



1971



THE
PACKERS CENTURY

P R O J E C T

ALL THE GAMES. ALL THE STORIES.

1919-2019

BY JIM RICE

packerscentury.com



1971

Record: 4-8-2 4th Place (last) – NFC Central Division

Coach: Dan Devine

- In January, Dan Devine was named the seventh head coach in the team's history. He came from the University of Missouri.
- Surgeries in the summer sidelined Bart Starr for 10 games. Rookie Scott Hunter – from the University of Alabama – started quarterback.
- The Packers traded up three spots to select John Brockington of Ohio State. Along with veteran Donny Anderson, the Packers had one of the league's best backfields.
- After starting 2-1, the Chicago Bears were the only team the Packers beat the rest of the way. They did it twice. The four wins were the fewest for the Packers since 1959.
- Green Bay's defense gave up 298 points in 14 games, the most since 1958.



NEW YORK

GIANTS

PACKERS

42

40

9.19.1971

Ouch!

With a little over four minutes gone in the game, Kenny Ellis returned a missed field goal attempt by Pete Gogolak 100 yards for a touchdown! New York's quarterback Fran Tarkenton answered with the next 28 points. Tarkenton threw two touchdowns to Rich Huston, and the Giants also recovered two Packer fumbles in the end zone for touchdowns.

The second half was better for Green Bay. Trailing 28-14, Scott Hunter threw two touchdown passes. Tarkenton, though, wasn't finished. He threw two touchdown passes as well with the second gong to fullback Tucker Frederickson for a 42-24 lead.

The fourth quarter belonged to Green Bay. New coach Dan Devine unfortunately got tangled up in a play along the sideline after a Doug Hart interception. Devine's leg was broken when he was hit by former Packer Bob Hyland. The Packers hit back hard with a Donny Anderson touchdown run, and Hunter's touchdown pass to Carroll Dale. The Giants led 42-38 with 4:20 remaining.

When the Giants were forced to punt, a bad snap by Bob Hyland went over the punter's head. Doug Hart tackled Tom Blanchard in the end zone to make it 42-40. After the punt from the safety, the Packers drove to New York's 36-yard line. When tight end Rich McGeorge fell down on a pass play linebacker Jim Files stepped in for the interception. Game over.

From coach Devine who was hospitalized after the injury, "I've had people tell me before I was too close to the sidelines.

I sent him (Hyland) a telegram telling him to forget about it.....it's not his fault."¹

New York	0	28	14	0	42
Green Bay	7	7	10	16	40

Attendance: 56,263

Turnovers: GB 5 NY 1

"I'm surprised the Packer band wasn't penalized for having too many men on the field. It was still marching out of the end zone behind the Packers, who were kicking off to start the game."¹

¹ Green Bay Press-Gazette, 9/20/71, Rimmel, p. 2

² Green Bay Press-Gazette, 9/2/71, Wagner, p. 17



1919-2019

DENVER

BRONCOS

PACKERS

13

9.29.1971

34

Denver quarterback and former Packer, Don Horn, threw six interceptions that Green Bay turned into 20 points. Kenny Ellis stole three of them in the second half that preserved a 20-3 first-half lead. "We know he likes the bomb,"¹ Ellis said of Horn, his former teammate. The Broncos never threatened, and Green Bay's backfield of Dave Hampton, John Brockington and Donny Anderson rolled over Denver for 218 yards and three touchdowns!

Denver	3	0	3	7	13
Green Bay	7	13	14	0	34

Attendance: 47,957

Milwaukee County Stadium

Turnovers: GB 4 DEN 7

¹ Green Bay Press-Gazette, 9/27/71, Rimmel, p. 17



CINCINNATI
BENGALS
PACKERS

17
20 10.29.1971

Defense

A huge gamble by Cincinnati backfired! Prior to the game's pivotal play, the Packers led 10-0 before the Bengals tied it in the third quarter. Green Bay reclaimed the lead in the fourth quarter with Scott Hunter's touchdown to Rich McGeorge, and a Lou Michaels field goal. With two minutes left in the game and trailing 20-17, Paul Brown elected to go for the win instead of the tie on fourth and two from Green Bay's seven-yard line. On a quarterback sneak, rookie quarterback Kenny Anderson was stopped by Dave Robinson and Willie Wood and Green Bay took over!

Green Bay's ground game pounded the Bengals for 256 yards!

Cincinnati	0	0	10	7	17
Green Bay	3	7	0	10	20

Attendance: 56,263

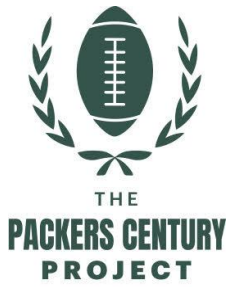
Total Yards: GB 318 CINN 178

"The Packers deserve commendation for restoring the pledge to pre-game ceremonies. The fans deserve praise too for their excellent recitation of the pledge."¹

"We've tailgated for years. Back in 1970-71, we went to a game and were in the northwest corner of the end zone. We took sleeping bags to the game to crawl into and keep warm. A guy told us we should take hot Southern Comfort to games. We each crawled into our sleeping bags sipping on our hot drink during the game. By the time the game got over, we couldn't get out of our sleeping bags!"²

¹ Green Bay Press-Gazette, 10/4/71, p. 1

² For Packers' Fans ONLY!, Wolfe, p. 58



1919-2019

PACKERS

DETROIT

LIONS

28

10.10.1971

31

The Lions jumped out to a 17-0 lead, and quarterback Greg Landry enjoyed a great afternoon with four touchdown passes. He led an offense that produced 545 yards. Larry Walton caught two of Landry's touchdowns, and the second one put the Lions in complete command 31-14.

Quarterback Zeke Bratkowski relieved Scott Hunter in the second half, and he brought Green Bay back. Bratkowski returned to the active roster after two years of coaching experience under Phil Bengston. The Packers got it to within three on a touchdown pass to Rich McGeorge with 56 seconds left, but time ran out.

Green Bay	0	7	14	7	28
Detroit	14	10	7	0	31

Attendance: 54,418



1919-2019

MINNESOTA
VIKINGS
PACKERS

24
13

10.17.1971

Turnovers

Minnesota's strong defense set up their offense. Gary Cuozzo's three touchdown passes all came after Green Bay turnovers – two fumbles and one interception.

After a 7-7 first half, Scott Hunter threw a 56-yard touchdown pass to Carroll Dale. When Alan Page blocked the extra-point, the Packers led 13-7. Page then recovered a Donny Anderson fumble on Green Bay's eight-yard line. On the next play, Cuozzo hit tight end Stu Voight to go in front 14-13.

Early in the fourth quarter, Hunter threw his third interception. This one went to Bobby Bryant, and Cuozzo converted on a pass to wideout Bob Grimm to extend the lead to 21-13. Fred Cox's field goal iced it.

Minnesota	7	0	7	10	24
Green Bay	0	7	6	0	13

Attendance: 56,263

Turnovers: GB 5 MINN 1

"Even the Marines and their tremendous halftime show, one of the finest we've seen in Lambeau Field, couldn't save the Pack."¹

¹ Green Bay Press-Gazette, 10/19/71, Wagner, p. 14



PACKERS

LOS ANGELES

RAMS

13

10.24.1971

30

Not a chance

Green Bay never led in this game, and the closest they came was 7-6 in the second quarter. After that, it was all L. A. as they put up the next 23 points. Roman Gabriel threw three touchdowns passes to Bob Klein, Jack Snow, and Lance Rentzel. They ran the ball for 164 yards as well.

Green Bay turned the ball over five times. After the game, Dan Devine made this comment. "I have a feeling that if we're going to lose, we're going to lose my way."¹

Green Bay	0	6	0	7	13
Los Angeles	7	6	7	10	30

Attendance: 75,351

¹ Green Bay Press-Gazette, 10/25/71, p. 17



1919-2019

DETROIT
LIONS
PACKERS

14

11.1.1971

14

The rain and wind made this a dark and muddy night at Milwaukee County Stadium. It also gave Monday Night Football's national television audience a slow-moving, low scoring tie without much excitement.

Two minutes into the game, the conditions began to have an impact. A fumble by quarterback Scott Hunter led to a 7-0 Detroit lead. Green Bay tied it on a 65-yard drive and Dave Hampton's touchdown run.

Fifty-eight seconds before halftime, the Packers went ahead 14-7. A fumble by the Lions led to a two-yard touchdown run by Scott Hunter! But with 17 seconds still left in the half, Detroit miraculously tied it thanks to two Green Bay penalties and a 49-yard touchdown pass from quarterback Greg Landry to Charlie Sanders.

In the awful conditions, the second half deteriorated quickly, and no points were scored. Linebacker Fred Carr starred for the Packers when he forced a fumble and blocked a field goal. The Packers passed the ball just five times all game, and rookie John Brockington carried the load for the offense with 116 yards rushing. After the game, linebacker Mike Lucci of the lions had this to say about Green Bay's rookie fullback. "I'll tell you, the Packers didn't waste their first choice."¹

Detroit	7	7	0	0	14
Green Bay	7	7	0	0	14

Attendance: 47,961

Milwaukee County Stadium

Total Yards: GB 218 DET 291

¹ Green Bay Press-Gazette, 11/2/71, p. 16



PACKERS

CHICAGO
BEARS

17

11.7.1971

14

In Green Bay's first game at Soldier Field since 1926, they held the Bears scoreless for 45 minutes! The Packers owned the first half as quarterback Scott Hunter threw a 31-yard touchdown pass to Carroll Dale, and rookie John Brockington scored on a seven-yard run.

In the fourth quarter, the Bears scored on a 30-yard Bobby Douglass to George Farmer touchdown. They tied it after Dick Butkus recovered Dave Hampton's fumble and Douglass converted with a one-yard touchdown run. Hampton quickly redeemed himself on the ensuing kickoff with a 62-yard return. It set up the winner by Lou Michaels with 59 seconds left!

Green Bay	0	14	0	3	17
Chicago	0	0	0	14	14
Attendance:	55,04				

*"Eastern sports writers take great delight in poking fun at Green Bay because of its devotion to the Packers. They say such enthusiasm and support of the fans is small townish, provincial, and unnecessary because, really, that's all we have except year-round cold weather. Much of this is sour grapes because all of the eastern teams have a long way to go to match the Packers' 11 championships."*¹

¹ Green Bay Press-Gazette, 11/8/71, Editorial, p. 4



PACKERS

MINNESOTA

VIKINGS

0

11.14.1971

3

Green Bay's defense held Minnesota to five first downs and 87 total yards! On offense, they ran all over the Vikings for 245 yards, but turnovers undid an otherwise solid performance.

The Packers were unable to score when they had their chances. Five times they were deep in Vikings' territory only to be turned away without points. Five times they self-destructed inside the red-zone with turnovers. A fourth-quarter interception of Scott Hunter by Charlie West finally did in Green Bay. The pick came on Minnesota's 10-yard line, and Fred Cox delivered with a 25-yard field goal, and the first-place Vikings escaped with the win.

Years later, linebacker Dave Robinson recalled his the frustration about this game. "We're down inside the five-yard line, the score is 0-0, and he refused to kick the field goal. Every time we got down inside the ten-yard line, Dan Devine would not let John Brockington carry the ball. That game will haunt me for as long as I live."¹

Green Bay	0	0	0	0	0
Minnesota	0	0	0	3	3

Attendance: 49,794

¹ Black & Blue, Berghaus, p. 235



PACKERS

ATLANTA

FALCONS

21

11.22.1971

28

This was Green Bay's first loss *ever* to the Falcons, and it was captured on Monday Night Football. The Packers were out-muscled and out-hustled by Atlanta. Quarterback Scott Hunter led a sluggish Green Bay offense that produced just 143 total yards. Hunter completed just three of eight passes, but his second-quarter touchdown pass to Donny Anderson gave Green Bay a short-lived, 14-12 halftime lead.

The Falcons took control on the opening kickoff of the second half. Cannonball Butler returned it to Green Bay' 19-yard line. Four plays later, Atlanta scored to take a 19-14 lead. Early in the fourth quarter, they scored the winner after they intercepted Hunter. Art Malone scored from the one-yard line for a second time in the game to seal the deal.

"They outmanned us. Everything they wanted to do to us, they did. Football is a contact game, and the first thing you have to do is hit. If you don't hit, you don't qualify to play the game,"¹ said veteran Wille Wood.

Green Bay	0	14	0	7	21
Atlanta	6	6	7	9	28
Attendance:	58,850				

¹ Green Bay Press-Gazette, 11/23/71, Rimmel, p. 13



NEW ORLEANS
SAINTS
PACKERS

29
21 11.28.1971

The Packers held the Saints to two field goals in the first half, and Bart Starr saw his first action of the season. He directed an early scoring drive that was capped off by Donny Anderson's three-yard run. "We sure didn't do much after that, did we?" Starr lamented. For the game, he finished 8-17-116-0-1.

Five field goals by Charlie Durkee kept New Orleans' offense productive. The extended the lead to 19-7 with a touchdown early in the fourth quarter. But big plays by Green Bay kept it close – Dave Hampton's 90-yard kickoff return, and Zeke Bratkowski's 40-yard bomb to Rich McGeorge – but six turnovers killed Green Bay's chances.

New Orleans	3	3	6	17	29
Green Bay	7	0	0	14	21

Attendance: 48,035

Milwaukee County Stadium



PACKERS

16

ST. LOUIS

12.5.1971

CARDINALS

16

Only five field goals graced the scoreboard – until the fourth quarter – three for St. Louis and two for Green Bay.

In the last two minutes of a 9-6 game, the teams traded touchdowns. Dave Hampton finished a 74-yard drive for Green Bay with a two-yard touchdown run and a 13-9 lead. The Cardinals reclaimed the lead with one minute left on a 57-yard touchdown pass that bounced off the helmet of Ken Ellis and into the arms of Mel Gray who took it in.

With no timeouts left, the Packers started with great field possession on their 45-yard line. A 21-yard completion from Scott Hunter to Carroll Dale brought it to the 19. Rookie kicker, Tim Webster, then kicked his third field goal of the game for the tie.

Green Bay	0	3	3	10	16
St. Louis	0	9	0	7	16

Attendance: 50,443

“Popular Ray Scott is the main speaker at the annual Green Bay Traffic Club Bash at the Elks tonight. Tom Miller, Packer assistant to the general manager, and Tony Canadeo, Scott’s old mike-side partner, are special guests.”¹

¹ Green Bay Press-Gazette, 12/7/71, Wagner, p. 15



CHICAGO
BEARS
PACKERS

10
31 12.12.1971

It was Ray Nitschke Day at Lambeau Field, and the Packers beat the Bears convincingly. It was the first game Nitschke started all season, and he played very well.

On their first possession, Scott Hunter connected with Carroll Dale for a 77-yard score to put Green Bay in front. After a close 7-7 first half, the Packers dominated. A key interception by Nitschke's successor's at middle linebacker, Jim Carter, started the second-half rally. Rookie John Brockington's six-yard touchdown came soon after and the Packers led 14-7.

Green Bay wrapped it up with touchdown runs by Scott Hunter and Bart Starr. Starr's touchdown was the last of his illustrious career.

Chicago	7	0	3	0	10
Green Bay	7	0	14	10	31
Attendance: 56,263					

As a rookie, Brockington topped 1,000 yards rushing!

Four astronauts from NASA visited Lambeau Field to honor Ray Nitschke. One was a Bears fan (Gene Cernan) who went to the same high school as Nitschke. The other was Wisconsin native "Deke" Slayton who rooted for the Packers. "The astronauts took part in the pre-game festivities on the field, and they returned to the field just before the end of the game so that they could make their way into the locker rooms."¹ The other astronauts were John Swigert and Ron Evans.

¹ Green Bay Press-Gazette, 12/13/71, Walter, p. 1



PACKERS

MIAMI

DOLPHINS

6

12.19.1971

27

This was Bart Starr's last game as quarterback of the Green Bay Packers. He started the game and went 13-22-126-0-0. Starr wasn't satisfied with his performance, "but I feel I've have made some progress."¹ (PG, 12/22/71, Rimmel, p. 25)

With the score 6-6 in the third quarter, the Dolphins brought to a close a disappointing season for the Packers with touchdown runs by Jim Kiick and Larry Czonka. Miami's final points came on a 47-yard return of a blocked field goal. Dan Devine closed out the season with this prediction: "With John Brockington getting 1,000 yards this year, and Scott Hunter developing – he seemed to settle down when Bart Starr came back – I think there are some people who are going to be surprised next year."²

Green Bay	3	0	3	0	6
Miami	3	3	14	7	27

Attendance: 76,812

¹ Green Bay Press-Gazette, 12/22/71, Rimmel, p. 25

² Green Bay Press-Gazette, 12/22/71, Rimmel, p. 20



THE
**PACKERS CENTURY
PROJECT**

1919-2019

1971 Team Statistics

FINAL STANDINGS – NFC Central Division

	<u>W</u>	<u>L</u>	<u>T</u>
Minnesota	11	3	0
Detroit	7	6	1
Chicago	6	8	0
Green Bay	4	8	2

Team Leaders

Passing	Hunter
Receiving	Dale
Rushing	Brockington
Scoring	Michaels
Interceptions	Ellis

All-Pro

Brockington	Running Back
Gillingham	Guard

Notable Draft Choices (Round, Position)

John Brockington (1, RB)
Scott Hunter (6, QB)
Dave Davis (7a, WR)
Kevin Hunt (10, T)



1919 - 2019

PACKERS CENTURY

with Jim Rice

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