



1976



THE
PACKERS CENTURY

P R O J E C T

ALL THE GAMES. ALL THE STORIES.

1919-2019

BY JIM RICE

packerscentury.com



1976

Record: 5-9-0 (4th Place - Last)

Coach: Bart Starr

- There was not much improvement over 1975. The patience that Coach Bart Starr asked for would begin being tested.
- Starr sent John Hadl, Ken Ellis and two draft picks to Houston for quarterback Lynn Dickey. Dickey's play was inconsistent as he threw more interceptions (14) than touchdowns (7).
- The offense ranked near the bottom of the league. The defense ranked in the middle of the pack.
- After an 0-3 start, the Packers rallied to 3-3 before losing six of their last eight games.
- Dickey separated his shoulder in mid-November against the Bears. He would be out for the rest of the season. He joined linebacker Jim Carter and running back Barty Smith on the disabled list.



1919-2019

SAN FRANCISCO

49ers

PACKERS

26

9.12.1976

14

0-1

On Jim Plunkett's first series as San Francisco's new quarterback, Johnny Gray's pick-six gave the Packers a first-quarter lead. It lasted until Will Harrell's second-quarter fumble on a punt return that set up Plunkett's first touchdown to Willie McGee. The 49ers moved in front 13-7 before halftime when Delvin Williams took a handoff from Plunkett and took off right up the middle of the Packer defense for a 59-yard touchdown and a 13-7 lead.

The Niners never gave up the lead. They extended it to 19-7 after a Packer fumble led to Plunkett's second touchdown pass to McGee. Unable to stop their ground game (210 yards), the Niners ate up the clock. Another Packer fumble led to San Francisco's final touchdown. Green Bay scored again with just over a minute left.

San Francisco 0 13 6 7 26

Green Bay 7 0 0 7 14

Attendance: 54,628

Three GB fumbles led to 20 SF points.

"With temperatures in the mid-80s and the sun beaming down from a cloudless sky, one enterprising young man covered all possibilities. Elegantly clad in dirty sneakers, ragged cut-off shorts, and a bare chest, he topped off his ensemble with a fur hat. 'Just in case the game goes extra innings and it gets cold' he replied with a deadpan face and a twinkle in his eye."¹

¹ Green Bay Press-Gazette, 9/13/76, Hierseman, p. 20



PACKERS

ST. LOUIS

CARDINALS

0

9.19.1976

29

With temperatures in the 90s against one of the favorites in the Eastern Division, Green Bay never stood a chance. Bart Starr acknowledged that the team had “taken a step back offensively”¹ with five turnovers that led directly to 23 St. Louis points.

Cardinals quarterback Jim Hart (15-29-211-0-0) easily outplayed Lynn Dickey (10-26-104-0-3). But for the first 45 minutes, it was all about kicker Jim Bakken. He kicked five field goals for a 15-0 lead. Three of the field goals came after Green Bay turnovers.

In the fourth quarter, the Cardinals scored on two short touchdown runs that followed Packer turnovers by Lynn Dickey and Will Harrell.

Green Bay	0	0	0	0	0
St. Louis	6	6	3	14	29
Attendance:	48,842				

¹ Green Bay Press-Gazette, 10/21/76, Christl, p. 17



PACKERS
CINCINNATI
BENGALS

7
9.26.1976
28

Dickey's turnovers

Four more Green Bay turnovers did the damage in this loss.

The Packers got on the scoreboard first when Dave Roller recovered a fumble on a Cincinnati punt attempt. After quarterback Lynn Dickey scored on a seven-yard touchdown run, the Bengals scored the next 28 points.

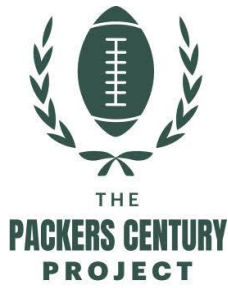
Packer turnovers led directly to 21 points. Ken Riley and Tommy Casanova took back interceptions for touchdowns. A fumble by Dickey in the third quarter was recovered by the Bengals on Green Bay six. Three plays later, quarterback Kenny Anderson found tight end Bob Trumpy for a 14-7 halftime lead.

The Bengals stuffed the Packer ground game often and allowed just 71 yards rushing. Green Bay's passing game fared even worse with 45 total yards. With 80 yards lost on six sacks, the Packers' total passing yardage dropped to minus 35 yards....the third lowest in NFL history at the time. The following day, City editor Dorg Larson wrote, "People who either used to toast Packer victories or drown out defeats, now are reduced to merely celebrating survival."¹

Patience.

Green Bay	7	0	0	0	7
Cincinnati	0	14	7	7	28
Attendance:	44,103				

¹ Green Bay Press-Gazette, 9/27/76, Larson, p. 6



1919-2019

DETROIT
LIONS
PACKERS

14
24 10.3.1976

The first win came courtesy of Steve Odom. He ran back the opening kickoff 88 yards to set up Barty Smith's touchdown 47 seconds into the game. The Packers had a 10-0 lead, but they fell behind as Greg Landry tossed two touchdown passes before halftime.

Early in the fourth quarter and still trailing 14-10, Willie Buchanon intercepted Landry deep inside Lion territory. A reverse to Odom went for 17 yards to put the Packers at the doorstep. A two-yard toss from Dickey to tight end Bert Askson took the lead back 17-14.

Odom finished his day with a touchdown catch. A 40-yard bomb on a halfback option pass from Will Harrell did the trick with 8:00 left. The defense shut out the Lions in the second half, and Landry was sacked eight times for the game. The next day, the Lions sacked their head coach, Rick Foranzo.

Detroit	0	14	0	0	14
Green Bay	10	0	0	14	24
Attendance: 54,758					

"My most memorable Packer moments are going to the shareholders meeting. It's so neat to rub shoulders with these people, and you can do that there. They're real meetings too. They pick members of the Board of Directors, they give a report of the previous year, Bob Harlan does a presentation, and then they talk about the upcoming year. Then, in addition to all the reports, they have a question-and-answer session."¹

¹ ForPackers Fans Only!, Wolfe, p. 137



1919-2019

SEATTLE

SEAHAWKS

PACKERS

20

10.10.1976

27

Green Bay wins two straight as Barty Smith, Steve Odom and Will Harrell engineered an exciting fourth quarter comeback against the new Seattle Seahawks.

After Barty Smith opened the scoring, the Packers didn't score again in the first half. Seattle went ahead 13-7 on two field goals and a blocked punt that was returned for a touchdown by Steve Raible. In the third quarter, after Lynn Dickey's interception, Green Bay trailed 20-7.

The Packers' comeback was jump-started in the third quarter by a 66-yard touchdown pass from Dickey to Steve Odom. Odom caught the pass over the middle, and he outran the Seattle defense. Green Bay took the lead with 7:52 left on a 71-yard touchdown drive. Barty Smith scored his second touchdown of the game for a 21-20 lead.

A short punt by the Seahawks helped Green Bay extend its lead. But after Will Harrell's touchdown run made it 27-20, Chester Marcol's missed extra-point kept the outcome in suspense for another 2:42!

Seattle	0	13	7	0	20
Green Bay	7	0	7	13	27

Attendance: 54,983

Milwaukee County Stadium

A record crowd at County Stadium.



1919-2019

PHILADELPHIA
EAGLES
PACKERS

13 10.17.1976
28

Back to Even!

Both teams came in 2-3, but the Packers prevailed to get back to 3-3. After an early field goal by the Eagles, Green Bay led the rest of the way.

The Packers took the lead quickly on Lynn Dickey's 44-yard touchdown pass on a fly-pattern to Ken Payne. Barty Smith's two touchdown runs in the second quarter made it 21-6 at intermission. After a quiet third quarter, the Packers clinched the win with a 69-yard bomb from Dickey to Will Harrell with just over five minutes left.

The defense held the Eagles to two field goals until a fourth-quarter touchdown. They sacked quarterback Mike Boryla four times and gave up only 239 yards. Philadelphia coach Dick Vermeil was impressed with the defense. "I've felt the Packer defense has been playing well enough all season to win more games than they have. The entire front four is strong, and Buchanon is a helluva corner."¹

Philadelphia	3	3	0	7	13
Green Bay	7	14	0	7	28

Attendance: 55,115

"The UW-GB Band turned in its now expected fine halftime show."²

1 Green Bay Press-Gazette, 10/18/76, Langenkamp. 20

2 Green Bay Press-Gazette, 10/18/76, Wagner, p. 20



PACKERS
OAKLAND
RAIDERS

14
10.24.1976
18

Tough One

This was a bruising battle with 26 penalties for 270 yards and nine quarterback sacks. Facing a quality opponent, the surging Packers got out to a 7-0 lead on a 57-yard touchdown pass from Lynn Dickey to Ken Payne.

Oakland retaliated quickly with three second-quarter touchdown passes by Ken Stabler. Touchdown passes went to Dave Caspar, Cliff Branch, and Fred Biletnikoff. All of the extra-points were unsuccessful, and Oakland led at the half 18-7.

Will Harrell's touchdown run with six minutes left in the game brought Green Bay to within four 18-14. A defensive stop with three minutes left gave the Packers a final opportunity. They took over on their 34-yard line and marched to Oakland's 25. A pass that was intended for Rich McGeorge slipped out of Dickey's hand and was intercepted. In the end, on the road, Starr chose to accentuate the positive. "It's encouraging when you can play well against a team like this."¹

Green Bay	7	0	0	7	14
Oakland	0	18	0	0	18

Attendance: 52,232

There 26 penalties and seven others that were declined.

There were more penalties than points scored.

¹ Green Bay Press-Gazette, 10/26/76, Christl, p. 21



PACKERS
DETROIT
LIONS

6
10.31.1976
27

Big Relapse

After four good games, the Packers were dominated. An early interception by Jim Hunter helped the Lions get out to a 10-0 lead. Detroit rolled with 409 total yards, and Greg Landry threw for 211 yards and two touchdowns.

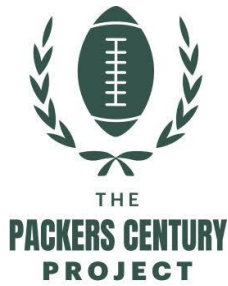
The Packers' offense never got untracked. They turned the ball over five times and generated only 163 yards. Chester Marcol's two fields goals provided the offense as quarterback Lynn Dickey was intercepted twice and threw for only 93 yards.

For the Lions, the win provided some payback for "the loss Green Bay hung on them a month ago which cost Rick Forzano his job as head coach two days later."¹

Green Bay	0	3	3	0	6
Detroit	10	14	0	3	27

Attendance: 74,582

¹ packershistory.net/1976Packers



1919-2019

NEW ORLEANS

Saints

PACKERS

27

11.7.1976

32

After Green Bay jumped in front 7-0, six lead changes stoked this battle. New Orleans moved in front before halftime 13-6 on two field goals and a pick-six by linebacker Jim Merlo. Green Bay fought back with Lynn Dickey's touchdown pass to Rich McGeorge. The Saints cooperated with a fumble that set up Chester Marcol's field goal four seconds before halftime that gave Green Bay the lead 16-13.

The Packers struck again right at the start of the second half. Twenty-two seconds in, a pick-six by linebacker Freddy Carr extended the lead to 23-13. Quarterback Bobby Douglas rallied the Saints with two touchdown drives late in the third quarter to retake the lead 27-23. But with 4:47 left in the game, Green Bay showed "it could come from behind and win."¹ Will Harrell's touchdown run and a safety stopped the two-game skid.

New Orleans	0	13	14	0	27
Green Bay	6	10	7	9	32

Attendance: 52,936
Milwaukee County Stadium

1 Green Bay Press-Gazette, 11/8/76, Langenkamp, p. 18



PACKERS
CHICAGO
BEARS

13
24

11.14.1976

Rough Outing

Eighteen penalties interrupted this rivalry game, but two early fumbles by Lynn Dickey and Will Harrell had more of an impact. Chicago turned both fumbles into touchdowns as Walter Payton and Mike Adamle made it 14-0. For the game, the Bears ran for 202 yards, and Walter Payton's 109 put him over 1,000 yards for the season.

Lynn Dickey and Chester Marcol rallied the Packers and cut the lead to 14-13 in the third quarter. Chicago regrouped and Roland Harper capped off a 66-yard drive with a 16-yard run for a 21-13 lead. After Lynn Dickey left the game with a separated shoulder with eight minutes left, Green Bay's comeback stalled.

An angry Dave Roller had a few choice words for the Bears after the game about the several shots they took at Lynn Dickey.

Green Bay	0	10	3	0	13
Chicago	14	0	7	3	24

Attendance: 52,907



1919-2019

MINNESOTA
VIKINGS
PACKERS

17 11.21.1976
10

With Lynn Dickey out for the season, the season was over was over for the Packers. They played a tough game here but fell short as Minnesota clinched its fourth straight NFC Central Division title.

Carlos Brown took over for Dickey. The second-year back-up was making his first NFL start, and he threw three interceptions. The Purple People Eaters sacked Brown four times and allowed just 82 net passing yards.

With Minnesota in front 10-3, the Packers took the second half kickoff and drove 74 yards to tie it at 10. Early in the fourth quarter, Viking quarterback Fran Tarkenton led an 88-yard march to the end zone. His 11-yard pass to Ahmad Rashad proved to be the winner.

Minnesota	3	7	0	7	17
Green Bay	3	0	7	0	10

Attendance: 53,104
Milwaukee County Stadium



1919-2019

CHICAGO
BEARS
PACKERS

16 11.28.1976
10

In the “second coldest game in recent Packer history,”¹ the cold froze the stadium’s turnstiles. It also took out the instruments of the Green Bay West High School Band that had planned to entertain at halftime.

Chicago kept the ball on the ground most of the day, and Walter Payton led the way with 110 yards rushing. A field goal on the game’s opening drive and a fingertip touchdown catch by James Scott a short time later gave the Bears a 10-0 lead. In temperatures reaching minus 14 degrees wind chill, the Packers had several opportunities to score deep in Chicago territory, but they could not capitalize.

In the second half, wideout Ken Payne caught a touchdown pass from Carlos Brown for a 10-10 tie. But the Green Bay’s defense faltered and couldn’t stop the Bears. The drove into field goal position twice, and Bob Thomas kicked his second and third field goals of the game to win it.

Chicago	10	0	3	3	16
Green Bay	0	3	7	0	10
Attendance: 56,267					

Packer bedtime Prayer!

*Now I lay me down to bed,
a wedge of cheese upon my head.
Allegiance to the Packers I promise to keep
and cheer them on while I’m asleep.
If I should die, don’t let me wonder,
just bury me ’neath the frozen tundra.
But, Lord, before you take my soul,
let me see the Pack in one more Super Bowl.*

*Forgive me, Lord, for those that I have hated,
the Lions and Vikings, they're overrated.
The streets of heaven so I have been told,
are paved for us in green and gold.
If I get to heaven, I'll have only one wish,
a big screen TV and a satellite dish.*

*I pray for this, Lord, for only one reason,
to cheer on my Pack to a winning season.
I'll close this prayer by thanking you, Lord,
for listening to me and the time you afford.
But one more thing, please remember the Bears,
because that's a team that hasn't a prayer!*

From Doris Curly, Whitefish Bay, WI



PACKERS
MINNESOTA
VIKINGS

9
12.5.1976
20

Green Bay took an early 6-0 lead on quarterback Carlos Brown's touchdown pass to rookie receiver Ollie Smith. It held up until the third quarter when Fred Cox's second field goal tied it at six.

Green Bay's offense continued to sputter. With the game tied, Minnesota quarterback Fran Tarkenton led two fourth-quarter touchdown drives. Chuck Foreman scored at the start of the quarter on a one-yard run one-yard, and with 2:11 left in the game, he sealed the deal with another one-yard plunge.

The Vikings' top-ranked defense held Green Bay to 59 yards rushing (218 for Minnesota) and eight first downs. Their only points in the second half came on Chester Marcol's 24-yard field goal.

In their last four games against the Bears and Vikings, the Packers were 0-4.

Green Bay	6	0	0	3	9
Minnesota	0	3	3	14	20
Attendance:	43,700				



ATLANTA
FALCONS
PACKERS

20 12.12.1976
24

Win #5

In rainy Atlanta with 22,124 no-shows – 992 fewer than the number that showed up – the Packers closed out the season by defeating the 4-9 Falcons. Green Bay came from behind in the fourth quarter on touchdown runs by John Brockington and Eric Torkelson. Cornerback Willie Buchanon's interception of former Packer quarterback, Scott Hunter, ended Atlanta's last drive.

Green Bay	0	10	0	14	24
Atlanta	0	10	10	0	20

Attendance: 23,116

At 5-9, GB finished one game better than 1975.



THE
**PACKERS CENTURY
PROJECT**

1919-2019

1976 Team Statistics

FINAL STANDINGS – NFC Central

	<u>W</u>	<u>L</u>	<u>T</u>
Minnesota	11	2	1
Chicago	7	7	0
Detroit	6	8	0
Green Bay	5	9	0

TEAM LEADERS

Passing	Dickey
Rushing	Harrell
Receiving	Payne
Scoring	Marcol
Interceptions	Gray

ALL-PRO

Carr Linebacker

NOTEABLE DRAFT PICKS (Round, Position)

Mark Koncar (1b, T)

Mike McCoy (3b, CB)



1919 - 2019

PACKERS CENTURY

with Jim Rice

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