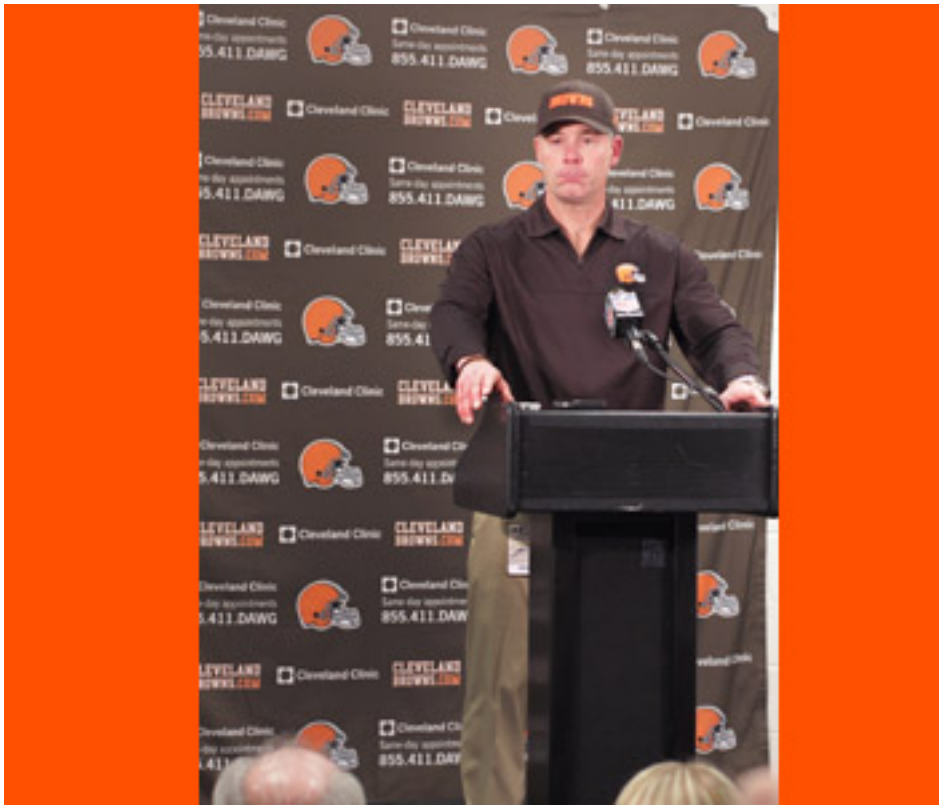

2013 brings in a new era to Browns team

Tom Heckert and Pat Shurmur were relieved of their duties as general manager and head coach, respectively, of the Cleveland Browns today, the team announced.

“We felt that these moves were in the best interests of the Cleveland Browns and our future,” said Browns Owner Jimmy Haslam. “I enjoyed getting to know Tom and Pat over the past several months, and want to thank them, not just for their contributions to the Browns, but also the insight they were able to provide. They are both fine men and hope they have the best of success as they move forward with their careers.”

“This decision was not an easy one because of my relationship with Tom and Pat and the fact that they are both quality people,” said Browns CEO Joe Banner. “Ultimately our objective is to put together an organization that will be the best at everything we do. On the field, our only goal is trying to win championships. I have a great deal of respect for Tom and Pat, and I want to wish them and their families nothing but the best.”

“I leave the Browns feeling very good about many of the things we accomplished here and the direction in which I believe this team is headed,” Heckert said. “Having been around this franchise growing up, I was really excited for the opportunity to come here three years ago, and I want to thank Randy Lerner and Mike Holmgren for making that possible. I also want to **ackn owledge** many of the hard-working people in the Browns organization, especially our player personnel staff, who are outstanding at what they do and supported me **immensely** in my role. I wish the team nothing but the best as they move forward.”

“I am extremely proud of the players on this team, who I felt made tremendous strides and helped to make the Cleveland Browns relevant again,” Shurmur said. “I want to thank them, as well as my entire coaching staff for making the past two years enjoyable. My coaches are outstanding teachers and even better men. They helped me lead these players through a unique time of transition. This group of players will achieve success soon, and there will be a part of me that will feel very good when that happens.

“I want to thank Randy Lerner, Mike Holmgren and Tom Heckert for bringing me in and having the faith in me to lead this football team. I am disappointed that we did not win more games, but I do know the Browns are on their way to becoming a consistent winner. I appreciated the time spent with Jimmy (Haslam) and Joe (Banner), and wish them all the best as they provide a new vision for the Cleveland Browns.”