlie Batch tried to fill in. The X-rays showed no break and Roethlisberger returned. "Doctors said 'Just

keep moving," Roethlisberger said. "As we kept going they said, 'Just keep moving' because it literally felt like it was about to explode." Roethlisberger received a rousing ovation when he walked back onto the field to start the second half, though it was obvious he was in serious pain. He hobbled to the line of scrimmage, he tip-toed while handing the ball off and he grimaced while stepping up to throw. Yet he somehow completed 8 of 12 passes for 178 yards after the break, including the sealing touchdown to Brown, who caught the ball near midfield then beat Cleveland's Mike Adams to the end zone. "I'm proud of him and glad he scored because I wouldn't have been able to make it down there if we had to run another play," Roethlisberger said, laughing. Roethlisberger will have an MRI exam Friday to determine the extent of the damage. The Steelers have 10 days off before a game in San Francisco. Brown finished with five receptions for 151 yards and a score as the Steelers (10-3) won for the eighth time in their last nine games to move a half-game in front of Baltimore for the AFC North lead. Yet the night won't be remembered for Brown's spectacular catch-and-run but Roethlisberger's John Wayne impersonation and Cleveland's typical meltdown against its biggest rival. The Browns (4-9) lost for the 15th time in their last 16 games with the Steelers, though they had plenty of chances to pick up their first victory at Heinz in eight years. Colt McCoy passed for 209 yards but also threw two interceptions for the Browns (4-9), who lost for the 15th time in their last 16 meetings with the Steelers. McCoy left briefly in the fourth quarter after taking a crashing helmet-to-helmet hit from Pittsburgh linebacker James Harrison. The second-year quarterback was scrambling out of trouble when he tucked the ball under his arm briefly as if to run. He pulled up as Harrison approached and flipped a short pass to Montario Hardesty just before Harrison smashed into him. McCoy laid on the field for several moments before making his way off. He refused to say whether he felt Harrison's hit was a cheap shot, but acknowledged that "it got me for a minute." Harrison, who has faced stiff fines in the past for hits against defenseless players, believes he didn't do anything wrong. "From what I understand, once the quarterback leaves the pocket, he's considered a runner," Harrison said. "All the defenseless(ness) and liberties that a quarterback has in the pocket are gone and you can tackle him just as he's a running back. The hit wasn't late, so I really don't understand why it was called." Seneca Wallace filled in, leading the Browns to the Pittsburgh 5. McCoy returned but he wasn't the same. He was flagged for intentional grounding on his first play back to push the ball back to the Pittsburgh 16. He tried to hit Mohamed Massaquoi in the end zone on the next snap, but Pittsburgh's William Gay easily stepped in front of it for an interception. "I just didn't get enough on it, underthrew it and their guy made a nice play and that was basically the game," McCoy said. Pittsburgh's defense gave a little but did not break, keeping McCoy winless against AFC North opponents in his brief career. He's 0-8 against division rivals, though there was plenty of blame to go around. Cleveland receivers dropped several passes and running back Peyton Hillis managed just 25 yards on 10 carries. "You can look at the raw yardage and say, 'well, I don't know what kind of performance it was,'" Cleveland coach Pat Shurmur said. "But we kept them out of the end zone until that last big pass. There's some things we can build on." Maybe, but they failed to take advantage on a night when the Steelers had trouble getting out of their own way. Twice in the first half Pittsburgh turned it over in the red zone. Hines Ward fumbled at the Cleveland 15 early in the second quarter to halt on Pittsburgh drive. The Steelers got it right back on Troy Polamalu's first interception of the season. Polamalu returned the pick to the Cleveland 10. Following a false start penalty, Roethlisberger hit Heath Miller in the flat, but the ball came tumbling out after getting hit by Cleveland safety Joe Haden to squander another opportunity. The Browns were hardly better. McCoy appeared to score a touchdown on Cleveland's opening possession, but the score was overturned by replay, which showed McCoy's knee hitting the ground with the ball just short of the goal line. The Steelers stuffed the Browns on third down and Cleveland settled for Phil Dawson's 20-yard field goal. Pittsburgh appeared to be off to the races when Roethlisberger hit Jericho Cotchery for an 11-yard score before injury changed things dramatically. Yet the Steelers survived again behind the play of one of the league's toughest competitors. Roethlisberger has already played through a sprained left foot and a fractured right thumb this season, though the pain paled in comparison to what he felt in the second half. Still, he managed to survive and keep Pittsburgh's hopes for a division title and homefield advantage through the playoffs very much alive. "It's one of those things with him where you're literally are going to have to take him off the field on a stretcher to get him out of the play," Batch said. © 2012 STATS LLC

Arizona gets 3rd OT victory in 7 games, 20-17 GLENDALE, Ariz. (AP) -- Overtime was Arizona's time - again. And it's got the Cardinals at .500 for the first time since the second week of the season. Patrick Peterson returned a punt 32 yards and John Skelton threw 32 yards to Larry Fitzgerald to set up a 22-yard field goal by Jay Feely that gave the Cardinals a 20-17 victory over the Cleveland Browns on Sunday in their third overtime win in seven games. Arizona became the ninth team in NFL history to win three overtime games in a season and just the second to win all three at home. The Cardinals (7-7), winners of six of their last seven, trailed 17-7 entering the fourth quarter. They have been behind in the second half in all seven of their victories. "We have a flair for dramatics," Fitzgerald said. "Today was kind of typical Cardinals fashion." By that, he means the offense starts slowly, the defense plays well - and all heck breaks loose at the finish. "It wasn't pretty, but we had so many different guys make plays throughout the course of the game, especially in the second half," coach Ken Whisenhunt said. "The way our team fights back is really something special. What I told them is their will to win is pretty strong." The win kept alive Arizona's long-shot hopes for the playoffs. Both teams were without their starting quarterbacks because of concussions. Skelton, in relief of Kevin Kolb, completed 28 of 36 for 313 yards with a touchdown and interception. Seneca Wallace, starting for Colt McCoy, was 18 of 31 for 226 yards, including a 76-yard TD play to rookie Greg Little, Cleveland's longest play from scrimmage in four years. "We had them on their heels and when it gets to that point, it is about not making mistakes," Wallace said, "not turning the ball over and giving them some easy points, and making plays. They played well on defense and made some plays. I need to help us out a lot more and make some more plays for our team." Little caught five passes for a career-best 131 yards in the Browns' fourth straight loss and seventh in eight games. Peyton Hillis gained a season-high 99 yards on 26 carries for Cleveland (4-10). Skelton, a second-year pro out of Fordham, improved to 7-2 as a starter, including 4-1 this year. That doesn't count the previous week's 21-19 victory over San Francisco, when he came in after Kolb took a knee to the head on the Cardinals' third play. Todd Heap, sidelined most of the season with hamstring problems, caught seven passes for 69 yards. Arizona's offense, so slow to start even through the team's recent success, scored the final 13 points of the game. Skelton completed 5 of 7 for 82 yards in the 11-play, 87-yard drive that culminated in Beanie Wells' 1-yard touchdown run that cut the lead to 17-14 with 8:33 remaining in regulation. A holding penalty on Cleveland's subsequent kickoff return pinned the Browns to their 10 and O'Brien Schofield got Arizona's first sack of the day on the elusive Wallace to push Cleveland back to its 5. Schofield got through on the next play as well, grabbing Wallace by an ankle and spinning him to the ground as the quarterback lost the ball. Initially, Wallace was ruled down on the play, but Whisenhunt challenged and the call was reversed. Replays showed the ball coming loose well before Wallace fell backward onto the turf. The Cardinals took over at the Cleveland 5 needing only to punch it in to take the lead. But Jabaal Sheard got his second sack, and Cleveland's fourth of the game and Arizona settled for Feely's 33-yard field goal that tied it at 17 with 5:40 to play. Cleveland won the coin toss to get the ball first in overtime, but the Browns managed only one first down before having to punt. Brad Maynard had artfully kicked the ball away from Peterson, the spectacular rookie whose four punt returns for scores have tied an NFL record. "I thought we did a very nice job, even on that last punt," Cleveland coach Pat Shurmur said. "We had a guy down in his face and you know we were trying to kick the ball out of bounds or try to pin him down there and the guy in his face thought he saw the fair catch." He doesn't know Peterson very well, then. The rookie disdains the fair catch, especially with the game on the line. He fielded it near his left sideline and ran across the field before making a run for it near

the right sideline. He took it to the Cleveland 40 and, two plays later, Skelton found Fitzgerald, more open than he'd been all day, far downfield. "We'd been running crossing patterns all day," Skelton said. "I think the last two drives, when we were in two-minute mode, we ran probably three or four of them, so they expected the same thing. ... Larry just made a good fake, a good cut, and we were able to get down there and let Jay do the rest." Feely who booted in the chip shot to give Arizona another OT triumph and make Whisenhunt the franchise's winningest coach with 43 wins. Two weeks earlier, the Cardinals beat Dallas 19-13 in overtime. The first OT victory was 19-13 over St. Louis on Nov. 6. Cleveland played its first overtime game since a 26-20 loss to the New York Jets on Nov. 14 of last year. Wallace evaded Arizona's rush much of the game. On the Browns' big play, he scrambled away from the blitz to his right and spotted Little in a one-on-one mismatch with linebacker Daryl Washington. The rookie receiver hauled in the pass and easily outran his pursuer for the touchdown that put the Browns up 17-7 with 3:01 left in the first quarter. Cleveland took the opening kickoff and powered down the field behind Hillis, who scored on a 1-yard run. Phil Dawson's 44-yard field goal made it 10-0 in the second quarter. With a no-huddle offense, Arizona went 65 yards in 90 seconds in the waning moments of the first half, Skelton hitting Andre Roberts with a 9-yard TD pass to cut the lead to 10-7 with 19 seconds to go. Notes: Little's TD catch was his 55th reception of the season, surpassing Eric Metcalf for second-most by a Browns rookie. Kevin Johnson has the team's rookie record with 66 in 1999. ... Cleveland lost three players - LB Titus Brown (knee), WR Jordan Norwood (concussion) and LB Ben Jacobs (concussion). © 2012 STATS LLC

Flacco leads Ravens to 20-14 win over Browns BALTIMORE (AP) -- Eight games, eight wins. The Baltimore Ravens achieved perfection at home for the first time, and now they're looking to add to that ledger in the playoffs. Joe Flacco threw two touchdown passes, and the Ravens beat the bumbling Cleveland Browns 20-14 on Saturday to move one step closer to winning the AFC North. Ray Rice ran for 87 yards and caught a TD pass for the Ravens (11-4), who led 17-0 at halftime and held on. "I have never been perfect at home in 16 years of football. That's amazing," Baltimore linebacker Ray Lewis said. "As good of teams we've had here, we've always found (a way) to lose one or two here or there. I think this year we really made a focus on taking care at home. This is the result, us being able to go 8-0 and being able to be sitting where you want to sit at the end of the day." The Ravens would win the AFC North by defeating Cincinnati on the road next week. That would also give Baltimore a first-round bye and a home playoff game - two if New England loses next Sunday at home against Buffalo. "It's big, man," linebacker Terrell Suggs said. "We are at our best when we are at (home) and our fans are rocking. So we definitely need a home playoff game, by any means necessary." Flacco went 11 for 24 with touchdown passes to Rice and tight end Ed Dickson. He also had a 33-yard run. Josh Cribbs had a career-high 84-yard punt return for a TD for Cleveland (4-11). But the Browns generated very little offense and were guilty of questionable play calling, bad clock management and untimely penalties in their fifth straight loss. Cleveland saved the worst for last. Having already burned their three timeouts, the Browns lined up on defense after the two-minute warning with the Ravens facing a fourth-and-2 at the Cleveland 37. It appeared obvious that Flacco and the Ravens were merely hoping to draw the Browns offside. As the play clock moved close to zero, Cleveland tackle Phil Taylor jumped across the line of scrimmage to give Baltimore a first down. "It was the first hard count and we stayed onside," Taylor said. "The second time, I just jumped. Of course you feel bad, but you just got to move on." Said Flacco: "I don't know if I've ever been in position for that to happen. It's never worked." The Ravens then ran out the clock on their eighth straight win over the Browns, including two this month. "We knew this would be quite a challenge for us," Cleveland quarterback Seneca Wallace said. "We're playing the Ravens at home, and they're playing for everything. I should have played better, and I should have made better decisions." Wallace went 19 for 33 for 147 yards in place of Colt McCoy, who was out with a concussion. Peyton Hillis ran for 112 yards, but Cleveland's offense mounted only one decent drive. The Browns took the opening kickoff and moved from their own 26 to the Baltimore 30 behind the power of Hillis, who gained 30 yards on six carries. But on a third-and-1, Cleveland inexplicably went to the air, and Lardarius Webb intercepted Wallace's pass for Mohamed Massaquoi. Flacco immediately threw deep for Torrey Smith, who drew a 60-yard penalty for pass interference on Mike Adams to set up a 5-yard touchdown pass to Dickson. Later, a 29-yard throw from Flacco to Smith led to a 48-yard field goal by newcomer Shayne Graham, signed in the middle of the week to take over for the injured Billy Cundiff. After another Cleveland punt, Flacco directed an 82-yard drive that gave Baltimore a 17-0 lead. Rice slipped behind linebacker D'Qwell Jackson on the right sideline, caught a soft pass in stride and sprinted into the end zone to complete a 42-yard scoring play. That made Flacco 5 for 5 for 94 yards and two touchdowns on third down. Cleveland moved deep into Baltimore territory late in the first half, thanks in part to a 30-yard pass interference call against Chris Carr. But with the clock inside 10 seconds and the Browns without a timeout left, Wallace handed off to Hillis instead of spiking the ball, and Hillis went nowhere. Wallace took the blame, and so did Browns coach Pat Shurmur. "I need to communicate it better, OK?" Shurmur said. Time expired before Cleveland could get off another play, and the Browns headed to the locker room after being held scoreless in the first half for the second time this season. The other time it happened was also against Baltimore. Graham kicked a 43-yard field goal in the third quarter to make it 20-0. The Browns finally scored when Cribbs took a punt on the right sideline, escaped an arm tackle and broke toward the center of the field before outrunning three defenders into the left corner of the end zone late in the third quarter. "I was wondering where all the defenders were," Cribbs said. "I saw all the great blocking around me. From there, it was easy. It was just a walk in." Cribbs also contributed to Cleveland's next touchdown, catching a 23-yard pass from Wallace as part of an 80-yard drive that ended with a 9-yard TD throw to Evan Moore midway through the fourth quarter. The Browns forced a punt, but on a fourth-and-4 from the Cleveland 45 with 4:03 left, a pass to Hillis did not produce the necessary yardage. Taylor's jump across the line of scrimmage soon followed. NOTES: Ravens KR David Reed hurt his left knee and declared himself out for the season. Also, Baltimore OT Marshal Yanda (chest) and CB Cary Williams (concussion) did not play in the second half. ... Shurmur said the Browns sustained no serious injuries. Cleveland closes the season next Sunday against Pittsburgh. © 2012 STATS LLC

Steelers stumble into playoffs, beat Browns 13-9 CLEVELAND (AP) -- They're bruised, limping and not close to being healthy. The Pittsburgh Steelers aren't themselves. But they are going to the playoffs. At this point, that's all that matters. Isaac Redman replaced injured starting running back Rashard Mendenhall and scored a touchdown, quarterback Ben Roethlisberger made enough big plays on his sprained ankle and Pittsburgh hobbled into the postseason with a wind-whipped 13-9 win Sunday over Cleveland, the Steelers' 16th victory in 17 games against the Browns. Redman scored on a 7-yard run in the third quarter for the Steelers (12-4), who finished tied with Baltimore for first in the AFC North but lost the tiebreaker because the Ravens beat them twice. Pittsburgh needed to win and hope Cincinnati could knock off the Ravens, who beat the Bengals 24-16. But the Steelers are in the playoffs as a wild card and will face Tim Tebow and the Broncos in Denver next week. "Now is the time to go out and play our best football," said Roethlisberger, who went 23 of 40 for 221 yards on his gimpy left ankle. "If you are a great team, you have to win on the road. We'd like to get it together, starting next week. We have not been able to put it all together yet this year, whether because of injury, weather, a lot of factors." The Steelers may be without Mendenhall, their leading rusher. He was hurt on the final play of the first quarter, when he went down after a 5-yard gain and immediately grabbed his right knee. Mendenhall walked slowly to the sideline, slapping hands with some teammates on his way to the bench. He didn't return. After the game, Mendenhall left the stadium on crutches, his head hanging in disappointment. Steelers coach Mike Tomlin made it sound as if Mendenhall could miss the postseason. "It's not good, of course, when a guy goes down in open grass and is not touched by

anyone," Tomlin said. "Experience tells me that in general that's not good." Tomlin said Mendenhall would be examined when the team gets home. "You should anticipate that he won't be participating next week," Tomlin said. The Steelers survived two fumbles by Redman in the second half and then held their breath on the final play when Browns quarterback Seneca Wallace floated a pass into a crowd in the back of the end zone. Pittsburgh safety Troy Polamalu came over the top and got his hand on the ball before rookie wide receiver Greg Little could grab it, allowing the Steelers to escape. The Browns (4-12) lost their last six games and nine of 10 under first-year coach Pat Shurmur. Cleveland was competitive - the Browns lost their final three games by a combined 13 points - but wound up with one less win than last season. "We intended to win a lot more games than that," said cornerback Joe Haden. "The only thing that kept us going is we didn't really get blown out in any games. We need to find a way to come up with a big play, come up with the big stop, the big score and the season would be totally different." Shaun Suisham made two field goals for the Steelers, who won 12 games for the second year in a row, something they haven't done since 1978-79. They won the Super Bowl both those years. Motivated by losing last season's Super Bowl to Green Bay, Pittsburgh opened the season by getting blown out by Baltimore. But the Steelers recovered and will now make another run at a Lombardi Trophy. "We have a lot of veterans who know what January football is all about," said safety Ryan Clark. "Now's the time to go play it. We kind of limped in and it would have been huge to get a bye and get guys healthy. Now we have to go and play better on the road. I believe this team can win anywhere." Phil Dawson kicked three field goals for all of Cleveland's points. Steelers wide receiver Hines Ward had five catches and became the eighth player in NFL history to reach 1,000 career catches. Ward grabbed a shovel pass in the fourth quarter, and although it lost three yards, it got him to the milestone. Ward and Hall of Famer Jerry Rice are the only players with 1,000 receptions and more than one Super Bowl win. Ward was embraced by his teammates when he came to the sideline after his catch, but it was one of the few things worth celebrating on a sloppy day for the Steelers, who dominated the stat sheet but couldn't put the Browns away. "It's the happiest negative-yard catch I've ever had," Ward said. "I always try to put team ahead of personal goals. But 1,000 catches and over 12,000 yards is not bad considering I was a third-round pick." Pittsburgh linebacker James Harrison was well-behaved. The hard-hitting Harrison, who was suspended for one game for his helmet-to-helmet hit on Browns quarterback Colt McCoy on Dec. 8, had little impact on the game. He was credited with three tackles, but none of them will need to be reviewed by commissioner Roger Goodell. "We played sub-par today, but got a win," Harrison said. "We need to step up next week and get better - a lot better." Without Mendenhall, the Steelers' game plan was out the window. And with Roethlisberger slowed by his tender ankle, Pittsburgh had to make due and did enough to improve to 23-4 against Cleveland since 1999. With the score tied 6-6 in the third, Polamalu's interception of Wallace at Cleveland's 43 set up the Steelers' go-ahead score. On 3rd-and-2, Wallace rolled right, and feeling pressure from backup linebacker Jason Worilds, forced a pass to tight end Evan Moore that Polamalu read perfectly and picked off near the sideline. "Troy made a great play," said Wallace, who went only 16 of 41 for 177 yards and lost all three starts as McCoy's replacement. "I probably shouldn't have thrown it." Roethlisberger completed two passes and the Browns jumped offsides to put it at the 7 before Redman took a handoff right and weaved his way in to make it 13-6. Notes: Roethlisberger improved to 80-33 as a starter, 34-9 against AFC North opponents and 14-1 vs. Cleveland. ... Steelers TE Heath Miller had 2 catches, giving him 336 for his career, one more than Hall of Famer Lynn Swann. ... Dawson finished 24 of 29 and has 1,155 points - 194 behind club leader Lou Groza. Dawson is hoping to be back for a 14th season with Cleveland, which placed the franchise tag on him this year. "I gave my heart and soul to this team this year," he said. ... Browns RB Peyton Hillis left with a knee injury after gaining 30 yards on 10 carries. © 2012 STATS LLC