



**1973**



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)



## 1973

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**Record: 5-7-2 3rd Place – NFC Central Division**

**Coach: Dan Devine**

- After a division title in 1972, expectations were sky-high. By any measure, the season was a step backward.
- Bart Starr did not return to the coaching staff in 1973.
- Ray Nitschke announced his retirement during the preseason, and Carroll Dale was placed on waivers and ended up in Minnesota.
- Scott Hunter, Jerry Tagge, and Jim Del Gaizo shared the quarterback position. Del Gazio was also acquired from Miami.
- The offense ranked near the bottom of the league in points scored. In three straight losses to the Rams, Lions, and Bears the Packers did not gain 100 yards, and they scored a total of 24 points.



1919-2019

NEW YORK

**JETS**

**7**

**9.17.1973**

**PACKERS**

**23**

The season started on a Monday night in Milwaukee. The Packers got off to a great start, and the Jets didn't score until there were 33 seconds left in the game.

Green Bay's defense kept the pressure on quarterback Joe Namath and the Jets all evening. Namath was sacked three times and intercepted once. He did not throw a touchdown pass, and New York ran for just 69 yards.

The Packers capitalized on three turnovers by the Jets for 17 points! Scott Hunter's touchdown pass to Rich McGeorge came early, and John Brockington's one-yard run made it 23-0. Chester Marcol also booted three field goals. After the game, Namath commented on the poor performance, "I've still got my health and my wits about me. It's not the end of the world."<sup>1</sup>

<b>New York</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Green Bay</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>23</b>

**Attendance: 47,124**

**Milwaukee County Stadium**

*Turnovers: GB 0 NY 3*

<sup>1</sup> Green Bay Press-Gazette, 9/18/73, p. 18



DETROIT  
**LIONS**  
**PACKERS**

**13**  
**13**

**9.23.1973**

The Packers led most of the game, but they had to come from behind in the fourth quarter to salvage the tie.

Green Bay enjoyed a 10-6 lead after 45 minutes thanks to McArthur Lane's touchdown and a Chester Marcol field goal. In the fourth quarter, the Lions took the lead 13-10 on a 79-yard touchdown drive. Altie Taylor's touchdown run came with 4:22 left.

With 1:53 left and still trailing 13-10, Devine replaced quarterback Scott Hunter with Jim Del Gaizo. Del Gaizo would confess later, "the situation kind of frightened me."<sup>1</sup> But he remained composed and completed three passes including a crucial third-down toss to Jon Stagers to put Green Bay in field goal range. Though they didn't score a touchdown, Chester Marcol tied it with 22 seconds left.

<b>Detroit</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Green Bay</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Attendance:</b>	<b>55,495</b>				

*"The scoreboard keeper did his best to help the Packers win. After Marcol's tying field goal, the big board read Packers 16 Lions 13. Then it was corrected to 13-13, then changed to 16-16, before finally settling for 13-13."*<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Green Bay Press-Gazette, 9/24/73, Rimmel, p. 17  
<sup>2</sup> Green Bay Press-Gazette, 9/24/73, Wagner, p. 18



**PACKERS**

MINNESOTA

**VIKINGS**

**3**

**9.30.1973**

**11**

### **No touchdowns**

Jim Del Gaizo started at quarterback for Green Bay, but he completed just four passes for 36 yards. The stingy Vikings defense also held running backs John Brockington and MacArthur Lane to 90 yards rushing. The Packers managed only 160 total yards, and they never got closer than the Vikings' 25-yard line.

A second-quarter field goal by Chester Marcol gave Green Bay an early edge. Soon after, the game went south for Green Bay when McArthur Lane fumbled into his own end zone. John Brockington recovered it for a safety.

Trailing 3-2, Minnesota's Fred Cox then provided all the offense with three field goals. The first coming on the drive right after the safety, a Packers fumble set up the second, and a missed field goal led to Cox's third. The win put the Vikings at 3-0.

<b>Green Bay</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Minnesota</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Attendance:</b>	<b>48,176</b>				



**PACKERS**

NEW YORK

**GIANTS**

**16**

**10.7.1973**

**14**

The game was played at the Yale Bowl, in New Haven, Connecticut. Green Bay overcame touchdown passes by Norm Snead to Don Herrman and Bob Grim to defeat New York. The Packers were helped by four Giant turnovers and New York's anemic running attack (57 yards).

Turnovers by both teams led to a 7-7 first half. Two field goals by Chester Marcol made it 13-6. But early in the fourth quarter, Norm Snead's second touchdown put the Giants back on top 14-13. On Green Bay's final drive, Scott Hunter, who had replaced Jim Del Gazio in the third quarter, passed the Packers into field goal range. MacArthur Lane and Jon Staggers made the big catches. With one second left, Chester Marcol nailed his third kick of the day to win it. Scott Hunter was told after the game that he had "regained starting status with a superlative second-half rescue mission."<sup>1</sup>

<b>Green Bay</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>New York</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Attendance:</b>	<b>70,050</b>				

<sup>1</sup> Green Bay Press-Gazette, 10/8/73, Rimmel, p. 44



KANSAS CITY  
**CHIEFS**  
**PACKERS**

**10**  
**10**      **10.14.1973**

Physically and statistically, it was all Green Bay. On the scoreboard, though, that wasn't the case.

The Chiefs took an early lead after they blocked a punt and quarterback Lenny Dawson's found Morris Stroud for six. The Packers came back with a Chester Marcol field goal and Jim Del Gazio's touchdown pass to Jon Stagers to lead halftime 10-7.

Quarterback Scott Hunter's chest injury hurt Green Bay's chances as he sat out the second half. It stayed 10-7 until the fourth quarter when K. C.'s Jan Stenerud unloaded a 36-yard field goal to knot it 10-10. Late in the game, deep in K. C. territory, quarterback Jim Del Gazio was picked-off by Bobby Bell. The Chiefs couldn't capitalize, and the tie stood.

<b>Kansas City</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Green Bay</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>

**Attendance: 46,583**  
**Milwaukee County Stadium**

*Total Yards: GB 315 KC 149*

*"The University of Wisconsin-Green Bay Band was its usual stunning self at halftime..."<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> Green Bay Press-Gazette, 10/15/73, Wagner, p. 18



1919-2019

**PACKERS**

LOS ANGELES

**RAMS**

**7**

**10.21.1973**

**24**

The Rams remained undefeated. The Packers had a terrible day on offense completing just five passes, generating only six first downs, for a grand total of 63 yards.....in 60 minutes! The news only got worse after the loss when word came that promising young cornerback Willie Buchanon broke both bones in his left leg.

L. A. quarterback John Hadl led an offense that produced 378 total yards. He threw one touchdown pass to Harold Jackson in the first half. Trailing 10-0 at halftime, the Packers struck gold on their first drive of the new half. They trimmed the lead to 10-7 on a McArthur Lane's option pass to rookie Barty Smith that went for a 23-yard touchdown. In the fourth quarter, an 80-yard touchdown drive by the Rams it made it 20-7. Two safeties by Rams' defensive end Fred Dyer wrapped-up the scoring, and the Packers fell to 2-2-2.

<b>Green Bay</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Los Angeles</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>24</b>

**Attendance: 8,558**

*Total Yards: GB 63 LA 378*





**PACKERS**

DETROIT

**LIONS**

**0**

**10.28.1973**

**34**

## Embarrassed

In another dismal performance, the Packers were skunked, and exactly like last week, they produced only 63 yards of offense. After taking a 10-0 lead, the Lions pretty put the game away in the second quarter. A fourth-and-one gamble by the Packers failed, and Detroit drove 56 yards for a Mel Farr touchdown. They led 17-0 at the break.

Scott Hunter replaced Jim Del Gazio in the second half, but he was unable to rally the offense. The Lions continued to pour on the points and the yards (329-63). After the game, a shocked Devine said, "it was a very, very horrible, nightmarish type of game. I'm personally humiliated."<sup>1</sup>

<b>Green Bay</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Detroit</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>34</b>

**Attendance: 43,616**

*"There have been times when the Packers have been awful. But even in those days, when Green Bay was considered a pro football wasteland, there was always something special about the place and the players and the fans."<sup>2</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> Green Bay Press-Gazette, 10/29/73, Rimmel, p. 18

<sup>2</sup> Facing the Green Bay Packers, Carlson, p. XXV



CHICAGO  
**BEARS**  
**PACKERS**

**31**  
**17**

**11.4.1973**

## 2-4-2

Green Bay lost its third in a row. Another awful performance by the offense produced just 98 total yards including 17 yards passing.

Green Bay actually led at halftime 17-10 before quarterback Bobby Douglass took over. Douglass, who scored his first touchdown earlier in the game, tacked on three more scores on one-yard plunges. Overall, he ran for 100 yards and threw for 118.

The Bears held the Packers to just seven yards in the second half. For the game, they sacked quarterback Scott Hunter four times. In their last three games, the Packers have been outgained 1,044-224. After the game, Devine was asked for a response to crowd's booing. "I wouldn't have much to say about the boos today. We certainly haven't been giving them the kind of performance they expect to see."<sup>1</sup>

<b>Chicago</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Green Bay</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Attendance:</b>	<b>53,231</b>				

<sup>1</sup> Green Bay Press-Gazette, 11/5/73, p. 18



ST. LOUIS  
**CARDINALS**  
**PACKERS**

**21**  
**25**

**11.11.1973**

Bart Starr’s jersey was retired at halftime, and the Packers celebrated with a win. In Jerry Tagge’s first start at quarterback for Green Bay, the offense woke up with 305 yards! The ground game percolated for the bulk of it with 243 yards and two touchdowns. Chester Marcol also kicked four field goals.

After Green Bay built a 22-7 halftime lead, St. Louis’ defense stiffened. In the first eight minutes of the fourth quarter, quarterback Jim Hart brought the Cardinals back with two touchdown drives. Now, holding just a one-point 22-21 lead, the Packers ate up the clock. After 10 plays and with 1:46 left, Chester Marcol kicked his fourth field of the game, and Green Bay escaped with a win!

<b>St. Louis</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Green Bay</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Attendance:</b>	<b>52,922</b>				

*Near the end of the first quarter, a pheasant ran on the the field “with a decidedly open field running style and was cheered on vociferously by the fans.” After the game, he was taken to a local wildlife sanctuary, but “it was unfortunate – one wag said – he was not run over by Packer Leland Glass before being captured. You know, Pheasant Under Glass!”<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> Green Bay Press-Gazette, 11/12/73, p. 1



**PACKERS**

NEW ENGLAND

**PATRIOTS**

**24**

**11.18.1973**

**33**

With this loss, the Packers dropped from postseason contention. But they jumped in front on their opening drive and took a quick 14-0 lead after the Patriots fumbled their first snap of the game. Touchdown runs by John Brockington and Perry Williams finished the drives.

Jerry Tagge “more and more like the eventual successor to the retired Bart Starr”<sup>1</sup> had a fine afternoon (17-23-267-0-1). The Packers led at intermission 17-9 and a pick-six by Ken Ellis to start the second half appeared to put it away 24-9.

But the Packers didn’t score in the second half. New England had no such trouble as quarterback, Jim Plunkett, led a scorching comeback with two touchdown passes and a touchdown run. Seven plays after the Packers took a 24-9 lead the deluge began. Plunkett found tight end Bob Windsor for a 28-yard touchdown. A 63-yard bomb followed to Reggie Rucker, and the Patriots had the lead for the first time 26-24. A Perry Williams fumble gave New England another opportunity. Three plays later, Plunkett sealed the deal with a one-yard dive into the end zone. For the game, he threw for 348 yards.

<b>Green Bay</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>New England</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>33</b>

**Attendance: 60,525**

*Total Yards: GB 338 NE 456*

<sup>1</sup> Green Bay Press-Gazette, 11/19/73, Rempel, p. 2



**PACKERS**

SAN FRANCISCO

**49ers**

**6**

**11.26.1973**

**20**

Monday Night Football wasn't kind to the Packers. San Francisco came into the game with a four-game losing streak, but they had no trouble holding Green Bay to two field goals.

An interception thrown by quarterback Jerry Tagge set up the San Francisco's first touchdown. In the fourth quarter, quarterback Steve Spurrier threw a game-clinching touchdown to Ted Kwalick.

<b>Green Bay</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>San Francisco</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Attendance: 49,244</b>					

*The National Council on Driver Equilibrium: "Our studies show that Green Bay drivers use more bumper stickers than drivers in any other part of the country. We understand it has something to do with a football team in the city."<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> Green Bay Press-Gazette, 11/27/73, Woessner, p. 2



1919-2019

NEW ORLEANS

**SAINTS**

**PACKERS**

**10**

**12.2.1973**

**30**

The Packers took a 13-0 lead and held on tight! A pick-six of Archie Manning by Al Matthews and two Chester Marcol field goals gave Green Bay the lead. Archie Manning's touchdown pass to Jubilee Dunbar cut the Packers lead to 13-10 at halftime.

But Manning threw two more interceptions in the second half including another pick-six to linebacker Jim Carter. Manning acknowledged later that he, "threw the game away with interceptions."<sup>1</sup>

New Orleans was held scoreless in the second half while the Packers added on. A 41-yard touchdown run by quarterback, Jerry Tagge, and the pick-six by Jim Carter ended all doubt.

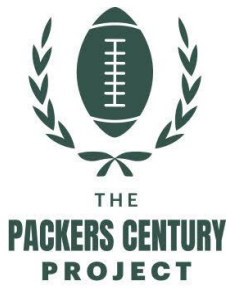
<b>New Orleans</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Green Bay</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>30</b>

**Attendance: 46,092**

*"The crowd was as enthusiastic about the game as I am about going to the dentist."<sup>2</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> Green Bay Press-Gazette, 12/3/73, Karbon, p. 18

<sup>2</sup> Green Bay Press-Gazete, 12/3/73, Wagner, p. 17



1919-2019

MNNESOTA  
**VIKINGS**  
**PACKERS**

**31**  
**7**  
**12.8.1973**

Five turnovers were costly for Green Bay. John Brockington's early fumble led to a Vikings touchdown. Three plays later, a pick-six by Bobby Bryant made it 14-0. In the game, quarterback Jerry Tagge threw three interceptions, and Jim Del Gaizo threw one.

Green Bay outgained the Vikings 300-221, but they didn't score until they trailed 31-0 with two minutes left. "We had a good week of practice, and it was disappointing,"<sup>1</sup> said, Dan Devine.

John Brockington provided the only highlight. He became the first player in NFL history to run for over 1,000 yards in his first three seasons.

<b>Minnesota</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>3</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>
<b>Attendance:</b>	<b>53,830</b>				

*First Downs: GB 10 MINN 10*

*"The snowball throwers in the stands were generally no more accurate than the Packer passers."<sup>2</sup>*

*Bob Lurtsema, Vikings' Defensive Tackle: "Lambeau Field is the just the greatest. I was a rookie with the Giants and I was introduced at Lambeau Field, and the history exploded in front of my eyes."<sup>3</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> Green Bay Press-Gazette, 12/3/73, Rempel, p. 45

<sup>2</sup> Green Bay Press-Gazette, 12/9/73, Wagner, p. 45

<sup>3</sup> Facing the Green Bay Packers, Carlson, p. 77



**PACKERS**

CHICAGO  
**BEARS**

**21**

**0**

**12.16.1973**

The win split the season series. John Brockington ran for 143 yards, and MacArthur Lane pounded away for 101 more. Jerry Tagge threw two touchdowns passes, and the 5-7-2 Packers finished ahead of the 3-11-0 Bears. "What a better way to end a bitter season.....beating the Bears. The rest of the winter will be just a few degrees warmer."<sup>1</sup>

<b>Green Bay</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Chicago</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Attendance:</b>	<b>29,157</b>				

*"The Packers won their last game of the season, and it came as the kind of joy you get from winning the last pot of the evening in a poker game in which you dropped 20 bucks."*<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Green Bay Press-Gazette, 12/17/73, Wagner, p. 22

<sup>2</sup> Green Bay Press-Gazette, 12/17/73, Larson, p. 11





THE

**PACKERS CENTURY  
PROJECT**

1919-2019

## 1973 Team Statistics

### FINAL STANDINGS – NFC Central Division

	<u>W</u>	<u>L</u>	<u>I</u>
Minnesota	12	2	0
Detroit	6	7	1
Green Bay	5	7	2
Chicago	3	11	0

### Team Leaders

Passing	Tagge
Receiving	Lane
Rushing	Brockington
Scoring	Marcol
Interceptions	3 tied w/3

### All-Pro

John Brockington	Running Back
Ken Ellis	Cornerback
Gale Gillingham	Guard

### Notable Draft Choices (Round, Position)

Barry Smith (1, WR)  
Tom MacLeod (3, LB)  
Tom Toner (6, LB)  
Hise Austin (8, DB/WR)  
Larry McCarren (12, C)



1919 - 2019

# **PACKERS CENTURY**

*with Jim Rice*

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