



**1983**



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)



## 1983

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**Record: 8-8-0 3rd Place - Tie**

**Coach: Bart Starr**

- Bart Starr's contract was extended until January 31, 1985.
- After seven years and four sacks, defensive end, Mike Butler, left to play in the USFL.
- Green Bay had a strong offense, but their defense ranked #26 out of 28 teams. They gave up the most points in the NFC (439), and they gave up the most yards in the league, 6,403 (the second most in team history).
- On October 17 on Monday Night Football, Lynn Dickey threw for just under 400 yards to lead the Packers over the Redskins 48-47. This is still the highest-scoring game in MNF history.
- Lynn Dickey had a record-setting year. His 4,458 passing yards were the most in Packer history to date. He also broke Cecil Isbell's record of 24 touchdown passes in a season set in 1941.
- Ray Nitsche's #66 jersey was retired in a win over the Bears in early December. Two weeks later, with a playoff birth at stake, they lost in Chicago.
- This was the first of three straight 8-8 seasons.



**PACKERS**  
HOUSTON  
**OILERS**

**41**  
**9.4.1983**  
**38 (OT)**

Both offenses were ready for this opener, and they put up 987 total yards between them. Lynn Dickey put on an incredible performance. For the second time in his career, Dickey threw five touchdown passes in a game. This time he did it against his former team!

Four of Dickey's touchdowns came in the first half to set a 28-7 pace by halftime. Dickey not only threw touchdowns to John Jefferson (2), Paul Coffman, Gerry Ellis, and James Lofton, but he completed 27 of 31 for 333 yards! Along with Jan Stenerud's two field goals, it was just enough!

Fullback Earl Campbell got Houston rolling in the second half. The big fullback ran for three touchdowns, and 123 yards overall. His third touchdown tied the game at 31. Near the end of regulation, Dickey's headaches got so bad he had to leave the game, and he did not play in the overtime. He was replaced by David Whitehurst whose passing helped the Packers into field goal range. Stenerud then won it from 42 yards away!

After a draining and exhausting opener, Bart Starr called Dickey's performance, "a remarkable feat."<sup>1</sup>

<b>Green Bay</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Houston</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Attendance:</b>	<b>44,073</b>					



PITTSBURGH  
**STEELERS**  
**PACKERS**

**25**  
**21**

9.11.1983

This was a tough loss in the home opener. Two Lynn Dickey touchdown passes gave Green Bay a 14-13 halftime lead. The long touchdowns strikes of 71 and 73 yards both went to James Lofton. For Pittsburgh, fullback Franco Harris and quarterback Cliff Stoudt scored on the ground, and a blocked extra point by Gary Lewis of Green Bay was the early difference.

On their first possession of the second half, the Steelers took the lead with a field goal. In the fourth quarter, they pushed it to 23-14 with a 12-play, 91-yard scoring drive. The Packers and Dickey came back to Lofton for a third time with 4:30 left to cut it to 23-21. Lofton's fine game included five catches for 169 yards and three touchdowns. When the Packers got the ball back with two minutes to play, Dickey was tackled in the end zone for a safety. Game over.

<b>Pittsburgh</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Green Bay</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Attendance:</b>	<b>55,154</b>				

*"A longstanding tradition at Green Bay Packer games was the object of careful scrutiny Sunday at Lambeau Field. Tailgate parties, as much a part of Packer games to some fans as the power sweep or forward pass, were under the watchful eye of city and Packer officials. By the time he finished his observations, he (Ald. Eddie Bodart) was not convinced of a pressing need to curtail tailgating. 'People just come out to have fun. That's part of the football game'"*

*"Hutson Road from Lambeau Street to Hinkle Street will close Tuesday through Thursday for road repairs."*

1 Green Bay Press-Gazette, 9/12/83, Hildebrand, p. 1  
 2 Green Bay Press-Gazette, 9/12/83, p. 7



LOS ANGELES

**RAMS**

**PACKERS**

**24**

**9.18.1983**

**27**

Jan Stenerud opened and closed the game with a field goal, and his winning kick from the 36-yard line!

The Packers scored on their first three possessions to take a 17-3 halftime lead. An Eddie Lee Ivery touchdown run, and Lynn Dickey's 23-yard touchdown pass to John Jefferson led the charge.

In the third quarter, the Rams struck on their first possession. They went 80 yards in three plays, and Vince Ferragamo threw a 23-yard touchdown pass to Otis Grant. Moments later, after Tim Lewis fumbled the ensuing kickoff, Eric Dickerson ran for a touchdown to tie it at 17.

L. A. went in front 24-17 after Lynn Dickey threw an interception deep in his own territory. Mark Lee returned the favor for Green Bay with an interception. With 11 minutes left, Green Bay tied the game 24-24 on Eddie Lee Ivery's second touchdown run.

Just when it looked like overtime was right around the corner, Eric Dickerson fumbled on the Rams 16-yard line. Nose tackle Byron Braggs recovered for Green Bay. Two plays later, with one second left, Jan Stenerud kicked the winner from the 36-yard line.

**Los Angeles      0    3    21    0    24**

**Green Bay        10   7    0    10   27**

**Attendance: 54,037**

**Milwaukee County Stadium**



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

**3**  
**27**  
**9.26.1983**

“Pack wasn’t ready for prime time”<sup>1</sup> read Tuesday’s headline. They were embarrassed on national television with four turnovers, and quarterback Lynn Dickey was sacked four times.

Though Dickey threw for 283 yards, the Packers managed just one field goal. They led 3-0 in the early going before New York took control. The Giants took the lead on a Rob Carpenter touchdown run after a Packers’ field goal. Carpenter and Butch Wolfolk led a potent ground attack that pounded Green Bay 45 times for 208 yards.

Leading 10-3 at halftime, New York extended the lead when Terry Jackson picked up Eddie Lee Ivery’s fumble and went 35 yards to the end zone. A minute later, a fumbled snap by the Packers led to a New York field goal and a 20-3 lead. New York quarterback Scott Brunner put it away for with a 27-yard touchdown pass to Earnest Gray.

<b>Green Bay</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>New York</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Attendance:</b>	<b>75,308</b>				

<sup>1</sup> Green Bay Press-Gazette, 9/27/83, McGinn, p. 23



TAMPA BAY

**BUCCANEERS 14**

**PACKERS 55**

10.2.1983

### **Blowout!**

The 49 points scored in the first half of this game is still a Green Bay record. They dumped the Buccaneers easily, and it started with a 90-yard punt for a touchdown by Phil Epps with less than five minutes gone.

Lynn Dickey threw three touchdown passes, and Jessie Clark led a ground game that added a touchdown and 164 yards. Overall, the offense hit the Bucs with 519 yards!!

Tampa Bay trailed 21-0 before Hugh Green's pick-six got them on the scoreboard in the second quarter. Tampa had trouble running the ball (20 yards), and they turned it over three times. Two of the turnovers – a fumble and an interception – were both returned for touchdowns.

Soon after Hugh Green's pick-six for Tampa Bay, two Green Bay linebackers got in on the act. A fumble was returned for a touchdown by Mike Douglass, and John Anderson's 27-yard pick-six made it 42-7! In all, seven different Packers scored touchdowns in this massacre.

<b>Tampa Bay</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Green Bay</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>Attendance:</b>	<b>54,272</b>				



1919-2019

**PACKERS**

DETROIT

**LIONS**

**14**

**10.9.1983**

**38**

This was not a good game for the Packers. They didn't score in the first half, and they trailed 24-0 at the break.

For the Lions, rookie fullback James Jones had quite a game. He scored three touchdowns with two coming in the first half. Quarterback Eric Hipple also threw one of his two touchdown passes in the first half to Leonard Thompson.

The Packers got on the scoreboard in the third quarter after a Detroit fumble. Eddie Lee Ivey's touchdown run broke the ice for Green Bay. But with a defense unable to stop the Lions, they roared back with an 80-yard drive and Jones' third touchdown for a 31-7 lead.

In the blowout, former Packer Max McGee injected some levity. When guard Tim Huffman of the Packers accidentally knocked Lynn Dickey down on a play, McGee was asked if Huffman should get credit for a sack. He replied, "Might as well. He hasn't done anything else today."<sup>1</sup>

<b>Green Bay</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Detroit</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>38</b>

**Attendance: 67,738**

<sup>1</sup> Green Bay Press-Gazette, 10/11/83, Gerds, p. 19





WASHINGTON

**REDSKINS**

**PACKERS**

**47**

**48**

**10.17.1983**

## **Wow!**

This is still the highest-scoring game in Monday Night Football history! At the time, it was also the fifth highest-scoring game in NFL history.

After a poor performance three weeks ago on national television, the Packers were ready for the bright lights. They were a completely different team in this effort with 473 total yards. Their performance, and the game itself was one of the most memorable and exciting in Packers history.

Lynn Dickey threw for 387 yards and three touchdowns. "As long as he's given time, he's going to throw strikes,"<sup>1</sup> said tight end, Paul Coffman. Washington's quarterback Joe Theismann also had a great game with 398 yards passing and two touchdowns.

The Packers led the game until Mark Moseley's field goal with 10 seconds left in the third quarter. It gave the Redskins their first lead 33-31.

This explosive contest came down to a scintillating fourth quarter that saw five lead changes. After Moseley's field goal, the Packers countered in only 25 seconds on a tight end-reverse by Gary Lewis. The 'Skins hit right back on their next possession with a 70-yard drive that John Riggins capped off with a one-yard plunge for a 40-38 lead.

In six plays, the Packers went back in front when fullback Mike Meade "leapfrogged free safety Mark Murphy"<sup>2</sup> for 45-40 Green Bay lead. Washington went on an eight-play, 67-yard drive that brought them to Green Bay's five-yard line. Theismann didn't

miss a beat with his second touchdown pass to Joe Washington for 47-45 lead with 2:50 left.

The Packers landed the final blow. On third down, Dickey and Gerry Ellis connected on a 56-yard pass play for a first down at the Redskins eight-yard line. Four plays later, Jan Stenerud split the uprights from the 20 with 54 seconds left. Washington had one more shot, but Moseley's try for a fifth field from the 39 went wide right as time expired!

<b>Washington</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Green Bay</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>48</b>

**Attendance: 55,255**

*Combined Totals: 1,025 yards - 771 yards passing - 56 first downs*

*Tickets? "I tried to get tickets all week and couldn't. I decided to go to the game and park in the parking lot to see if I could pick up tickets there. I put a sign around my neck that said: "I Need 2 Tickets." We couldn't have been there 25 minutes, when this guy came up and said, "I got two of them for sale." I'm figuring the guy's going to scalp me since it was a Monday Night Football Game, and the Redskins were the World Champs! Just give me face value – \$13 bucks. Forty-yard line sitting right next to Bart Starr's secretary. A great night!"<sup>3</sup>*

1 Green Bay Press Gazette, 10/18/83, Christl, p. 24

2 Green Bay Press Gazette, 10/18/83, p. 24

3 For Packer Fans ONLY!, Wolfe, p. 141



MINNESOTA  
**VIKINGS**  
**PACKERS**

**20** 10.23.1983  
**17** (OT)

## 4-4

Shortly after Lynn Dickey threw his first interception, the Vikings grabbed a 7-0 lead. They held a 10-3 lead in the second half when a Ted Brown touchdown run late in the third quarter seemed to put the game out of reach 17-3.

On the Packers' next series, they marched 70 yards in nine plays to make it 17-10. The touchdown came on the first play of the fourth quarter when Lynn Dickey found John Jefferson in the corner of the end zone. It didn't stop there! With 1:48 remaining, Dickey drove the Packers 80 yards, and he found fullback Mike Meade for the tying touchdown with two seconds left in regulation!

Green Bay had the first opportunity in overtime, but they had cooled-off and went three-and-out. The Vikings took over near midfield and, with 9:55 left in the game, Benny Ricardo delivered the three-point winner from 32 yards out.

<b>Minnesota</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Green Bay</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>17</b>

**Attendance: 55,236**



**PACKERS**  
CINNATI  
**BENGALS**

**14**  
**34**

**10.30.1983**

Former teammates, Bart Starr, and Forrest Gregg faced each other for the first time as head coaches. The Packers led very briefly, 7-6, but it was the Bengals' game as they broke away with next 21 points.

Big Pete Johnson led the Bengals with two first-half touchdown runs and 112 yards rushing overall. Quarterback Kurt Schonert threw for 224 yards and fired touchdown passes to Chris Collingsworth and Pete Kreider. Schonert also scored one in himself.

The Packers didn't score again until the game was well out of reach. Green Bay was outgained 464-283. They turned the ball over three times, and quarterback Lynn Dickey was decked four times.

<b>Green Bay</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Cincinnati</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>Attendance:</b>	<b>53,349</b>				

*Trisha Denucci, Packers fan: "I dress up even if I'm watching the game at home. I'll paint my face, everything. I paint my face when I go to the bar to watch the game. My whole family does. I love the Packers. My bridesmaids' dresses are green and gold. My wedding band is actually going to be green and gold. I also have a Packer tattoo."*<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For Packers Fans ONLY!, Wolfe, p. 84



MINNESOTA  
**VIKINGS**  
**PACKERS**

**20** 10.23.1983  
**17** (OT)

**4-4**

The Vikings grabbed a 7-0 lead shortly after Lynn Dickey threw his first interception. They led 10-3 when Ted Brown's touchdown run late in the third quarter looked to put the game out of reach 17-3.

On the Packers' next series, they marched 70 yards in nine plays to make it 17-10. They scored again on the first play of the final quarter when Lynn Dickey found John Jefferson in the corner of the end zone. It didn't stop there! With 1:48 remaining, Dickey drove the Packers 80 yards and fullback Mike Meade scored on a short pass from Dickey to tie it with two seconds left in regulation!

The Packers had the first possession in overtime, but they had cooled-off and went three-and-out. Minnesota took over near midfield and, with 9:55 left in the game, Benny Ricardo delivered the three points from 32 yards out.

<b>Minnesota</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Green Bay</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Attendance:</b>	<b>55,236</b>					



MINNESOTA  
**VIKINGS**  
**PACKERS**

**20** 10.23.1983  
**17** (OT)

**4-4**

The Vikings grabbed a 7-0 shortly after Lynn Dickey threw his first interception. They held a 10-3 lead in the second half, when a Ted Brown touchdown run late in the third quarter looked to put the game out of reach 17-3.

On the Packers' next series, they marched 70 yards in nine plays to make it 17-10. They scored on the first play of the final quarter with Lynn Dickey finding John Jefferson in the corner of then end zone. It didn't stop there. With 1:48 remaining, Dickey drove the Packers 80 yards and found fullback Mike Meade for the tying touchdown with two seconds left in regulation!

The Packers had the first opportunity in overtime, but they had cooled-off and went three-and-out. The Vikings took over near midfield and, with 9:55 left in the game, Benny Ricardo delivered the three points from 32 yards out.

<b>Minnesota</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Green Bay</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Attendance:</b>	<b>55,236</b>					



**PACKERS**  
CINCINNATI  
**BENGALS**

**14**  
**34**

**10.30.1983**

It was Bart Starr vs. Forrest Gregg, and Cincinnati dominated. The Packers led very briefly, 7-6, but they didn't score again until the game was out of reach, 27-7 Cincinnati.

Bengals quarterback Kurt Schonert threw for 224 yards, scored on the ground, and threw two touchdown passes. Big Pete Johnson ran for 112 yards overall and finished two first-half drives with short touchdown runs. Schonert scored his touchdown before two touchdown passes to Chris Collingsworth and Pete Kreider finished off the Packers convincingly to put them at 4-5.

<b>Green Bay</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Cincinnati</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>Attendance:</b>	<b>53,349</b>				



1919-2019

CLEVELAND

**BROWNS**

**PACKERS**

**21**

**35**

**11.6.1983**

The Packers never trailed, and their balanced attack took care of the Browns. They led 14-7 in the first half after capitalizing on two Cleveland miscues.

An interception by Mike Douglass led to the first of four Lynn Dickey touchdown passes. In the second quarter, a penalty on Minnesota for too many men on the field opened the door for Dickey's second touchdown to Paul Coffman. Before the half, Dickey and tight end Gary Lewis also connected for a 10-yard score for a 21-7 halftime lead.

To back up Dickey's four touchdowns passes Gerry Ellis, and Jessie Clark led a ground game that put up 154 yards. Gerry Ellis scored twice in the second half to help hold off Cleveland. After Brian Sipe's touchdown pass cut lead to 28-21 with 1:25 left, Ellis went 25-yards around left end for a touchdown with 56 seconds left to seal the deal. "We control our own destiny. We beat Minnesota next week, and we're right where we want to be,"<sup>1</sup> said Coffman after the game.

<b>Cleveland</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Green Bay</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>35</b>

**Attendance: 54,089**

**Milwaukee County Stadium**

<sup>1</sup> Green Bay Press Gazette, 11/7/83, Christl, p. 1





1919-2019

**PACKERS**  
MINNESOTA  
**VIKINGS**

**29**

**11.13.1983**

**21**

### **First place tie**

On Green Bay's first visit to the Metrodome, it's a showdown of division leaders. Jan Stenerud's 46-yard field goal got Green Bay going, and at the end of the first quarter, fullback Mike Meade scored the first rushing touchdown of his career to make it 10-0. After Ezra Johnson recovered a Minnesota fumble, quarterback Lynn Dickey and wideout John Jefferson hooked up for a five-yard touchdown to push the advantage to 17-0.

With 2:58 left in the half, Vikings quarterback Steve Dils was tackled in the end zone for a safety by defensive tackle Greg Boyd. It was one of six sacks by the Packers, and it was 19-0 at halftime.

The Vikings woke up in the second half as Ricky Young's two touchdown runs in the third quarter slowed down Green Bay and trimmed the lead to 22-14. In the fourth quarter, they cut it to 22-21 with an 83-yard drive and a Tony Galbreath touchdown run. The Packers took over with 8:28 left, and they ran the ball on nine of the next 11 plays. On the 12<sup>th</sup> play from the Vikings 19-yard with 2:12 left, Dickey hit James Lofton for a first-place tie!

<b>Green Bay</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Minnesota</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>21</b>

**Attendance: 60,113**

*Total Yards: GB 343 MINN 419*



DETROIT  
**LIONS**  
**PACKERS**

**23**  
 11.20.1983  
**21** (OT)

### More extra time

There were nine turnovers in this pivotal game, and five belonged to the Lions. Detroit mishandled snaps on two punts that Lynn Dickey turned into touchdown passes to John Jefferson and Paul Coffman. The Packers led 20-3 at halftime, though they returned the turnover favors in the second half.

Lynn Dickey suffered a mild concussion near the end of the first half that kept him on the bench for the remainder of the game. Detroit's defense had much less trouble with back-up quarterback David Whitehurst. Whitehurst fumbled on the first snap of the second half, and Detroit quarterback Hipple scored on the ground to make it 20-10.

At the end of the third quarter, Eddie Murray's field goal made it a one-touchdown game 20-13. With seven minutes left, a short, 35-yard punt by Bucky Scribner was returned to Green Bay's 24-yard line. Three plays later, Hipple hit Freddie Scott to make it 20-20, and force the overtime.

Bobby Watkins picked-off David Whitehurst in the OT and Eddie Murray hit a 37-yard field goal to win it. The next day, a still dejected Bart Starr said, "It was a game we never should have lost. We let it get away from us, and I'm embarrassed to have the film go out and have other people see it."<sup>1</sup>

<b>Detroit</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Green Bay</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>20</b>

**Attendance: 50,050**

**Milwaukee County Stadium**

*Lynn Dickey sets a new GB record with 26 TD passes in a season.*

<sup>1</sup> Green Bay Press-Gazette, 11/22/83, Christl, p. 15



**PACKERS**  
ATLANTA  
**FALCONS**

**41**      **11.27.1983**  
**47 (OT)**

### More OT

Green Bay's 500 yards of offense wasn't enough. For the second straight game, an interception in overtime doomed the Packers.

Green Bay followed the lead of quarterback Lynn Dickey to take an early lead. They led 21-0 after Dickey threw two touchdown passes, and scored on a one-yard touchdown run. Atlanta got back into the game before halftime 24-21.

In the second half, Dickey's third touchdown pass to Paul Coffman steadied the ship momentarily. But after two Atlanta field goals, fullback William Andrews scored his third touchdown to give the Falcons their first lead, 34-31 with 9:18 remaining. After Stenerud's field goal tied it at 34, a pick-six of Lynn Dickey by Kenny Johnson with 1:57 left gave Atlanta a 41-34 lead. Quickly, Green Bay marched 85 yards to send the game into overtime on Gerry Ellis' touchdown run with three seconds left.

In overtime, Dickey threw a third interception when his pass was tipped by linebacker Buddy Curry. Kenny Johnson caught the errant pass and took it 31 yards for the victory. "This was worse than last week,"<sup>1</sup> was all Jan Steneud could say.

<b>Green Bay</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Atlanta</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Attendance: 35,688</b>						

<sup>1</sup> Green Bay Press-Gazette, 11/28/83, p. 25



1919-2019

CHICAGO  
**BEARS**  
**PACKERS**

**28**  
**31**

**12.4.1983**

*During a pre-game ceremony, Ray Nitschke had his #66 retired by the Packers. Nitschke was just the third Green Bay player to be so honored following Don Hutson, Tony Canadeo, and Bart Starr.*

### **Old Friends Return!**

Since they did not play in 1982 because of the player's strike, the old rivals finally meet again for Green Bay's last home game of the season.

Gerry Ellis paced the Packers with 141 yards rushing. He set up their first touchdown with a 71-yard sprint from scrimmage. His 12-yard touchdown run in the second quarter gave the Packers a 21-14 lead at the break.

With 5:30 left in the game and the Packers leading comfortably 28-14, an interception by Leslie Frazier led to a touchdown. After stopping Green Bay on its next series, Dennis McKinnon's 59-yard punt return tied the game at 28 with 1:50 left.

A stunned Packer crowd watched as Lynn Dickey, who threw for 345 yards on the afternoon, pulled the game out with a 67-yard pass to James Lofton that put Green Bay at Chicago's six-yard line. Three plays later, Jan Stenerud won it from 19 yards away!

After the game, Bart Starr apologized to the team for not overruling the third-and-one option pass by Gerry Ellis that was intercepted by Leslie Frazier. The call was made by offensive coordinator Bob Schnelker.

<b>Chicago</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Green Bay</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>31</b>

**Attendance: 51,147**

*The defense held Walter Payton to 59 yards rushing.*

*"It was a typical crowd for a Chicago game at the end of the season.  
There were certainly some people who got out of line."<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> Green Bay Press-Gazette, 12/5/83, Hildebrand, p. 13



**PACKERS**

TAMPA BAY

**BUCCANEERS**

**12**

**12.12.1983**

**9 (OT)**

**Five OTs!**

A win in the fifth overtime game in 1983 coupled with Detroit's loss to Cincinnati, kept them in the playoff hunt at 8-7.

Jan Stenerud scored all of Green Bay's points on this Monday night with four field goals. He also became the NFL's all-time leader in field goals moving ahead of George Blanda.

With seven minutes left in the game, Tampa Bay took the lead with the game's only touchdown. They missed the extra-point which opened the door for Stenerud's third field goal to tie it 9-9 with 28 seconds left. In the overtime, the Packers won the toss, and they went 65 yards in 11 plays before Stenerud won it from the 23-yard line.

<b>Green Bay</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Tampa Bay</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>

**Attendance: 50,763**

*Lynn Dickey became the 4<sup>th</sup> quarterback in NFL history to throw for over 4,000 yards.*



**PACKERS**

CHICAGO

**BEARS**

**21**

**12.18.1983**

**23**

The Packers suffered a devastating loss that brought to an end their playoff hopes, and Bart Starr's nine years as coach.

In frigid temperatures in the Windy City, (-28 wind chill) the Packers turned the ball over seven times to help Chicago to 14 points. The Bears started the scoring with quarterback Jim McMahon's touchdown pass to Willie Gault. Quarterback Lynn Dickey ran for a touchdown, and his 31-yard touchdown pass to James Lofton made it 14-7 Packers at halftime..

Late in the third quarter, the Bears recovered a fumbled punt by Phillip Epps. McMahon took advantage with a touchdown pass to Dennis McKinnon to knot it at 14. With 4:34 left in the game, the Bears made it 20-14 on a six-yard quarterback-draw by Jim McMahon. The Packers took back the lead with an inspired drive and Lynn Dickey's second touchdown pass. Paul Coffman caught this one with 3:08 left in the game.

When the Packers' defense couldn't stop the Bears, and Bart Starr chose not to use his remaining time outs, the Bears milked the clock. They went 58 yards in 10 plays, and Bob Thomas' winning kick came with 10 seconds left. Cliff Christl of the Press-Gazette put it this way: "Over the course of the season, the Packers' defense has been the worst in the league. And, once again, it failed to come through when it mattered most."<sup>1</sup>

Consequently, Bart Starr was fired the next day. His reaction? "I'm sorry I couldn't deliver more."<sup>2</sup>

<b>Green Bay</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Chicago</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Attendance:</b>	<b>35,807</b>				

*A House Divided? "Even households were divided. One caller praised Starr and questioned the qualifications of Robert Parins as President of the Packers organization. A short time later, this caller's son was on the air to say Parins' decision was right and just."<sup>3</sup>*

*Letter to the Editor: "In my opinion, he has done more for the integrity of football, more for our own particular NFL franchise, more for our community, and more for humankind, than anyone in our local history. As a role model, he has touched young lives and turned them in a positive direction. In whichever area he chooses to pursue, it can be assumed that he will continue to make his corner of the world better than he found it." Judy Scherer, Green Bay*

1 Green Bay Press-Gazette, 12/19/83, Christl, p. 25

2 Green Bay Press-Gazette, 12/20/83, Gerds, p. 25

3 Green Bay Press-Gazette, 12/20/83, Gerds, p. 25

4 Green Bay Press-Gazette, 12/24/83, p. 12





THE  
**PACKERS CENTURY  
PROJECT**

1919-2019

## 1983 Team Statistics

### FINAL STANDINGS – NFC Central

	<u>W</u>	<u>L</u>	<u>T</u>
Detroit	9	7	0
Green Bay	8	8	0
Chicago	8	8	0
Minnesota	8	8	0
Tampa Bay	2	14	0

### TEAM LEADERS

Passing	Dickey
Rushing	Ellis
Receiving	Lofton
Scoring	Stenerud
Interceptions	Lewis, Anderson (tie)

### ALL-PRO

Douglass	Linebacker
Lofton	Wide Receiver
McCarren	Center

### NOTABLE DRAFT PICKS (Round, Position)

Tim Lewis (1, CB)  
Dave Drechsler (2, G)  
Jessie Clark (7, RB)  
Bucky Scribner (11, P)



1919 - 2019

# **PACKERS CENTURY**

*with Jim Rice*

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