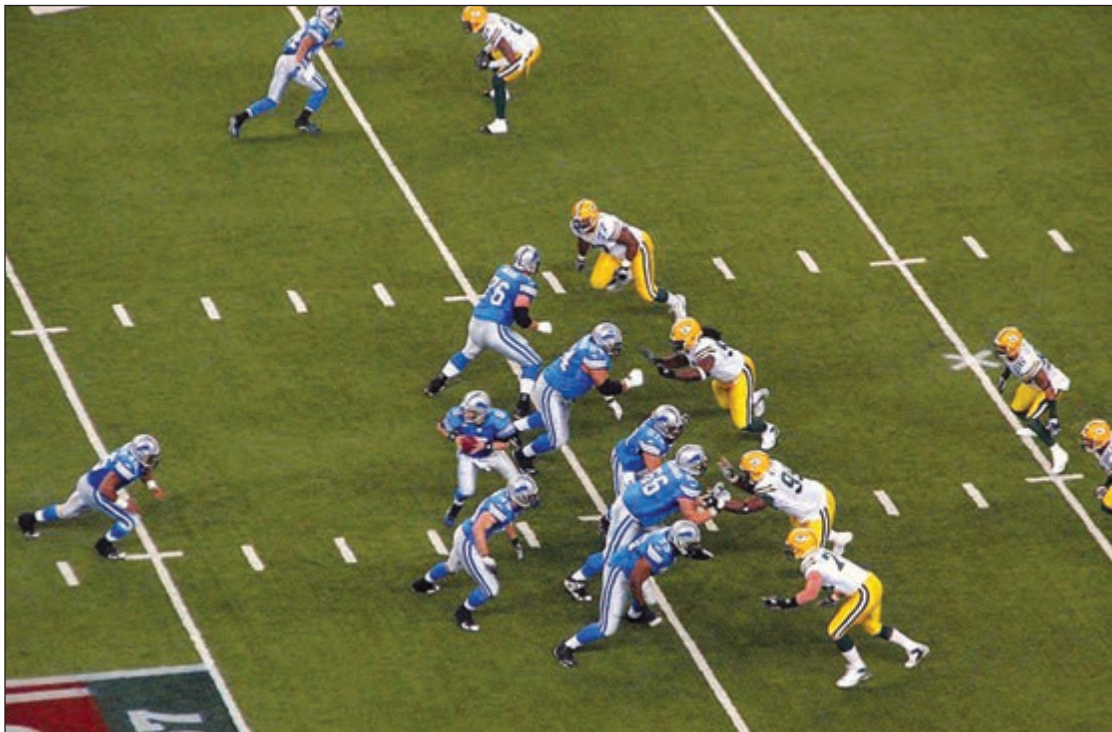


PACKERLAND™



On Thanksgiving 2007, the Green Bay Packers defeated the Detroit Lions 37-26 at Ford Field. **Dave Hogg photo**



Green Bay Packers Nose Tackle Bob Nelson lifts quarterback Don Majkowski after the Packers were credited with a touchdown in the final minute of the Nov. 5, 1989, game. **Gary Porter photo**

Feasting and football: Packers carry on Thanksgiving tradition

BY MIKE WARREN
CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

GREEN BAY – With another game on Thanksgiving this season, the Green Bay Packers continue a tradition that first began during the franchise’s second season.

On Nov. 25, 1920, the Packers beat the Stambaugh (Mich.) Miners, 14-0, in a non-league game played at Hagemeister Park in Green Bay. The matchup was the first of forty games which the Packers have played on Thanksgiving.

After playing home games against the Duluth (Minn.) Kelleys and the Hammond

(Ind.) Pros in 1922 and 1923, the Packers took to the road each Thanksgiving from 1924 to 1935, first playing the Kansas City Blues and Pottsville (Pa.) Maroons in 1924 and 1925, then travelling to face the Frankford (Pa.) Yellow Jackets between 1926 and 1930.

In 1931, Green Bay defeated the Providence (R.I.) Steam Rollers, 38-7, followed by a 7-0 victory against the Brooklyn Dodgers the following year.

In 1933, the Packers beat the Staten Island (N.Y.) Stapletons, 21-0, in a non-league game, before losing two straight holiday games to the Chicago Cardinals in 1934 and 1935.

After taking the next 15 years off from the holiday tradition, the Packers in 1951 began a thirteen-season run as the perpetual opponent to the Detroit Lions each year through 1963 – and only three times (1956, 1959, 1961) did the visitors from Green Bay best the hometown team.

In 1956, the Packers handed the Lions one of only three losses that season.

The 1959 contest is notable because it marked the first in the series for Vince Lombardi. The win also helped the Packers to their first winning

See **THANKSGIVING** page 4

The Instant Replay Game

BY MIKE WARREN
CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

GREEN BAY – “After further review, we have a reversal.” The now infamous words of referee Tom Dooley delivered 35 years ago this month sent Green Bay Packers fans into a wild frenzy at Lambeau Field, after a roller coaster of emotions which came at the end of another slugfest with the Chicago Bears.

The game, played Nov. 5, 1989, has become famously known as the Instant Replay Game. The Chicago Bears and their fans refer to it as the Asterisk Game, and to this day is denoted as such in the team’s annual media guide. The game even has its own Wikipedia page.

In the grand scheme of things, the game’s outcome did not have an impact on the outcome of the season for either team. Chicago won just one more game the rest of the way and finished in third place in the NFC Central Division with a record of 6-10. Green Bay finished at 10-6 — the team’s best record in 17 seasons — but still missed the playoffs in a tiebreaker with Minnesota.

Jim Harbaugh, now the head coach of the Los Angeles Chargers, was Chicago’s starting quarterback by November 1989, after replacing Mike Tomczak, who had been named the starter after the Bears traded Jim McMahon during training camp.

After starting five games as a Green Bay rookie, Don Majkowski got the nod in nine games in 1988 before being given the job at the start of the 1989 campaign.

Leading up to the Instant Replay Game, Majkowski engineered three game-winning comebacks, earning the “Majik Man” nickname and the team being referred to as the “Cardiac Pack.”

By the time the Bears made their annual pilgrimage to Lambeau Field, the Packers were 4-4, trailing 5-3 Chicago by one game in the

See **REPLAY** page 6



After losing to the Lions for 11 straight, the Packers faced the Detroit team again on Sept. 25, 1955, and the Lions were leading 17-6. **New City Stadium Dedication program photo**

The Knothole Gang and a 50-cent piece

BY KRIS LEONHARDT
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

“On the kind of picture-perfect fall Sunday afternoon that makes Green Bay football’s nirvana, [the Packers] beat Detroit, 20-17, in one of the biggest upsets and one of the

most thrilling finishes ever. One could even argue that the victory triggered the wildest and most spontaneous celebration in the Packers’ storied history,” Packers Historian Cliff Christl wrote in *The Greatest*

See **50-CENT PIECE** page 3



Lambeau Field experienced white-out conditions on Oct. 20 as the Packers took on the Houston Texans, during the team’s first “Winter Warning” game. Attendees helped create a blizzard-like effect to enhance the team’s new white alternate helmets including a solid white face mask and a white shell, with the traditional dark green Packers ‘G’ logo on the sides and dark green stripes down the middle. The white helmets were paired with the team’s white away jerseys, white pants and solid white socks. **Kris Leonhardt photo**

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50-CENT PIECE
from page 1

Story in Sports.

“What inspired the madness, besides the electrifying finish, was a collective release of frustration by the City Stadium crowd of 22,217 when the Packers scored the go-ahead touchdown.”

After losing to the Lions for 11 straight, the Packers faced the Detroit team again on Sept. 25, 1955, and the Lions were leading 17-6.

“Things that can only happen in Green Bay happened when the Detroit Lions, defending Western Division champions, fell by a score of 20-17 in the last 20 seconds — moments after Gary Knafelc took Tobin Rote’s 18-yard pass and slammed into the end zone,” wrote the *Press-Gazette’s* Art Daley.

Among the 22,000-plus in attendance were three kids of the “Knothole Gang.”

“In those days... there was a tendency to let kids in, ages nine through 17 or 18 years old,” recalled Mike Culligan.

“I lived out on the west side — Oneida Street — so we’d catch the bus for a dime and go all the way right to the stadium. It was kind of a nice trip because our parents would either be in the stadium or not going to the games.

“Well, what they did was they called them the Knothole Gang and these were the kids of all ages that wanted to see the game. So, the corporation and the police department were pretty lax about letting us get in. And at that time, there were about three ways to get into the stadium if you didn’t have a ticket.

“One was, of course, if you wanted to be a concessionaire... you’d sell peanuts, popcorn, programs, pennants, all kinds of things.

“And a second way of getting in was at that time the players used the locker room at East High



Knafelc

School. They didn’t have one at the stadium, but just on the southeast corner of the stadium there were gates, and that’s where the players would come in and go out to the lockers and back. Well, if you were enterprising enough, you’d mix with a couple of players. They’d run you in the game.

“The third way was the Knothole Gang and that was where you’d go, and you’d try to go over the fence or through the fence. And the old stadium was pretty rickety in 1955.

“So, the siding of the stadium — the parameter of the stadium — was all wooden boards. It looked like it was pretty high, but it wasn’t because we were young kids. What you do is you’d have somebody older kind of lift you up. You get on the boards, go over the boards, get in the rafters of the stadium and come down.

“And the police were pretty lax about it. I think it was just an understanding that the Packers Corporation, the police department, leave them alone once you’re in the stadium, then you had to find a place to sit.”

For that game, Culligan, 14, and friends John Kozicki, 14, and Jeff Funk, 13, were among the hundreds of kids finding their way into the game.

“I said, ‘You know, the Packers are going to win this game,’ and they said, ‘No, they’re not going to win.’ I said, ‘I think they are.’ I said, ‘I tell you what, I’m going to bet you each



Gary Knafelc is carried off the field.

Press-Gazette photo

a quarter that they win. And if I lose, I’ll pay you each a quarter, and if I win, you guys pay me,” Culligan explained.

When Knafelc caught the pass, Culligan and his friends caught up in the excitement joined the mob out on the field.

“So the three of us now, they hadn’t kicked the extra point yet. Now we walk out on the field; we know they’re going to win the game. So I had a 50-cent piece in my pocket. They had quarters, or whatever it was. The reason I had money because in those days, I had a paper route and you had a little more money when you’re a paper kid,” Culligan explained.

So, they pick up Gary Knafelc, and they start carrying them off the field... as they carry Knafelc over towards the bench, the three of us are out there; and either prior to that or at that time I said, ‘Hey, I’m going to give him 50 cents. Or I bet that when they won I was going to give whoever scored for the Packers, I was going to give them the

50 cents.

“So now we’re walking, and he comes along, and they’re going to bring him down, and he’s on these shoulders of these kids. So he goes to come down, and he’s right in front of me. So I take the 50 cents and I slap it in his hand.

“We all walk off; the police clear the field. They kicked the extra point; the game’s over.”

That evening, Knafelc was seeking out a “little boy about seven years old who pushed a 50-cent piece into (his) hand and then ran into the crowd.”

“I would like to know who that boy was; the money belongs to him,” the *Press-Gazette* reported Knafelc saying.

On Tuesday, Culligan got a phone call from the media, asking him to appear on Channel 2’s “Quarterback Club.”

“They invite us on the show. The three of us come on the show,” Culligan said.

“At that point in time, I believe it was Lisle Blackburn the coach says, ‘Well, Gary, you gonna give the kid back his 50 cents?’ And Gary says,

‘Yeah, when I’m ready.’

“And the show ends, no 50 cents. We go our merry way.

“I probably walked into Knafelc over the years 15 times after the event. We always said ‘hi’ and greeted each other. And at one time he said, ‘Do you want the 50 cents?’ And I said ‘Gary, It has a little more meaning to you. You keep it.’”

To hear more from Culligan, find his interview on “Packerland Podcast,” available on Spotify.

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310 W. Walnut Street
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920-265-4872
Mike Hollihan
mhollihan@mmcllocal.com

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THANKSGIVING
from page 1

season since 1947, when Curly Lambeau led the team to a 6-5-1 record. The win in 1961 avenged a loss to Detroit in the season opener and helped the Packers to an 11-3 record, a Western Conference Championship and a spot in the NFL Championship, which they won — Lombardi's first, and the team's first since 1944.

The following season, the Lions used the annual meeting to hand Lombardi's Packers their only loss, a 26-14 decision, in what has become known as the "Thanksgiving Day Massacre."

The Packers were coming off their 1961 NFL Championship, and had what many insiders now consider the most dominant team of the Lombardi era, and easily the best team since World War II.

Detroit also had a contender that year and was coming into the Thanksgiving Day clash at 8-2, including a 9-7 loss to the Packers on Oct. 7 at City Stadium — a game the Lions felt they should have won, after they surrendered a 7-6 lead with less than two minutes remaining.

With that loss seemingly still fresh in their minds, a relentless defensive front dominated Green Bay's offensive line, while sacking Bart Starr eleven times — once for a safety and another which caused a fumble that led to a Detroit touchdown. The Lions staked a 23-0 half-time lead and cruised to a 26-14 victory — handing the eventual back-to-back NFL champions their only loss that year. Those close to Lombardi

said it's the maddest he's ever been.

In 1963, the two rivals played to a 13-13 stalemate. Without a suspended Paul Hornung, the Packers managed just 31 rushing yards that day — 28 by Jim Taylor. The game ended in a tie, the first for the Packers in five years, and it was the end of the holiday series for Green Bay. Their visit to Tiger Stadium the following year was on a Monday night in late September.

The Packers wouldn't play on Thanksgiving for another seven years.

On Nov. 26, 1970, Green Bay visited the Dallas Cowboys, who had begun their holiday football tradition four years earlier.

An aging cast of all-pro players — now being led by Head Coach Phil Bengston — were no match for a highly-motivated Dallas team, which had never defeated Green Bay in six previous attempts.

After the Packers took an early 3-0 lead on a Dale Livingston field goal, the Cowboys put up 16 unanswered points in the win.

Fourteen years would pass before the Packers would once again be featured in the holiday classic.

In 1984, Green Bay — now coached by Forrest Gregg — renewed its Thanksgiving Day rivalry with the Detroit Lions. Green Bay's high-powered offense — led by quarterback Lynn Dickey — had crushed the Lions four weeks earlier, 41-9, at Lambeau Field.

On Thanksgiving, Dickey and the Packers grabbed a 21-7 lead, before the Lions scored 24

unanswered points to jump in front, 31-21, in the fourth quarter.

After replacing Dickey, rookie Randy Wright led the Packers on a six-play, 96-yard drive, finding Phil Epps from four yards out with just under a minute left in the game to pull within three, 31-28.

The Lions recovered the ensuing onside kick and ran out the clock to grab the win.

Two years later, Walter Stanley would forever etch his name into Packers lore, with one of the greatest moments in Thanksgiving history.

In a back-and-forth battle that would see the two teams combine for 84 points, Stanley clearly stood out as the star of the game.

After Detroit grabbed an early 10-0 lead, Green Bay scored 16 unanswered points, including three Al Del Greco field goals.

After an Eddie Murray field goal pulled the Lions to within three, Stanley hauled in the first of two touchdown grabs on the day, a 21-yarder from Wright that gave the Packers a 23-13 lead.

The Lions came roaring back with 24 straight points to take a 37-23 lead in the third quarter. Green Bay answered,

with Wright again finding Stanley, this time from 36 yards out, to pull to within seven heading into the fourth quarter.

After another Murray field goal gave the Lions a 40-30 lead with 5:06 remaining, the Packers went to work, as many Detroit fans began heading for the exits.

After an eleven-yard pass to James Lofton, Wright found Stanley on a crossing route over the middle which he ran down to the Detroit 6-yard line, covering 62 yards on the play.

After a false start penalty on tight end Ed West that moved Green Bay back to the 11, Wright found fullback Paul Ott Carruth wide open out of the backfield for a score that pulled the Packers to within three with 3:31 on the clock.

The Lions — unable to run the clock out with Green Bay using their remaining timeouts on defense — were forced to punt after a holding penalty stopped the clock with 1:02 remaining.

Stanley took the punt at the Green Bay 17-yard line, started out to his left, then reversed field and found a wide open right sideline which he used to return the kick 83 yards for the winning score, giving the Packers their first Thanksgiving

win in 25 years.

Eight years later, the Packers found themselves back in Dallas, taking on a Cowboys team that would be led that day by third-string quarterback Jason Garrett.

After the Packers — behind quarterback Brett Favre and wide receiver Sterling Sharpe — staked a 17-3 lead, Garrett led Dallas to a 42-31 come-from-behind win, in what is considered to this day to be one of the top 10 Thanksgiving Day moments in NFL history.

On just 15 passes, Garrett threw for 311 yards and two touchdowns and led Dallas to 36 second-half points in the win.

After a seven-year hiatus, the Packers in 2001 began appearing somewhat regularly on Thanksgiving Day. They would play Detroit six times between 2001 and 2013, winning four of those matchups.

On Nov. 26, 2015, the Packers made Thanksgiving history again, when they hosted a game at Lambeau Field for the first time.

The night was a special one for Packers fans, who endured a cold, relentless rain on a windy 39-degree night to witness the team retire Brett Favre's No. 4,

with legendary quarterback and coach Bart Starr also in attendance — making his final trip to Lambeau Field.

The visiting Bears spoiled the party, snatching a 17-13 victory.

Green Bay had a first-and-goal from the 8-yard line with just over one minute left, but could not score, as the Bears handed the Packers their 20th loss on Thanksgiving Day.

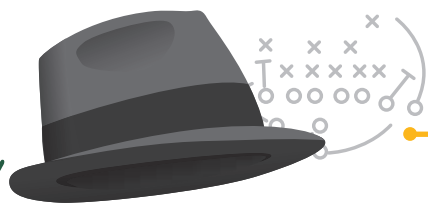
On Nov. 23, 2023, the Packers found themselves back in Detroit to face the Lions. And, for the sixth time in eight Thanksgiving Day games with Detroit, Green Bay came out on top, notching a 29-22 win.

Quarterback Jordan Love set the tone with a 53-yard pass to Christian Watson on the game's first play and finished with a then-career-high-tying three touchdowns. Love was 22 of 32 for 268 yards and three touchdowns, including two in the first quarter.

The win was among six in their final eight games of the season which helped catapult the red-hot Packers into the playoffs.

Overall, the Packers are 18-20-2 in games played on Thanksgiving. 🍂

A few words from
Lombardi



“Winning is not a sometime thing, it is an all the time thing. You don't do things right once in a while... you do them right all the time.”

-Vince Lombardi

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GOLDEN GIRLS, THE FIRST TO DO IT

TORI WITTENBROCK
SPORTS EDITOR

GREEN BAY – Though they were trailblazers in the NFL Cheerleading industry at the time, the Golden Girls didn't know exactly what they were a part of when it all began.

"I never mentioned it. I never spoke about it as being a big deal. It was just another thing to do. Mary Jane (Van Duyse Sorgel) would say, okay we are going to have another parade in this place. We would drive across the state, sometimes to Milwaukee or Chicago, for fundraisers and we didn't really think of it as a big deal," said Golden Girl Anne Maedke.

With NFL Cheer expanding to what it is now, the Golden Girls said that it really helped them to realize in retrospect how important their role was as women on the field at that time.

"The first time the lightbulb went off was when the exposure of some of the other professional teams started popping up with really extraordinary and elaborate cheerleaders for other teams. We were the first ones in the league to have that opportunity with routines and

field entertainment while the band played while there was something for the people in the stands to watch. It was designed as entertainment to fill in the blanks," said Maedke.

Golden Girl Sandy Borkovetz said that the ladies were just proud to be on the field and never received any financial reimbursement for their time.

"The only time we ever received money was when we took the bus with the band to the stadium in Milwaukee. On the way home, we'd pull over and stop at the Big Boy on Port Washington Road on the east side of Milwaukee. Wilmer Burke (of the Lumberjack Band) would stand in front of the steps and as we each got off, he'd hand us a white envelope — inside were three single dollar bills so we could buy a big boy and a soda. That was our big treat," said Borkovetz.

According to Borkovetz, the experience in itself and the appreciation and support from the Packers fan base was reward enough.

"Really it was the fans who gave us the motivation and we could see by their appreciation that it was growing and catching



on, and each year we were back on the field. You could see the fans were taking a liking to us. Even to this day, a few years back you would go anywhere in Green Bay with Mary Jane and people would stop and want to take your picture. They'd recognize her," said Borkovetz.

Where it all began

Borkovetz and Maedke said that the Golden Girls would have never existed had it not been

for the iconic Mary Jane Van Duyse Sorgel and the mind of Vince Lombardi.

"From what I know, Lombardi wanted a group of girls on the field and approached her because she appeared at Wrigley Field and there was an incident with her dropping a baton and the Chicago newspapers referred to her as the 'Golden Girl' so I think it was from there that Lombardi knew she'd be the person to do it," said Borkovetz.

According to the Golden Girls, there was a lot of diligent planning and thought that went into each performance.

"Mr. Lombardi would

talk to her about putting together some kind of two-minute warning show better than high school. Colleges had some cheerleaders, but he had some kind of dance routine in mind, rather than vocal cheers. The television and filming of these games wasn't such a big deal. People didn't really have TVs until the late 60s because they were still a luxury item," said Maedke.

Each Golden Girl had their own specific role on the field, which was to be taken seriously in preparation and performance.

"On the field at any one time, we had four squads of four, which meant that

there were 16 of us in total. Each corner of the field had a group of four girls and then there were back ups in case someone fell ill. They could move up through the ranks like I did by tolerating the cold," said Maedke.

"There were broken legs, sprained ankles, and (Van Duyse Sorgel) had to be ready. This was serious business. This wasn't just a little backyard barbecue entertainment. This was professional football, and she took it very seriously and she delivered," said Maedke.

To be continued in the next edition of Packerland.



Packers HOF Archives photos

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2025 NFL DRAFT NEWS

New flights added at GRB for 2025 NFL Draft

FOR PACKERLAND

GREEN BAY – The countdown clock to the 2025 NFL Draft at Lambeau Field keeps ticking, and local businesses aren't the only ones getting ready for it.

Delta Airlines recently announced additional flights to Green Bay for fans from across the country so they can fly in and be a part of the event.

"Delta has not only listened to GRB's feedback about the Draft, but they're also seeing the demand firsthand from travelers themselves," explained Marty Piette, A.A.E., Green Bay Austin Straubel International Airport (GRB) director. "We expect to see a major increase in foot-traffic at GRB for the Draft, and it's great to see airlines like Delta make these types of

accommodations for football fans from across the U.S."

The new flights, added by Delta, will operate April 23-27, and they may not be the only additions from the airline.

"It's not uncommon for airlines to add even more flights as demand continues to grow," added Piette. "We see it throughout our regular football season with additional flights being added for away and home games." GRB encourages travelers to keep checking airlines sites for new routes and dates for both regular football season and the upcoming NFL Draft.

Green Bay Austin Straubel International Airport (GRB) is the third largest airport in the state, serving Northeast



Wisconsin and portions of Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

Business and leisure

flights are offered by five major airlines, American, Delta, Frontier, Sun Country and United Air-

lines, and two fixed base operators (FBOs), JetAir Group and Executive Air. As the "Gateway to

Lambeau Field," GRB is a Green Bay Packers partner and the home airport of the Packers. 🏈

REPLAY

from page 1

NFC Central Division standings. Green Bay was looking to, not only catch the Bears in the standings, but also end an eight-game losing streak to their long-time rivals.

Fans were reminded of the intense rivalry on the first play of the game, when a personal foul penalty was called against Chicago defensive lineman Richard Dent, who said leading up to the game he had a score to settle with Green Bay left tackle Ken Ruettggers.

"Majik" and his teammates wasted no time in grabbing an early lead. The Packers scored on the

opening drive of the game, covering 72 yards in just six plays, with the score coming on a 24-yard touchdown pass to tight end Clint Didier, Majkowski's league-leading 17th of the season. The drive also included a 22-yard run by Majkowski.

The Bears answered with a 25-yard field goal by Kevin Butler, his 19th in a row. The Packers led 7-3 at the end of the first quarter.

After a scoreless second quarter, Chicago put up 10 unanswered points in the third, grabbing a 13-7 lead, on Butler's 20th consecutive field goal and a 2-yard run by fullback Brad Muster.

Heading into the fourth quarter, the Packers were

driving. But on the first play of the quarter, Majkowski had the ball knocked out of his hands by a blitzing John Roper and the Bears' Ron Rivera fell on the loose ball at the Chicago 27-yard line.

The Bears went to their running game to chew up much of the first half of the quarter, while driving down to Green Bay's 39-yard line, before a penalty forced a 3rd-and-7, which the Packers' defense stopped.

Majkowski and the Packers' offense got the ball back at their own 10-yard line following a Bears punt.

Green Bay flipped field position on the first play of the possession, when Majik hit Brent Fullwood on a screen pass which he took 67 yards down to Chicago's 23-yard line.

A pass to fullback Michael Haddix covered 10 yards to the Chicago 13.

A 1-yard toss to running back Keith Woodside set up a 2nd-and-9 from the 12.

The next play looked eerily similar to the one that would change the game near the end of the quarter, and from nearly the exact spot. After being forced from the pocket, Majkowski rolled to his right and threw on the run. The pass was intercepted by Rivera and the Bears took over at their own 9-yard line, with just over seven minutes remaining.

But the Green Bay defense — like it had after the previous Packers turnover — forced another Chicago punt.

Still trailing 13-7, Majkowski and the Packers' offense got the ball back at their own 27-yard-line with 4:44 remaining in the game.

On 2nd-and-10, Majik hit Perry Kemp across the middle for 26 yards to the Chicago 47.

Disaster nearly struck on the next play, after a pass by Majkowski was batted

into the air by William "The Refrigerator" Perry and appeared to be intercepted by Chicago's Steve McMichael, who immediately had the ball stolen away by Packers' tight end Ed West for no gain.

An 11-yard strike to Aubrey Matthews — Majkowski's tenth different receiver on the day — set up a 1st-and-10 at the Bears' 36.

Following an incomplete pass intended for Kemp, the "Majik Man" found West on a 17-yard completion to the Bears' 19.

Following the two-minute warning, Majkowski threw incomplete to Sterling Sharpe, then hit Woodside on a short pass to the Chicago 15-yard line, setting up 3rd-and-6.

Again rolling right, Majik found Herman Fontenot at the 10-yard line, but inches short of a first down.

A diving Vince Workman took a Majkowski handoff and leaped over the pile for three yards, setting up a 1st-and-goal at the seven-yard-line with 1:26 to go.

Disaster nearly struck again on the next play, when a scrambling Majkowski had the ball kicked out of his hands by a leaping John Roper. Center Blair Bush fell on the loose football back at the Bears' 14-yard-line.

Two incomplete passes left the Packers facing a 4th-and-goal situation with just 41 seconds on the clock.

Following Green Bay's last timeout, Majkowski took the snap in shotgun formation, then stepped up and started rolling to his right. As he approached the 15-yard line, Majik pumped his arm once, then fired a pass into the end zone which was caught by Sterling Sharpe.

As the Packers and their fans began celebrating the apparent game-tying touchdown, a penalty flag sud-

denly took center stage.

Line judge Jim Quirk ruled Majkowski had crossed the line of scrimmage prior to letting the pass go. An illegal forward pass would mean a loss of down, essentially ending the game.

As the Bears were starting to line up to run the remaining 32 seconds off the clock, replay official Bill Parkinson buzzed referee Tom Dooley indicating he wanted more time to look at the play.

After an excruciating four minutes and six seconds, Dooley made his now-famous announcement.

Chris Jacke tacked on the deciding extra point moments later and the comeback was complete — a 14-13 victory, Green Bay's first win over the Bears in five years.

Under today's NFL rules, the Majik Man's touchdown toss to Sterling Sharpe would have been automatically reviewed by instant replay officials, as every scoring play is. But in 1989, instant replay was still in its infancy.

According to its website, the NFL first experimented with instant replay in 1976. Two years later, the league first tested instant replay on a wider scale during seven nationally-televised preseason games.

With evolving technology, the NFL tested a review system during eight preseason games in 1985 — producing promising results.

Prior to the 1986 season, owners voted 23-4-1 to adopt limited use of instant replay. That first process lacked the coach's challenges and technology familiar in today's NFL. Most reviews were initiated upstairs by a designated replay official, except when game officials requested a second opinion of their ruling after conferring on the

field.

From 1986 until 1991, the National Football League used an instant replay system in which an official in the booth would buzz the referees on the field, indicating that they were reviewing the previous play and then the replay official would determine whether the play needed to be reversed.

With only 13 percent of the total reviewed plays from 1986 to 1991 reversed, the system was deemed ineffective and dropped prior to the 1992 season.

After much debate and many changes, a re-imagined replay system was overwhelmingly approved prior to the 1999 season — now complete with coaches' challenges and official-initiated reviews inside the final two minutes of each half.

And it was the Packers' misfortune that may have led to the return of replay.

During a January 1998 NFC Wild Card playoff game at 3Com Park in San Francisco, the 49ers were driving toward a go-ahead score with less than two minutes remaining when Packers rookie Scott McGarrahan appeared to strip Jerry Rice of the football at the Green Bay 41, and Bernardo Harris recovered. Officials ruled Rice was down by contact before the ball came out. Multiple slow-motion replay angles clearly show Rice losing possession of the football before he was down. Even Pat Summerall — who was calling the game for Fox Sports — said after seeing a replay, "That's another vote, if there is one in the off season, for instant replay."

Since its return, the league has taken multiple steps to improve the process and limit errors as much as possible, as technology also continues to improve. 🏈



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A Harold Elder cartoon centered on the first stadium vote. UW-Green Bay Archives/Green Bay Chamber collection image

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. 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.

A 1930s hard leather helmet.

Tori Wittenbrock photo

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CHEESEHEAD NATION

JULEE BIESZK

BY TORI WITTENBROCK
SPORTS EDITOR

GREEN BAY – Local and loyal Green Bay Packers fan Julee Bieszk has been a long time supporter of the Packers and said that this year she is particularly excited about the direction the team is going.

“This season I feel like we have a chance to go all the way. I just think that we are getting better and better and Love is doing great, so obviously the Super Bowl is the ultimate goal,” said Bieszk.

Though originally a Lake Geneva native, Bieszk said that she relocated to the Green Bay area about seven years ago.

In her time since moving here, Bieszk said that she has made the most of her close proximity to one of the NFL’s most historic stadiums — Lambeau Field in attending nearly 40 Green Bay Packers games.

Since her love affair with the Green Bay Packers began at age 17 with her first visit to Lambeau Field, Bieszk said that her support for the team has only grown stronger.

“My favorite memory is probably my first game at Lambeau Field. That was when I fell in love with it because I was down in the lower bowl and just being that close to everything and seeing all the action during a great game was really cool, so that was probably my all-time favorite memory,” said Bieszk.

Like most football fans, Bieszk said there is one player that she has always admired as her favorite.

Although he no longer sports the Green and Gold, the Packers icon holds the top spot for many Cheeseheads.

“Aaron Rodgers — I like him as a person and just love his personality. Obviously, he’s just a great player as well,” said Bieszk.



Bieszk



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PACKERS vs. TEXANS

Oct. 20, 2024

	1	2	3	4	T
GB	0	14	7	3	24
HOU	3	16	0	3	22



Green Bay Packers Wide Receiver Dontayvion Wicks launches himself into the endzone in an all-out effort for a touchdown.

Tori Wittenbrock photos



Linebacker Lukas Van Ness brings down the Houston Texans offensive advance in their game on Sunday, Oct. 20.



Green Bay Packers Linebacker Isaiah McDuffie sacks Houston Texans Quarterback C.J. Stroud.



Packers Running Back Josh Jacobs battles through defensive pressure for a first down in the Packers game against the Houston Texans at Lambeau Field on Sunday, Oct. 20.



Wide receiver Romeo Doubs grabs a reception from Jordan Love during the Packers' 24-22 win over the Houston Texans.



Green Bay Packers kicker Brandon McManus nailed a walk-off field goal to secure a win for his team against the Houston Texans.

Putting the cheese in cheesehead

Fan Photo Gallery



Two fans on opposite sides have a little fun at the Oct. 13 game.

Chris Pamperin photo



The "Green and Golden Girls" cheer on the Packers as they took on the Vikings.

Chris Pamperin photo



Danielle Peterson and Brielle Peterson enjoy the fair weather at Lambeau Field. Submitted photo



"Darth Packer Vader" takes in the Packers-Viking game.

Chris Pamperin photo



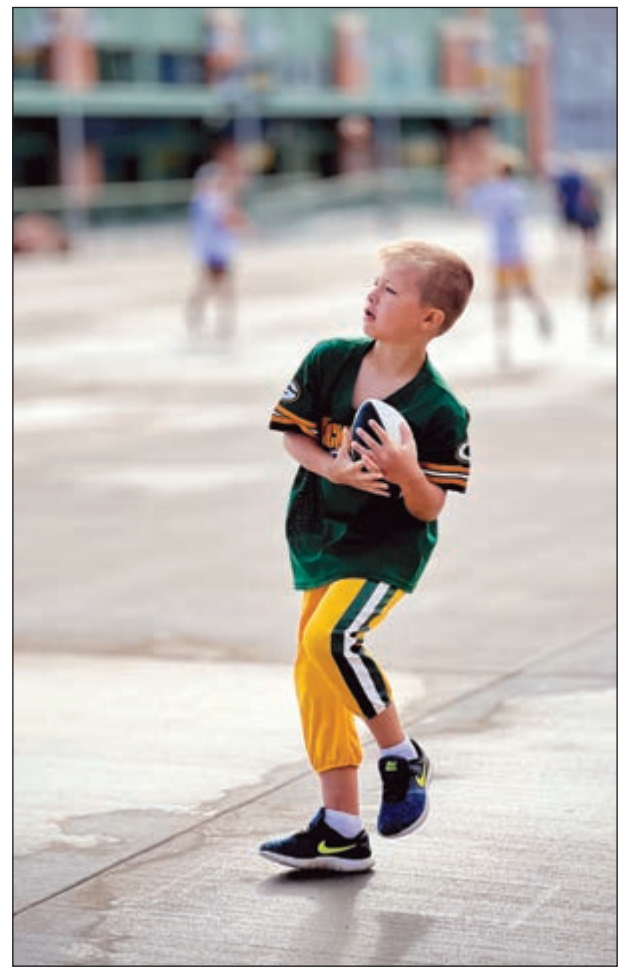
Packerland Emeritus Editor Chris Wood, Green Bay, stands with his third incarnation of the "Green-and-Golden Rod."

Kris Leonhardt photo



These fans prepare to "Shout It Out Loud" for the Packers.

Chris Pamperin photo



Jordy Peterson throws a football around at Lambeau Field.

Submitted photo

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