

# PACKERLAND™

## Packers Heritage Trail connects present and past

BY KRIS LEONHARDT  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

GREEN BAY – Modeled after “The Freedom Trail” — a 2.5-mile-long path around Boston that visits 17 locations significant to United States history — the Packers Heritage Trail visits two dozen locations in the Green Bay area significant to Green Bay Packers history.

The trail was the concept of longtime newsmen and current Packers Historian Cliff Christl.

“I conceived the idea and knew the history and did all the writing for the plaques. Scott King was our fundraiser. When I first proposed the idea and started talking to people... I wasn’t getting very far because I had no clue how to pay for this. Scott King was a good friend. He was working at Nicolet Bank, and he volunteered to be the fundraiser and he was able to raise money like the snap of his fingers. Most people really got excited about it and got on board,” Christl recalled.

The undertaking did not



take more than two years to put together thanks to Christl’s background and the contributions of those around him

“We did it in about a year or two. It was in two stages. First, the plaques. I think we started with 21 plaques. Now there’s like 23 or 24. And then the second stage was the plaza at Washington at Cherry Street. Like I said, Scott did just an amazing job of raising money, and so it didn’t take long. And I was pretty familiar with the history, so it didn’t take a lot of time to write,” he added.

See **TRAIL** page 3



Green Bay Packers Heritage Trail Plaza is located on the corner of Washington and Cherry on the east side of the Fox River in downtown Green Bay. **Kris Leonhardt photo**

## Bolden: I’m ‘100% cleared’

Patriot whose injury ends Packers game early sits out all of 2023 season

BY THOM GERRETSEN  
CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

GREEN BAY – It appears that Isaiah Bolden will get a second chance to impress Packers fans if the New England Patriots return to Green Bay in the coming year or so.

Bolden spent his rookie campaign on injured reserve (IR) after his head injury caused both teams to end their Aug. 19, 2023, preseason game at Lambeau Field with 10:29 remaining.

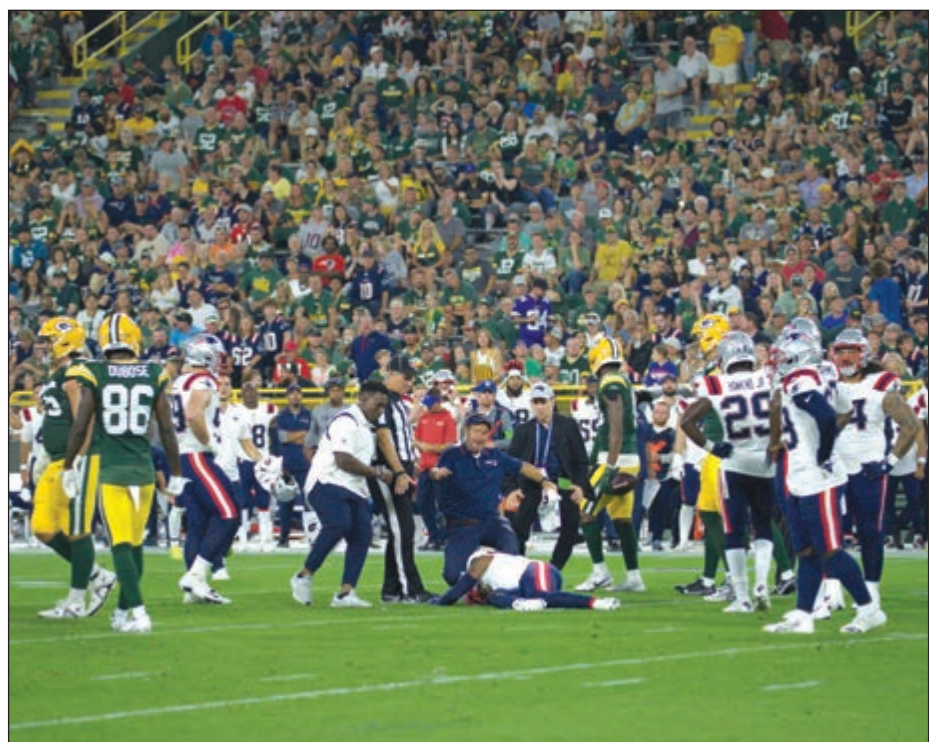
The Pats were leading the Packers 21-17 at that point and were declared the winner.

In a Jan. 10 post on X, the former Twitter, the 24-year-old cornerback said he’s “100% cleared.”

He had three tackles against the Packers before he collided with a teammate, Calvin Munson, while covering a slant pass that had been caught by Green Bay receiver Malik Heath.

Bolden was reported to have a concussion and spent the night at Aurora BayCare Medical Center before he was released early on Aug. 20.

Following the game, the Patriots said he had “feel-



Patriots staff rush out to attend to Isaiah Bolden on Aug. 19.

ing in all his extremities” and remained in the hospital for observation.

Bolden was placed on the IR Aug. 29.

He played his college ball at Jackson State in Mississippi before New England selected him in the seventh round of the 2023 Draft as the 245th overall pick.

The preseason game wasn’t the only chance for

Packers partisans to get a look at him.

A few days earlier, former head coach Bill Belichick had his Patriots engage in two joint practices at Green Bay’s training camp.

Each attracted full houses at Ray Nitschke Field. Because of the circumstances involving Bolden’s injury, the Pats canceled two joint practices with the

Tennessee Titans the following week.

This was also close to eight months removed from Damar Hamlin’s on-field cardiac arrest. Hamlin, a safety for the Buffalo Bills, had emergency treatment on the field during a Monday night game at Cincinnati on Jan. 2, 2023.

See **BOLDEN** page 6

## Austin Straubel, flying and football

BY TORI WITTENBROCK  
ASSOCIATE SPORTS EDITOR

GREEN BAY – Though most people in the Green Bay area recognize the name Austin Straubel in terms of being the namesake for the local airport, some take their knowledge of him even further by recognizing his heroism in dying for his country as a pilot during World War II.

However, his relevance as a prominent member of the Green Bay community extends beyond the world of aviation into something that the area is far better known for — football.

Even fewer people from the area are well acquainted with Straubel’s athletic background prior to entering the service, which includes some ties to the early Green Bay Packers.

### Early life

Straubel was born on Sept. 4, 1904 in Green Bay. A true Wisconsinite, thorough and through, it seems fitting that Straubel was raised in the cheese business.

Straubel’s father, Carl A. Straubel, was the founder of Straubel Cheese Co. — a local cheese manufacturer — and a stockholder in Mid-West Cold Storage Co. for which Straubel briefly worked after his graduation from college.

### Football first

Although he would later go on to become a legend in the Brown County area, Straubel’s legacy first began where many of the most well-known early Packers players did... playing football at East High.

During his time attending East High — 1919-23 — Straubel’s athletic career happened to overlap with the most well-known East High graduate, Curly Lambeau.

With the inception of the Green Bay Packers being

See **AUSTIN STRAUBEL** page 4

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- 1 Packers Neville Museum**  
210 Museum Place
- 2 Downtown Green Bay**  
325 N. Washington St. (Plaque in back along CityDeck)
- 3 Birthplace of the Packers**  
200 N. Adams St. (Plaque on Cherry St.)
- 4 Hotel Northland**  
304 N. Adams St. (Plaque on Pine St.)
- 5 Curly Lambeau's Office, Northern Building**  
305 E. Walnut St. (Plaque on Adams St.)
- 6 Bellin Building**  
130 E. Walnut St.
- 7 Milwaukee Road Depot**  
400 S. Washington St.
- 8 Packers Office Building**  
321 S. Washington St. (Plaque on Crooks St.)
- 9 Elks Club**  
300 Crooks St. (Plaque on Adams St.)
- 10 St. Willebrord Catholic Church**  
209 S. Adams St.
- 11 Brown County Courthouse**  
100 S. Jefferson St.
- 12 Columbus Community Club**  
115 S. Jefferson St.
- 13 Green Bay Press-Gazette**  
435 E. Walnut St.
- 14 Hagemeyer Park**  
1415 E. Walnut St. (Plaque on Baird St.)

- 15 City Stadium**  
North of East High School (Plaque on Baird St.)
- 16 Curly Lambeau's Birthplace Home**  
615 N. Irwin Ave.
- 17 Chicago and North Western Depot**  
200 Dousman St. (Plaque near entrance)
- 18 Packers Practice Fields**  
N. Baird St. (Plaque north of City Stadium)
- 19 Riverside Ballroom**  
1560 Main St. (Plaque near entrance)
- 20 Bellevue Park**  
1613 Main St.
- 21 Indian Packing and Plant & Acme Packing and Plant**  
Main and Elizabeth (Plaque at start of Kress Trail)
- 22 Curly Lambeau's Gravesite**  
2121 Riverside Dr. (No Plaque)
- 23 Vince Lombardi's Home**  
667 Sunset Cir. (No Plaque)
- 24 Union Hotel**  
200 N. Broadway St., De Pere (No Plaque)
- 25 St. Norbert College & the Packers**  
505 Third St., De Pere
- P Packers Heritage Trail Plaza**  
N.W. corner of Washington & Cherry St.



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**TRAIL**  
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Christl said the concept was born out of a seminar he attended years ago. "I grew up in Green Bay I live in downtown Green Bay. I have great memories of spending a lot of my growing-up years shopping downtown, going to restaurants downtown. Later, imbibing at many of the establishments downtown. And it was actually during a sports and society seminar at St. Norbert College where there was a speaker who talked about the value of having professional sports or Big Time college sports teams in your city and how the city itself probably doesn't benefit as much economically, as the leagues and schools sometimes claim. Yet, at the same time, without sports your downtowns are virtually destined to die," he recalled. "And it was a fascinating, fascinating seminar listening to him. I think he was from the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor. I wish I could remember his name. "So, I was retired at the time and my wife and I just talked about doing something for the city. And I knew that [with] the Packers, there was no chance that

the Packers would ever be playing downtown or even near it, and whether any other franchise was ever likely to build a soccer stadium or whatever. And so I thought, maybe we should establish the Packers Heritage Trail patterning it after the Freedom Trail. We could draw people to the downtown area." Today, the self-guided walking, biking or driving tour includes 25 stops featuring bronze commemorative plaques through Green Bay and De Pere where visitors can learn about the rich history of the Green Bay Packers and the community that supports them. The trail is divided into three sections: the City Walk — starting at the Neville Public Museum, 210 Museum Pl., Green Bay, and ending at the former Chicago & North Western train depot. The Packing Plant Spur begins at the edge of Baird Street just north of City Stadium and follows East River Greenway and the Baird Creek Parkway. The Lambeau-Lombardi Spur follows the scenic Fox River State Trail from Green Bay to De Pere. For more information, visit <https://www.packershofandtours.com/explore/heritage-trail/trails-and-spurs>.

**AUSTIN STRAUBEL**  
from page 1

in the year 1919, Lambeau had a lot on his plate and only coached at the high school level for two seasons, 1919-21.

During this time, the team earned a record of 14-4-3.

Straubel's junior and senior years would be coached by the much lesser known, but equally influential "Wiley and Dice" duo.

Although not as big of a name in the football community as he would one day become, Straubel would have had no clue that he was in the presence of what would soon be one of the most influential historical football figures in the game.

While attending East High, Straubel had a variety of interests outside of football as well. He was an active member in a variety of clubs on campus, including two years of French Club, and ran track for the Red Devils for four years as well.

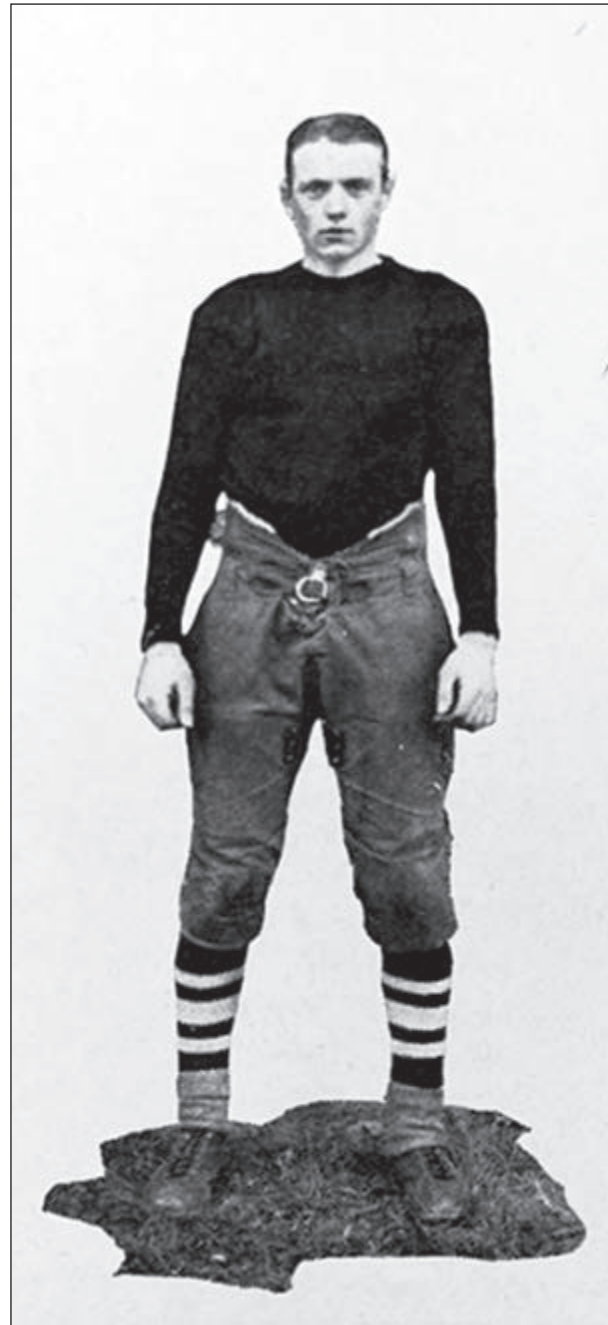
Straubel's passion for the game would not be left behind in high school, however.

Upon graduating from East High, Straubel would then go on to pursue a degree from UW-Madison, while continuing to play as a tackle for the Badgers until his graduation in 1927.

On Jan. 1, 1927, Straubel was a part of the notorious East-West rivalry football game played in San Francisco, including alumni from both high schools.



After his time playing football at East High overlapped with Curly Lambeau, Austin Straubel went on to play tackle for the UW-Madison Badgers until his graduation in 1926. His photo from East High's "Aeroplane" shows him posing in uniform. **Brown County Library/East High photos**



Straubel, though most known for his heroic military career and being the namesake for Green Bay's local airport, also has ties to the notorious Green Bay football community of the 1920s. His sister, Florence, was married to Bernard Darling of the Green Bay Packers.

**Another tie**

Playing high school football under coach Curly Lambeau was not the end of Straubel's ties with the Green Bay Packers.

Straubel's younger sister, Florence "Babe" Straubel, would eventually end up marrying Bernard "Boob" Darling, an early player for the

Packers who was a starter from 1927 until 1931.

The final three years that Darling was a part of the Packers, the team went on to take consecutive league championship titles.

Though it was something that had always interested him, Straubel truly got the itch for flying after his college grad-

uation landed him working part time with his father in a job that was of little interest to him.

According to Florence, upon his early returns from the military, Straubel would be eager to display his newly mastered aviation skills by giving rides to his friends and family in open top, two-seater planes.

In an interview with Trevor Jones, former curator of history at the Neville Public Museum, Florence recalled that one time, Straubel gave Bernard a chaotic ride in his plane, performing a grand display of loops and flips with the intent of intimidating his sister's suitor.

"He wanted to see if he was worthy of me," said Florence.

Florence passed away at the age of 99 on Sept. 16, 2007.

**An act of bravery**

While training and working to perfect his skills as a pilot at Chanut Field in Rantoul, Ill., Straubel selflessly risked his life to save a fellow pilot in distress.

After witnessing a student's attempt to parachute to safety go awry when his chute became entangled within the tail of the plane, Straubel leapt into action.

While his fellow aviator dangled helplessly in the air, Straubel ran to the kitchen and secured a paring knife to a sandbag with a rope on the other end.

Straubel then grabbed another pilot and the two took off together towards the plane and the pilot in distress.

Straubel exited the cockpit and made his way to the edge of the wing of the plane, lowering the knife to the dangling pilot who was able to cut himself free and

parachute to safety.

No doubt, Straubel's selfless instincts and brave actions throughout his life and career are what earned him the honor of becoming the namesake for the local Green Bay airport after his death a few years later.

**Military pursuits**

In an effort to escape work with his father at Mid-West Cold Storage Co., Straubel began taking aviation courses in Oshkosh to master the art of flying before eventually joining the Air Corps in 1929.

A significant part of what propelled Straubel into his deep interest in flying was Charles Lindbergh's famous 3,600 non-stop flight in May of 1927 from New York to Paris.

Later on, Straubel would become part of the same exclusive "Caterpillar Club" as Lindbergh, when he became one of a handful of pilots to be forced to parachute to safety out of a jeopardized plane.

Straubel continued his pursuits within the military, eventually earning the title of Lt. Col. Austin Straubel, shortly before his final flight.

According to a 1949 *Press Gazette* article, at the time of his death, Straubel was a highly trained expert in, "gunnery, aerial photography, military science, tactics and other special branched that added to his skill and dexterity as an airman."

**Final flight**

After marrying his wife, Isabella Walthall in Riverside, Calif. In 1936, the couple gave birth to their first daughter, Susan, and two years later had a second daughter, Victoria, in 1938.

Tragically, on Feb. 3, 1942, Straubel's B-18 plane was shot down while flying radar operators to Surabaya while based out of Jogjakarta.

He was able to navigate the plane to crash land on a small island near Java. None of his crew survived, and Straubel was transported to a local hospital.

Straubel's official death date was incorrectly noted as Feb. 3 — as it remains on his memorial monument at Austin Straubel Airport today — but his actual death date was the next day on Feb. 4.

According to Jones's interview, Florence, with whom he was very close, said, "I remember exactly how I learned he was killed. They called me, Mama was in the hospital (with a broken arm). Dad was out... It was the third of February 1942."

The Brown County Airport was renamed in honor of the local Green Bay war hero in a ceremony on Aug. 27, 1948 in a dedication ceremony at which an unanticipated 40,000 people were in attendance.

Straubel was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and Purple Heart for his efforts during the war.




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# PACKERS OF THE PAST

## Harry Sydney

### #42

BY MIKE WARREN  
CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

GREEN BAY – For most of his professional life, Harry Sydney has been a mentor.

Whether it's been as a teammate, an assistant coach, a father or through his nonprofit, Sydney has been helping young men become successful both on and off the football field for more than 30 years.

Sydney's mentoring career started in earnest in 1992, when he came to Green Bay as a free agent running back, joining new Packers Head Coach Mike Holmgren.

The two had been together for five seasons with the 49ers in San Francisco, where they won back-to-back Super Bowls in 1988 and 1989.

"He brought me over here in '92 to help teach these guys how to win," Sydney told Packerland, during our July 2023 conversation.

As a veteran during the '92 campaign, Sydney helped mentor rookie running backs Edgar Bennett and Dexter McNabb, as well as three-year starter Darrell Thompson and free agent Marcus Wilson.

He also contributed on the field, catching 49 passes for 384 yards and rushing for 163 yards on 51 carries.

After not playing in 1993, Holmgren kept Sydney in the fold in 1994 as a general assistant "to work with many areas of the football team."

"People always said Harry was like a coach while he was still playing," Holmgren said in making the appointment. "I think he'll make an excellent teacher."

Sydney was promoted to running backs coach in 1995, assisting Bennett to his only 1,000-yard season as a pro, and the first by a Packers running back since Terrell Middleton turned the trick in 1978.

Under Sydney's guidance, Bennett also closed out the season with a team-record 1,715 yards from



Sydney

scrimmage, surpassing Jim Taylor's previous record of 1,580 amassed in 1962.

In 1996, Sydney tutored the offensive backfield trio of Bennett, Dorsey Levens and venerable blocker William Henderson, which amassed 2,817 rushing and receiving yards and 18 touchdowns, as the Packers raced to a 13-3 regular-season record and through the playoffs capturing the Lombardi Trophy by winning Super Bowl XXXI.

Building on the success of the 1996 season, Harry Sydney further developed Dorsey Levens, presiding over his emergence as one of the most productive running backs in team history.

Under Sydney's tutelage, Levens made the most of becoming the team's featured back in the absence of the injured Bennett, who was lost early in the season to a torn Achilles' tendon.

Levens became the team's sixth 1,000-yard rusher (1,435) and the first running back in nearly two decades voted to the Pro Bowl.

Levens also shattered the Packers' single-game rushing record, grinding out 190 yards against Dallas (Nov. 23) to break Jim Taylor's 36-year-old record.

The following season, Levens — and thus, any form of a running game — all but disappeared from the Green Bay offense amid contractual difficulties and a major injury.

Still, the Packers managed an 11-5 record, which qualified them for the playoffs as the NFC's fifth seed.

In the NFL Wild Card round, they were beaten 30-27 by the San Francisco 49ers, when a stumbling Steve Young recovered from a near sack and threw a 25-yard touchdown pass to Terrell Owens with three seconds left.

The loss brought an end to the Mike Holmgren era in Green Bay.

But Harry Sydney — along with Sherm Lewis and Johnny Holland — survived the coaching change.

Sydney returned the following season as the team's running backs coach under new Packers Head Coach Ray Rhodes.

When Rhodes was let go after a disappointing 8-8 season in 1999, Sydney was not retained by new Packers Head Coach Mike Sherman.

His NFL career was over.

"It's like different levels of life. I was a single man then I became a dad, then you're teaching. So, that's the same thing. Chasing to get a Super Bowl. Won it. Won back to back with San Francisco, then came to Green Bay to teach guys how to win. It's a process. You can't have one without the other," he said.

In 2003, Sydney began "coaching" on a different level. He founded My Brother's Keeper, Inc., a nonprofit 501(c)(3) male-mentoring organization dedicated to assisting boys and men dealing with various hardships in their lives.

"What the whole premise of My Brother's Keeper is to help our boys and men get out of their own way," Sydney told us. "When we opened it after I was coaching with the Packers, we looked around and realized there was an epidemic going around. Boys and men were getting lost. We were throwing them in jail instead of figuring out, 'Hey, what's going on?' Now we talk about mental awareness. We were doing it 20 years ago. That's what My Brother's Keeper is about. It's about helping our boys and men. And the ages, it

used to be 11-65. Now it's 9-82."

Participants range from troubled boys identified by schools, courts and parents, to men struggling with relationships, job dissatisfaction, financial difficulty and defining and achieving realistic goals.

"I've got clients that come from as far as Sturgeon Bay, as far as Milwaukee, all around this area," Sydney stated. "I do most of the mentoring — me and another guy part-time."

Sydney is among many former Packers players and/or coaches who came to Green Bay and stayed here after their careers were over.

"I tell people Green Bay's the American Dream once you're old enough to realize what the American Dream is. It's a peaceful place to live," he said. "You got sports, you can go to Milwaukee, you can go wherever you want, but it's a good place because of the Green Bay Packers. Because of the Green Bay Packers, it's never going to be a crime area because nobody's going to spend money to come here if they're not safe, so Green Bay makes it safe."

Sydney broke into profes-



Sydney

TOPPS photo

sional football as a member of the Denver Gold of the USFL in 1983-84.

In 1985, he joined the league's Memphis Showboats, where he was a teammate of future Packers player Reggie White.

Sydney ranks 11th all-time in rushing yards for the USFL.

After spending the 1986

season in the CFL, Sydney joined the San Francisco 49ers in 1987.

He spent five seasons with the Niners, before joining his offensive coordinator in Green Bay in 1992.

Sydney is the only NFL player who has caught touchdown passes from both Joe Montana and Brett Favre.



Harry Sydney participates in the 2023 Green Bay Packers Hall of Fame golf fundraiser in Green Bay. Kris Leonhardt photo

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# CHEESEHEAD NATION

## SUSAN WILLIAMS

BY TORI WITTENBROCK  
ASSOCIATE SPORTS EDITOR

GREEN BAY – The Green Bay Packers fan base is one of the most unique and prominent aspects of the franchise, and cheeseheads tend to be among the most loyal fans in the NFL.

Longtime Packers fan Susan Williams said that she has spent her whole life surrounded by a family of loyal Packers supporters and has never doubted her allegiance to the team.

“I’m from Wisconsin. It’s where I grew up, and we’ve always been Packers fans, the whole family,” said Williams. “I’ve been a Packers fan all my life.”

After years of supporting the Packers through thick and thin, Williams has seen quite a variety of stars and legends perform at Lambeau Field, but she said that there is no doubt in her mind that one has remained at the top of her list, up until a decade after his retirement in 2013.

“My all-time favorite Packer player is Donald Driver,” said Williams. “He’s a true Packer.”

After being drafted in 1999 as a wide receiver, Driver spent his entire career playing for the Packers, only missing four games throughout the course of his career.

After being picked up in the seventh round of the NFL Draft out of Alcorn University, Driver certainly earned his place on the Green Bay Packers stage, still holding the franchise’s all-time record for the most career receptions and receiving yards.

A true Packers fan, Williams said that she has been to four or five Packers games at Lambeau Field and each time has had unforgettable experiences.

“It’s incredible. You get chills everytime you come here,” said Williams of her fondest memories at Lambeau Field.

Being a part of the Packers fan base has been an irreplaceable experience for Williams and she said that being a part of such a warm and welcoming community has been great for her.

“They really are a family,” said Williams. The loyalty of Packers fans is part of what makes them the most alluring community in the league, and Williams said that it has been interesting to stick by them throughout the ups and downs this season.

However, Williams said that seeing one of the biggest upsets of the season when the Packers upset the No. 2 seed Dallas Cowboys as the No. 7 seed in the NFL Wild Card Round of the playoffs was one of the most rewarding parts of the season.

“The best part of this season is seeing how far they’ve gotten. It’s just awesome to see,” said Williams.

Even though they’ve had a great run this season, Williams said that she is hopeful that the young squad will be able to work the kinks out and come out even stronger next year.

“Oh, I’m hoping we go all the way. They’ve got us now,” said Williams, hopeful that they will find their way to the 2024 season Super Bowl.



Susan Williams and her husband Marvin are proud Packers fans and said that they can't wait to see what the team brings next season after such a great 2023 season. **Tori Wittenbrock photo**



Isaiah Bolden is carted off Lambeau field and taken to Aurora BayCare Medical Center.

**BOLDEN**  
from page 1

The game was suspended and never resumed.

It raised lots of questions, though, about regular season standings and whether the upcoming playoffs would need to be delayed — which they weren't.

Because the Packers/Patriots contest was during the preseason, it was much simpler from the National Football League's logistical standpoint to simply

end it early with a winner declared.

Belichick said at the time that he appreciated how the NFL handled it, saying, “It was the right thing to do.”

Packers’ Coach Matt LaFleur said he agreed with the decision, calling it a “scary ending.”

Meanwhile, Hamlin has been mentioned as a possibility to receive the NFL’s Comeback Player of the Year for 2023.

The award will be presented at the 13th annual

NFL Honors show on Thursday, Feb. 8 from Las Vegas.

Hamlin, 25, began his third pro season Oct. 1 when he had 18 snaps on special teams in a 48-20 Bills’ victory over the Miami Dolphins.

It was the first of his five regular season games in 2023, playing a total of 94 snaps on special teams.

He returned to his defensive post Nov. 13 when he had one tackle for loss in a 24-22 loss to Denver.

Hamlin’s only other regular season game in the Bills’ secondary was on Nov. 26 with one tackle for loss in a 37-34 loss to Philadelphia.

Buffalo defensive back Micah Hyde, who played the first four of his 11 NFL seasons in Green Bay, said Hamlin’s return made a big impact on his teammates “just to see what he went through and being there for each and every step” of his comeback.

As of early January, Bet-

MGM listed Hamlin as the favorite for the Comeback Player award and Cleveland quarterback Joe Flacco was a close second.

Flacco is a former Super Bowl champion with Baltimore who sat out this season until late November.

He later signed a one-year deal to replace the injured Deshaun Watson.

Two other QBs were listed as longshots: Baker Mayfield of Tampa Bay and Matthew Stafford of the Los Angeles Rams.

The Associated Press names the league’s “official” comeback player award.

Pro Football Talk chose Flacco, noting that Hamlin played just 17 snaps at his defensive position in 2023.

Retired Green Bay wide receiver Jordy Nelson was the consensus 2016 Comeback Player of the Year after sitting out all of the previous year with a torn ACL knee ligament suffered in a preseason game at Pittsburgh.

**Tori Wittenbrock photo**

# UNPACKING History



The Green Bay Packers Hall of Fame generously opened their vault to share pieces of Packers history with the Press Times to be highlighted each week for our readers. For more information on the hall of fame, visit [www.packershofandtours.com](http://www.packershofandtours.com). If you would like to donate Green Bay Packers memorabilia to the Packers Hall of Fame, contact Katie at (920) 965-6986 or [katief@gbphof.com](mailto:katief@gbphof.com).

The trophy presented to the Green Bay Packers from the city of Green Bay following the Super Bowl win in 1967. It reads "First NFL-AFL Playoff, Jan. 15, 1967, Los Angeles, Green Bay Packers 35 - Kansas City Chiefs 10." **Kris Leonhardt photo**



Josh Sitton speaks while being inducted into the Green Bay Packers Hall of Fame in August 2023. **Kris Leonhardt photo**

## Packers Hall of Fame recognizes key franchise contributors

**BY PACKERLAND STAFF**

GREEN BAY – The idea of honoring former Green Bay Packers players, coaches and others contributing to the team’s successes was conceived in 1970 by Bill Brault, who was the Green Bay Visitor and Convention Bureau director at that time, to supplement the existing Packers Hall of Fame Museum in the Brown County Veterans Memorial Arena.

The original concept proposed 80 candidates for induction through nominations from the Green Bay Packers, Packers Alumni and Wisconsin Pro Football Writers Association.

Work began in June 1970 on trying to secure sponsorships for the pilot awards program.

However, just eight 1920s Green Bay Packers were enshrined Sept. 19, 1920, during the inaugural ceremony held at the Elks Club, with 150 former Packers members present.

The only surviving members to accept the honor were Johnny Blood and Mike Michalske.

The recognition for Curly Lambeau was accepted by his son, Don, and Bernard Darling’s wife represented her husband.

Other honorees the first year included Jug Earpe, Verne Lewellen, Lavvie Dilweg and Cal Hubbard,

Their plaques were then displayed in the Packers Hall of Fame at Veterans Memorial Arena.

The inductees were cho-

sen by the “Wisconsin Pro Football Writers.”

In 1972, eight more players from the 1940s and two from previous decades were inducted.

During the next three years, 10 others were inducted each year before the program began steadily reducing the number enshrined. The annual inductions continue today.

The most recent inductees were former players, Jordy Nelson and Josh Sitton.

The Green Bay Packers Hall of Fame Inc. will induct former Packers Clay Matthews and Aaron Kampman at the 53rd Hall of Fame Induction Banquet which will be held this year on Thursday, Aug. 29, in the Lambeau Field Atrium.

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# Putting the cheese in cheesehead

## Fan Photo Gallery



Jody Scidmore, of Spencer, and her son, Kyle Scidmore, of Green Bay, take in the Packers-Chargers game on Nov. 19 at Lambeau Field. Submitted photo



Mike and Chris Walsh of Green Bay bond with other uber-fans at an early-season game. Submitted photo



Mike Walsh, at right, of Green Bay, and his wife, Chris, say they live, eat, sleep and breathe their Packers. Submitted photo



A reminder of Vincent T. Lombardi with his 1966 championship ring wowed Packerland Editor Mike Warren. "Vince" of East Troy was at Lambeau Field to see the Packers go 10-0 against the Bears with Matt LaFleur as Green Bay's head coach. Thom Gerretsen photo



Fans get pumped up during pre-game festivities outside Lambeau Field on Jan. 7. Kris Leonhardt photo



Brian Asher, left, and Brian Varsho, right, both of Marshfield, hope for a Packers win and a shot on TV on Jan. 7. Submitted photo



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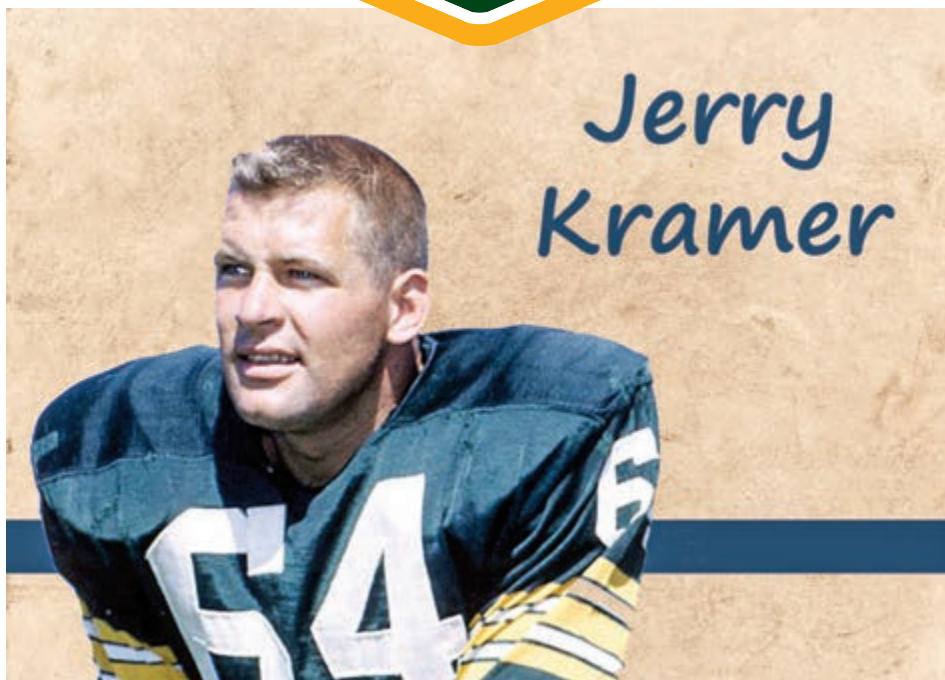
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# PACKERS vs. BEARS

Jan. 7, 2024

|     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | T  |
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| CHI | 3 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 9  |
| GB  | 0 | 7 | 7 | 3 | 17 |



Green Bay Packers Wide Receiver Bo Melton clinches a reception in their game against longtime rivals, the Chicago Bears. **Tori Wittenbrock photos**



Green Bay Packers Quarterback Jordan Love finds his receiver in the endzone despite intense pressure from the Bears' defense during their rivalry game.



Green Bay Packers Cornerback Jaire Alexander celebrates with the fans in the endzone walking off the field after a victory against the Bears.



Green Bay Packers Veteran Running Back Aaron Jones bursts through the pile in an intense second effort to gain as many yards as possible in their final regular season game of the 2023 season.

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