



1950



THE
PACKERS CENTURY

P R O J E C T

ALL THE GAMES. ALL THE STORIES.

1919-2019

BY JIM RICE

packerscentury.com



1950

Record: 3-9-0 (5th Place)

Coach: Gene Ronzani

- On January 24, the team's training facility called the Rockwood Lodge burned down. The team's insurance company paid the Packers \$75,000 to help cover the loss.
- On February 1, Curly Lambeau resigned after 31 years. He was replaced six days later by Gene Ronzani, an assistant coach with the Bears and a former star at Marquette in Milwaukee.
- To stabilize finances with a debt of \$90,000, the franchise's third stock sale began on April 12th. "Back the drive with \$25!" raised \$104,137.50. In 1950, the Packers made a profit of \$12,990.49!
- Three teams from the rival All American Football Conference were absorbed into the NFL – Cleveland, Baltimore, and San Francisco.
- Coach Ronzani brought with him experience with the T-Formation Offense, and he also hired Jack Vanisi as the team's chief talent scout.
- On November 25, Bob Mann became the team's first African-American player.
- The team's weak defense gave up 33 points a game. The offense committed the most turnovers in team history - 57.
- New green and gold uniforms made their debut.



1919-2018

DETROIT
LIONS
PACKERS

45 9.17.1950
7

Let's Start Over

This is Green Bay's first game without Curly Lambeau. New coach, Gene Ronzani, debuted 25 players who were not on the roster in 1949.

Green Bay took an early 7-0 lead. The Lions answered with a resounding 45 points. Quarterback Bobby Layne threw for 232 yards and a touchdown. Green Bay turned it over eight times including a 56-yard pick-six by Clarence Self that made it 22-7 Lions at halftime.

Green Bay's rookie quarterback Tobin Rote hurt his shoulder in the first half, and was replaced by Tom O'Malley who threw six interceptions. This was Detroit's first win in Green Bay in 10 years!

Detroit	9	13	16	7	45
Green Bay	7	0	0	0	7

Attendance: 22,096



1919-2018

WASHINGTON

REDSKINS

PACKERS

21

9.24.1950

35

After their loss in the opener, Green Bay played with a sense of urgency in a bruising battle with 21 penalties for over 200 yards!

Quarterback Sammy Baugh of the Redskins struck first with a touchdown pass six minutes into the game. A turnover by Washington allowed the Packers to tie it with Paul Christman's touchdown pass Ted Cook. An 85-yard punt return by Green Bay's Billy Grimes made it 14-7 at the break.

In the second half, the Packers capitalized on a blocked punt by big Ed Neal and a fumble recovery by Abner Wimberly for touchdowns. Green Bay's three-second half touchdowns came from one, two and three-yard lines!

Washington 7 0 7 7 21

Green Bay 0 14 14 7 35

Attendance: 14,109

Milwaukee County Stadium

Before the team arrived in Milwaukee...

"The Packers were roundly trounced by the Detroit Lions in their league opener at Green Bay, 45-7, but that will make no difference. They will be welcomed like champions. They will be serenaded at the Schroeder Hotel Saturday morning at 10 o'clock by the Miller Brewery Band, driven through downtown Milwaukee in convertibles and then taken to the stadium site for practice. A loudspeaker will be set up at the practice field to help acquaint fans with the players. A similar public workout in Green Bay several weeks ago drew 7,500 fans."¹

¹ packershistory.net/1950Packers



1919-2018

CHICAGO
BEARS
PACKERS

21
31 10.1.1950

BIG Win!

The Bears won the statistical battle with more yards, more first downs, and more completed passes. They led 7-3 at halftime, but they also ran into a turnover problem.

The Bears turned the ball over five times in the second half. Trailing 7-3, the Packers came back with four interceptions of Chicago quarterback Johnny Lujack to take the game away. Two of the picks were returned for touchdowns by cornerbacks Wally Dryer and Rebel Steiner.

After halftime, a 68-yard punt return by Billy Grimes provided the winning points. In the fourth quarter, the teams traded touchdowns, and the Packers protected the lead for the upset.

Chicago	0	7	7	7	21
Green Bay	3	0	21	7	31

Attendance: 24,893

*Go, John, Go! "The man who has never missed a Packer home game, John W. Johnson of Bessemer, Michigan, kept his record intact Sunday."*¹



1919-2018

NEW YORK
YANKS
PACKERS

44
10.8.1950
31

Shocked

The Packers fell back to .500 when their second-half comeback fell short. The surprising Yanks, took the lead in the second quarter, and never faltered.

New York took control near the end of the first half when a poor punt gave them great field position. After they scored to lead 10-3, they intercepted Tobin Rote a few plays later and extended the advantage to 17-3 before the break.

In a wild, 41-point third quarter, each team scored three times. The Yanks never lost the lead, but Green Bay did get to within six points twice only to be outdone by running back George Taliaferro of the Yanks. Taliaferro scored twice in the second half on a 37-yard touchdown pass from quarterback George Ratterman, and on a 24-yard touchdown run that put the Packers away.

The teams generated 811 total yards and after the game, Ronzanni commented, "I think our little lambs, our little acorns are getting a few roots. They're getting a feel of some of these big teams with great personnel."¹

New York	3	14	20	7	44
Green Bay	3	0	21	7	31

Attendance: 23,871

GB ran for 312 yards.

"Supplementing the customary halftime performance of the Packer Lamberjack Band and its majorettes was the appearance of 'Miss Wisconsin Potatoe for 1950.' She is Miss Agnes Ourada of Antigo.

A highlight of the between halves entertainment was the performance of the West High School Band.”²

1 Green Bay Press-Gazette, 10/9/50, Rimmel, p. 17

2 Green Bay Press-Gazette, 10/9/50, Rimmel, p. 17



1919-2018

PACKERS

14

CHICAGO
BEARS

10.15.1950

28

The 14-point favorite Bears looked to deliver some payback for two weeks ago. In a tough contest between rivals, the Packers grabbed a 7-0 lead in the first quarter. The Bears responded with vengeance and ripped off four straight touchdown runs. The Packers didn't score again until it was 28-7 in the fourth quarter.

Quarterback Johnny Lujack scored three of Chicago's touchdowns, and he also kicked four extra points. The Packers struggled sustaining drives. They punted 11 times and turned the ball over on three other occasions.

Green Bay	7	0	0	7	14
Chicago	0	7	14	7	28

Attendance: 51,065

*Three Green Bay fans "paraded the length of the east sidelines bearing a huge red banner upon which was printed Beat The Bears! They were waylaid, however, by Business Manager Rudy Custer of the Bears who "urged" them to leave the field. They disappeared, so Custer thought. Moments later, the persistent fellows appeared on the west sidelines, again sporting the banner. This time they went they distance unmolested."*¹

¹ Green Bay Press-Gazette, 10/16/50, Rimmel, p. 19



PACKERS
NEW YORK
YANKS

17
10.19.1950
35

In a quick rematch at Yankee Stadium on a Thursday night, “the Packers were hardly out of the dressing room”¹ when they found themselves down 14-0. Tobin Rote’s fumble inside the five-yard line led to New York’s second touchdown. The Packers rallied with 10 points before the Yanks struck again before halftime.

In the third quarter, the Packers closed the deficit to 11 on an 85-yard touchdown strike from Rote to Al Baldwin. The Yanks ended any comeback talk by Green Bay with a pick-six by linebacker Duke Iverson.

Green Bay	0	10	7	0	17
New York	14	7	7	7	35
Attendance:	13,661				

Bert Bell, NFL Commissioner: "Green Bay belongs in any big-time pro football setup and I, for one, will do everything in my power to keep it there. There isn't the slightest doubt in my mind that the Packers will come back strong."

1 packershistory.net/1950Packers



1919-2018

PACKERS

BALTIMORE

COLTS

21

11.5.1950

41

Embarrassed

After enjoying a 16-day break, the Packers met a new team from the old AAFC. Though Green Bay was favored, the Colts put up 506 yards of offense in a surreal, upset performance.

Green Bay led 7-0 in the second quarter before Baltimore fullback Jim Spavital scored twice. His 46-yard touchdown run was nearly matched later by a 45-yard touchdown bomb from Y.A. Tittle. In the fourth quarter, Spavital sprinted 96 yards from scrimmage for another touchdown.

With Green Bay holding on 21-20 in the fourth quarter, the Colts picked off three passes and returned all of them for touchdowns. This was Baltimore's only win in its first year in the NFL.

Green Bay	7	7	7	0	21
Baltimore	0	14	0	27	41

Attendance: 12,971

At Austin Straubel Field, "there were more than 1,000 fans there to welcome the team despite the 41-21 loss at Baltimore. Most of the players felt a bit sheepish as they stepped off the plane and waited for their luggage. Head Coach Gene Ronzani said 'You can't beat these fans anywhere.'"¹

¹ Green Bay Press-Gazette, 11/6/50, p. 17



LOS ANGELES

RAMS

PACKERS

45

11.12.1950

14

Annihilated

The Packers trailed 24-0 at halftime. They turned the ball over nine times including four interceptions thrown by Tobin Rote. Green Bay didn't score until they trailed 45-0 in the fourth quarter.

Los Angeles 3 21 14 7 45

Green Bay 0 0 0 14 14

Attendance: 20,456

Milwaukee County Stadium



PACKERS

DETROIT

LIONS

21

11.19.1950

24

On a wet field due to a steady rain, both squads coughed up the ball easily (GB 5, DET 6). Statistically, it was a fairly even all around, but Detroit rookie Doak Walker was the difference.

Walker scored all of Detroit's points. In the second quarter, he caught a 33-yard touchdown pass from quarterback Bobby Layne. He also nailed a 35-yard field goal in the first half, and he kicked all three extra points.

But Walker really took over after Green Bay scored twice to take a 14-7 lead. He caught another touchdown pass from Layne, and with less than two minutes left in the game, he won it with his third touchdown catch, this time from back-up quarterback Fred Enke, to win it. On the play, Walker was "all alone in the end zone.....as the Packers pulled in fairly tight with a seven-man line."¹

Green Bay	0	14	0	7	21
Detroit	0	10	7	7	24

Attendance: 17,752

Each team intercepted four passes.

¹ Green Bay Press-Gazette, 11/27/50, Daley, p. 19



SAN FRANCISCO

49ers

PACKERS

21

11.26.1950

25

A Third Win

Another team from the old All-American Football Conference (AAFC) visits Green Bay. They were greeted, said the Press-Gazette, with “the worst winter game weather conditions in the history of Packer competition anywhere.”¹

The Packers went in front in the cold, wind, and snow with touchdowns by Tony Canadeo and Billy Grimes for a 13-7 edge at halftime. The Niners struck gold right after intermission when they capitalized on two Packer fumbles for a 21-13 lead.

In the fourth quarter, Green Bay got a huge break when Frankie Albert’s punt “went straight up in the air and blew out of bounds on the 14-yard line.”² In four plays, the Packers scored to cut the deficit to two, but they missed the extra point. But with just three minutes to go, Breezy Reid won it when he snared a short pass from quarterback Paul Christman and went 44 yards for the winner!

San Francisco	7	0	14	0	21
Green Bay	7	6	0	12	25
Attendance: 13,196					

¹ Green Bay Press-Gazette, 11/27/50, Daley, p. 19

² Green Bay Press-Gazette, 11/27/50, Daley, p. 19



1919-2018

PACKERS

LOS ANGELES

RAMS

14

12.3.1950

51

The Rams blew out the Packers with 550 yards of total offense including 31 first downs. Green Bay scored first, but not again until it was too late in the fourth quarter. They punted 11 times, and generated just 13 first downs.

Green Bay 0 7 0 7 14

Los Angeles 0 16 21 14 51

Attendance: 39,323



PACKERS

SAN FRANCISCO

49ers

14

12.10.1950

30

Moving On

The Packers scored first again – but not much after that – on a beautiful 96-yard touchdown pass from Tobin Rote to Billy Grimes. The 49ers scored the next 24 points. San Francisco ran for 223 yards while Green Bay’s 35 yards on the ground all belonged to Tony Candeo who passed Clarke Hinkle as Green Bay’s all-time leading rusher.

Green Bay	7	0	7	0	14
San Francisco	10	14	0	6	30

Attendance: 20,797



1950 Team Statistics

FINAL STANDINGS - Western Conference

	<u>W</u>	<u>L</u>	<u>T</u>
Los Angeles	9	3	0
Chicago	9	3	0
New York	7	5	0
Detroit	6	6	0
Green Bay	3	9	0
San Francisco	3	9	0
Baltimore	1	11	0

TEAM LEADERS

Passing	Rote
Receiving	Baldwin
Rushing	Grimes
Scoring	Grimes
Interceptions	Steiner

ALL-PRO

Grimes	Halfback
Neal	Defensive Tackle
Tonnemaker	Center/Linebacker

NOTEABLE DRAFT PICKS (Round, Position)

Clayton Tonnemaker (1, C)
 Tobin Rote (2, QB)
 Larry Coutre (4, RB)
 Jack Cloud (6, RB)



1919 - 2019

PACKERS CENTURY

with Jim Rice

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