

SEASON
25

1943



THE
PACKERS CENTURY

P R O J E C T

ALL THE GAMES. ALL THE STORIES.

1919-2019

BY JIM RICE

packerscentury.com



1943

Record: 7-2-1 2nd Place - Western Division

Coach: Curly Lambeau

- This was the franchise's 25th season.
- Due to World War II, the schedule was reduced by one game from 1943-45. Many former players began coming out of retirement to help fill-out rosters and hold the interest of fans.
- Though they began broadcasting Packer games in 1929, WTMJ Radio in Milwaukee signed a contract with the team in 1942. The station now began paying the Packers to broadcast games.
- Cecil Isbell retired to coach at his alma mater, Purdue. In 1943, Tony Canadeo and Irv Comp shared the quarterback position. Green Bay threw nearly 100 fewer passes than in 1942.
- Don Hutson also "retired." He actually held out for more money, and when he returned, he was the NFL's highest-paid player. He had another fantastic season leading the league in catches, receiving yards, and touchdowns receptions.
- The offense was stronger than the defense, but Green Bay led the league in interceptions with 19.



CHICAGO
BEARS
PACKERS

21
21 **9.26.1943**

0-0-1

A shakey beginning. On Green Bay's first possession, Tony Canadeo threw an interception. The Bears scored nine plays later. The back-and-forth battle started a bit later when the Bears fumbled, and Ted Fritsch's touchdown run tied it before halftime.

In a reversal of sorts, Green Bay's ground game fared better than Chicago's (224-146). With the game tied 7-7, another Chicago fumble led to quarterback Irv Comp's touchdown run and a 14-7 Packer lead. After the Bears tied it, Lou Brock of the Packers fumbled a punt on his 20-yard line. The Bears capitalized for a 21-14 lead.

With seven minutes left, the Packers salvaged a tie with a 26-yard touchdown from Canadeo to Don Hutson. Overall, this opener between rivals had very few shenanigans as "the teams seemed to be content to use all their energy to gain an advantage without worrying about any "inside" stuff. One roughing penalty was meted out."¹

Chicago	7	0	7	7	21
Green Bay	0	7	7	7	21
Attendance:	23,675				

Tony Canadeo ran for 99 yards.

¹ Green Bay Press-Gazette, 9/27/43, Yuenger, p. 13



PACKERS

28

CHICAGO

10.3.1943

CARDINALS

7

Though Curly Lambeau warned the Packers all week that the Cardinals wouldn't be pushovers, they were. Since the game started a half-hour late, it just took more time than usual.

Chicago turned the ball over 10 times with eight interceptions! Two of the picks led to Packer touchdowns. Green Bay's rookie quarterback Irv Comp threw two touchdown passes to Joel Mason in the first quarter. The Cardinals scored their lone touchdown in the second quarter, and the Packers followed with Ted Fritsch's touchdown. Green Bay led at halftime 21-7.

A third-quarter touchdown pass to Harry Jacunski wrapped up the scoring, and the Packers defeated the Cardinals for the 12th straight time!

Green Bay 14 7 7 0 28

Chicago 0 7 0 0 7

Attendance: 15,563

"Accustomed to eating well before their games, the Packers had to take potluck like other customers on the trip. In prewar years, they had steak before a game to provide necessary energy but "them days" is gone for the duration. The squad isn't squawking about the food. They still can wield the knives and forks with the best of them."¹

¹ packershistory.net/1943Packers (News & Notes, Oct. 4)



DETROIT
LIONS
PACKERS

14
35 10.10.1943

Tony!!

It was evident early that the Packers were the superior team and a big crowd saw Green Bay easily down Detroit. The Packers ran “around, through, and over the Lions”¹ for 235 yards. Overall, they outgained Detroit 445-272.

Tony Canadeo starred for Green Bay with two first-half touchdown passes for a 21-7 lead. Green Bay’s offensive line was impenetrable. For the game, Canadeo ran for 71 yards, and he threw his third touchdown pass to Andy Uram to put the game out of reach 35-7. The defense was outstanding with five interceptions, and they allowed just eight first downs. “It’s no disgrace to lose to an outfit that’s hitting like that,”² Detroit’s coach Gus Dorais said.

Detroit	0	7	0	7	14
Green Bay	14	7	7	7	35
Attendance:	21,396				

*“It’s stimulating how the younger generation takes to the Green Bay Packers. Sunday some 700 carriers boys were guests of the Press-Gazette...they knew very well that the game wouldn’t start until two in the afternoon, but they began storming the gates before 10:30.”*³

1 Green Bay Press-Gazette, 10/11/43, Yuenger, p. 17
 2 Green Bay Press-Gazette, 10/11/43, Hickok, p. 17
 3 Green Bay Press-Gazette, 10/11/43, Pagel p. 17



WASHINGTON
REDSKINS
PACKERS

33
7 **10.17.1943**

Blowout

The Packers and their fans looked forward to this matchup against the defending NFL Champions and their quarterback Sammy Baugh. It shocked nearly everyone that the game was so one-sided. It was a surprise too that there were 11 turnovers, six by the Redskins and five by Green Bay.

Washington's first drive picked up steam quickly, and they scored easily. When Green Bay went three-and-out on their first series, the 'Skins scored again for a quick 13-0 lead. Four touchdowns passes from quarterback Sammy Baugh showed Washington the way.

Defensively, the Redskins were impressive as well. They held the Packers to 59 yards rushing, and they intercepted five passes. They led 33-0 before a Tony Canadeo to Don Hutson touchdown pass spoiled the shutout. Detroit Coach Dutch Bergman was pleased, but he also understood. "The Packers are a better ball club than they looked today, but we were set for them,"¹ he told the scribes.

Washington 13 7 6 7 33

Green Bay 0 0 0 7 7

Attendance: 23,058

Milwaukee

Turnovers: GB 5 WASH 6

"Even late in the third quarter, with the Washington team 26 points ahead, the spectators had a big hand for the Green Bay representatives when they made a first down, or seemed headed for a touchdown."²

“A lot of people lost their hats in the strong wind at State Fair park, but the most spectacular play in that department was made by Harold Goodchild of Green Bay, who lost his on the racetrack, (in front of) the grandstand. He chased it down the track and finally caught it as most of the 23,000 spectators cheered.”¹

1 Green Bay Press-Gazette, 10/18/43, Hickok p. 13

2 Green Bay Press-Gazette, 10/18/43, Hickok p. 13

3 Green Bay Press-Gazette, 10/18/43, Hickok p. 14



PACKERS

DETROIT

LIONS

27

10.24.1943

6

The Packers had no trouble bouncing back from their loss to the Redskins. To shake things up a bit, Curly Lambeau decided to coach from the Press Box since it was equipped with a phone to communicate with his assistant coach, Red Smith, on the sidelines.

The Lions led 6-3 in the first quarter, but after that, it was all Packers. Rookie Irv Comp completed 14 of 18 passes including seven of eight on Green Bay's first touchdown drive for a 10-7 lead. The touchdown went to Don Hutson. The Lions were shutout in the second half, but the Packers continued their roll with two short touchdown runs by Lou Brock.

Green Bay's passing defense stymied Detroit's offense. The Packers intercepted nine passes to set a new NFL record. Their only failure in the game was their inability to score every time they had the ball deep in Detroit territory. The Packers outgained the Lions 446-162!

Green Bay	3	7	7	10	27
Detroit	6	0	0	0	6

Attendance: 21,396



PACKERS

NEW YORK

GIANTS

35

10.31.1943

21

In preparing for this game, Lambeau "told the players they would receive no permission to go into New York during their off-time. 'It's all business this week, boys. You'll see plenty of New York in the Polo Grounds Sunday afternoon.'"¹

This exciting battle between two of the league's finest drew over 45,000 fans to the Polo Grounds. It featured 67 passes and 700 yards of offense!

Green Bay started the scoring with a surprise.....Don Hutson's only touchdown pass of his career! They did it on a fake end-around play with Hutson pulling up for the pass. The play fooled the Giants and it went for a 37-yard touchdown to Harry Jacunski. The Giants came right back and their outstanding rookie, Bill Paschal, scored the first of his three touchdowns for all of New York's points.

Tony Canadeo led the way for the Packers. In the second quarter, he caught a 10-yard touchdown pass from Andy Uram. He also threw a 22-yard touchdown pass to Hutson for a 21-7 lead at the break. New York came back with two more touchdown runs by Paschal. The first touchdown drive took just four plays. The second came after Harry Jacunski of the Packers vigorously protested a call and pushed an official. Paschal scored soon after.

With the game knotted 21-21, the Packers took control with two touchdowns in the final four minutes. Tony Canadeo, who ran for 122 yards and scored twice, connected again with Hutson for the game-winner.

Don Hutson "had one his greatest days, breaking five of his own league records."² He caught eight passes for 103 yards and two

touchdowns. He also threw a touchdown pass, and kicked five extra points!

Green Bay	7	14	0	14	35
New York	7	0	7	7	21

Attendance: 446,208

1 Green Bay Press-Gazette, 10/26/43, p. 13

2 Green Bay Press-Gazette, 11/1/43, O'Connor, p. 13



PACKERS

CHICAGO

BEARS

7

11.7.1943

21

“The Lumberjack Band was at the Northwestern Road Station Saturday afternoon to give the Packers a hearty sendoff.”¹

A rain-drenched field ankle deep in mud couldn't stop Tony Canadeo! His 20-yard touchdown run gave Green Bay an early 7-0 lead. Nor did it stop the 66-yard touchdown sprint by Scooter McLean that tied the game before halftime.

In the midst of “his greatest season,”² Luckman singlehandedly won the game in the second half. After his 10-yard punt return into Packer territory, Luckman hit Harry Clark for a 38-yard bomb touchdown that proved to be the winner. In the fourth quarter, when the darkness and mud made the players nearly unrecognizable, Luckman sealed the deal with a one-yard quarterback sneak.

Green Bay	7	0	0	0	7
Chicago	0	7	7	7	21

Attendance: 43,425

Rushing Yards: GB 128 CHI 218

1 Green Bay-Press Gazette, 11/8/43, p. 14

2 Packers vs. Bears, Swain, p. 108



PACKERS

CHICAGO

CARDINALS

35

11.14.1943

14

A number of reporters commented about the improvements in the press box at State Fair Park. This time, they found that “only occasionally was there a slight sensation of swaying in the breeze.”¹

Don Hutson, who had announced that he would retire after the season, gave a fantastic “farewell” performance to Packer fans with another three-touchdown game. In a rout of the Cardinals, both Irv Comp and Tony Canadeo threw touchdowns to Hutson in the first quarter. When the Bears tried to slow down Hutson, a pass interference penalty put the ball at the one-yard line. Ted Fritsch took it in for a 21-0 halftime lead.

Green Bay played most of the final 30 minutes with its second string. Hutson left the game after his third touchdown, an 85-yard pick-six late in the third quarter. It was one of five interceptions by the Packers that helped send the Cardinals down to their 11th straight loss.

Chicago	0	0	7	7	14
Green Bay	7	14	14	0	35
Milwaukee					

Of GB's 327 total yards, just 38 came on the ground.

¹ Green Bay Press-Gazette, 11/15, Pagel, p. 11



PACKERS
BROOKLYN
DODGERS

31
7

11.21.1943

Not dead yet!

A loss by the Bears and this win by the Packers kept Green Bay's title chances alive. A big crowd at Ebbets Field saw Green Bay easily defeat the Dodgers as the Don Hutson "farewell" tour continued. Hutson put on quite a performance to show he had quite a lot left. He scored two touchdowns, a field goal, and four extra points for 19 total points. He also broke his own NFL single-game record with eight catches for 237 yards!

The Dodgers were overwhelmed. They were outgained by nearly 200 yards (398-204), and the Packers picked-off six passes. Brooklyn didn't score until the fourth quarter on a 44-yard run by Pug Manders.

"As always happens when the Wisconsin eleven is in the east, they are getting favorable notices in the New York papers. All the sportswriters went overboard on their display against Brooklyn last Sunday. Once again, they used the occasion to review (for) the metropolitans the record of Don Hutson. It will be remembered that Hutson got 19 points against the Dodgers."¹

Green Bay	14	3	7	7	31
Brooklyn	0	0	0	7	7
Attendance:	18,992				

¹ Green Bay Press-Gazette, 11/24/43, p. 13



PACKERS

PHIL-PITT

STEAGLES

38

12.5.1943

28

The combined squad of the Steelers and Eagles held the advantage in the first quarter, but Green Bay controlled matters the rest of the way. By halftime, two touchdowns by Tony Canadeo had given the Packers a 17-14 lead.

Green Bay pulled away after Irv Comp scored on a four-yard run in the third quarter. Comp also threw two more touchdown passes to Don Hutson in the fourth quarter to finish-off the Steagles. The Green Bay defense shut down the airways with six interceptions.

Green Bay	14	3	7	14	38
Phil-Pitt	14	0	0	14	28

Attendance: 34,294

Total Yards: GB 218 PP 318



THE
**PACKERS CENTURY
PROJECT**

1919-2019

1943 Team Statistics

FINAL STANDINGS - Western Division

	<u>W</u>	<u>L</u>	<u>T</u>
Chicago Bears	8	1	1
Green Bay	7	2	1
Detroit	3	6	1
Chicago	0	10	0

TEAM LEADERS

Passing	Canadeo
Receiving	Hutson
Rushing	Canadeo
Scoring	Hutson
Interceptions	Comp

ALL-PRO

Chet Adams	Tackle
Charley Brock	Center
Tony Canadeo	Halfback
Don Hutson	End
Bay Ray	Tackle

NOTEABLE DRAFT PICKS (Round, Position)

Dick Wildung (1, T)
Irv Comp (2, B)
Roy McKay (3, B)



1919 - 2019

PACKERS CENTURY

with Jim Rice

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