



**1975**



THE  
**PACKERS CENTURY**

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**P R O J E C T**

*ALL THE GAMES. ALL THE STORIES.*

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**1919-2019**

BY JIM RICE

[packerscentury.com](http://packerscentury.com)



## 1975

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**Record: 4-10-0 (4th Place - Last)**

**Coach: Bart Starr**

- On Christmas Eve, Bart Starr was named coach and general manager of the Packers. He was honored to be selected and, "he asked fans for their prayers and patience."<sup>1</sup>
- Ted Hendricks left as a free agent. In a contract dispute, Ken Ellis walked out of training camp. He returned after being suspended. Willie Buchanon broke his leg in Game #2.
- The season began with four straight losses, the team's worst start since 1922. Starr's first coaching win finally came in mid-October against Dallas.
- The team struggled on both sides of the ball. In overall league rankings, the defense performed better than the offense.
- Quarterback John Hadl led the conference with 21 interceptions. MacArthur Lane was traded, and John Brockington's production slipped dramatically.

<sup>1</sup> Green Bay Packers: Measure of Greatness, Goska, p. 194



1919-2019

DETROIT  
**LIONS**  
**PACKERS**

**30** 9.21.1975  
**16**

### Punts, Punts, Punts

Two blocked punts by Levi Johnson of the Lions helped Detroit get out to a 17-0 lead. Johnson returned his first block for a touchdown.

Forced to play from behind, quarterback John Hadl completed only 13 of 33 passes, and he was sacked five times. A touchdown run by John Brockington in the second half cut the lead to 17-10. But Detroit blocked a third punt that set up another touchdown that extended their lead back to 14.

Brockington's fourth quarter touchdown wasn't enough. Regarding his coaching debut, Bart Starr said, "We made mistakes today that shouldn't be made by a high school team."<sup>1</sup>

|                  |           |          |          |          |           |
|------------------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| <b>Detroit</b>   | <b>10</b> | <b>7</b> | <b>7</b> | <b>6</b> | <b>30</b> |
| <b>Green Bay</b> | <b>0</b>  | <b>3</b> | <b>7</b> | <b>6</b> | <b>16</b> |

**Attendance: 50,781**

#### **Milwaukee County Stadium**

*Kicker Chester Marcol was lost or the season with a torn quadriceps muscle.*

*"Some people may do heroin. Some people may neddlepoint. I watch football. No, I take that back. I watch Packer football. It's like fishing. I don't care if I catch a fish, as long as I'm fishing. I don't care if they win, as long as I'm watching Packer football. That's how it is here."*

<sup>1</sup> Green Bay Press-Gazette, 9/22/75, Rimmel. p. 19



**PACKERS**  
DENVER  
**BRONCOS**

**13**  
**23**

**9.29.1975**

In this Monday night matchup, Green Bay played well, but they didn't score until the fourth quarter. Packer quarterback John Hadl (23-36-273-1-2) was sacked four times, and he threw two interceptions.

Jim Turner's two field goals gave Denver a 6-0 lead at halftime. In the third quarter, the Broncos' backup quarterback, Steve Ramsey, stretched the lead to 13-0 with a touchdown pass to Jack Dolbin. The Packers charged back in the fourth quarter when quarterback John Hadl threw his first touchdown pass of the season. John Brockington also scored on the ground to cut the lead to 16-13 with 2:26 left.

When Green Bay got the ball back, Hadl's pass to Rich McGeorge was intercepted by linebacker Randy Gradishar. Gradishar took 44-yards to the house to put the game on ice.

|                  |          |          |          |           |           |
|------------------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| <b>Green Bay</b> | <b>0</b> | <b>0</b> | <b>0</b> | <b>13</b> | <b>13</b> |
| <b>Denver</b>    | <b>0</b> | <b>6</b> | <b>7</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>23</b> |

**Attendance: 52,491**

*GB's Ken Payne caught 12 passes for 167 yards.*



1919-2019

MIAMI

**DOLPHINS**

**PACKERS**

**31**

10.5.1975

**7**

A complete annihilation. Miami racked up 414 yards of offense, and they ran the ball down the throats of the Green Bay Packers 58 times for 281 yards. Don Nottingham ran for three touchdowns, and Mercury Morris pitched in with 137 yards. Bob Griese (7-13-133-1-0) threw a 58-yard touchdown to Freddie Solomon to complete a 21-0 first half. Green Bay didn't score until it was 31-0.

|                  |          |           |           |          |           |
|------------------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| <b>Miami</b>     | <b>7</b> | <b>14</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>0</b> | <b>31</b> |
| <b>Green Bay</b> | <b>0</b> | <b>0</b>  | <b>0</b>  | <b>7</b> | <b>7</b>  |

**Attendance:**

*"This is a tribute to Packer fans. They didn't boo, as well they might have. They didn't cheer either."*<sup>1</sup>

1 Green Bay Press-Gazette, 10/6/75, Wagner, p. 17



**PACKERS**  
NEW ORLEANS  
**SAINTS**

**19**  
**10.12.1975**  
**20**

The Packers scored the first 16 points on a 93-yard kickoff return, a fumble returned for a touchdown, and a safety. Other than a fourth-quarter field goal, the offense did not produce another point.

In the fourth quarter, things got messy as the teams traded fumbles. Green Bay's fumble led to a Saints field goal that completed their comeback from being down 16-0. The kick put them in front 17-16 with eight minutes left. The Packers capitalized on a New Orleans fumble with a Joe Danelo field goal for 19-17 lead with two minutes left.

After the ensuing kickoff, Archie Manning's passes drove the Saints right back into field goal position. Szaro's 20-yard kick as time expired handed Green Bay its seventh straight loss.

|                    |           |          |          |          |           |
|--------------------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| <b>Green Bay</b>   | <b>14</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>0</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>19</b> |
| <b>New Orleans</b> | <b>0</b>  | <b>7</b> | <b>7</b> | <b>6</b> | <b>20</b> |

**Attendance:**

*Total Yards: GB 161 / NO 392*

*"A young boy standing outside the Packer bus before it departed:  
'Hey Bart, you should come out retirement man.'"<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> Green Bay Press-Gazette, 10/13/75, p. 18



**PACKERS**

DALLAS

**COWBOYS**

**19**

**10.19.1975**

**17**

**Down goes Dallas!**

The unbeaten Cowboys were 17-point favorites. While Bart Starr did not come out of retirement, he apparently can still handle the Cowboys!

Trailing 3-0 halftime, Dallas took control with two third-quarter touchdowns and a fourth-quarter field goal. The field goal proved to be the turning point as it resulted from a Packer fumble on their 10-yard line. Holding the Cowboys to three points turned the tide.

Trailing 17-9, Green Bay rallied for 10 points in the last 10 minutes. A 73-yard kickoff return by Steve Odom set up Joe Danelo's 29-yard field goal. With just over two minutes left, Golden Richards was stripped of a punt by Larry McCarren, and the Packers recovered on the Dallas 31-yard line. Two plays later, quarterback John Hadl and tight end Rich McGeorge hooked up for a 26-yard winner with 1:52 left.

|                    |               |          |           |           |           |
|--------------------|---------------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| <b>Green Bay</b>   | <b>3</b>      | <b>0</b> | <b>6</b>  | <b>10</b> | <b>19</b> |
| <b>Dallas</b>      | <b>0</b>      | <b>0</b> | <b>14</b> | <b>3</b>  | <b>17</b> |
| <b>Attendance:</b> | <b>64,189</b> |          |           |           |           |

*Hundreds of fans greeted the Packers when they returned from Dallas. "That had to stir up some of our young people, who have heard about the Packer tradition and fan response but hadn't seen it yet."<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> Green Bay Press-Gazette, 10/20/75, Christl, p. 21



PITTSBURGH  
**STEELERS**  
**PACKERS**

**16**  
**13** 10.26.1975

Green Bay gave the Super Bowl Champions all they could handle. But Pittsburgh running back, and Green Bay native, Rocky Bleier had the best game of his career against the team he rooted for growing up. Bleier ran for 163 yards on 35 carries!

Though the Steelers had little trouble moving the ball, they twice had to settle for field goals rather than touchdowns. After Roy Gerela's first field goal, John Brockington's touchdown run put Green Bay in the lead 6-3. On the ensuing kickoff, Mike Collier's 96-yard return grabbed the lead right back for Pittsburgh 10-6.

A second goal-line stand by Green Bay gave way to Gerela's second field goal. The Packers rallied with a critical, 64-yard drive, and John Hadl's touchdown toss to John Brockington tied the game at 13. In the final 15 minutes, the Packer offense did little. As the end of regulation approached, the Steelers marched from their 27 to Green Bay's 11-yard line. Roy Gerela's third boot of the game sealed the deal with 1:04 left.

|                   |          |           |          |          |           |
|-------------------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| <b>Pittsburgh</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>0</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>16</b> |
| <b>Green Bay</b>  | <b>0</b> | <b>6</b>  | <b>7</b> | <b>0</b> | <b>13</b> |

**Attendance: 52,258**

**Milwaukee County Stadium**

*Pat Mason, Packer Guard: "I've heard and read about how great it was to be a Green Bay Packer. But I didn't know how it was until I got off that plane last week and saw 400 people at the airport. That's why I'm so proud to be part of this team."<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> Green Bay Press-Gazette, 10/27/75, Christl, p. 18





1919-2019

MINNESOTA  
**VIKINGS**  
**PACKERS**

**28** 11.2.1975  
**17**

The Vikings were the defending NFC Champions, and they came into Green Bay undefeated (6-0). After a tight game for three quarters, they left unscathed.

On the first play from scrimmage, John Brockington was injured and replaced by second-year man Barty Smith. Minnesota took control early behind their quarterback, Fran Tarkenton, who threw for 285 yards and three touchdowns.

A touchdown to tight end Stu Voight started the scoring, and the Packers came right back on their next series with Barty Smith's first touchdown to tie it. Before halftime, Ed Marinaro's two-yard run put Minnesota back in the lead 14-10.

In the third quarter, Green Bay retook the lead 17-14 on a seven-yard touchdown pass from John Hadl to Barty Smith. In the fourth quarter, Hadl fell apart and tossed three interceptions while Tarkenton threw for two more touchdowns to put away Green Bay.

|                    |               |          |          |           |           |
|--------------------|---------------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| <b>Minnesota</b>   | <b>7</b>      | <b>7</b> | <b>0</b> | <b>14</b> | <b>28</b> |
| <b>Green Bay</b>   | <b>7</b>      | <b>3</b> | <b>7</b> | <b>0</b>  | <b>17</b> |
| <b>Attendance:</b> | <b>55,378</b> |          |          |           |           |



**PACKERS**

CHICAGO

**BEARS**

**14**

**11.9.1975**

**27**

Both teams had new coaches – Bart Starr and Jack Pardee – and Chicago had a new rookie running back by the name of Walter Payton!

A bad punt led to a Chicago field goal and Steve Odom’s fumble set up a touchdown as Chicago got out to a 10-0 lead. The Bears returned the miscue with a fumble that the Packers quickly converted into a 42-yard touchdown from back-up quarterback Don Milan to Steve Odom. With 51 seconds left in the first half, Walter Payton scored from five yards out for a 17-7 lead.

In the third quarter, Bears safety Craig Clemons iced the game with a 76-yard pick-six. Chicago controlled the Packer ground game (41 yards) and a late touchdown by Green Bay came with a 1:17 left. “Disappointed would be the more appropriate word,” Bart Starr said after the game. “I don’t think you can afford to get discouraged.”<sup>1</sup>

**Green Bay      0    7      0    7      14**

**Chicago        10   7      10   0      27**

**Attendance: 48,738**

*Signs that you are addicted to the fortunes of America’s team:*

- ✓ *You married a Bears fan and consider it a mixed marriage.*
- ✓ *The cheesehead gets in the way of your back swing, but you don’t mind.*
- ✓ *You’ve named your driveway Vince Lombardi Drive.<sup>2</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> Green Bay Press-Gazette, 11/10/75, p. 17

<sup>2</sup> The Packer Fan(atic) Handbook, Edelstein, p. 68



**PACKERS**

DETROIT

**LIONS**

**10**

**11.16.1975**

**13**

### **1-8...what next?**

Fullback John Brockington who led the Green Bay running game with 72 yards, said it best afterward, "I'm getting tired of saying we played well but lost."<sup>1</sup>

With less than five minutes gone in the game, Detroit scored the only points of the first half on a nine-yard touchdown pass to Charlie Sanders. In the second half, a Joe Danelo field goal put Green Bay on the scoreboard. The Lions got the field goal back after an interception by Dick Jauron led to a field goal.

Early in the fourth quarter, an interception by Perry Smith of the Packers set up Will Harrell's halfback-option pass to Steve Odom that tied the game. With under three minutes to play, the Packers couldn't stop the Lions who drove 74 yards to set up Errol Mann's winning field goal with 13 seconds left.

|                    |               |          |          |          |           |
|--------------------|---------------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| <b>Green Bay</b>   | <b>0</b>      | <b>0</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>7</b> | <b>10</b> |
| <b>Detroit</b>     | <b>7</b>      | <b>0</b> | <b>0</b> | <b>6</b> | <b>13</b> |
| <b>Attendance:</b> | <b>76,356</b> |          |          |          |           |

<sup>1</sup> Green Bay Press-Gazette, 11/17/75, Christl, p. 17



NEW YORK  
**GIANTS**  
**PACKERS**

**14** 11.23.1975  
**40**

### **Blowout!**

The 40 points by Green Bay were the most a Packer team had scored since 1971 when they lost to the Giants 42-40! In this game, Green Bay pounded out 508 yards of offense, and six Packers scored points for the win.

Packer halfback Will Harrell sparked the offense with two touchdowns in the first half. He caught a touchdown pass from John Hadl and threw a touchdown to Steve Odom to help the Packers take a commanding 24-0 lead.

After the Giants struck twice in the third quarter to make it 24-14, the Packer defense stopped any further advances. Overall for the game, the defense forced four fumbles and delivered four sacks. The offense managed to keep John Hadl upright, and he led the way with 275 yards passing and two touchdowns (18-29-275-2-1).

|                  |           |           |           |           |           |
|------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| <b>New York</b>  | <b>0</b>  | <b>0</b>  | <b>14</b> | <b>0</b>  | <b>14</b> |
| <b>Green Bay</b> | <b>14</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>0</b>  | <b>16</b> | <b>40</b> |

**Attendance: 50,150**  
**Milwaukee County Stadium**



CHICAGO  
**BEARS**  
**PACKERS**

**7**  
**28** 11.30.1975

This game was called many things – the Cellar Bowl, the Basement Bowl, and the Bottom Bowl. The names were justified as snow, and below-zero wind chills made it a bad day for football all around. Twenty-nine thousand fans stayed home.

Packer fans missed John Brockington as he plowed his way through the Bears for 111 yards and three first-half touchdowns! They also didn't see three interceptions and three fumble recoveries by the Packer defense. They missed four sacks of quarterback Bob Avellini of the Bears, and a bumbling Chicago offense that produced just 132 yards.

Fumbles by Walter Payton and Bob Avellini led to Packer touchdowns. Green Bay outgained Chicago 309-132, and the Bears didn't score until it was 28-0.

|                    |               |           |          |          |           |
|--------------------|---------------|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| <b>Chicago</b>     | <b>0</b>      | <b>0</b>  | <b>7</b> | <b>0</b> | <b>7</b>  |
| <b>Green Bay</b>   | <b>7</b>      | <b>21</b> | <b>0</b> | <b>0</b> | <b>28</b> |
| <b>Attendance:</b> | <b>46,821</b> |           |          |          |           |

*Bob Avellini did not complete a pass until it was 21-0 Packers.*

*A ball boy at Packer Training Camp: "My first year was 1975, and I was 13 years old. I was not supposed to be a ball boy until I was 14. A guy named Paul Roach coached the running backs. Paul had been a head coach in Wyoming and had also been on the Raider staff with John Madden. He saw me watching practice one day and called me out there and told me that he wanted me to be his ball boy. I started out with the running backs – every ball boy was assigned a group. We only got paid thirty bucks a week. If we had two years of experience, we got 35 dollars a week. We got three meals a day. We ate at the training table. We stayed in the dorm. A lot of us were*

*playing high school football, and we able to work out. It was a good experience. The hours were long and the work was hard.”<sup>1</sup>*

1 For Packers Fan Only!, Wolfe, p. 43



**PACKERS**  
MINNESOTA  
**VIKINGS**

**3**  
**12.7.1975**  
**24**

This was a first-half game that was dominated by the strong defense of the 10-1 Vikings. Similar to how the Packers defeated the Bears last week, the Vikings picked off three passes and delivered three sacks. The Packers generated just six first downs, and they were outgained 387-122.

The Vikings moved the ball easily. Quarterback Fran Tarkenton escaped pressure too often and threw three touchdown passes. The Packers were kept out of the end zone all game, and “the last thirty minutes was simply a matter of running out the clock.”<sup>1</sup>

|                    |               |           |          |          |           |
|--------------------|---------------|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| <b>Green Bay</b>   | <b>3</b>      | <b>0</b>  | <b>0</b> | <b>0</b> | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>Minnesota</b>   | <b>14</b>     | <b>10</b> | <b>0</b> | <b>0</b> | <b>24</b> |
| <b>Attendance:</b> | <b>46,147</b> |           |          |          |           |

<sup>1</sup> Green Bay Press-Gazette, 12/8/75, Wagner, p. 17



**PACKERS**  
LOS ANGELES  
**RAMS**

**5**  
**12.14.1975**  
**22**

### Not a Chance

The Rams welcomed home their former quarterback John Hadl with six sacks. Green Bay's Dave Pureifory returned the favor with five sacks of L. A. back-up quarterback Ron Jaworski, including a first-quarter safety.

After Joe Danelo's field goal gave Green Bay a 5-0 lead, the rest of the game belonged to L. A. The Rams defense completely shut out Green Bay allowing just 53 yards on the ground and 170 overall. When he wasn't flat on his back, Hadl threw two interceptions, and he completed only 10 passes for 115 yards.

For L. A., after staking the Packers to a 5-0 lead, an interception by Isiah Robertson in the first half set up Rob Scribner's touchdown run. Tom Dempsey booted three field goals, and John Cappelletti's fourth-quarter touchdown finished off Green Bay.

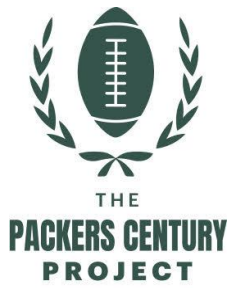
|                    |          |          |          |           |           |
|--------------------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| <b>Green Bay</b>   | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>0</b> | <b>0</b>  | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>Los Angeles</b> | <b>0</b> | <b>9</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>22</b> |

**Attendance: 59,312**

*"If you...don't know what to do with your Packer-Falcon tickets, a group of area Green Bay businessmen have an idea. Donate them to Tickets For Kids, which will distribute the tickets to charitable organizations, which in turn will give them to youths wishing for an opportunity to see a Packer game"<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> Green Bay Press-Gazette, 12/16/75, p. 27





1919-2019

ATLANTA  
**FALCONS**  
**PACKERS**

**13**  
12.21.1975  
**22**

Despite the poor season, the headline in the Green Bay Press-Gazette on Monday said it all, "Packers Win and Fans Love 'Em."<sup>1</sup>

After a Dave Hampton touchdown run made it 6-3 Atlanta, the Packers pulled away, and the Falcons didn't score again until they trailed 22-7. Eric Torkelson and Barty Smith scored on the ground for Green Bay, and Joe Danelo kicked three field goals. After the game, happy Packer fans tore down goal posts!

|                  |          |          |           |          |           |
|------------------|----------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| <b>Atlanta</b>   | <b>6</b> | <b>0</b> | <b>0</b>  | <b>7</b> | <b>13</b> |
| <b>Green Bay</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>9</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>0</b> | <b>22</b> |

**Attendance: 38,565**

*Bart Starr: "Our fans are sensational and without question the finest in the world."*<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Green Bay Press-Gazette, Christl, 12/22/75, p. 24

<sup>2</sup> Green Bay Press-Gazette, Christl, 12/22/75, p. 24



THE  
**PACKERS CENTURY  
PROJECT**

1919-2019

## 1975 Team Statistics

### FINAL STANDINGS – NFC Central

|           | <u>W</u> | <u>L</u> | <u>T</u> |
|-----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Minnesota | 12       | 2        | 0        |
| Detroit   | 7        | 7        | 0        |
| Chicago   | 4        | 10       | 0        |
| Green Bay | 4        | 10       | 0        |

### TEAM LEADERS

Passing Hadl  
Rushing Brockington  
Receiving Payne  
Scoring Danelo  
Interceptions P. Smith

### ALL-PRO

Carr Linebacker

### NOTEABLE DRAFT PICKS (Round, Position)

Willard Harrell (3a, RB)

Steve Luke (4, CB)

Carlos Brown (12, QB)



1919 - 2019

# **PACKERS CENTURY**

*with Jim Rice*

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