

**STEVE SCHUMER**  
**"GREEN BAY"**

FAIR LAWN, NJ HIGH SCHOOL YEARBOOK - 1974



# Jim Carter (American football)

**James Charles Carter** (October 18, 1948 – November 23, 2023) was an American professional football player who was a linebacker for the Green Bay Packers of the National Football League (NFL) from 1970 through 1978. He attended South Saint Paul High School and played college football for the Minnesota Golden Gophers.

Carter was a 10 letterman in high school and played hockey, football, and baseball, gaining All-America recognition in football and hockey.

At the University of Minnesota, Carter was a fullback on the 1967 Golden Gophers team that was Co-Big Ten Champion; he captained the 1969 Gopher team and led the team in scoring. In addition to being a 3-year starter in football, Carter played two years of varsity hockey for the Golden Gophers and was later drafted by the St. Paul Fighting Saints. He decided to pursue a football career rather than hockey and he was drafted in the 3rd round by the Green Bay Packers in the 1970 NFL draft. Although he played only on offense in college, the Packers drafted Jim to play linebacker. He signed with Green Bay and played 9 seasons for the Packers and was defensive captain from 1973 through 1976. He was selected to play middle linebacker for the NFC in the Pro Bowl after the 1973 season.

Jim Carter is in the University of Minnesota Hall of Fame, the South St. Paul Sports Hall of Fame, the Mancini's (St. Paul) Hall of Fame, and the Minnesota Old Timer's Football Association Hall of Fame.

After retiring from the Packers, Carter bought a struggling Ford dealership in Eau Claire, WI.<sup>[1]</sup> He commenced operating Jim Carter Ford in February 1980. After building the dealership back to profitability and respectability, Carter went on to acquire numerous other automotive businesses around Wisconsin: Bob Johnson Chevrolet-Mazda in Wausau, Car City Honda in Chippewa Falls, Borum-Dyer Volkswagen-Audi in Eau Claire, and Ken Loesch Cadillac-Pontiac-Oldsmobile in Chippewa Falls. He branded them all with his name and operated award-winning dealerships for 25+ years. He was named the Greater Eau Claire Area Small Businessman of the Year in 1987 by the Eau Claire Chamber of Commerce; he was named Wisconsin Dealer of the Year in 1988 by the Wisconsin Auto and Truck

## Jim Carter

**No. 50**

**Position:** Linebacker

### Personal information

**Born:** October 18, 1948  
St. Paul, Minnesota, U.S.

**Died:** November 23, 2023  
(aged 75)

**Height:** 6 ft 3 in (1.91 m)

**Weight:** 235 lb (107 kg)

### Career information

**High school:** South St. Paul  
(South St. Paul, Minnesota)

**College:** Minnesota

**NFL draft:** 1970 / Round: 3 / Pick: 68

### Career history

- Green Bay Packers (1970–1978)

### Career highlights and awards

- Pro Bowl (1973)
- Second-team All-Big Ten (1969)

### Career NFL statistics

**Interceptions:** 6

**Fumble recoveries:** 7

**Defensive TDs:** 1

Player stats at PFR (<https://www.pro-football-reference.com/players/C/CartJi00.htm>)



Dealer's Association; he was one of the five national finalists for the Time Magazine Quality Dealer of the Year in 1988. Carter sold all the dealership operations to his long time manager (and protege), Keith Kocourek, in 2005.

While operating his businesses, Carter was active in his communities. He served on the board of directors of the Greater Eau Claire Area Chamber of Commerce and was president of the organization in 1990; he served on the board of directors of the Wisconsin Auto and Truck Dealers Association; he served on the board of directors of the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation in Chicago, IL.; he also served on the board of directors of the environmental organization, Clean Wisconsin.<sup>[1]</sup>

Carter was a finalist for a position on the University of Minnesota Board of Regents when issue was made of a publicized incident of sexual harassment during his NFL playing days in 1976.<sup>[2]</sup> While admitting it was "bad behavior" that led to a lawsuit by the victim, Carter accused university leaders of waging a smear campaign against him; Carter had been critical of the University's strict punishment of players accused of sexual assault. "Carter said he does not condone sexual assault but simply backed the players' call for changes in how the university investigates assault allegations."<sup>[3]</sup>

Carter was very active in his addiction Recovery community. He was a regular at many recovery meetings and sponsored many fellow addicts.<sup>[1]</sup>

Carter died at his home on November 23, 2023, at the age of 75. He was survived by his wife, Victoria.<sup>[4]</sup>

## References

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1. Ahlstrom, John (January 2016). "Jim Carter: a nine- year career with the Packers & life after football" ([https://issuu.com/stpaulpublishing/docs/ssp\\_jan\\_2016](https://issuu.com/stpaulpublishing/docs/ssp_jan_2016)). *South St. Paul Voice*. Retrieved April 24, 2021.
2. Josh Verges, Ex-Packer, finalist for UMN board of regents, admits 'bad behavior' toward woman in 1976 (<http://www.twincities.com/2017/01/12/ex-packer-finalist-for-umn-board-of-regents-admits-bad-behavior-with-woman-in-1976/>), *Pioneer Press*, January 12, 2017, accessed February 18, 2017.
3. Mila Koumpilova, Regent finalist Jim Carter accuses U of M leaders of smear campaign (<http://www.startribune.com/regent-finalist-jim-carter-accuses-u-of-minn-leaders-of-smear-campaign/410663305/>), *Star Tribune*, January 14, 2017, accessed February 18, 2017.
4. Jim Carter was an unappreciated but hard-nosed middle linebacker (<https://www.packers.com/news/jim-carter-was-an-unappreciated-but-hard-nosed-middle-linebacker>)

## External links

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- NFL.com player page (<http://www.nfl.com/players/jimcarter/profile?id=CAR659100>)
- 

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▪



# PRO FOOTBALL REFERENCE

## Jim Carter

**James Charles Carter**

**Position:** LB-G

6-3, 235lb (190cm, 106kg)

**Born:** October 18, 1948 in St. Paul, MN

**Died:** November 23, 2023 (Aged 75-036d)

**College:** Minnesota (College Stats)

**Weighted Career AV (100-95-...):** 43 (2280th overall since 1960)

**High School:** South St. Paul (MN)

**Draft:** Green Bay Packers in the 3rd round (68th overall) of the 1970 NFL Draft.

SUMMARY	G	AV	Int	Yds	TD
Career	106	50	6	60	1

### Defense & Fumbles \* Selected to Pro Bowl, + First-Team AP All-Pro, Bold Indicates league leader

Regular Season		Playoffs																				
				Games		Def Interceptions					Fumbles											
Year	Age	Tm	Pos	No.	G	GS	Int	Yds	TD	Lng	PD	FF	Fmb	FR	Yds	TD	Sk	Sfty	AV	Awards		
<u>1970</u>	22	<u>GNB</u>	LLB	50	11	10			0				0	1	0	0	0.0		5			
<u>1971</u>	23	<u>GNB</u>	MLB	50	13	13	1	16	0	16			0	1	0	0	0.5		7			
<u>1972</u>	24	<u>GNB</u>	MLB	50	14	14	1	0	0	0			0	1	0	0	0.5		9	AP DPoY-9		
<u>1973*</u>	25	<u>GNB</u>	MLB	50	14	14	3	44	1	42			0	1	0	0	0.0		9	PR		
<u>1974</u>	26	<u>GNB</u>	MLB	50	14	13	1	0	0	0			0	1	19	0	0.0		7			
<u>1975</u>	27	<u>GNB</u>	MLB	50	12	11			0								1.0		5			
1976							Missed season - Injured (arm)															
<u>1977</u>	29	<u>GNB</u>	MLB	50	14	14			0								0.0		6			
<u>1978</u>	30	<u>GNB</u>	LB	50	14	1			0				0	2	0	0	0.0		2			
<b>Career</b>					<b>106</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>42</b>			<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2.0</b>		<b>50</b>			

# GREEN BAY vs. CHICAGO

PACKERS	0	0	0	0--0
BEARS	0	0	2	0--2



Quarterback Zake Bratkowski and Coach Dan Devine ponder the situation from the sidelines.



Packer halfback Dave Hampton bolts away from Chicago linebacker Ross Brupbacher and goes for extra yardage.



Middle linebacker Jim Carter of Green Bay, a former running back at the University of Minnesota, eyes Bear quarterback Bobby Douglass.





Wide receiver John Spilis of Green Bay pulls in a short pass from Scott Hunter. Coming up to make the tackle is Viking defender Charlie West (40).



Minnesota's veteran fullback, Bill Brown (30), is hauled to the turf by Packer safeties Doug Hart (43) and Willie Wood (under Brown). Other Packers are Fred Carr (behind Hart) and Jim Carter (50).



Somewhere under that mass of humanity is a Minnesota ballcarrier. The Packers are (from left) Dave Robinson, Doug Hart, Willie Wood, Jim Carter and Mike McCoy.

Green Bay's Carroll Dale had an outstanding performance against Minnesota, grabbing eight passes for 151 yards and one touchdown. In this third-quarter photo, the veteran wide receiver has eluded the Viking defense and is about to haul in a 50-yard scoring pass (the ball is circled) from Scott Hunter that gave the Packers a 13-7 advantage.



### PACKER INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

#### RUSHING

Anderson 22 for 62; Brockington 12 for 59; Hunter 3 for -1, 1 TD.

#### PASSING

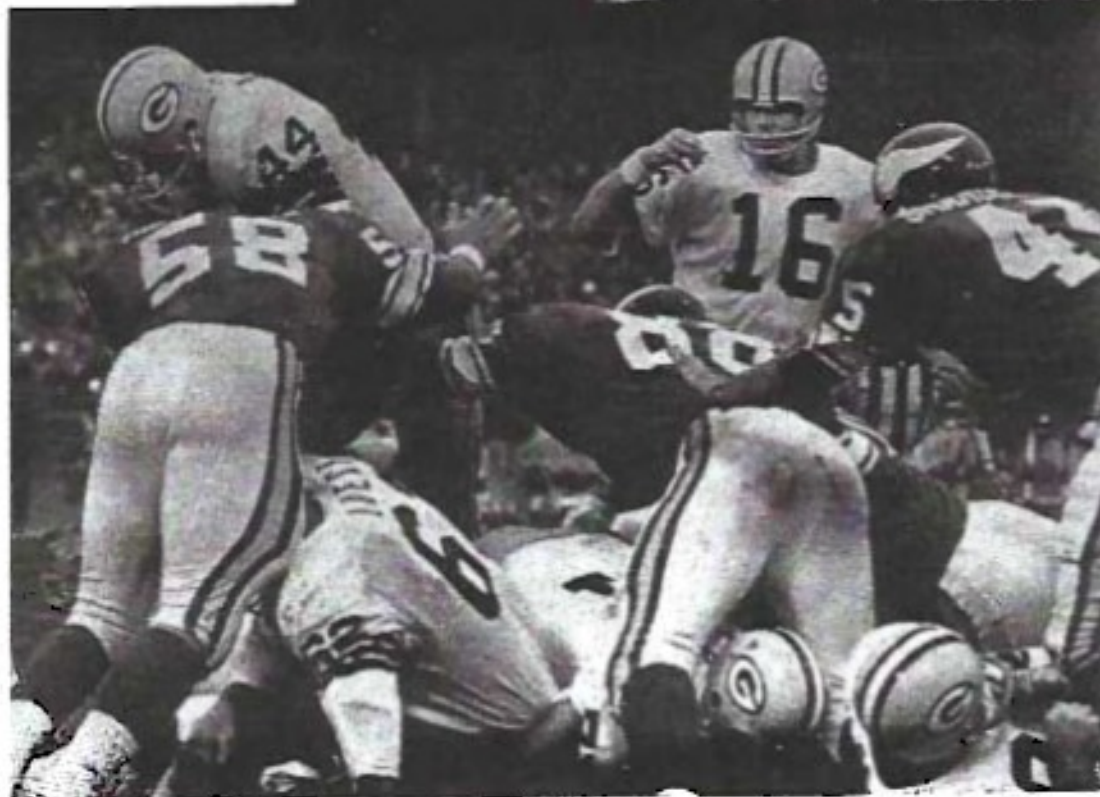
Hunter 12 of 24 for 230, 1 TD, 3 int.; Anderson 0 of 1.

#### RECEIVING

Dale 8 for 151, 1 TD; Spilis 2 for 38; Anderson 1 for 21; McGeorge 1 for 20.



Green Bay middle linebacker Jim Carter receives instructions from Coach Dan Devine before entering the game in the fourth quarter. In the background is Packer linebacker Coach Burt Gustafson



Minnesota's Wally Hilgenberg stops Donny Anderson for no gain on the Viking one-yard line in the second quarter

#### PACKER INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

##### RUSHING

Brockington 23 for 149 yards;  
Anderson 21 for 68; Hampton 8 for 23;  
Hunter 2 for 3.

##### PASSING

Hunter 5 of 8 for 61, 2 int.;  
Bratkowski 1 of 3 for 4, 1 int.

##### RECEIVING

Dale 2 for 26; Anderson 2 for 22;  
Spills 1 for 13; McGeorge 1 for 4.



8/5/72

# PACKERS 24 BENGALS 14



Scott Hunter scrambles in untouched for a second quarter score.



Dave Hampton was an effective ground threat, picking up 42 yards in nine attempts.



After slamming Cincinnati's Jess Phillips for a loss (left), Jim Carter took a breather on the bench.



All-time great Bart Starr made his debut as the Packers' quarterback coach.

pro! 9/9/72



# WELL, LOOK WHAT THE PACK HAS

*A Kicker, that's what. The field goal had become an obsolete part of Green Bay's offense in recent years. But rookie Chester Marcol rammed through three pointers from 41, 19, 49 and 17 yards as the Packers rolled to a 26-10 triumph over Cleveland.*

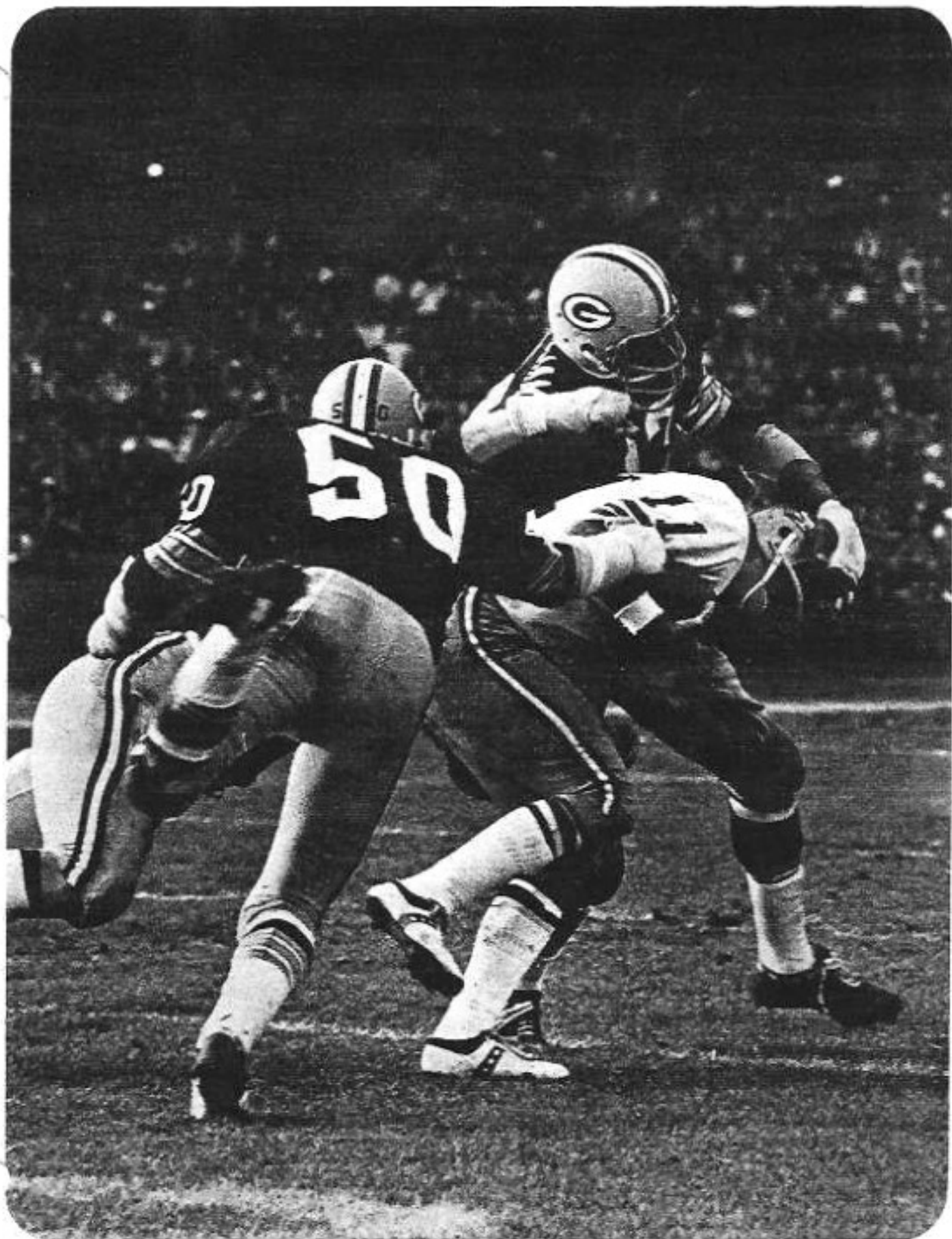


Chester Marcol adds another three points for Green Bay.

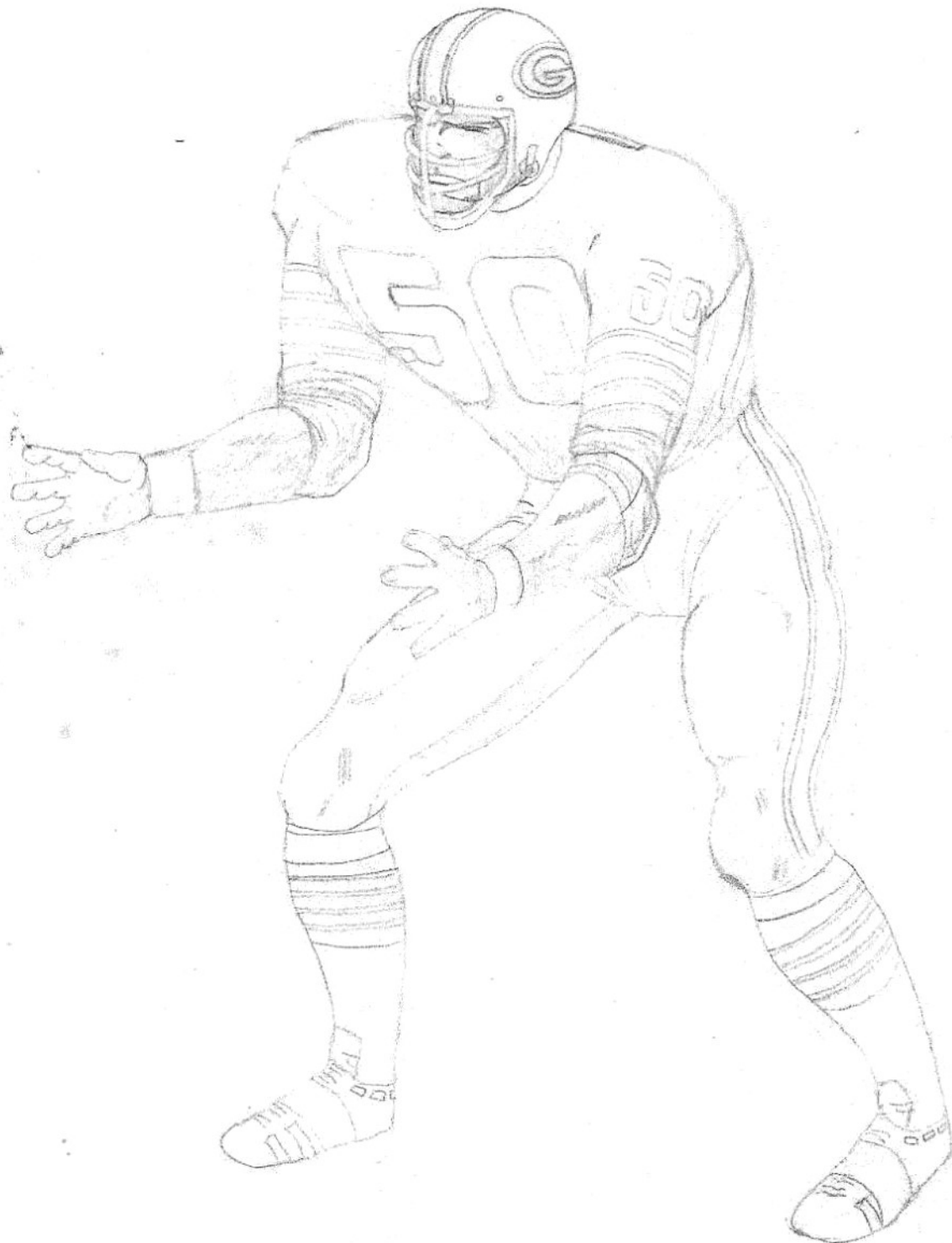


Jim Carter (50), Alden Roche (87), Fred Carr (53) and Gale Gillingham (68) imprison Cleveland's Leroy Kelly.





The dangerous Steve Spurrier, who completed 19 passes for 315 yards, is stopped by Green Bay's Jim Carter (50) and Clarence Williams.



JIM CARTER  
DRAWN BY STEVE SCHUMER (15)

172



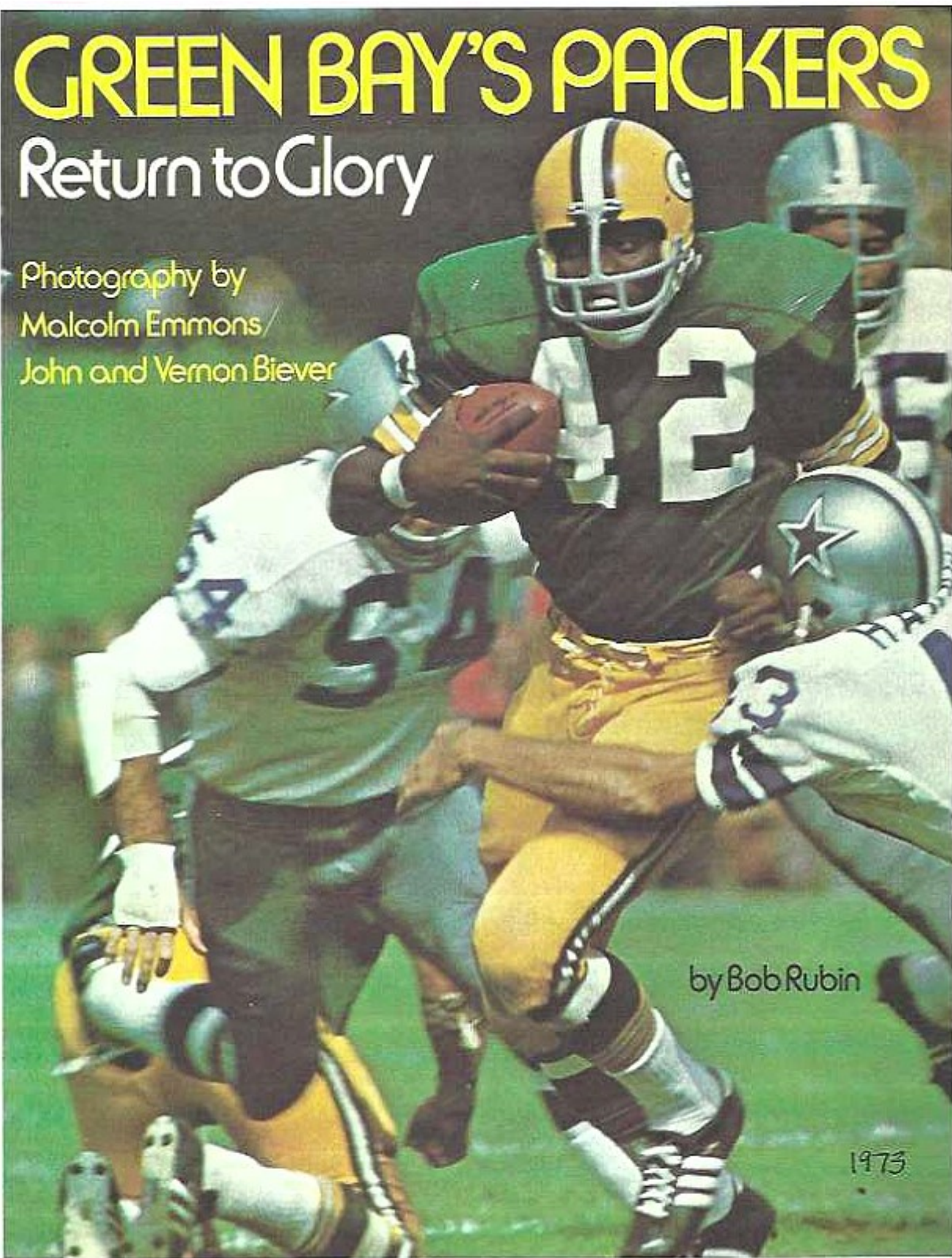
# GREEN BAY'S PACKERS

## Return to Glory

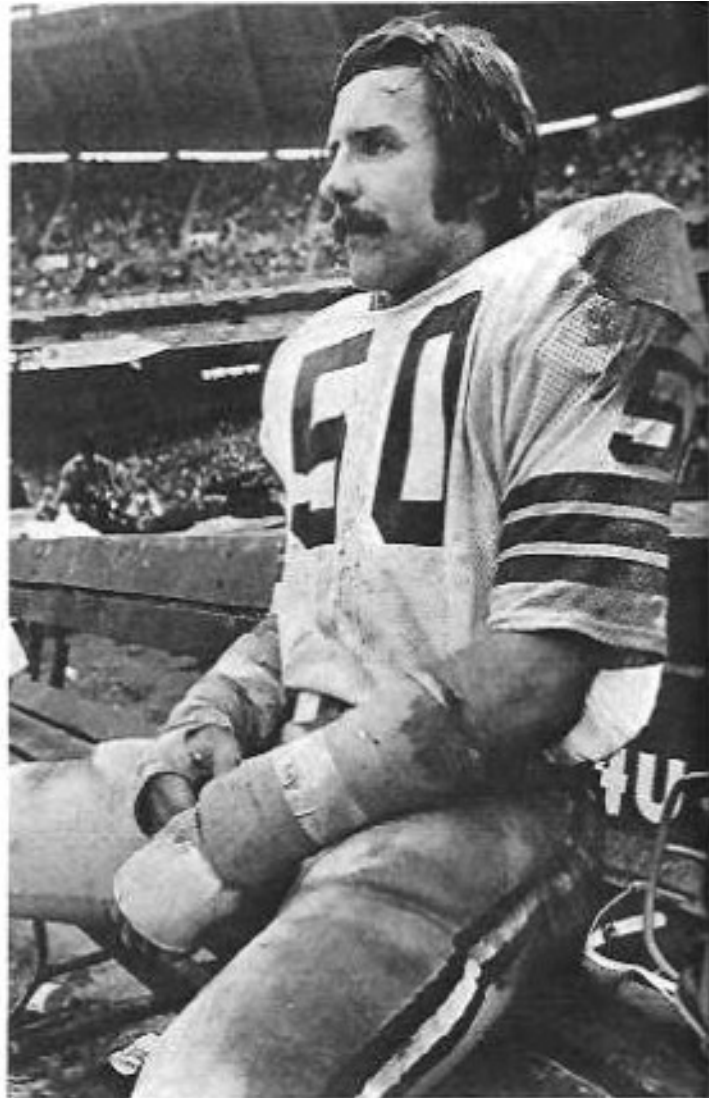
Photography by  
Malcolm Emmons/  
John and Vernon Biever

by Bob Rubin

1973







jim carter

A third-round draft choice from Minnesota, Carter stands six-foot-three, weighs 230 pounds, and gets plenty of sleep in Green Bay (during the season). He has a bright future indeed with the Packers. He was a fullback in college and a good enough hockey player to attract the attention of the Minnesota Fighting Saints of the WHA, who drafted him.

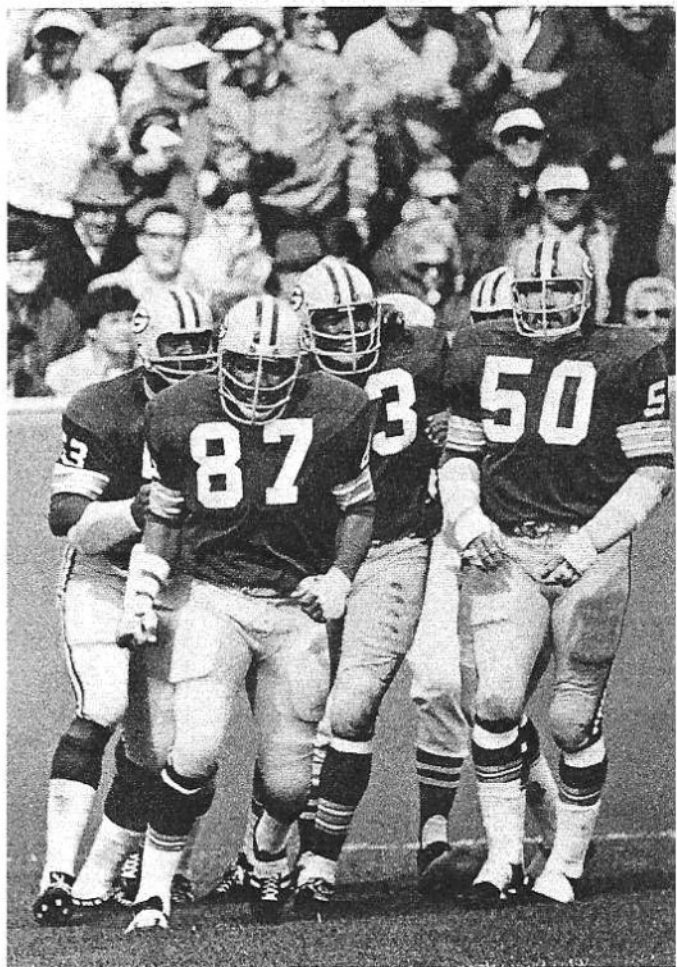
Carter faced a tremendous adjustment when he became a professional football player. Learning a new position is tough enough, but when a man has to move from offense to a spot with as many responsibilities as middle linebacker, it's sheer murder. And making the move just that much tougher was the fact that he was taking the place of a man who was one of the greatest middle linebackers in pro football history. Packer fans chanted, "We want Nitschke," all through 1971, when Carter was going through on-the-job training. The pressure was enormous.

"I tried not to hear it," Carter said at the time about the fan reaction. "I don't want anybody to think I begrudge Ray anything. He's earned it. I respect him myself for what he's done. I tell myself the fans are for Ray and not against me, and I think that's true. But I'm human, too. Sometimes it's like Ray could do a better job and that's not true."

Dave Hanner, for years a teammate of Nitschke's, understood the need for the transition. "I have a world of respect for Ray, and I think he can do some things better than Jim," said Hanner. "But a lot of things he can't. And age is something you can't hide, you know. Plus, the only thing you can look to is the future now; why not get all the experience you can?"

His first and second seasons were learning years. Now Carter knows his responsibilities well enough to assume a leadership role and react instinctively, which in turn permits him to hit with the fury that made coach Dan Devine switch him to middle linebacker. The chants for Nitschke stopped as Green Bay's tremendous improvement at defense became apparent. Now all the Packers have to do is make sure Jim Carter continues to get enough sleep.

*Carter and three defensive colleagues break from a huddle.*



*(Top right) Jim Carter eludes Chicago offensive players after intercepting a Bear pass.*



*(Bottom right) Carter draws a head on Dallas' Calvin Hill as he prepares to interrupt Hill's progress.*





1973

JIM CARTER TAKES OVER

73

"Jim always has had two things going for him — hit and hustle.

"Now he's starting to put everything together. He's getting to see more of a play than just his primary keys. He has what we call good football sense."

Carter had to make one of the most difficult adjustments when he reported to Green Bay as a third round draft choice in 1970. He was a running back at Minnesota and never played defense.

"There's no question that hurt my development as a pro," Carter said. "I didn't even know how to line up on defense. Everything was new to me. I had to go out and play and do it the hard way."

Understandably, Nitschke didn't go out of his way to help Carter. Here was a bold, young rookie trying to take away his job.

"Looking back, it's been uncomfortable for both him and me," Carter said. "It's unfortunate that it worked out that way. But now it's eased off. The last of this season I believe I played at the level I think I can play."

"He's been playing very consistently," said Gustafson. "He's got a lot of confidence and leadership qualities, too. He will keep the game fired up. Sure, he makes mistakes — we all do — but when he makes one he's going 100 m.p.h."

Carter enjoys the hitting — if he is doing his job correctly. "It feels good to get a good hit," he pointed out. "But seeing it work into the defensive plan is even better."

Contrary to opinion, Carter was not the tough guy on the block as a kid. He was big for his age — 6-3, 185 pounds as a sophomore in high school — but he was not hunting for trouble.

# JIM CARTER TAKES OVER THE GREEN BAY DEFENSE

*He won the job  
from Ray Nitschke, a  
Packer all-time great*

By **BUD LEA**  
*The Milwaukee Sentinel*



**J**IM Carter is not as cocky as a lot of people think he is. Confident? Sure, he is that. But, more importantly, he is a superb football player. Too often, though, his ability is obscured by his willingness — even eagerness — to tell reporters things like he did as an untested sophomore in the summer of 1971:

"I'm going to be the next middle linebacker for the Green Bay Packers. Ray Nitschke has been a great all-pro, but it's no secret he's nearing the end."

Carter started all but one game for the Packers that season.

"I don't mind if they have a favorite

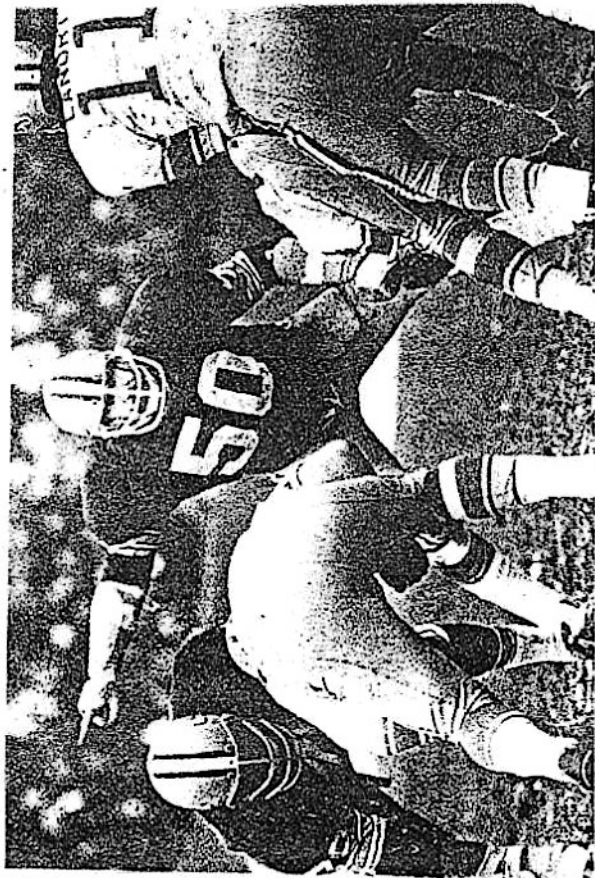
here. But when you get hurt and they cheer, that's awful. It's depressing and humiliating. To say the fans here are great is a lot of hog wash."

Carter said that Oct. 22 at County Stadium after he injured a knee in the Atlanta game and was replaced by Nitschke for several plays. The Milwaukee crowd cheered the arrival of old No. 66.

Carter does not need to say such things to get his name in the papers. His talent as a player will take care of that.

"He can be as good as he wants to be," says Burt Gustafson, who tutors the linebackers at Green Bay.

Jim Carter directing the Green Bay defense — best in the NFC in 1972.



"I wasn't brought up that way," he said. "When I started to play football as a kid I wanted to carry the ball. The fact that I was bigger than the others made it easy for me. But when I went out for midget ball, they figured I was too old."

Born in St. Paul 24 years ago, Carter played fullback at Minnesota and was elected captain his senior year. He also played hockey for the Gophers. "My older brother (Bob) was always out for sports and he was part of my motivation when I was young," Carter recalled. "At that time I was always Bob's little brother. I had to prove this and that, although I was more gifted with size."

Now Carter, who is down to 232 pounds, is in a game where everyone comes big and hits like a truck. Being blindsided by a 260-pound tackle constantly is on his mind.

"I don't remember the worst shot I've had," he said. "It was probably a blindside hit."

"There's a certain draw play that a lot of teams use where the tackle comes down on the middle linebacker. Most of the time it's a blindside thing for me and I can really get it. Those big tackles come high. (Rockne) Freitas from Detroit and (Ernie) McMillan of St. Louis really come storming."

"I can feel them coming and I've just got to stay in there. You get hit pretty good."

SOHO

**M**ARLIN Briscoe, Miami wide receiver, on the benefits of being traded by Buffalo to Miami: "Money, yes, but exposure, too. Howard Cosell never comes to Buffalo."

—From *The Los Angeles Times*


It was a blindside hit from Atlanta's 225-pound tight end Jim Mitchell that forced Carter out of the Falcon game. Carter returned despite knee damage (stretched ligaments) but was boiling mad when the fans cheered the arrival of Nitschke and he told the world about it later.

"I got about 100 letters the following week," Carter revealed. "Just about every one was from people wanting me to understand that those cheers had nothing to do with me. So many people like Ray because he's been around so long. They didn't realize I had been hurt. Only one letter said I should grow up — or something like that."

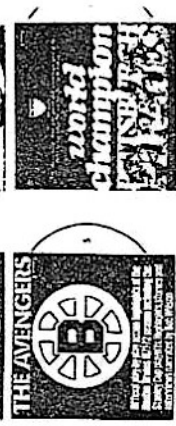
Carter has had a lot of things to overcome in his brief career, among them, of course, the support of the fans.

Carter is concerned about establishing himself as a player so he will be financially prepared to settle down when his playing career ends.

"It looks like I'll be working with Fuzzy Thurston's ever-expanding Left Guard restaurants," he said. "My dad and I also are looking into the possibilities of a car dealership in Wisconsin."

Carter's a big reason the Packers went so far this last year, but he had to find out it was almost easier to whip the opponents than the legend of Ray Nitschke. 

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son was all but impossible. Replacing his vacated spot with a rookie ... well?

Coach Dan Devina, however, was confident that the rookie from Minnesota could do the job. MacLeod showed evidence of some very good play midway through the 1973 pre-season games.

"We're not thinking in terms of trying to cover a weakness," Devina remarked last August. "If the guy you have there doesn't do the job, there's nothing anyone can do. It just makes it a lot tougher on everyone else. I think we made the right decision on MacLeod. As far as a trade is concerned, there just isn't anyone available who's as good as what we have."

So the education of young Tom MacLeod began in earnest. Here was a rookie who had been exposed to linebacking only in his senior year. He had to learn the trade from the bottom floor and learn it fast.

It takes a gifted athlete to play linebacker. Like MacLeod, most of them are developed in the pros. Nitschke was a fullback at Illinois. Robinson was a tight end at Penn State. Carr was a defensive end at Texas El-Paso.

Although he was on a crash program to fit into Green Bay's defense, MacLeod knew the possibility of being cut is one that lives with everyone. He tried not to dwell on it because he was up to his hip pads in work.

"Being cut is not something you want to think about," MacLeod said. "You just try to shut it out of your mind. You know it's a possibility, but that's very negative thinking."

"I don't know what I'd do if I were cut. I just hope I never come up against it. There's enough other things on your mind."

There were things on the other players' minds, too. Carter said he was frankly worried about starting the season without Robinson at left linebacker.

"I thought to myself, 'Well, we're just going to have to all help pick up our share of the load,'" Carter said. "We were going to have an inexperienced man at left linebacker, and he was going to have to try to replace someone as good as Robinson, and that was all there was to it."

MacLeod, to say the least, was on the spot. When the regular season started, he could not have asked

*Continued on page 20*



JIM CARTER, 50, AND FRED CARR TROT OFF FIELD AFTER AL MATTHEWS RECOVERS FUMBLE AGAINST BEARS IN GREEN BAY.



## Packers' Defense Boasts of Depth and Quality Personnel

# PACKER DEFENSE IS ALL-PRO

By Terry Bledsoe

What do you do to improve on the best defense in the National Conference, especially when you're going to have to get along without one of its most prominent members?

Well, you hire an All-Pro, for one thing. Because the Green Bay Packers did exactly that, the prospects for Dave Hanner's marvelously improved unit look extremely bright for 1973.

As the offseason progressed, the 1973 goal seemed simple enough — merely to hold the level of play achieved in 1972, when the Packers achieved the most dramatic turnaround in professional football. They started with the leakiest pass defense in the game — 21 touchdown passes surrendered in 1971 — and they wound up with a pass defense that came within 20 minutes of setting a National Football League record for fewest touchdown passes allowed.

Now, pass defense is one of the chief exhibits in support of the thesis that in pro football, very little is what it seems to be. Item: In the playoff game in Washington, Roy Jefferson caught a touchdown pass with cornerback Willie Buchanon chasing him. Buchanon's fault?

Nope. It was a zone, which was designed to rotate to the strong side of the field, and strong safety Al Matthews was a trifle late fading to cover the deep area. Moreover, it was a defense absolutely tailor-made to stop the pattern Jefferson ran. "If Bill Kilmer had read the defense, instead of just turning around and throwing it, he never would have let that pass go," Packer Coach Dan Devine said disgustedly.

Therefore it is impossible to laud the Green Bay secondary without adding plaudits for the linebackers and the pass rushers, and it is invalid to pour praise upon the talented head of cornerback Willie Buchanon, a rookie of the year in most observers' eyes, without crediting veteran linebacker Dave Robinson with helping free Buchanon from an oversupply of responsibility. "That's the biggest thing I have to get used to here," Buchanon said. "In college you don't get this much help."

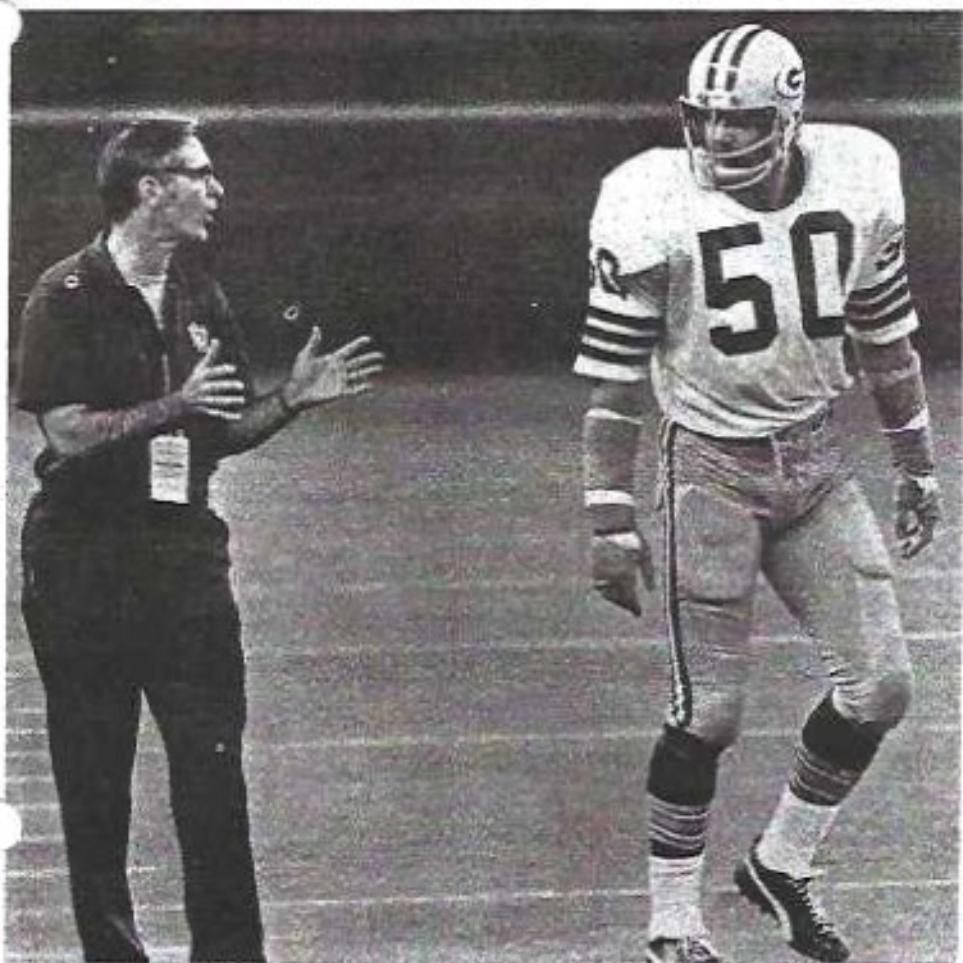
It was Robinson who subtracted himself from the Green Bay defense, when he informed the club early in January that he proposed to retire to





Packer middle linebacker Jim Carter rests an injured knee.

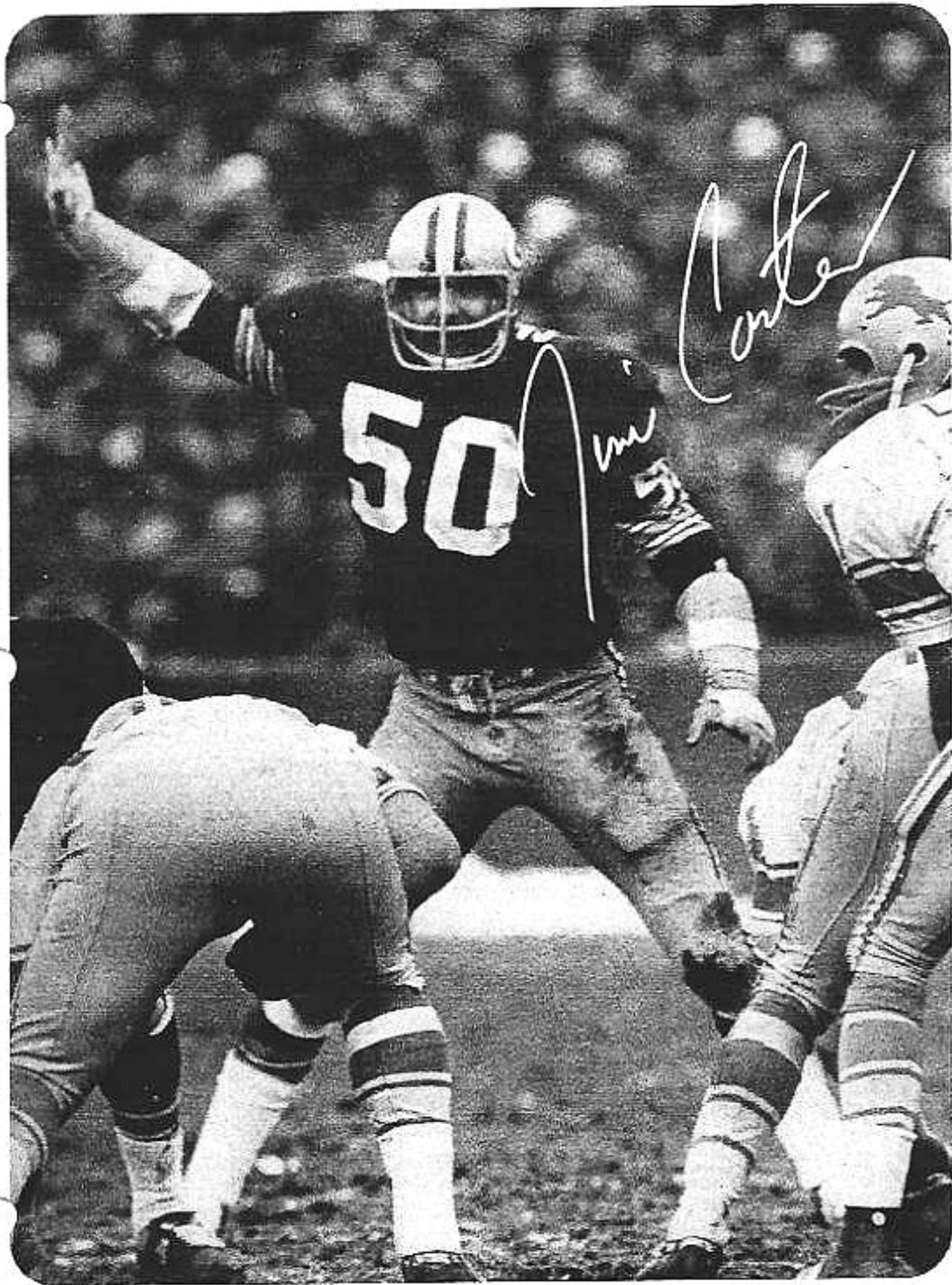




Scott Hunter (above)  
just manages to  
hurl a pass  
before being hit.

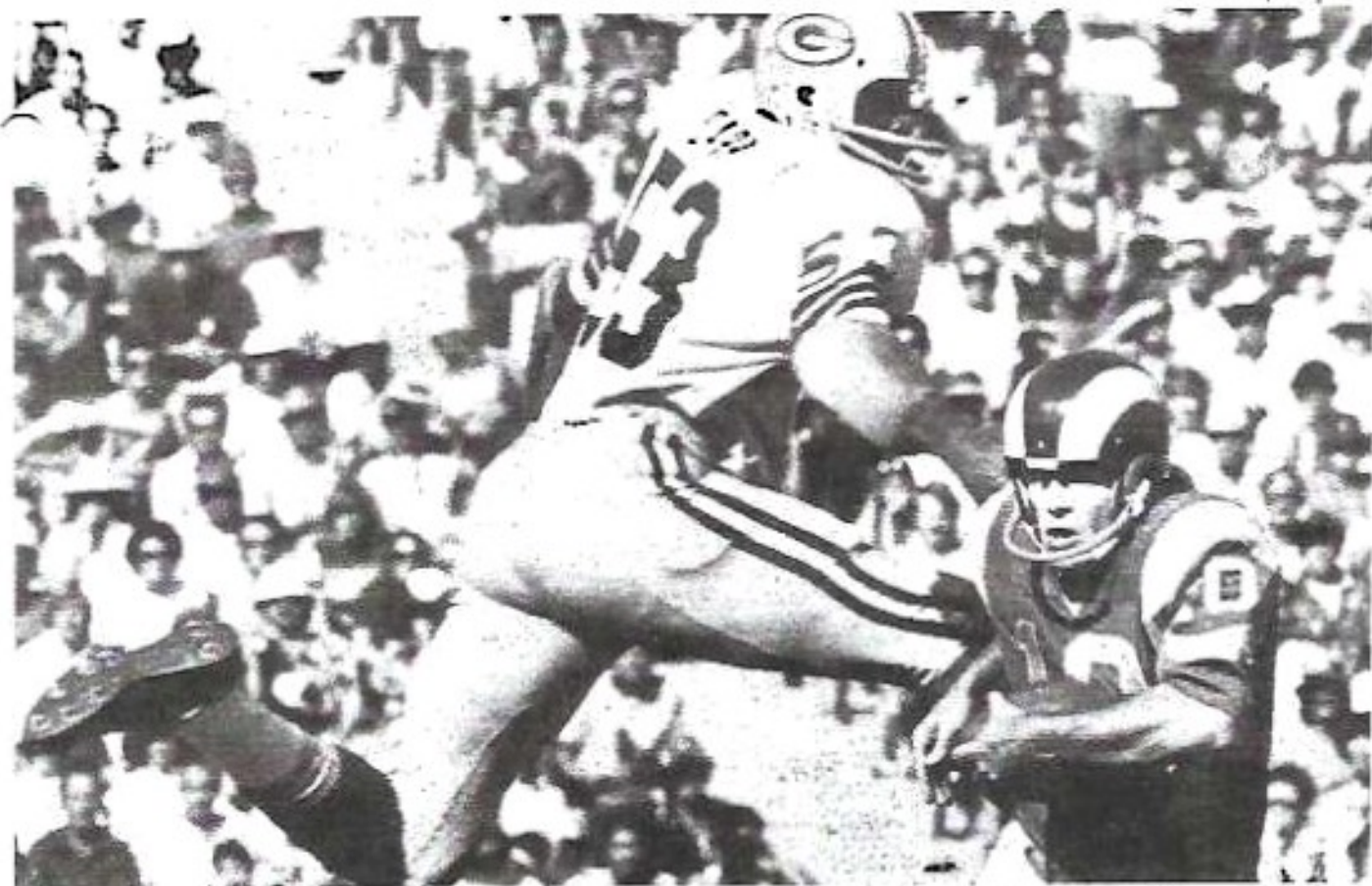
Jim Carter,  
Packer middle  
linebacker, gets  
instructions from  
Coach Dan Devine  
(right).





PRO! 10/19/73





*A blitz by Fred Carr forces Los Angeles punter Dave Chapple to scurry for cover.*



*Jim Carter tries to plug up the middle, but Larry Smith plunges over from the one yard line for a Ram TD.*



JIM CARTER  
DRAWN BY  
STEVE  
SCHUMER (17)  
2-3-74



# pro!

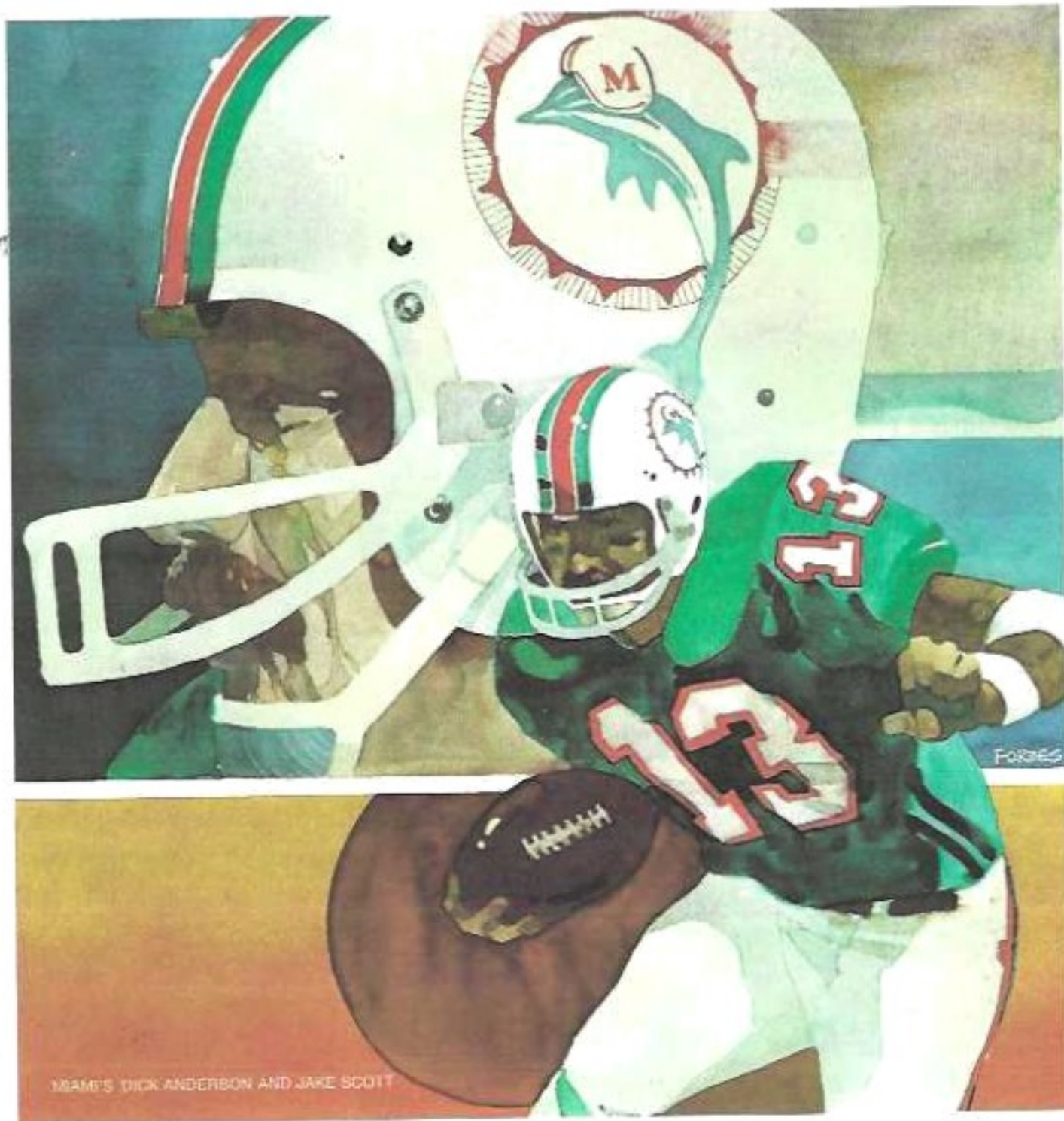
THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE

**Safeties First  
...and Last!**

Good Safeties  
Are the Key to  
Good Defenses

**Colts  
vs. Packers**

Memorial Stadium  
September 22, 1974  
\$1.00



MIAMI'S DICK ANDERSON AND JAKE SCOTT

# Thawing the Freeze in Green Bay! It Took Some Doing After Carter Iced Things Up

Jim Carter  
Green Bay Packers



Jim Carter arrived in Green Bay rather inconspicuously in 1970 out of the University of Minnesota, a third-round draft choice without a position.

In two years Packers fans found themselves bidding farewell to one of the all-time great football players, Ray Nitschke.

Carter, a fullback in the big, lumbering University of Minnesota mold, took over the middle linebacker spot from the old pro, who once was a college fullback himself.

Diehard Packers backers were skeptical from the start and they were not pacified when Carter proclaimed in his second year: "I'm going to be the next middle linebacker for the Green Bay Packers. Ray Nitschke has been a great all-pro but it's no secret he's nearing the end."

It's not that easy for some people to part with a legend. When Carter was injured once and was replaced by Nitschke for several plays, the crowd cheered the arrival of the veteran. Carter interpreted it as cheering his injury.

"I don't mind if they have a favorite hero," he said. "But when you get hurt and they cheer, that's awful. It's depressing and humiliating."

Carter's rapport with local fans has improved considerably since the early days, partly because he's become a good middle linebacker. Some even say he's the best, if not on past performance, then certainly on the potential he is rapidly realizing.

"He can be as good as he wants to

be," says Burt Gustafson, who coaches the Green Bay linebackers. "He's always had two things going for him—he hits and he hustles. He has what we call good football sense. He's got a lot of confidence and leadership qualities, too. He will keep the game fired up. Sure he makes mistakes, but when he makes one he's going a hundred miles an hour."

Even Nitschke admits: "Carter can become one of the great middle linebackers."

Carter, 25, grew up in South St. Paul, where he played hockey well enough to be a high school All-America and get drafted by the Chicago Black Hawks. "That was before the National Hockey League expanded," says Carter.

Carter continued his hockey career at the University of Minnesota and his reputation lasted long enough to get him an offer from the World Hockey Association before last football season, even though he had been away from the game for four years.

The 6-foot 3-inch, 235-pounder "had a little bit of finesse on the hockey rink," but didn't need to use it much. "I let the forwards know I was around," he recalls, but "college guys don't like to mix it up. Cliff Koroll [now of the Black Hawks] is an example. He was playing for Denver when we met in the NCAA and I wanted to go at him but he wouldn't drop his stick. I got so mad I pulled off his helmet and started hitting him with it."

Another time at Michigan State when Carter was sent to the penalty box, a fan climbed in with him. Carter didn't know what school he was from, nor did he care.

"It was a shoot-first-ask-questions-later situation," says Carter. "I only hit him once. The guy flew backward,

crashed through a set of double doors and skidded down this long corridor. He hit the wall at the other end and was left in a sitting position, unconscious. I said to myself, 'I thought this only happened in John Wayne westerns.'"

In the off-season, Carter runs the Left Guard Supper Club in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, one of a chain owned by former Packers Fuzzy Thurston and Max McGee. Eventually he might set up a car dealership. His dad, Bob Carter, sells Fords in South St. Paul and like son, like father, has shown the audacity to buck local tradition by hanging Packers pennants in the heart of Vikings territory.

In Green Bay, people might have been surprised by Carter's fast progress. But the people who knew him in Minnesota weren't surprised at all.

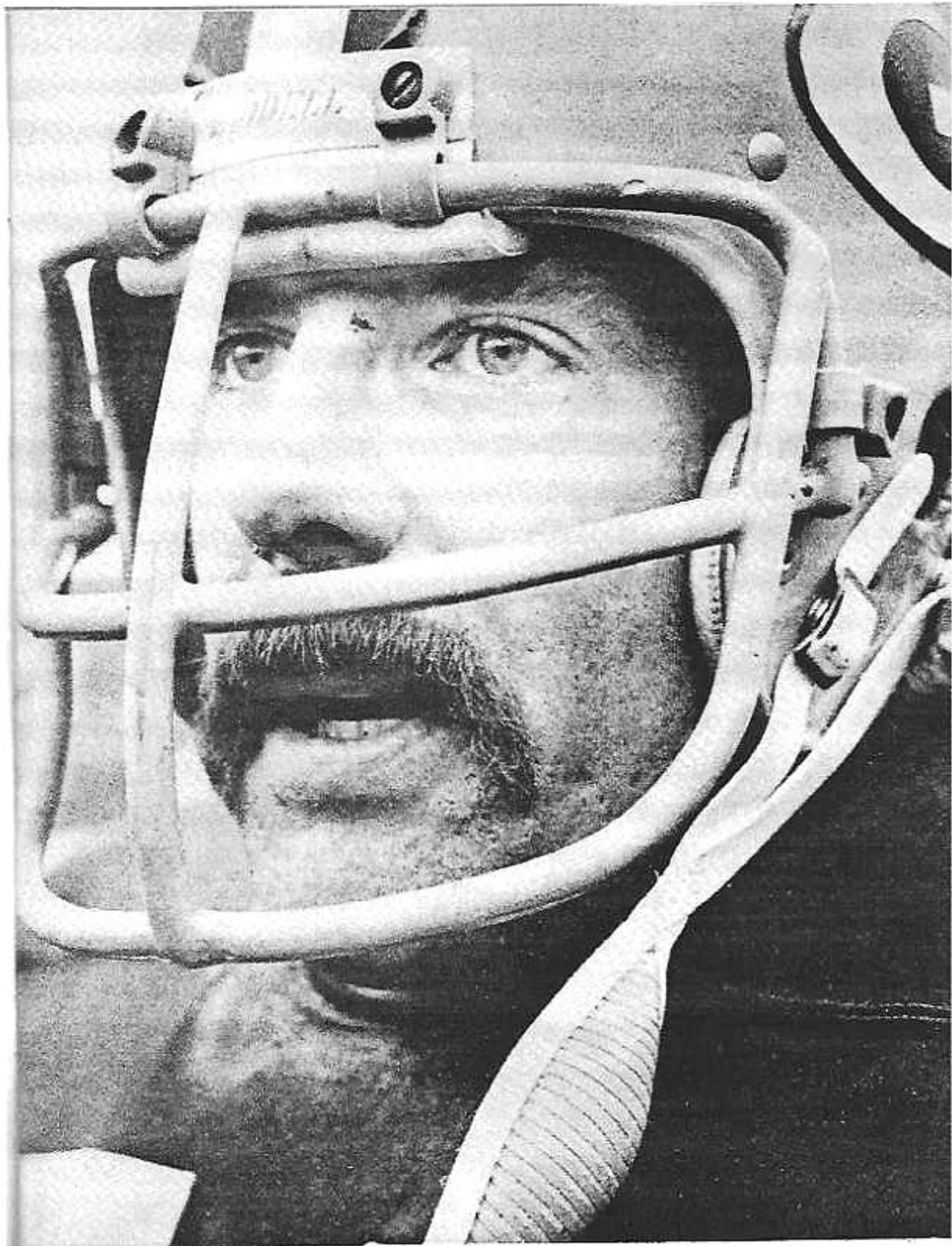
"It really hasn't been that fast. It took quite a while of getting the hell kicked out of you a few times before things got to where it's natural. That's why Dick Butkus has always been so great. Not only was he intense and hard working, but he had a great feel. You need that feel for where people are coming from and where you're going. When I first started I had to think, 'Well, you gotta go here and look for people.' Now you can feel them and it's taken three years before I've really gotten to the point where I feel comfortable at it."

*(Continued on page 84)*

*It's not easy for some people to part with a legend, and Jim Carter didn't endear himself to Green Bay fans when he proclaimed himself the next middle linebacker before Nitschke had retired.*

Reprinted from PROFILE. Published by Dell Publishing Co., Inc.





**"It's not a picnic up there when you're not winning."**



*Carter puts the arm on the ball carrier.*

*You never played middle linebacker in college. Did you ever think you might end up there?*

"I never really thought that much about it in college, to be honest. I guess everybody who plays ball in college wants to get a shot at pro ball, but I always tried to be reasonable and figured if it didn't come, don't worry about it, just try to get your education and do something else. But once they drafted me as a linebacker, it seemed reasonable. I always felt I didn't have the speed or quickness to be a running back yet my quickness was pretty good for a linebacker. And my disposition is probably a little better suited to being a linebacker than a running back."

*You had to learn the position from scratch. Are you still in that learning process or just perfecting the things you know?*

"There'll always be things to learn and I haven't had the opportunity—and I'm not crying on anyone's shoulder—but I haven't had the opportunity of some people in this league. I think as a group, Kansas City and Cincinnati have the best linebackers, but those guys have had

the privilege to work with Tom Bettis, the linebacker coach in Kansas City, and Vince Costello at Cincinnati and both those guys were great linebackers. See, I've never worked with anybody who was even a linebacker.

"Hawg Hanner's helped me a lot, he's our defensive coach, but individually I've had two different linebacker coaches here and neither of them was ever a linebacker."

*Have Packers' fans forgotten Nitschke?*

"No, they never will, which is good. He was a great player and had an awful lot of great years up there and was awfully popular and I wouldn't expect anyone to. I don't think they should forget him. Even now there are still people who feel, in spite of the fact I might go to the Pro Bowl or be the club's most valuable player or whatever, that I'm still the guy who took Nitschke's job and it wasn't right and it'll always be that way. I didn't help matters because I'd been kind of outspoken all the time anyway. But I wasn't going to go in like a little baby and hope things turned out. That's just not my nature, so I compounded it a little bit—quite a bit I'm sure."

*Everybody asks what happened to the Packers in 1973. Do you have any theories?*

"Well, really, it's a crime that it should have happened because we went from ten-four to five-seven-two with the same personnel. Obviously we had a couple injuries, but that's part of the game; everybody has them. I really don't know what happened. Our offense early wasn't jelling too much and a lot of people didn't really believe in what they were doing. They didn't like the game plans and possibly you can attribute that to the fact that Bart Starr left [as assistant coach]."

*Last season there were all kinds of rumors coming out of Green Bay. There was the quarterback problem with Scott Hunter, Jerry Tagge, and Jim Del Gaizo; there was the rumor*

*that Tagge didn't get along with some players; and other things. How much truth was there in these things?*

"I'd say almost none. We heard all those rumors, too, and it started to really bug someone like Tagge because as far as the players themselves go, it's a close team; we do get along well. Tagge never had any problems with Mac [MacArthur Lane] or Brock [John Brockington] and that's where all the rumors started, that he was fighting with Mac. On defense there's nine black guys and myself and [Mike] McCoy and I'm the captain of the defense and there's no problems. All those rumors about the black discontent and all that, that's just not true, and I'm sure you could ask any of the black players and they'd tell you the same."

*How much does playing in a small town contribute to the spreading of rumors?*

"Quite a bit. Considerably, I'm sure. Especially in Green Bay. To tell you the truth it's not a real picnic playing up there when you're not winning. There's no place you can go without being recognized. Wherever you go people are coming up—and some of that's nice; let's face it, we all like recognition—but you come to the point where you wish you could be a little more anonymous."

*When you were growing up in Minnesota and were a Vikings' fan, didn't you by necessity have to hate the Packers?*

"Well, not too much. Again I really wasn't that much of a pro football fan. We followed all the teams, but I always liked the idea of the guys on the Packers, the way they used to cut up. See, I liked Hornung and McGee and Fuzzy the way they used to . . . you know, you always hear stories about them running up and down bars and cuttin' up and doing all that and I always liked that,

*"There'll always be things to learn," Carter says, and he shows what he means as he gets caught in traffic against the Rams.*



I really did. So the truth is, and people say it around here, too, I think I should have played ten years earlier. I think I'd fit in a lot better. The game's changed and so have the people. It's a lot more conservative, rightly so, I guess. It's bigger business and people are more serious, but I would have liked to have played with those old clubs, not just because they won, but because of the guys, the way they had good times and were together all the time. I think it was a good way to play."

*It does seem that there aren't as many characters as there used to be.*

"All the characters now are in wrestling, I think. Wrestling now, really, it's about like football used to be. I know a lot of the guys in Minneapolis—Dick Murdock, Verne Gagne, Crusher—they just raise holy hell all the time and just have fun. They make a lot of money, they go out and just cut up and have fun all the time."

*Sounds like you might become a wrestler next. Last year it was almost hockey.*

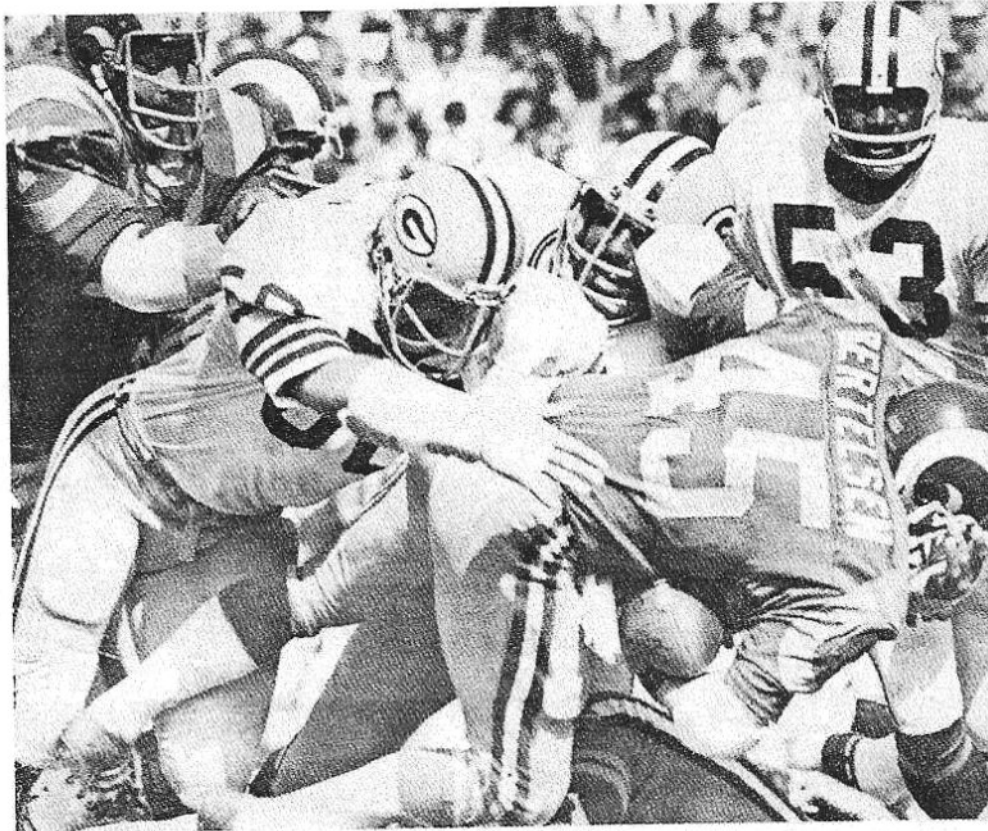
"The president of the Minnesota Fighting Saints offered me a job, offered me a contract and the whole works. It was an unbelievable contract really, considering I hadn't skated in a long time, but he offered me a five-year contract for pretty good money. At that time it was more than I was making with the Packers, plus he said it would be a no-cut deal; in other words, if I needed a couple years to play into shape that would be all right with him. See, in that league, they needed publicity, even some kind of gimmick, but the guy was serious about it."

*Have you ever been hurt?*

"No, knock on wood, not seriously yet."

*Do you figure you're just lucky?*

"No, I think it's from being in pretty good shape. Guys who get hurt early in the year or in training camp



*Getting some help from the Pack, Carter rides the Rams' Jim Bertelsen down.*

are the guys who aren't in shape. I really believe that. We fool-around during the off-season, but I work hard during the day, too, to get in shape. I think that makes a difference."

*What do you do to get in shape?*

"I play tennis, any kind of exercise in the winter. Once it gets warm I run distance quite a bit for cardiovascular development. I think it's pretty good so I'll run distance until I'm up to three miles three or four times a week and on alternate days I'll do interval training, short distance running."

*Now you sound like a trackman.*

*Don't you think track is ultimate proof that today's athletes are better than they were in the so-called good old days?*

"Sure, track is good proof. Everybody's faster, stronger. In football, they hate to admit it, but Tony Canadeo is a good friend of mine and he'll admit it. He says, 'Hell, they're all bigger, faster,

stronger, how can they not be better?' Even the Dolphins compared to the old Packers, they have to be better. The Packers were great at that time, they had great esprit de corps and they dominated the league, but I can't believe they're as good as the Dolphins. I wouldn't say that to Fuzzy and those people—they'd go out of their minds—but I can't believe it."

*Do they still talk about the old Pack?*

"Oh yeah, it was the greatest time of their lives."

*Do they compare themselves with the Dolphins?*

"No, Fuzzy doesn't too much. I think he might realize it. Fuzzy's changed. He's a fan now; he's a great fan. He loves to see us win."

## The Toughest Plays a Middle Linebacker Faces

Middle linebackers have to fight centers for a living. They are natural enemies. But centers don't usually bother Jim Carter as much as tackles.

It is the offensive tackle that Carter fears most, because offensive tackles are not only big, they're sneaky. Carter dreads it when the tackle hits him from the blind side on a draw play. He hasn't quite learned how to avoid it, and he calls it the toughest play he has to face. It's a problem common to all the game's middle linebackers, whether they are relative newcomers such as Carter or whether they're 10-year veterans.

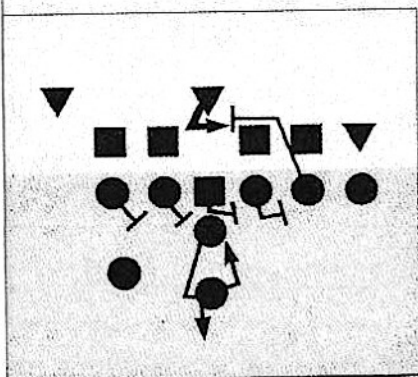
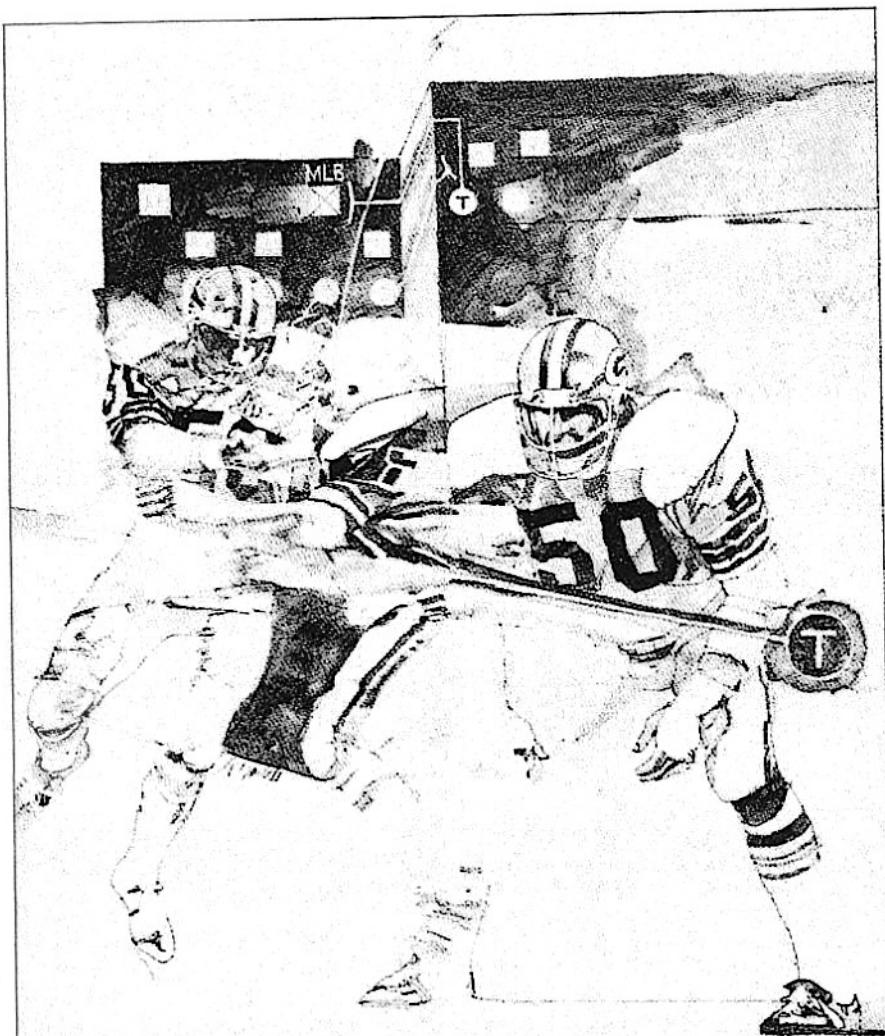
"The quarterback turns like he's going to set up for a pass and then hands to the running back," says Carter. "The center will set back and the right guard will block the left defensive end.

"I'll be kind of just hanging there and I'll always feel it, but I still don't feel it quick enough. I'll step to my right and see the center set up and I think pass so I start back, but then I see the draw, take one step up and I just feel that big tackle coming down on me. He blasts the hell out of me and I just try to get as low as I can and fight through him, but usually the back will break the play back behind. Then our tackle has got to make the play, it's not really my play, but it's still tough on me. It really is the toughest and it hurts.

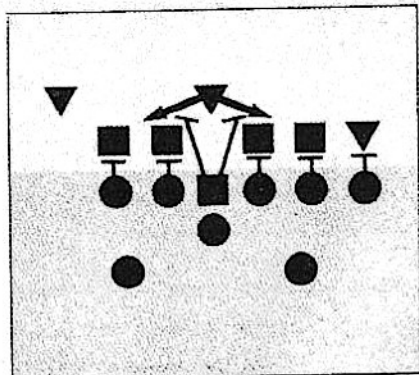
"A guy like Ron Yary, as big as he is, they run that play and he comes down growling like hell and, you know, it's a hard play."

Keying the center is not as difficult. "You can tell right away which way the play is going," says Carter. "If the center is going to try and cut you off, you know you have to get over there for the play.

"But what makes it tough are the good centers and I think Jack Rudnay of Kansas City is the best. That's my opinion. Jim Langer [of Miami] is of course really good. I think the two of them are the best in football right now, but Rudnay's been so tough on me because he has a great persistence."



Carter calls the fullback draw the toughest play for a middle linebacker to defend. As he watches the center set up in apparent pass-blocking, he's hit from out of nowhere by the tackle. Carter's next responsibility: pick himself up and get back into the flow of the play as quickly as possible.



Good centers anticipate the movement of middle linebackers. That's why Carter must move in the correct direction as quickly as possible to get outside the center's block and be in position to tackle. Quickness is his primary asset in doing so, but equally important is his first step off the snap of the ball.

(Continued on page 87)

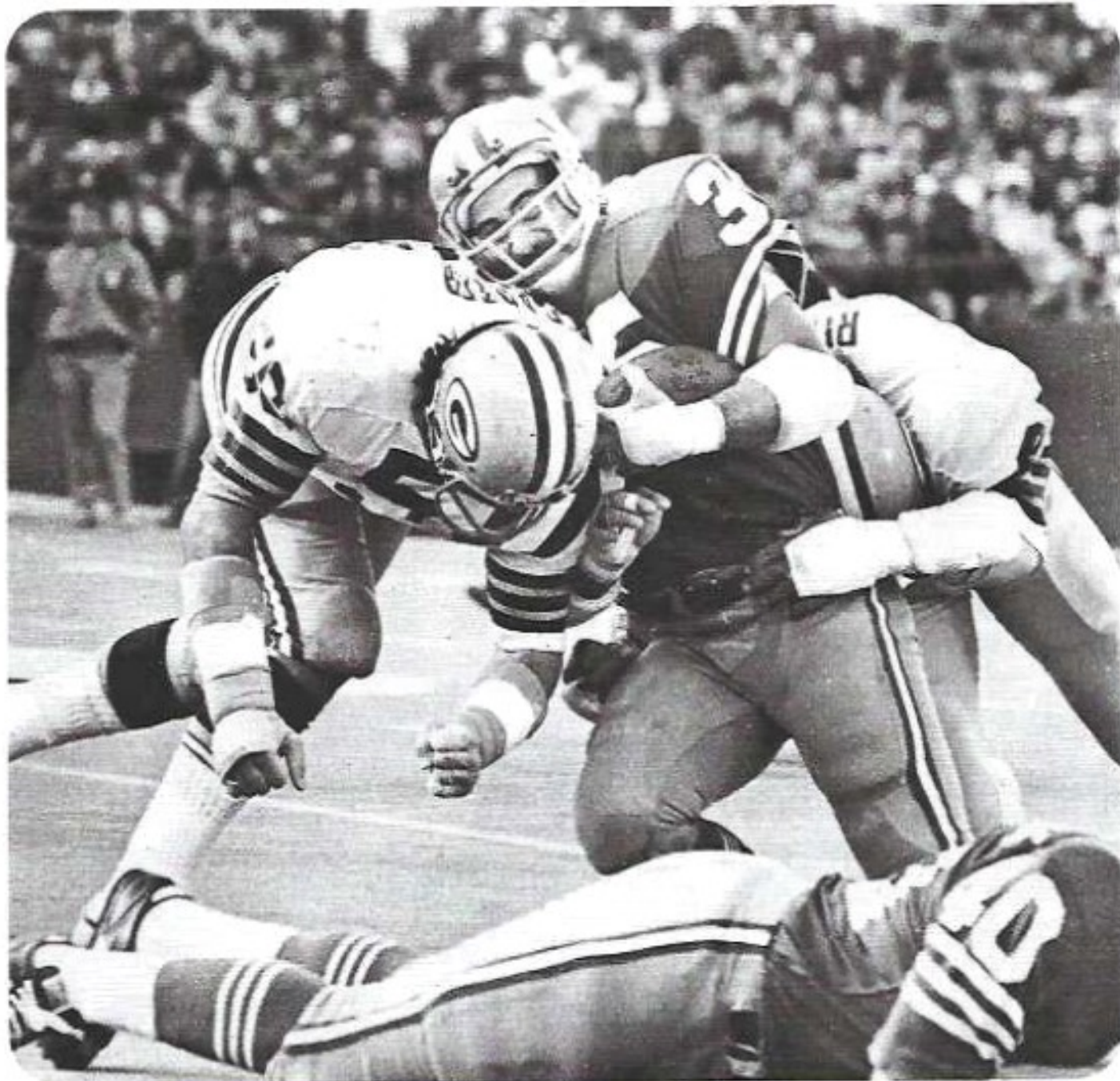




Coach Dan Devine confers with quarterback Jerry Tagge on the sidelines late in the game (left), while (clockwise) defensive end Clarence Williams decks Los Angeles quarterback Jim Harris; Ram Coach Chuck Knox offers his congratulations to the Packers' Devine, and tackle Mike McCoy and middle linebacker Jim Carter, two of Green Bay's best in the brilliant defensive performance, eagerly eye the Los Angeles signal caller.







THE PACKERS WILL BANK ON RETURN OF STRONG DEFENSE IN 1975 — PERHAPS LIKE CRUNCH ABOVE AS JIM CARTER (50) AND ALDEN ROCHE PINCH 49ERS' LARRY SCHREIBER IN 7-6 LOSS AT SAN FRANCISCO DEC. 8.

*Continued from page 2*

Mac Lane and the others who complement him in the backfield have to be effective as runners as well as blockers. And when Brockington is the blocker, he has to excel in that area, so the other backs can be effective runners.

"We've got to have better execution in our passing game when we need it — on third down."

The whole business comes down to balance between the ground and air games.

Starr has an excellent blend of experience at quarterback. John

Hadl is in his 14th season, Jack Concannon his 11th and Jerry Tagge his fourth.

It all starts at quarterback . . . and the competition among these three during the six-game pre-season campaign certainly will go a long ways toward determining the success of the offense once the team gets on the fast track.

The hoped-for base of the new 1975 Packers — a balanced offense and continued rugged performances by the defense! The rest of the 1975 Yearbook relates the specifics.

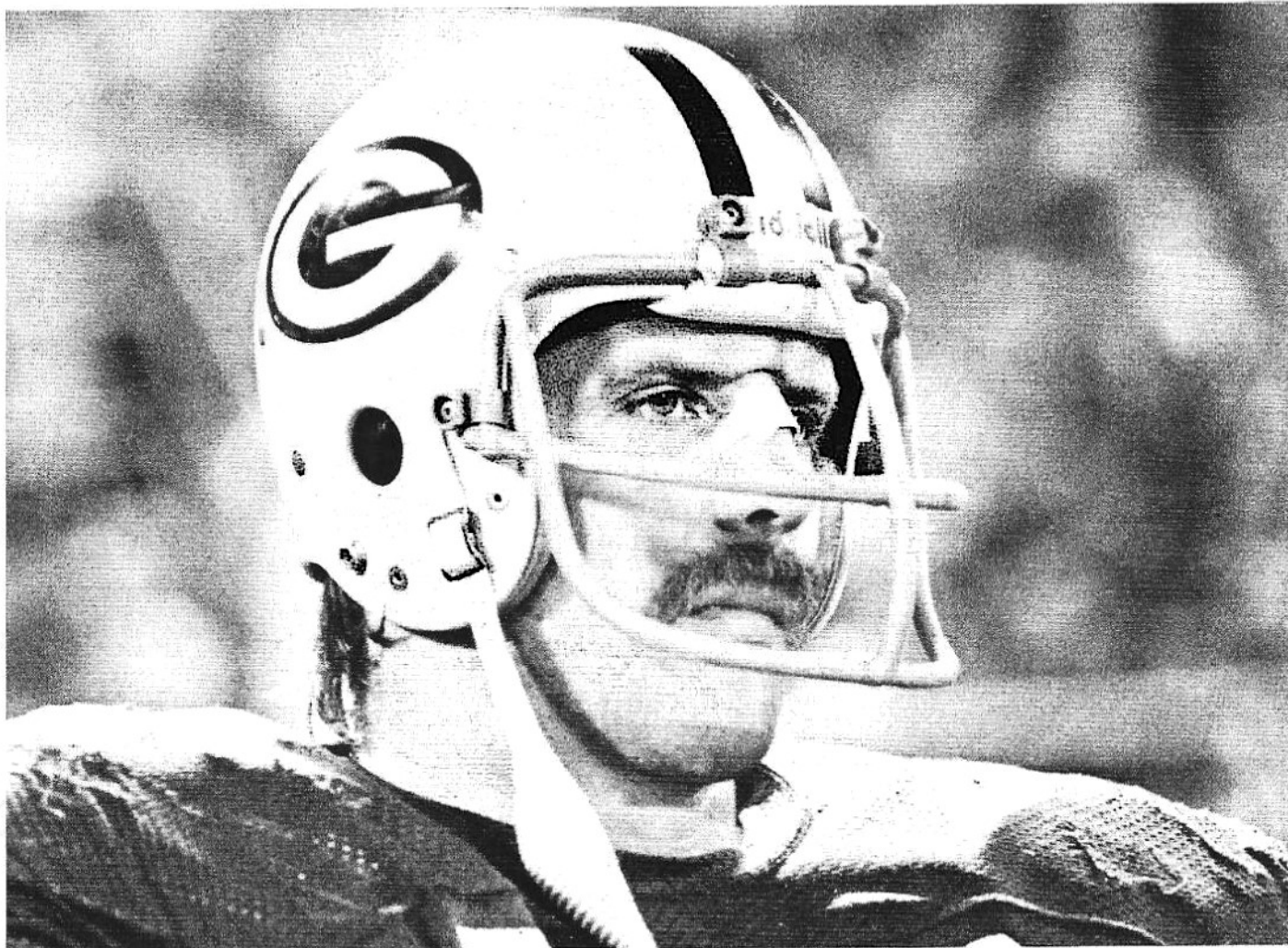
The adrenalin started flowing

last Dec. 24 . . . and it all leads up to Sept. 21, 1975 when the Big Game Phase of the Starr Era officially begins for the Packers.

Never before have the Packers entered a more exciting and more hopeful era . . . This is the first time in the club's history that a home-grown Packer has taken over as head coach and Starr goes into his gigantic task as the people's choice . . . or favorite son, if you please.

Starr has the best wishes of all Packer fans . . . and that goes triple from this writer.





*A serious Jim Carter looks to future with the Packers*

# The Jim Carter Story

*By Jon Echternacht  
Editor, Packer Report*

Jim Carter may have suffered the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune in his seven-year football career but as the eighth approaches he seems to be taking arms against his sea of troubles and working toward an injury free and improved 1977 campaign.

The controversial bachelor from Minnesota has enjoyed anything but a normal evolution of circumstances in his life with the Packers.

A broken arm, a broken leg, knee problems, fan disapproval and teammate resentment have surrounded Carter through the past seven years. One would think it enough to blow the whistle on the business and look for

another line of work. But Carter is not disgruntled with his chosen profession.

The veteran middle linebacker started training hard for the new season last March, running three miles a day with teammate Eric Torkelson. "I'm afraid to come to training camp out of shape, it's kind of like signing your own death warrant. I have been working hard on getting my legs as strong as possible for the season," he said in sun-washed Lambeau Field last spring just prior to one of his daily workouts.

The broken arm last season was probably the most frustrating of the occupational hazards Carter has yet

endured.

"I'm 28-years-old, I'll be 29 in the fall and this is when an athlete is supposed to be in his prime. I came to camp last year in good shape and lighter than the previous year and I felt I was going to have a good season, but you can't condition bones," he reflected.

"Even with a broken arm, a player should be able to come back into action in some of the later games, but then I had to have a plate put in the bone," he said revealing a long scar on his right wrist.

"I can sure tell when it is going to rain now. I get a pain in the arm." The

*Continued on page 35*

*Continued from page 34*

arm has recovered, it will continue to pain at times, but it is nothing that should hamper his play.

Carter was a third round draft choice in 1970 from the University of Minnesota where he had been captain of the football team as a fullback and a regular defenseman on the Gopher hockey squad.

The Packers made an outside linebacker out of the collegiate offensive star and he played in 10 games his rookie season. He was thrown into regular duty in mid-season of the year when Dave Robinson suffered a torn Achilles tendon.

In 1971 Carter was moved to the middle by Coach Dan Devine and replaced veteran Ray Nitschke in 10 games, a move that was quite unpopular with the fans who made their displeasure known verbally during the games.

In 1972 the Packers won the Central Division title and Carter logged in 14 regular season games as the starting middle linebacker.

In 1973 he started in 14 games, was selected as the team's most valuable defensive player and was chosen to play in the Pro Bowl after the season, but he began to have knee problems.

In 1974 he feels he had his best year, starting another 14 regular season games even though the knee problems continued, a carryover from earlier injuries in high school hockey.

Also in 1974, with friend and linebacker Larry Hefner, Carter walked across the picket line while the NFL Players Assn. was conducting a strike during training camp, and went to work against the wishes of the other Packer veterans.

"At that time the players' slogan was 'No Freedom, No Football,' and I didn't agree with the freedom issues," he said. "I felt we should work to get more benefits, which is what the association came around to placing their emphasis on in later negotiations."

The move may have brought him closer to the fans who had alienated him after he took Nitschke's spot, but it also caused some hard feelings and resentment among his teammates.

In 1975 he played in 13 games on the regular season, but suffered a break in the small bone in his left leg during the annual intra-squad game which hampered his performance during most of the season.

"I never fully recovered until the last few games," he said "and maybe the big mistake I made then was going to work on it too soon and not giving the leg enough time to recover. But I felt I had to play."

And then last year, the broken arm in training camp and the frustration of sitting out the entire season on injured reserve.

"I'm really looking forward to another season. The bones have healed and are usually stronger at the point of the break after they have healed. And the doctors tell me I can play another five or six years. I know I can play for awhile, some coaches are convinced I can't play another year, but I know I can play," he said.

Carter, who has always been known as candid and forthright in his comments, admits maybe the fans wouldn't have been as tough on him if he would have been the shy type when he was tabbed to replace Nitschke. "The defense needs

leadership at the middle linebacker position and I wasn't shy about taking the job. If I would have been the kind to say 'gee wiz, I think I can do the job,' it might have met with better reaction, but I'm not that way, and anyway we all know the fans are demanding in Green Bay.

"I may always be remembered in Green Bay as the guy who took Ray Nitschke's job, no matter how well my career goes. There will always be those who hate me for it."

Carter was as sought after for his hockey talents as his football prowess in college (he was an all-stater in both sports at South St. Paul Minn., high school) and you might think in retrospect he might have rather strapped on the ice skates instead of football cleats in the pro ranks, but not so.

"I have never wanted to change my profession. Of course when I came to the Packers there were still only six

*Continued on page 36*



*Jim Carter listens to instructions from Defensive Coordinator Dave Hanner during 1972 game.*



Continued from page 35  
 teams in the NHL and shortly after that the expansion made room for a lot more players. When I look back on the situation, I see hockey players in the pro ranks who played behind me in college, but hindsight is always 20-20. I never wanted to change."

Carter has also been quoted and misquoted about planning to retire on various occasions. "I have never stated that I wanted to retire. Last year in the frustration of having to sit out the season on injured reserve, I really thought about it, but I guess after the last game of the season when you are on a team that doesn't make the playoffs, everybody thinks about retiring, but after a few months of rest, you change your mind. I really love playing the game. It feels good to accomplish something on Sunday after a hard week of practice. It is a lot like the daily workouts. I really hate coming over here and going through all that running, but I really feel good afterwards."

Meanwhile, Carter has developed in the business world in the off

season. He owned and operated the Left Guard Restaurant in Janesville, Wis., until last year when he sold out. Last December, he bought a discolounge in Manitowoc called Yesterdays and he says business is booming. He also owns real estate in Western Wisconsin.

In addition he has applied his speech-communication degree from the University of Minnesota by doing some TV work which included broadcasts of high school games in the

*"You know my dad is my best friend —"*

area last fall and he would like to try his hand in a major network operation sometime.

His father, Bob Carter, has a successful car dealership in Inver Grove Heights, Minn., and the two have kicked around the idea of starting a franchise in Wisconsin under Jim's name.

"All this is in preparation for the time when I can't play football anymore. I have grown accustomed to some of the things a good salary can provide me and I want to continue enjoying them after I'm through with football," He said.

Carter is the product of an Irish father and a Swedish mother (the worst possible combination, he says, because it involves having a bull head and a hot temper) and he credits his determination to their example. "It sounds trite, but I know I have to live my life with me, therefore I want to make the best of it."

As far as the 1977 season is concerned, Carter thinks the Packers may still be short a couple of key people, but they have as good a personnel as a lot of teams.

"You know, my Dad is my best friend. He never misses a game at Green Bay or in Milwaukee plus he always catches the game with the Vikings in Minnesota. I hope we can have a good season so he doesn't have to take so much flak from the Viking fans back at his office."

## Tops in the NFL

### RUSHERS

	All	Yards	Avg	L	TDs
Simpson, Buffalo	290	1503	5.2	175	8
Payton, Chicago	311	1390	4.5	60	13
Williams, S.F.	248	1203	4.9	180	7
Mitchell, Baltimore	289	1200	4.2	43	5
McCutcheon, L.A.	291	1168	4.0	40	9
Foreman, Minn.	278	1155	4.2	46	13
Harris, Pittsburgh	289	1128	3.9	30	14
Thomas, Washington	254	1101	4.3	28	5
Bleier, Pittsburgh	220	1036	4.7	28	5
van Eeghen, Oakland	233	1012	4.3	21	3

### INTERCEPTORS

	No.	Yards	Avg	L	TDs
Jackson, Los Angeles	10	173	17.3	146	3
Riley, Cincinnati	9	141	15.7	153	1
Haynes, New England	8	90	11.3	28	0
Perry, Los Angeles	8	79	9.9	43	0
Lavender, Washington	8	77	9.6	28	0
Jackson, Denver	7	136	19.4	146	1
Hunter, Detroit	7	120	17.1	139	1
Darden, Cleveland	7	73	10.4	21	0
Brupbacher, Chicago	7	49	7.0	25	0
Wright, Minnesota	7	47	6.7	21	0

### KICKOFF RETURNERS

	No	Yards	Avg	L	TDs
Harris, Miami	17	559	32.9	69	0
Bryant, Los Angeles	16	459	28.7	190	1
Phillips, New England	14	397	28.4	71	0
Perrin, Denver	14	391	27.9	43	0
Williams, Kansas City	25	688	27.5	64	0
Hunter, Detroit	14	375	26.8	84	0
Jennings, Oakland	16	417	26.1	55	0
Baschnagel, Chicago	29	754	26.0	48	0
McCoy, Green Bay	18	457	25.4	65	0
Shelby, Cincinnati	30	761	25.4	197	1

### SCORERS - TOUCHDOWNS

	No.	Yds	Avg	L	TDs	TDs				Pts
						Tot	Rush	Pass	Misc	
Foreman, Minnesota	14	13	1	0	0	84				
Harris, Pittsburgh	14	14	0	0	0	84				
Grogan, New England	13	12	0	1	78					
Payton, Chicago	13	13	0	0	78					
Branch, Oakland	12	0	12	0	72					
Carr, Baltimore	11	0	11	0	66					
McCaulley, Baltimore	11	9	2	0	66					
McCutcheon, Los Angeles	11	9	2	0	66					
Casper, Oakland	10	0	10	0	60					
Chandler, Buffalo	10	0	10	0	60					
Johnson, New England	10	6	4	0	60					
White, Minnesota	10	0	10	0	60					

### PASS RECEIVERS

	No.	Yds	Avg	L	TDs
Lane, Kansas City	66	686	10.4	44	1
Chandler, Buffalo	61	824	13.5	158	10
Mitchell, Baltimore	60	555	9.3	140	3
Pearson, Dallas	58	806	13.9	140	6
Foreman, Minnesota	55	567	10.3	141	1
Largent, Seattle	54	705	13.1	45	4
Galbreath, New Orleans	54	420	7.8	35	1
Casper, Oakland	53	691	13.0	130	10
Rashad, Minnesota	53	671	12.7	47	3
Harris, Saint Louis	52	782	15.0	40	1

### PUNT RETURNERS

	No.	FC	Yds	Avg	L	TDs
Upchurch, Denver	39	3	536	13.7	192	4
Haynes, New England	45	0	608	13.5	189	2
Brown, Washington	48	8	646	13.5	171	1
Fuller, San Diego	33	0	436	13.2	43	0
Brunson, Kansas City	31	0	387	12.5	48	0
Bryant, Los Angeles	29	2	321	11.1	25	0
Metcalfe, Saint Louis	17	1	188	11.1	39	0
Colzie, Oakland	41	3	448	10.9	32	0
Johnson, Dallas	45	11	489	10.9	55	0
Marshall, Phil.	27	9	290	10.7	29	0

### SCORERS - KICKING

	XP Made	XP All	FG Made	FG All	TOT Pts
Moseley, Washington	31	32	22	34	97
Bakken, Saint Louis	33	35	20	27	93
Stenerud, Kansas City	27	33	21	38	90
Cox, Minnesota	32	36	19	31	89
Herrera, Dallas	34	34	18	23	88
Dempsey, Los Angeles	36	44	17	26	87
Smith, New England	42	46	15	25	87
Gerela, Pittsburgh	40	43	14	26	82
Bahr, Cincinnati	39	42	14	27	81
Turner, Denver	36	39	15	21	81

### PASSING 140+ Attempts

	All	Comp	Pct	Yds	TD	Int
Stabler, Oakland	291	194	66.7	2737	27	17
Jones, Baltimore	343	207	60.3	3104	24	9
Ferguson, Buffalo	151	74	49.0	1086	9	1
Harris, Los Angeles	158	91	57.6	1460	8	6
Landry, Detroit	291	168	57.7	2191	17	8
Tarkenton, Minn.	412	255	61.9	2961	17	8
Hart, Saint Louis	388	218	56.2	2946	18	13
Staubach, Dallas	369	208	56.4	2715	14	11
Griese, Miami	272	162	59.6	2097	11	12
Livingston, K.C.	338	189	55.9	2682	12	13

### PUNTING

	No.	L	Avg	Blk	Opp Ret	In 20
Bateman, Buffalo	86	78	42.8	1	52	16
James, Atlanta	101	67	42.1	0	52	28
Wilson, Kansas City	65	62	42.0	1	38	14
Guy, Oakland	67	66	41.6	0	38	13
Jennings, N.Y. Giants	74	61	41.3	3	45	11
Wittum, S.F.	89	68	40.8	2	52	15
West, San Diego	38	57	40.7	0	22	9
Patrick, New England	67	52	40.1	0	37	12
Carrell, N.Y. Jets	81	72	39.7	0	55	13
Lee, Baltimore	59	56	39.7	0	33	21

**JIM CARTER  
FORMER PACKER PUT PROBLEMS BEHIND HIM**

by Joe Zagorski  
(Originally printed in Packer Report, 8/10/87)

On a crystal-clear spring morning in the small but growing town of Eau Claire, Wisconsin, a secretary in a popular car dealership gleefully answers her ringing telephone with a sunrise slogan that sounds like it could go quite well with a wakeup cup of coffee: "Hello! It's a beautiful day at Jim Carter Ford!" Undoubtedly it is. Even on days when it is raining outside, it is still beautiful enough for Jim Carter.

As a former middle linebacker with the Packers from 1970-'78, Jim Carter has succeeded in the "real world" after pro football, due in large part to his daily credo of hard work, predicated further by more hard work. Such dedication is necessary in the commercial enterprise of selling cars, an arena in which the competition level can often equal that of his former occupation's. "Learning the automobile business took time," says Carter, at age 39 as outspoken and articulate a gentleman as an ex-line backer can be, "and learning it in 1980 through 1982 was really difficult, mainly because of the economic time."

Nevertheless, Carter decided to press onward, a choice he repeated from his unique athletic career. From his college days at the University of Minnesota (where he was a star hockey player as well as the starting fullback), to the days when he wore the Green and Gold of the Packers, Carter hung tight to his belief of perseverance. As a result, his best of efforts were to become the lifeblood of his success, today as well as yesterday.

Green Bay chose Carter in the third round of the 1970 draft, hoping to tap his bountiful resources of determination and desire. By the end of his rookie season, #50 had progressed at a most commendable pace.

"He can be as good as he wants to be," said Burt Gustafson, then the Packers' linebacker coach. "Jim always has had two things going for him – hit and hustle."

The lusty-hitting Carter played his defender role with even more zeal in his second year, as he quickly became a take-charge type of player out on the field.

"He's been playing very consistently," said Gustafson after the first few weeks of the '71 season. "He's got a lot of confidence and leadership qualities, too. He will have the team fired up. Sure, he makes mistakes – we all do – but when he makes one, he's going 100 m.p.h."

Two of the biggest drawbacks of growing up are found in the numbing isolation of making mistakes and learning things the hard way. Carter wasted little time in making the most forlorn mistake of his pro career after he replaced Green Bay's legendary middleman, Ray Nitschke, in the early part of 1971. This mistake came by word (or words) of mouth, and it traveled faster than any mistakes he could've made on the field.

"As I look back," remembered Carter, "I realize that most of the difficulty I had was self-induced. When I took over for Nitschke, I was always spouting off too much – I should have just shut up and done by job and let things fall in where they might."

Unfortunately, Carter mixed too much talk with his constant work ethic, as he tried to ignore the fact that there was still so much more to learn about the game and its people. Carter's brash statements were to become an infringement on the popularity of Nitschke, as well as a distancing tool that was used between himself and the Green Bay fans.

"I'm going to be the next middle linebacker for the Green Bay Packers," said Carter in the wake of his new starting assignment. "Ray Nitschke has been a great all-pro, but it's no secret he's nearing the end."



Such words represented the fervor of Carter's headstrong attitude back then, and in the following year a dramatic occurrence of the emotional forces in pro football left the young linebacker in an unenviable position with the Packer faithful.

Against the Atlanta Falcons on Oct. 22 in Milwaukee County Stadium, a blindside hit from burly Jim Mitchell, a 225-pound tight end, left Carter's knee in bad shape with stretched ligaments. As Carter was being helped off the field, Nitschke ran onto it amid a chorus of cheers from the throng of Green Bay followers. Carter mistakingly thought that the fans were applauding his injury, and in the locker room after the game, he was more than willing to explain his feelings to anyone who would listen.

"So many people like Ray," said the then-ill-tempered Carter, "because he's been around so long. I don't mind if they have a favorite here. But when you get hurt and they cheer, that's awful. It's depressing and humiliating."

After this misinterpreted incident, many of the football fanatics in Wisconsin began wondering whether Carter was, in point of fact, trying to make people forget all about Nitschke. It was a question that would take some time to answer; and it would be answered – if not by Carter, then by the fans themselves.

"As a result of the whole mixed-up situation," recalled Carter, "the fans booed me and I became awfully sensitive to that. To overcome that, I think I tried to be too cocky and act like it didn't bother me."

With Nitschke's retirement after the '72 season, the "angry young man" syndrome became a custom fit for the rebellious but still hard-working Carter in 1973. He improved his mental and strategical capabilities in the team's weekly film studies. He progressed in the critical areas of coordination, pursuit, and intensity. Most importantly, however, was the fact he took seriously for the first time his role as a team leader, especially on game day. All of this he did, while still keeping a chip from the fans on his shoulder. The result was Carter's first and only All-Pro Season.

Another award Carter received in '73 probably meant even more to him, because it came from his own teammates and coaches. Carter was named Green Bay's most valuable defensive player, a distinguished honor in spite of the team's 5-7-2 finish and the defense's 259 points allowed. Unfortunately, Green Bay's downward trend of defeat was just the beginning.

The Packers' record the next several years proved they were little more than an also-ran team, floundering along the scale of mediocrity. Consequently, with imminent failure in team achievements came more of the same in the individual categories. Carter was one of the many whose performance suffered during the mid-1970s.

"I had a couple of good years," said Carter, "but that was about it. It certainly helps to play on a winning team, but I don't believe I was ever a player on the level of some of the annual All-Pros."

One reason Carter's success level in pro football diminished was because of injuries. A pre-season leg fracture cost him some time in 1974; then came a nagging knee injury in 1975. These two were followed by the coup de grace in 1976 – a broken arm sustained against the New England Patriots in the pre-season which kept him out the remainder of the year.

Coming back from such a tough layoff is seldom easy, but Carter managed to survive the lack of action. "After not hitting for a year," said Carter during the 1977 Green Bay training camp, "that's the part you have to get back into. It just takes a little while to let go. It's hard to describe. It's a kind of cautious thing, but it's not like you're protecting yourself. It's something you have to do each year, really – get used to hitting and being hit again."

Carter led the Packers with 121 unassisted tackles in that year, as he proved he could come back to provide the defense with stability in the middle. He also proved fortunate enough to withstand and defeat a play that, for him, was the toughest in the game – the fullback draw.

"I'll be kind of just hanging there," said Carter, referring to his position on the field just after the snap of the ball, "and I'll always feel that offensive tackle bearing down on me. I'll step to my right and see the

## THE COFFIN CORNER: Vol. 10, No. 2 (1988)

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center set up, and I'll see the draw develop. Then from out of nowhere, I can just feel that tackle trying to blast the hell out of me. I just try to get as low as I can and fight through him. A guy like Ron Yary (former Minnesota tackle), as big as he is (6-6, 260), they run that play and he comes down growling like hell and, you know, it's a hard play."

Making the plays on the field was becoming quite a natural occurrence for Carter. Making the plays off the field was too, but in a totally different vein. Throughout his professional athletic career, Carter remained a bachelor, and a most eligible one at that. His dark eyes, thick mustache, and long brown hair mixed in well with his 6-3, 230-pound build. These attractive features were sure to give the young ladies of the Green Bay area a lot to look at whenever this "pseudo-celebrity" linebacker stepped out in public.

Added to his singular status were his enjoyment of discotheque parties and his proficiency for indulging in spirituous liquid refreshment. This combination eventually produced a nighttime lifestyle that Carter would in later years regret.

"I'm not really sure whether being a bachelor made any difference in how I spent my playing days," says Carter. "I'm sure that many of the stupid things that I did or said were attributable to drinking, and they could've been done married or single. I wasted a lot of time drinking and partying, and it could have been time much better spent in preparing for my days after football."

This spring, Carter told the Milwaukee Sentinel: "I was never into coke. I didn't know what cocaine was. The booze had the same effect. Booze is legal. We abuse it. I was an alcoholic. The last couple years I played in Green Bay there were about eight or 10 other players who were alcoholics, too."

"The professional athlete has the time and the money to do whatever he wants. I can't believe players in Green Bay have been getting into deep trouble without being drunk or stoned."

Life after football was drawing closer and closer to the nine-year veteran during the 1978 season, as he found himself splitting time with a promising young linebacker – rookie Mike Hunt. It seemed as if time had drifted back to the days when Carter was after Nitschke's job ... only now, seven years later, Hunt was eagerly after Carter's.

Emerging from the 1978 NFL campaign, Carter felt disillusioned with many facets of his pro football career – from the Nitschke situation, to the injuries, to the team's failure to win – all of these sentiments were very much in vogue when he met with ex-Packer head coach Bart Starr in the spring of 1979.

"I went and talked to Coach Starr," remembered Carter, "and he told me that I was not in the Packers' plans anymore. That was depressing and maybe a bit scary, but I accepted it as a fact of life. The next day I announced my retirement from the game."

Carter left pro football as a man who made many mistakes. These shortcomings led to too many disappointing memories, but important memories nonetheless. For within the fans' opinion of him (which never really improved that much over the years), and his more relaxed attitude and desire to play away games rather than home games, Carter learned a lot.

Possibly the most important lesson he learned was in the daily struggle to grow up and live each day to the fullest – a lesson so few of us ever learn. Located deep within the inner core of this education is the knowledge – the mark of an intelligent man stems from one who admits his mistakes, because only then can he begin to do some thing about them. Carter has this knowledge, and has lived it out in the years following his final gridiron tackle.

"I don't think I failed to achieve 'super-star status', says Carter, "because our team wasn't always in contention. When it was all said and done, the fact of the matter was that I wasn't the caliber of player that a Ray Nitschke was ... very few men are."

Thrust into the business world after his retirement from the game, Carter immediately applied himself and overcame the obstacles that often stood in his way during his years with the Packers. Before long, Carter was on a road which led to personal and professional fulfillment.



"Over the years," says the briefcase carrying Carter, "the lessons that I learned being an athlete have been invaluable in business. The adjustment from an athlete to a businessman wasn't really difficult from a work standpoint. I have always worked hard – even when I was partying too much, I would still work hard during the day. I quit drinking six years ago and that really helped me establish my direction of what I wanted to accomplish.

"Another thing which really straightened my life out was marriage – Ann and I got married in 1986, and we have an excellent life together."

An excellent crop of businesses are proof of Carter's irrepressible drive and determination. The Ford-Volkswagon-Audi dealership in Eau Claire was quickly followed by a Chevrolet-Mazda dealership in Wausau, then came another Ford dealership in St. Paul, Minnesota (Carter's hometown). Included in each location is a group of men and women who work together as a team, and succeed together as a team.

"We employ 180 people," says Carter. "We will sell about 5,150 vehicles this year and do about \$54,000,000 in total sales. I also have two leasing companies and a Budget Rent-A-Car franchise. All in all, the businesses I own are doing quite well.

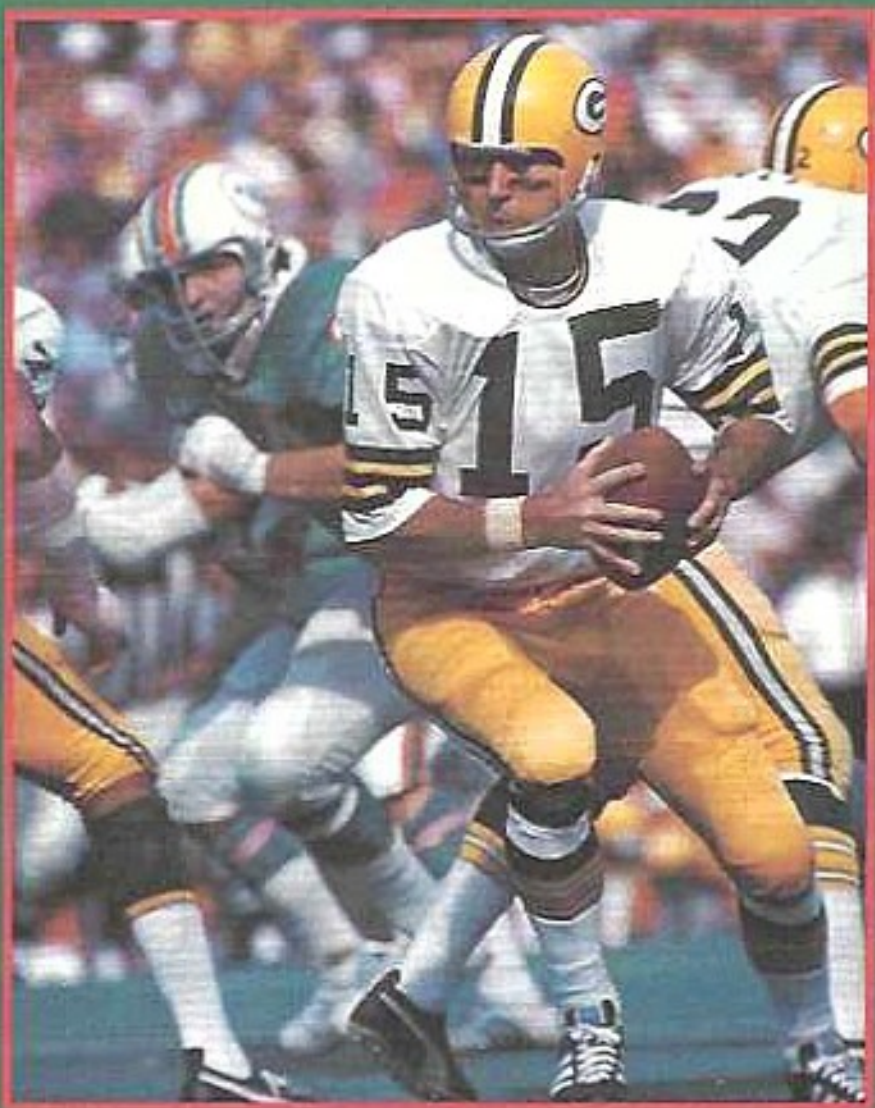
So is Carter himself. For in this brute of a former football player lies a constantly hard-working human side, as well as in intelligence which transcends his past mistakes. Also emanating from his personality is a suave and gentle business nature, as evidence by his verbal sales techniques this day at his Eau Claire dealership.

As the sun starts creeping down the resplendent Wisconsin horizon, Carter spots a curious customer coming around the end of the car lot, eyeing one of his latest Ford automobiles. He immediately goes over to the would-be buyer and levels him, not with a forearm, but with a sales pitch that easily lures the fellow into taking a test drive.

Who says ex-linebackers are all action and no talk?

# ***Downfield!***

**Untold Stories of the Green Bay Packers**



***Jerry Poling***

**With a Foreword by Jerry Kramer**

1996



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## CHAPTER

# 4

## Love Lost

Jim Carter  
Linebacker, 1970-1978

**I**f you ask former Packers whether or not they enjoyed playing in Green Bay, most say it was the highlight of their football careers. In Green Bay, they'll tell you with emotion in their voices, they felt not only appreciated but heroic. It's something they never forget.

The players probably never knew that five times—as early as 1922—fans came to the financial rescue of the team with stock drives and fundraisers. They only could sense something special each time they stepped on Lambeau Field, winning or winless, to waves of welcoming cheers, or were asked for autographs while at the grocery store. They only could sense that the Packers were America's team, not a multimillionaire's.

What is America's team? It's millions of Packer fans, long-suffering Wisconsinites, former Wisconsinites and converts who simply love the underdog or love the fact that the Packers are the only publicly owned, and hence American-owned, NFL team (with 1,800 to 1,900 shareholders). These fans supply the circulation for two Packer fan newspapers,

*make up America's Pack fan club, belly up to Packer bars on Sundays across the country and surf the Internet for information about the team.*

*Without America's team, Green Bay would be just another Great Lakes port city and blend unnoticed into the Midwestern landscape. It wouldn't get national headlines or be on national newscasts with Los Angeles, Chicago, or New York. So the fans eagerly pay their homage to their Hollywood, their Sears Towers, their Empire State Building—the Packers. It's love required. Former players often return for reunions or guest appearances and repeat the mantra: Once a Packer always a Packer. The fans and players are warmed by the mutual admiration and family-like bond.*

*That intangible bond between players and fans is the magic behind the Green Bay Packers. It's how Packer players mounted one last frozen-finger drive against Dallas in 1967. It's how Packer fans revel at the chance to sit for hours in numbing cold. It's how southern natives like Brett Favre somehow excel in subzero Green Bay weather. It's why people from Wisconsin donated as much money as people from Tennessee toward the rebuilding of Reggie White's church in Knoxville in 1996. It's how Packer merchandise (the city has only 97,000 people) was the fifth best seller in the NFL after the 1995 season. It's how the small-town Packers sell out every game outside in December when a metropolitan team like the Minnesota Vikings struggled in 1995 to give away indoor tickets. It's how the Packers have a season-ticket waiting list of 23,000. It's how Green Bay inexplicably has had a team for more than three-quarters of a century while pro football has been remapped dozens of times in all the major cities in the land.*

*In Green Bay, football is a matter of love.*

The love relationship between the Green Bay Packers and their fans was plain for Jim Carter to see when he arrived in 1970, just two years after the Packers' third straight title. He had grown up a six-hour drive west of Green Bay in St. Paul, Minnesota, hearing about players like Starr, Nitschke, and Hornung. "I was pretty excited to be a Packer. It sounded glamorous," he recalled.

It was. Until he tried to replace the ultimate football soldier, Ray Nitschke, at middle linebacker. The ugly experience—being booed by

his own fans even though of tracks be and four use given up dri a new life s fortified at the ball city in t

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his own fans—left a scar on Carter's psyche, one that irritates him still, even though he is a successful businessman who has put almost 20 years of tracks between himself, football, and Green Bay. He has three new and four used car dealerships with \$70 million annually in sales and has given up drinking in favor of community involvement. Carter has built a new life separate from football, one he's proud of. Yet he is discomforted at the thought of returning to what is considered the greatest football city in the country.

Since retiring in 1978, he hasn't been to a Packer game in Green Bay, although he would like to return for a pending reunion of the 1972 Central Division champion team. "If I ever went to Green Bay for an alumni game I fear I'd get booed. I never want to go through that again. It had a profound effect on me. It was degrading. Maybe that's why I made a new life of not being interested in football," he said from his office at Jim Carter Ford in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, as he sat behind a desk the length of an offensive line. He pointed to a wall where three helmets—University of Minnesota, Pro Bowl, and Packer—were displayed in a case, the only visible evidence that he once was at the top of a different profession. Unlike many Packers of the 1960s, he doesn't use his Packer past as a business builder, doesn't throw footballs around in his commercials, doesn't schmooze with the Packer elite to sell cars. He played in an era when the Packers were losers; losing doesn't sell.

Jim Carter acknowledges that Packer fans and the franchise are one-of-a-kind, but he remains detached from Green Bay for good reason. The good life—or a life of doing good, in Carter's case—didn't really begin until he left Green Bay.

He retired from football with \$50,000 and opened his first dealership in Eau Claire. After struggling through two years of high consumer interest rates and low sales, he slowly built a regional auto empire, with businesses in St. Paul and the Wisconsin cities of Eau Claire, Chippewa Falls, La Crosse, and Wausau. In his mind, he's finally had some successes. He has done well enough so that he could build a new, trendy-looking Jim Carter Ford in 1994 in Eau Claire, well enough so that he can downhill ski 10 days a month in the winter at his second home in Winter Park, Colorado. He employs about 150 people, and he is regarded as a fair but forceful boss.

In Eau Claire, he has been head of the Chamber of Commerce, a small business person of the year, and a state auto dealer of the year, impressive stuff for a man who believes he wasted his first decade of adulthood. "I like what I've done the last 15 years a lot more. But we still have lots of work to do. I've made opportunity for a lot of people. We're involved in the community, charities. I didn't do anything like that during my football years. The Bart Starrs and Carroll Dales did but I didn't. I'm a better person, a better citizen now. I make a good living and I hope I've earned some respect with the things I've done. My years in Green Bay [off the field] were not well-spent, not productive at all. That's not sour grapes. I lived it, I did it so I have to be accountable and responsible for how I acted."

He drank too much. He talked too much. He didn't pay enough homage. He didn't feel the warmth or the love.

If he had it to do over, what would he change? "I would keep my mouth shut and do my best. I would praise Ray Nitschke and say I was lucky to be there."

Carter came to the Packers as a third-round draft pick in 1970 out of the University of Minnesota, where he was a thundering fullback. He was put at outside linebacker to replace ailing Dave Robinson. By the start of the 1971 season, he had won Nitschke's coveted middle linebacker job. The animosity was natural. Nitschke later said, "If I was going to be beaten out, I wanted to be beaten out by somebody who could show me he had more ability than I did." Carter not only replaced a hero, but he didn't show any sympathy when he said that he deserved the job. "I was always popping off about how I thought I was better than Nitschke. Those guys [from the 1960s] didn't give up easily. I probably knew then but just wouldn't admit what a great player he was. The fans loved him. He deserved the accolades. I was jealous," Carter remembered.

Yet 25 years later he still couldn't resist one last opinion, articulated in his booming middle-linebacker voice: "I still think [Dick] Butkus was better."

But it was the 1960s-spoiled fans, not Nitschke, who made Carter's Packer life miserable. With Nitschke on the sidelines, whenever the defense made a mistake the fans booed Carter and called for Nitschke. Middle linebacker, according to Carter, is the position most susceptible

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to a variety of defensive errors and, thus, the blame. The most poignant moment came in the sixth game of the 1972 season against Atlanta at Milwaukee. Carter hurt his knee and Nitschke came in for several plays. "As I ran onto the field, I heard a big cheer," Nitschke wrote in his biography *Mean on Sunday*. "The Milwaukee crowd was just yelling for old Ray, but Jim thought the fans were cheering because he'd been injured, and it burned him up. Quite a few people wrote him letters to explain they'd been cheering for Nitschke, not against Carter." Even so, Carter still felt bad. "To me it was the same thing. It was like they were cheering because you were hurt. I took it all personally."

The backlash Carter took from fans for replacing Nitschke only "made me a more negative person, more judgmental. I had an alcoholic personality anyway, but it made me party harder and drink harder," he said. It didn't stop him from talking. He had his own television show in Green Bay, live from the bar at the Left Guard. Carter typically would have "a couple of drinks" before the show. He recalled a woman in the audience once asking if he ever would be able to fill Nitschke's shoes. "I said something like, 'Go to hell.' It was a live show. We didn't cut it. It was probably a decent question. I caught hell for that."

Carter made the Pro Bowl in 1973 but admitted not living up to his potential as a player, pointing out, "There's no way you can perform when you miss curfew and are out too late." He recalled a regrettable incident late in his career when, still hung over from a night of drinking, he sought a sexual favor at the Packer offices from a club secretary. The woman complained to coach Bart Starr. The incident was settled internally, Carter said, but not before it got into the news. It was "very bad publicity for me and for the Packers," Carter acknowledged.

Alcohol became a centerpiece of Carter's life. He bought a disco night club in Manitowoc, Wisconsin, near Green Bay, and managed one of Fuzzy Thurston's Left Guard bar and restaurants in Eau Claire. Carter also bought a Left Guard in Janesville, Wisconsin, struggled, and sold it back to Thurston. Carter, who is divorced, gave up drinking on March 3, 1983. It was no coincidence that from then on his businesses began to succeed, he said.

Carter feels that the competitiveness of pro football draws "compulsive type personalities" rather than the game breeding alcoholism. Two

of Carter's teammates, kicker Chester Marcol and linebacker Ted Hendricks, also have had drinking problems. A survey by the NFL Players Association found that 13 percent of players from the 1970s, more than any other decade, had alcohol problems during their first three years out of football.

While alcohol may have been the most common vice among Packers in the 1970s, it wasn't the only one. The use of amphetamines as performance enhancers was common among players, including Carter. Players got their jump start in two forms of diet pills, either a tiny pill with a white cross, called White Crosses, or a large pill called a Black Cadillac. Carter took Black Cadillacs. The pills produced energetic feelings of euphoria and heightened alertness—like an overpowering caffeine or sugar rush—in addition to “awful hangovers,” Carter recalled. “We never gave it a thought. We felt it was what we needed to do to play well. It gave us an edge. In hindsight, I believe I would have played better without it.”

Carter said the team didn't push the use of the diet pills but didn't prohibit them either. It had to be obvious to team officials that players were on some sort of drug because “we all sat there before games with our eyes [wide open], sweating, drinking Cokes, and smoking cigarettes. How could they not know? It was real prevalent. At least half of all the offensive linemen and half of the defensive line took it, some linebackers, some defensive backs.”

Offensive lineman Gale Gillingham began taking the diet pills when he arrived in 1966. The team supplied them for players until 1971, he recalled, with few restrictions. After 1971, players got the pills on their own in prescription form—usually pleading fatigue or weight problems—and popped them before games to gain what they thought was a mental edge. Gillingham took the pills throughout his career, but he didn't and still doesn't see it as a serious issue. “What's the big deal? Everybody in the league took it. Truck drivers still take it. It's the intent. It was to help us play better. We didn't take it to get high.” The diet pills were a form of amphetamine commonly referred to as speed. Speed was a popular drug—and earned its bad reputation—in the 1960s with California counter-culture groups who took so much of it that they could stay awake for days.

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Jim Carter's problems in Green Bay were just a small part of the confusion in the Packer organization after the 1972 season. When the team began losing in 1973, players and officials began taking sides for and against Coach Dan Devine. "The type of conversation was, 'Is he coming or going?' 'How can we get rid of him?'" Carter said. Once, when it was known that Devine's job was in jeopardy, running back MacArthur Lane took a card around the locker room asking players to sign it to show their support for Devine. Carter laughed when he recalled the bizarre situation. He didn't sign the card and neither did about half the players on the team. Carter and Lane became divided on the Devine and strike issues and "didn't get along at all at the end of our time together in Green Bay," Carter said. However, Carter now would like to reconnect with Lane and be friends again because Lane "was an excellent, tough football player and a person who had the courage to speak his mind."

While Carter liked Devine and Devine's family, he didn't think Devine was a good coach. He remembers Devine's first team meeting, when he brought in University of Missouri film to show the Packers how to cover kicks. Carter knew that wouldn't sit well with the players. He turned to Donny Anderson and said, "This is never going to fly." Carter believes Devine "wasn't prepared to deal with the issues that faced him when he came to Green Bay."

Devine himself admitted in a 1990 interview that he was "pretty naive" when he came to the Packers. "I'm not talking about Xs and Os. It was other things, personnel and how you did things." He also said that the lack of support he got from the Packer administration was damaging in 1974. "I had some good players I had to discipline, but they would just go to the seven-man committee and bitch to them and they'd side with the players. You're asking me why I quit and that's one of the reasons."

Devine now lives near Phoenix, Arizona, after retiring recently as athletic director at Missouri. He had hip replacement surgery in 1995, and his wife, Joanne, is wheelchair-bound because of multiple sclerosis. She was diagnosed with the disease when they lived in Green Bay.

The 1974 players' strike over free agency only exacerbated the Packers' confusion and internal disagreements. Devine allegedly offered bonuses to players to cross the picket line, and on July 18, less than three weeks after the strike began, Carter and Larry Hefner crossed the line.

On July 23, Chester Marcol crossed. Carter and Hefner did not get bonuses, but they crossed because they didn't believe in the strike or the leadership of the union under Ed Garvey, according to Carter.

By the end of the 1974 season, when the Packers went to Atlanta for their final game, the players sensed that it was Devine's last game. There were rumors of players boycotting the game. The situation was dismal that rainy day in Atlanta with only a few thousand fans showing up. Carter remembers a reserve Packer lineman filling his water bottle with vodka and drinking it throughout the game. By the end of the game the player was so drunk he "couldn't find his helmet," Carter remembered with a laugh. Afterward, half the Packers didn't fly back with the team, instead scattering to their home towns. Carter and Marcol piled up beer in an empty plane seat between them and drank all the way back to Green Bay.

Carter missed part of the 1975 and all of the 1976 season with injuries. He was back in form in 1977, but after 1978, which saw him become a backup. Bart Starr told him that he wasn't in the team's plans. He retired.

Two years later he was in the car business, ready to put football far behind him. He knew cars. His father owned a Ford dealership in South St. Paul, Minnesota, when Jim was growing up, in those halcyon days when he was a star high school fullback and was recruited by Notre Dame, Minnesota, and other major colleges. He also was a star hockey player, capable of playing pro hockey had he chosen. The world seemed to be his for the grabbing. "I never performed, honestly, at the level I thought I was capable [in the NFL]. When I was in high school I knew I could do things that others couldn't do. I was All-Pro one year. Why not eight years?"

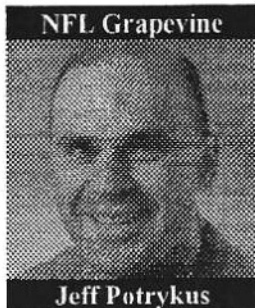
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## Gory years: Carter remembers them well

Dec. 3, 1997



Jim Carter has, in essence, relinquished all physical and emotional ties to the Green Bay Packers.

"My football career, good, bad and indifferent, is part of the past," Carter said recently. "I try not to dwell on it too much."

Carter, 49, played nine seasons with the Packers (1970-'78). Today, he lives on a 120-acre farm in Eau Claire and owns several Ford dealerships. He has not attended a Packer game since leaving the team after the '78 season.

George Dohrmann, a writer for the St. Paul Pioneer Press, talked recently with Carter about his playing days with the Packers and why he has so distanced himself from an organization which again has risen to national prominence, a much greater distance than the four hours or so (by car) between Eau Claire and Green Bay.

First, a bit of history.

Carter, a star at the University of Minnesota, was drafted in the third round by the Packers in 1970. Carter, a middle linebacker, was given the unenviable task of replacing an aging Ray Nitschke, a cornerstone of Vince Lombardi's championship teams of the '60s.

The rabid Green Bay fans, fiercely loyal to Nitschke, never embraced Carter. He, in turn, never cared for them.

"I've got a lot of regrets in my life," Carter said. "A lot of things I've done that I regret now, but I can't change them so I try to stay current and go forward."

For instance, Carter doesn't want to remember his experience on his own television show, done live from Fuzzy Thurston's restaurant. Carter first prepped for the show by having a couple of drinks and then, when asked by a woman in the audience whether he was capable of replacing Nitschke, offered a terse, three-word response:

Go to hell.

There were other forgettable moments.

Sexual advances made toward a secretary, stories of which were reported in several newspapers; too much drinking; failed business investments; and the Packers' poor play.

In Carter's nine seasons, the Packers qualified for the playoffs just once, in 1972, when they won the NFC Central Division title under Dan Devine. Overall, the Packers' cumulative record during Carter's years was 57-72-5.

This era became known as the gory years.

Carter has packed away all of his football memorabilia, save for one newspaper article. That article, cut from the Milwaukee Sentinel in 1978, is framed and hangs on the wall of his office.

The article was written after then-coach Bart Starr decided to go with a younger player at middle linebacker, effectively ending Carter's career. In the article, readers are given a view of a player who drank too much, chased women and was a bit too arrogant.

"It is the only article from my playing days that I ever kept," Carter said. "And I think it's the best."

Carter admits he nearly made the four-hour drive from Eau Claire to Green Bay earlier this season, the 25th anniversary of the 1972 division champion, for an alumni reunion.

"I'm sure I would have had fun," he said. "I would like to see the guys that are there, but I don't know. I just haven't gotten into going back. I don't want to give the impression that I've turned my back on the sport. I'm just into other things."

Like life away from football.

"I know guys, and great guys, and their whole life is that they were a Green Bay Packer, and they never wanted to do or be anything else," he said. "I know those guys, and I like those guys."

"And I don't want people to think I consider living that way a waste of life. That's just not the life that was right for me."

### **Rice to the rescue?**

After getting embarrassed by the Kansas City Chiefs on national TV, the San Francisco 49ers, while still owning the inside track for homefield advantage in the NFC playoffs, appear to be a team desperate for a lift.

A rather firm pat on their collective backs. A bit of reassurance that all will be well.

According to NFL Grapevine's well-trained spies, the hope in 49erland is that the boost will come on Dec. 15 against Denver, when wide receiver Jerry Rice is set to return to the lineup for the first time since suffering a serious injury to his left knee in the season opener.

"I think I heal faster than normal individuals," said Rice, the NFL's all-time leading receiver. "The next two weeks will tell where I'm at. If the knee responds well, why not? If I'm able to make all those cuts, if I'm still explosive . . . if doctors say (yes) it's a go."

San Francisco coach Steve Mariucci surely realizes his 11-2 team will need more than just Rice to close out the regular season with authority rather than stumble toward the finish line.

With the loss to the Chiefs, the 49ers have yet to beat a team with a winning record. Well, at least they've beaten a team -- Philadelphia -- with a .500 record. The Eagles improved their record to 6-6-1 Sunday by rallying to beat Cincinnati, 44-42.

The 49ers have also beaten teams just one game below the .500 mark -- Carolina and Dallas, both 6-7. But you saw how the Packers pounded the Cowboys, a team the 49ers struggled to beat, 17-10. And the Panthers? The NFC's darlings of 1996 have struggled through all of '97 and lost this past Sunday to the Saints!

The 49ers, who clearly don't want a playoff dance with the Packers to be held in Green Bay, have home games against Minnesota and Denver before closing out the regular season on the road against Seattle.

Fox analysts Terry Bradshaw and Ronnie Lott believe Mariucci's team will regain its stride.

"Forget the score today," Bradshaw said. "I remember we (Pittsburgh) won Super Bowls and we got our butts handed to us by the Cincinnati Bengals, who had not won a game."

"I just blow this game off and set it aside."

Lott, a perennial all-pro defensive back during his days with the 49ers, naturally engaged in a bit of public relations work after the loss to Kansas City.

"I think it's going to be fine," Lott said at halftime with the 49ers trailing, 28-6. "They'll get the job done in terms of getting homefield advantage."



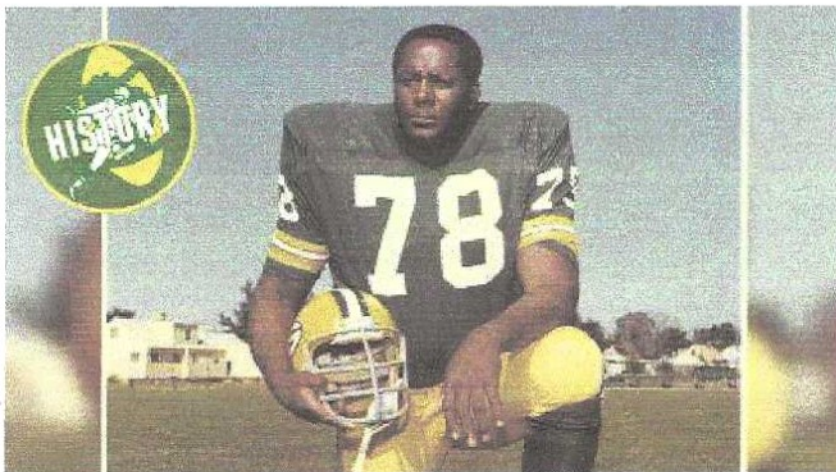
# 1972 Packers were a talented bunch

Defense, running game and special teams all stood out that year

Feb 25, 2021 at 09:30 AM



Cliff Christl  
Packers team historian



Former defensive tackle Bob Brown in 1972

Brad from Grafton, WI

Love your work. First, what is your unbiased assessment of Dan Devine and the 1972 Packers? Second, I have always had the impression – because of Packers publications – that the organization has made an effort to downplay the accomplishments of the 1972 team under Devine. Fans who saw that team firsthand have spoken more favorably about it. And with a little NFL Films research, it seems to me to be a very interesting and talented team that didn't win the NFC Central Division accidentally. I realize I probably don't have the whole story, and that is why I look to you to clear up the disconnect.

Thanks for being a reader and you are absolutely correct: The 1972 Packers, the best of the 24 teams during the post-Lombardi drought, didn't win the division by accident. Lee Rempel covered the Packers for the Green Bay Press-Gazette from 1945 to early 1974, when Devine hired him to be director of public relations. Thereafter, Rempel worked for the Packers until 2007. That's a span of more than 60 years, stretching from the end of the Curly Lambeau era to the start of Mike McCarthy's reign, and Rempel always marveled at how well the 1972 team played down the stretch. "I'll say this, I think the Packer team in the last four, five, six weeks of that '72 season played as well as any Packer team I've ever seen," Rempel told me in 2002. That's high praise from someone who covered all five of Vince Lombardi's NFL championship teams as a reporter and then had an insider's view of the 1996 Packers. To your point about the organization downplaying the accomplishments of that team, I think Lee's comments are proof that hasn't been the case. Also, keep in mind, the Packers have won 13 NFL championships and the 1972 team is one of 16 others in club history that won a division or conference title but not a league championship. Thus, I don't think they've been overlooked any more than the 1938 or 1960 or 1995 or 2003 or 2011 or any of the 10 other Packers teams that matched their accomplishments. But take nothing away from what was the only Packers team to win a division between Lombardi's last season and Mike Holmgren's fourth season. In 1972, I was in my second year as a sportswriter at the Press-Gazette and while my main beat in the fall was covering high school football, I was assigned to write about at least three Packers home games that season, including the Dec. 3 showdown against Detroit that gave them the inside track on winning the NFC Central Division. It was a frigid Sunday afternoon at Lambeau Field and the game was no contest. The Packers dominated 33-7. The following week, they were just as impressive, beating the Vikings, 23-7, on another brutally cold day at the old Met in Minnesota to clinch the division. As I think back off the top of my head, I can't remember any Packers team ever looking any better in back-to-back late-season games with so much at stake. MacArthur Lane and



John Brockington were as good a backfield tandem as any the Packers have had since Paul Hornung and Jim Taylor were in their prime in the early 1960s. Brockington and Lane rushed for a combined 1,848 yards. The offensive line was solid, as well, although perennial all-pro guard Gale Gillingham was moved to defense and then lost for the season in the second game due to injury. The defense ranked second in the league in fewest yards allowed and second against the run. Defensive tackle Bob Brown and linebacker Fred Carr made the Pro Bowl. Willie Buchanon and Ken Ellis played as well as any cornerback tandem I can remember, at least since Herb Adderley and Bob Jeter in 1967. Maybe Charles Woodson and Al Harris played at a similar level during a stretch from 2007 to 2009. But Buchanon was the AP's NFL Defensive Rookie of the Year and Ellis was an AP All-Pro. This is a strong statement, but I don't know that I've seen a Packers cornerback since Adderley have a better year than Buchanon did even as a rookie in terms of shutting down receivers and forcing on the run. Woodson made more big plays in his best years in Green Bay, but Buchanon was younger, faster and a textbook tackler before he broke his leg twice in three years. At linebacker, besides Carr, the Packers also had Pro Football Hall of Famer Dave Robinson and Jim Carter, who was selected to the Pro Bowl a year later. The only linebacker trio that I can think of that played better since the Lombardi era was Carr, Carter and Ted Hendricks two years later, only because Hendricks was in the prime of his career and Robinson was 31 and two years removed from an Achilles tendon injury in 1972. As for Brown, this might sound crazy, but he could overpower blockers and toss them around like Reggie White during his moments of brilliance. Discovered by personnel director Pat Pepler while playing for the Wheeling Ironmen of the Continental Football League, Brown was a 27-year-old rookie in 1966 and played as a reserve on two of Lombardi's championship teams. He also had his best year in 1972. Otherwise, he fought a constant battle with his weight and was never in good enough shape to dominate consistently. Another key to that 1972 team was rookie kicker Chester Marcol, who kicked 33 field goals. He still shares the

club record for most field goals in a season. The only weakness on that '72 team was the passing game. The Packers ranked 25th out of 26 teams. Starting wide receivers Carroll Dale and Leland Glass caught 16 and 15 passes, respectively. Scott Hunter, the starting quarterback, was in his second year and had suffered a shoulder injury in college that robbed him of velocity on the passes that separate great quarterbacks from the rest. That said, Hunter had something working in his favor that can't be quantified: His teammates responded to his leadership. To this day, players on that team believe they could have won the Super Bowl if not for Devine. They lost to Washington, 16-3, in the NFC Divisional Playoff and then Washington lost to unbeaten Miami, 14-7, in the Super Bowl. Clearly, Miami with Don Shula and Washington with George Allen had a bigger edge there than they did among players, but that's another subject to be covered in our book on the 100-year history of the Packers, due out later this year. For now, I'm just going to refer you to [this oral history with guard Bill Lueck](#) and [this one with Brockington](#).



# 1972 Green Bay Packers season

Week	Date	Opponent	Result	Record	Venue	Attendance
1	September 17	at Cleveland Browns	W 26–10	1–0	Cleveland Stadium	75,771
2	September 24	Oakland Raiders	L 14–20	1–1	Lambeau Field	56,263
3	October 1	Dallas Cowboys	W 16–13	2–1	Milwaukee County Stadium	47,103
4	October 8	<b>Chicago Bears</b>	W 20–17	3–1	Lambeau Field	56,263
5	October 16	at <b>Detroit Lions</b>	W 24–23	4–1	Tiger Stadium	54,418
6	October 22	Atlanta Falcons	L 9–10	4–2	Milwaukee County Stadium	47,967
7	October 29	<b>Minnesota Vikings</b>	L 13–27	4–3	Lambeau Field	56,263
8	November 5	San Francisco 49ers	W 34–24	5–3	Milwaukee County Stadium	47,897
9	November 12	at <b>Chicago Bears</b>	W 23–17	6–3	Soldier Field	55,701
10	November 19	at Houston Oilers	W 23–10	7–3	Astrodome	41,752
11	November 26	at Washington Redskins	L 16–21	7–4	RFK Stadium	53,039
12	December 3	<b>Detroit Lions</b>	W 33–7	8–4	Lambeau Field	56,263
13	December 10	at <b>Minnesota Vikings</b>	W 23–7	9–4	Metropolitan Stadium	49,784
14	December 17	at New Orleans Saints	W 30–20	10–4	Tulane Stadium	65,881

Monday (October 16)

Note: Intra-division opponents are in bold text.

## 1972 Green Bay Packers roster

### Quarterbacks

- 16 Scott Hunter
- 10 Frank Patrick
- 17 Jerry Tagge

### Running backs

- 42 John Brockington
- 23 Bob Hudson
- 40 David Kopay
- 36 MacArthur Lane
- 31 Perry Williams
- 26 Ward Walsh

### Wide receivers

- 84 Carroll Dale
- 47 Dave Davis
- 41 Paul Gibson
- 46 Leland Glass
- 22 Jon Stagers

### Tight ends

- 88 Len Garrett
- 86 Pete Lammons
- 81 Rich McGeorge

### Offensive linemen

- 57 Ken Bowman
- 68 Gale Gillingham
- 77 Bill Hayhoe
- 72 Dick Himes
- 64 Kevin Hunt
- 62 Bill Lueck
- 71 Francis Peay
- 67 Malcolm Snider
- 58 Cal Withrow
- 65 Keith Wortman

### Defensive linemen

- 78 Bob Brown
- 76 Mike McCoy
- 75 Dave Purefoy
- 57 Alden Roche
- 73 Vernon Vanoy
- 83 Clarence Williams

### Linebackers

- 59 Fred Carr
- 50 Jim Carter
- 56 Tommy Crutcher
- 51 Larry Hefner
- 66 Ray Nitschke
- 89 Dave Robinson

### Defensive backs

- 28 Willie Buchanan
- 48 Ken Ellis
- 21 Charlie Hall
- 39 Jim Hill
- 44 Bob Kroll
- 29 Al Matthews
- 37 Ike Thomas

### Special teams

- 13 Chester Marcol
- 20 Ron Widby

### Reserve lists

- 30 Larry Krause RB (IR) +

### Practice squad

- 11 Charlie Napper QB

## Steven Schumer

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**From:** Jim Carter <[hurricane.carter659@gmail.com](mailto:hurricane.carter659@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Sunday, August 28, 2022 5:04 PM  
**To:** Steven Schumer  
**Cc:** Scott Hunter; Ryman, Rich  
**Subject:** Re: RICH RYMAN RE: 1972 PACKERS 50 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

Thanks, Steven.

I enjoyed reading your notes, below.....especially the very accurate comments on Dan Devine!

Jim

**From:** Steven Schumer  
**Sent:** Sunday, August 28, 2022 4:50 PM  
**To:** Jim Carter ([hurricane.carter659@gmail.com](mailto:hurricane.carter659@gmail.com)) [hurricane.carter659@gmail.com](mailto:hurricane.carter659@gmail.com)  
**Subject:** RE: RICH RYMAN RE: 1972 PACKERS 50 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

Jim, fyi. You were a great MLB, loved watching you play back then.

Steven M. Schumer  
Sales Transformation & Enablement Executive  
CRM [Customer Relationship Management] / ISC [IBM Sales Cloud]  
Mobile: 908-672-7317 | Home Office: 204 Gates Ave, Gillette NJ 07933  
[LinkedIn Profile](#) | [Green Bay Packers Fan Hall of Fame Member \[Video, Article\]](#)



**From:** Scott Hunter <[Scott.Hunter@RaymondJames.com](mailto:Scott.Hunter@RaymondJames.com)>  
**Sent:** Sunday, July 31, 2022 10:30 AM  
**To:** Steven Schumer <[sschumer@us.ibm.com](mailto:sschumer@us.ibm.com)>  
**Cc:** John Brockington <[John.Brockington@westpacwealth.com](mailto:John.Brockington@westpacwealth.com)>; Willie Buchanon <[willieb@buchanonassoc.com](mailto:willieb@buchanonassoc.com)>; Kenny Ellis <[kenellis48@gmail.com](mailto:kenellis48@gmail.com)>; Rich/Bonnie McGeorge <[bmcge79147@aol.com](mailto:bmcge79147@aol.com)>  
**Subject:** RE: RICH RYMAN RE: 1972 PACKERS 50 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

Steven; Thanks...your data should give him a good basis for his story. Will be on the alert for his call.  
Scott

Sent from my iPad

**From:** Steven Schumer  
**Sent:** Sunday, July 31, 2022 10:24 AM  
**To:** Scott Hunter ([Scott.Hunter@RaymondJames.com](mailto:Scott.Hunter@RaymondJames.com)) [scott.hunter@raymondjames.com](mailto:scott.hunter@raymondjames.com)  
**Subject:** RICH RYMAN RE: 1972 PACKERS 50 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

Scott, per following, I've gotten Rich Ryman of the Green Bay Press-Gazette to agree to write an article on the '72 Packers as part of the 50 year anniversary. I expect he'll be contacting you in the near future. Though he told me he found the case I made for writing such an article quite compelling, I'm curious if you think I forgot to include anything. I'm still not giving up on pulling off some kind of in-person reunion this fall, but worst case it looks like Rich's article will shine a bright light on that year and team.





**From:** Steven Schumer  
**Sent:** Saturday, July 30, 2022 1:14 PM  
**To:** Rich Ryman ([rryman@greenbay.gannett.com](mailto:rryman@greenbay.gannett.com)) <[rryman@greenbay.gannett.com](mailto:rryman@greenbay.gannett.com)>  
**Subject:** RE: 1972 PACKERS: 50 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

Rich, though I know you took great notes yesterday, I thought it would only help if I jotted down the key points I made to you, literally off the top of my head, to help answer the question of what made the '72 Packer team and season special enough to write about. So I offer you the following. Again, please let me know if I can help further in any way. Otherwise, will look forward to hearing from you when appropriate. Thanks again Rich.

- Only full-season division championship in the 20+ years after Lombardi and before Favre/Wolf/Holmgren/White. Really, the one shining light from the entire 70's and 80's decades. (I mentioned that while as a Packer fan I loved that the '82 team made the playoffs, doing so at 5-3-1 in the strike-shortened season just doesn't compare to what the '72 team accomplished)
- In the last 50+ years, what Packer team had a more dramatic turnaround? In '71 the Packers were 4-8-2 and finished last in the division. No one predicted anything better for '72. Yet they amazingly went from last to first, from 4-8-2 to 10-4.
- And the quality of those 10 wins was incredibly impressive. The Cowboys won the Super Bowl in '71. The Packers were 4-8-2. Yet three games into the '72 season, the Packers beat the Cowboys straight-up in Milwaukee. Other teams they beat that were playoff teams in '71 and/or '72: The Browns, Vikings and 49ers. And if not for a return of a muffed lateral that the NFL later determined was illegally returned for a TD, the Packers would have beaten another playoff team, the Raiders. Very impressive how that 10-4 record was achieved.
- Even more impressive: The Vikings were the class of the NFC throughout the 70's. They won the NFC Central 10 out of 11 years from '68 to '78. In that timeframe they went to 4 Super Bowls ('69, '73, '74, '76). They had many Hall of Fame players (Fran Tarkenton, Ron Yary, Mick Tinglehoff, Alan Page, Carl Eller, Paul Krause). The one year they didn't win their division was '72, when the Packers did. And the Packers did it by going to Minnesota at the end of the season, with the division title on the line, and though the Vikings led that game 7-0 at halftime, the Packers shut them out in the second half and went on to win convincingly 23-7. The single most significant regular season win between 1968 and 1992.
- Those that even remember the Packers '72 team typically think first of the strength of their running game, with John Brockington and MacArthur Lane. And certainly it was one of the best in the NFL at the time. But most have no idea how good the Packers defense was that year. The Super Bowl winning, perfect season Dolphins had the #1 defense in '72 (based on yards given up). The #2 defense in the NFL that year: Shockingly, the Packers. You can count on one hand how many times the Packers have been ranked in the top 5 defenses in the last 50+ years. That's how good the Packers defense was that year. Bob Brown and Mike McCoy were stalwarts on the defensive line, with Alden Roche but especially Clarence Williams providing pass rush. The LB corps of Dave Robinson, Jim Carter and Fred Carr was superb. But the best unit on defense was the secondary, led by at that time the best set of CBs in the league in Ken Ellis and the Packers '72 #1 pick and Defensive Rookie of the Year Willie Buchanon. Along with S's Al Mathews and Jim Hill, that secondary gave up only 7 passing touchdowns the entire season – which was the least in the NFL that year.
- Consider that the Packers accomplished what they did in '72 in spite of losing arguably the best player on the entire team to injury. Though OLB Dave Robinson is in the Hall of Fame and was a major contributor to making the defense what it was, he was no longer in his prime. Pound for pound the best player on that '72 team was Guard Gale Gillingham. Yet he, along with 1970 #1 pick TE Rich McGeorge, were both lost for the year during the second game of the season. Without these two players, and led only by a 6<sup>th</sup> round pick at QB in his second

year (Scott Hunter), the offense still was effective enough to contribute mightily to that 10-4 record – largely on the running of Brockington and Lane, and the extraordinary kicking of rookie revelation Chester Marcol.

- It's a fascinating storyline, by the way, that Bart Starr, the Packers famous '17<sup>th</sup> round pick out of Alabama in '56, was now the QBs coach of the '72 Packers, molding Scott Hunter, a 6<sup>th</sup> round pick out of Alabama in '71
- Also, the '72 team overcame what history would suggest was by far the very worst head coach the Packers have had in the last 50+ years post-Lombardi. The players had little respect for Devine, who was in over his head as a long-time college coach in his second year in the NFL. They won in spite of him, in spite of this enormous handicap. How many other NFL playoff teams have there ever been where this was the case?
- And in the spirit of the NFL's "The Lost Rings" series (most famously led by those aforementioned 70's Vikings), a compelling argument can be made that the '72 Packers had a very real chance at winning the Super Bowl that year if Dan Devine had not taken the play calling away from Bart Starr as they took on the Redskins at Washington in the playoffs. Though Starr had acted as offensive coordinator and called the plays most all season, once the Packers won the division title Devine felt that Starr got too much credit for that success. So out of jealousy and spite, he took over the play calling duties against the Redskins. And as George Allen deployed a 5 man line to thwart the Packers ground game, Devine refused to implement Starr's plan to attack it and spent the entire game having Brockington and Lane try to run at it. As Scott Hunter has explained to me in detail, if Starr had been allowed to call the plays, they were confident they could move the ball against the Redskins. That confidence was built partly on losing narrowly to the Redskins in late November 21-16 in Washington when rookie QB Jerry Tagge played the majority of the game instead of the injured Scott Hunter and the Redskins took specific advantage of injured CB Ken Ellis' replacement Ike Thomas to win that game, and by the fact that in spite of the Packers offense doing effectively nothing in the playoff game and the Redskins having the ball seemingly all game long, the Packers defense held the Redskins to only 16 points. If the Packers had gotten past the Redskins, they would have hosted the Cowboys in Green Bay on December 31<sup>st</sup> – a team the Packers had beaten earlier that season. That would have pitted the '72 Packers against the unbeaten Dolphins. And though most may understandably scoff, the Packers had beaten the Dolphins in that '72 Pre-Season when both teams played most all their starters, as related well here: <https://gameonwi.com/green-bay-packers/packers-near-brush-72-dolphins/> The truth is those '72 Packers matched up very well with that Dolphins team, and quite possibly may have shocked the sports world and re-written NFL History if not for one man's ineptness and ego.
- Why do I think this Packers '72 team is mostly unknown and vastly underappreciated? A couple of reasons. First, I believe those that lived through the 70's prefer to not be reminded how truly awful that decade was for the Packers, made even more painful coming off the dominance they enjoyed under Lombardi throughout the 60's. Secondly, they prefer to not be reminded of Dan Devine, who as I mentioned earlier was not only the worst coach the Packers have had in the last 50+ years (and arguably ever), but also the very worst General Manager. In making what most any NFL observer would rank as the worst trade in NFL history -- when he gave away 2 1's, 2 2's and a 3 for 34 year old QB John Hadl -- he doomed the Packers to mediocrity for many years afterwards. Worse, he made that trade behind the entire Packer organization's back, the same way he was underhanded and disingenuous in the way he left for Notre Dame at the end of the '74 season. He is not only the worst head coach and GM in Packers history, he is the most despised and hated – by both his players and Packers fans. For all these reasons, the '72 Packers do not get the credit for what they – the players – achieved.
- Who would I recommend to interview about that '72 Packers team and season? I'd lead with QB Scott Hunter and RB John Brockington from the offense, OLB Dave Robinson and CB Willie Buchanon from the defense. Other players to consider that were key contributors that season: C Ken Bowman, DT Mike McCoy, CB Ken Ellis, PK Chester Marcol. And, of course, Cliff Christl for a historical perspective.

Steven M. Schumer

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[LinkedIn Profile](#) | [Green Bay Packers Fan Hall of Fame Member](#) [Video, Article]





## Steven Schumer

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**From:** Steven Schumer  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 19, 2022 11:17 PM  
**To:** Jim Carter  
**Cc:** Ryman, Rich; Scott Hunter; John Brockington; Willie Buchhanon; Kenny Ellis; Rich McGeorge  
**Subject:** Re: 1972 Packers overcame all obstacles, except their own coach and Washington. Do they deserve more recognition?

Jim, I thank you as well for your kind comments. I just sent Rich a separate email and said the following:

“Rich, I read through the whole article this evening, watched both videos, reviewed the additional photo gallery. Honestly, it exceeded my wildest expectations. You did a truly outstanding job telling this team’s story, capturing all the most important elements. I appreciated how you weaved in all the players’ perspectives, then added Cliff’s and my point of views. It made for an incredibly complete story. I thought you were very fair and balanced in presenting it all. Simply stated, I loved it. And I’m so glad to have learned that you genuinely enjoyed doing it. I know I said it before, but again, I can’t thank you enough Rich. This article means a great deal to me, and I have no doubt even more so to all these players from that ’72 team. Your helping recognize what they accomplished 50 years ago, at this point in their lives, I know is something they sincerely and deeply appreciate. Thanks again Rich. Great, great job!”

### Steven M. Schumer

Sales Transformation & Enablement Executive  
CRM [Customer Relationship Management] / ISC [IBM Sales Cloud]  
Mobile: 908-672-7317 | Home Office: 204 Gates Ave, Gillette NJ 07933  
[LinkedIn Profile](#) | [Green Bay Packers Fan Hall of Fame Member \[Video, Article\]](#)



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**From:** Ryman, Rich <rryman@greenbay.gannett.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 19, 2022 1:07 PM  
**To:** Jim Carter <hurricane.carter659@gmail.com>; Steven Schumer <sschumer@us.ibm.com>  
**Cc:** Scott Hunter <Scott.Hunter@RaymondJames.com>; John Brockington <jsb4236@gmail.com>; Willie Buchhanon <willieb@buchanonassoc.com>; Kenny Ellis <kenellis48@gmail.com>; Rich McGeorge <bmcge79147@aol.com>  
**Subject:** Re: 1972 Packers overcame all obstacles, except their own coach and Washington. Do they deserve more recognition?

Jim:

Thank you. It was the most fun I've had doing a story in a while. It was great talking to all of you.

Rich

### Richard Ryman

Packers Business Reporter

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PRESS-GAZETTE**

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**From:** Jim Carter <[hurricane.carter659@gmail.com](mailto:hurricane.carter659@gmail.com)>

**Sent:** Wednesday, October 19, 2022 9:58 AM

**To:** Steven Schumer <[sschumer@us.ibm.com](mailto:sschumer@us.ibm.com)>; Ryman, Rich <[rryman@greenbay.gannett.com](mailto:rryman@greenbay.gannett.com)>

**Cc:** Scott Hunter <[Scott.Hunter@RaymondJames.com](mailto:Scott.Hunter@RaymondJames.com)>; John Brockington <[jsb4236@gmail.com](mailto:jsb4236@gmail.com)>; Willie Buchanon <[willieb@buchanonassoc.com](mailto:willieb@buchanonassoc.com)>; Kenny Ellis <[kenellis48@gmail.com](mailto:kenellis48@gmail.com)>; Rich McGeorge <[bmcge79147@aol.com](mailto:bmcge79147@aol.com)>

**Subject:** Re: 1972 Packers overcame all obstacles, except their own coach and Washington. Do they deserve more recognition?

Steve and Rich-

Excellent job! Thanks for being vigilant and getting it to print.

Jim

**From:** Steven Schumer

**Sent:** Wednesday, October 19, 2022 10:30 AM

**To:** Scott Hunter ([Scott.Hunter@RaymondJames.com](mailto:Scott.Hunter@RaymondJames.com)) <[Scott.Hunter@RaymondJames.com](mailto:Scott.Hunter@RaymondJames.com)>; John Brockington ([jsb4236@gmail.com](mailto:jsb4236@gmail.com)) <[jsb4236@gmail.com](mailto:jsb4236@gmail.com)>; Willie Buchanon ([willieb@buchanonassoc.com](mailto:willieb@buchanonassoc.com))

<[willieb@buchanonassoc.com](mailto:willieb@buchanonassoc.com)>; Ken Ellis <[kenellis48@gmail.com](mailto:kenellis48@gmail.com)>; Jim Carter ([hurricane.carter659@gmail.com](mailto:hurricane.carter659@gmail.com)) <[hurricane.carter659@gmail.com](mailto:hurricane.carter659@gmail.com)>; Rich McGeorge <[bmcge79147@aol.com](mailto:bmcge79147@aol.com)>

**Subject:** 1972 Packers overcame all obstacles, except their own coach and Washington. Do they deserve more recognition?

Guys, it's out! But it's for Green Bay Press-Gazette subscribers only. So if you're not a subscriber, I've pasted the entire article below. Would love to know what you think!

Link: <https://www.packersnews.com/story/news/2022/10/19/could-1972-packers-have-won-super-bowl-some-think-so-green-bay/10183524002/>

Steven M. Schumer

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# 1972 Packers overcame all obstacles, except their own coach



## Steven Schumer

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**From:** Jim Carter <hurricane.carter659@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, December 30, 2022 1:23 PM  
**To:** Steven Schumer  
**Subject:** RE: THAWING THE FREEZE IN GREEN BAY! IT TOOK SOME DOING AFTER CARTER ICED THINGS UP

**Attachments:** Jim Carter article 092274.pdf

Thanks, Steven.

Nice of you to send - I don't remember the article, but it was fun to read. Also, pretty "cringe worthy" for some of my youthful comments.

Happy New Year!

Jim

**From:** Steven Schumer  
**Sent:** Friday, December 30, 2022 12:02 PM  
**To:** Jim Carter ([hurricane.carter659@gmail.com](mailto:hurricane.carter659@gmail.com)) [hurricane.carter659@gmail.com](mailto:hurricane.carter659@gmail.com)  
**Subject:** THAWING THE FREEZE IN GREEN BAY! IT TOOK SOME DOING AFTER CARTER ICED THINGS UP

Jim, first off, hope you and yours had a nice Christmas. I happened to stumble across the attached article after recently purchasing this old Pro! Magazine on eBay. It's from the Packers at Colts game 9/22/74. I bought it because that was the first regular season game I ever attended seeing the Packers live (I drove down to Baltimore from my home in New Jersey). I assume you already have this article, but just in case not, thought you might appreciate. I thoroughly enjoyed reading it just now. I loved watching you play Jim, and as I mentioned in prior emails, find it a thrill to be communicating with you now, all these years later. Would love to talk over the phone sometime if you'd be interested. Let me know. In the meantime, will again wish you a Happy New Year. Thanks Jim.

Steven M. Schumer  
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[LinkedIn Profile](#) | [Green Bay Packers Fan Hall of Fame Member \[Video, Article\]](#)



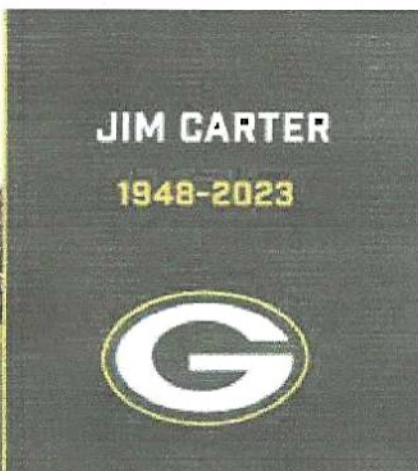
# Jim Carter was an unappreciated but hard-nosed middle linebacker

Ray Nitschke's successor dies at age 75

Nov 26, 2023 at 04:25 PM



**Cliff Christ**  
Packers team historian



Jim Carter, who bore the burden of replacing a legend and never received his due during eight years as a rugged and productive middle linebacker for the Green Bay Packers, died of cancer Thursday, Nov. 23.

Carter was 75.

Drafted in the third round in 1970, Carter replaced fan favorite and future Pro Football Hall of Famer Ray Nitschke as the starting middle linebacker a year later. After Carter made a favorable impression during an April minicamp in Arlington, Texas, first-year coach Dan Devine had him work at middle linebacker with the No. 1 defense starting day one of training camp in 1971.

Carter secured the job during what was then a six-game preseason only to suffer a hamstring injury two days before the season opener.



Nitschke started the first game, a 42-40 loss to the New York Giants, but Carter permanently replaced him the next week.

Dave Hanner, who was then defensive coordinator of the Packers, said Carter was the better player of the two at that point and deserved the job.

"He was tougher and could get through trash," Hanner said in a 2005 interview. "(Nitschke) was having trouble with cut blocks and all that. He wasn't quite as aggressive. He could run, but as far as changing direction, he wasn't the same. He was going to get hurt. That's the way all of us felt at the time."

Nitschke remained with the Packers through the 1972 season but played sparingly. He made his only starts during his 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> seasons on Ray Nitschke Day, Dec. 12, 1971, and on Nov. 5, 1972, when Devine inexplicably benched another future Pro Football Hall of Fame linebacker Dave Robinson against San Francisco. In both games, Nitschke started in the middle and Carter at left linebacker. However, in the 1972 game, Nitschke was benched after the first quarter and Carter moved back to middle linebacker with Robinson taking his place on the left side.

Over the two seasons when Carter started ahead of Nitschke, as well as in 1973 and '74, his production and post-season recognition only reinforced the trust that Devine and Hanner had placed in Carter.

In 1972, when the Packers won their only division title between the coaching reigns of Vince Lombardi and Mike Holmgren, Carter was named second-team all-NFC middle linebacker by United Press International. The Chicago Bears' Dick Butkus, arguably the greatest middle linebacker in the history of the NFL was first team.

That season, the Packers finished second in the NFL in team defense, based on fewest yards allowed, and also were second in run defense, their best showing in that category from 1933, when the stat was first recorded, until 2009, when they finished No. 1. That was a 76-year span.

In 1973, Carter was named to the Pro Bowl, the only Packers' middle or inside linebacker chosen between 1964, the only year Nitschke made it, and 2010, when A.J. Hawk was named. That was a 46-year span. Carter also was named the Packers' most valuable defensive

player in 1973. As a middle linebacker, he even shared the team lead with three interceptions.

Carter also was defensive captain of the Packers in 1973 and '74, but asked to be relieved of the duties after the second year because he had crossed his veteran teammates' picket line and reported to training camp during the players' strike that summer.

Carter's strength was playing the run between the tackles. A former fullback and hockey player at the University of Minnesota, he had good range for someone who stood 6-foot-3 and weighed in the neighborhood of 240 pounds. Although Carter had never played defense in college, he proved to be a capable fill-in at outside linebacker as a rookie, when Robinson tore his Achilles' tendon in the fourth game.

Nevertheless, once Carter took over for Nitschke, Packers fans booed him frequently and lustily thereafter. He was booed during player introductions and just about any time he missed a tackle or a pass was completed over the middle, according to newspaper accounts from that time. And he drew cheers only when he was injured and Nitschke would run out on the field to take his place.

Not surprisingly, it left scars.

"If I ever went to Green Bay for an alumni game, I fear I'd get booed," Carter told Jerry Poling, author of "Downfield! Untold Stories of the Green Bay Packers," in 1996. "I never want to go through that again. It had a profound effect on me. It was degrading."

While still playing, Carter took solace in the support of his teammates – other than Nitschke..

"Definitely, the players supported me," he said in a 2010 interview. "I had a lot of good support from them with the stuff with Nitschke, like when he'd come into a game and I'd go out, and (the fans) would all cheer. When I started getting booed, all the players – the defense and the offense, too – were real supportive."

They also respected him and sympathized with what he went through. "Carter was an excellent linebacker," cornerback Willie Buchanon said in a 2005 interview. "We didn't ask him to cover. All he had to do was go between the tackles. And he did a good job of that. But the fans loved Nitschke. They did more booing of (Carter) than anybody. That was a shame."



Later in his career, injuries also took a toll on Carter's play. He broke his leg in the team's annual Intra-Squad Game in 1975, and when he rushed to get back onto the field – he played in 12 of 14 games that year – his performance suffered. In 1976, Carter broke his arm in the preseason and missed the entire regular season. He returned in 1977 and led the Packers in unassisted tackles but was replaced a year later by second-round draft pick Mike Hunt. As a result, Carter retired before the 1979 season.

More than 30 years after his career ended, Carter returned to Lambeau Field for the first time and was greeted during pregame introductions with cheers that he had never heard as a player. Carter was again honorary captain for the final game of last season and came back in late September for this season's alumni weekend.

# Former Green Bay Packers linebacker Jim Carter dies at 75



**Richard Ryman**

Green Bay Press-Gazette

Published 4:20 a.m. CT Nov. 28, 2023 | Updated 9:12 a.m. CT Nov. 28, 2023

Jim Carter, a no-nonsense, hard-driving linebacker for the Green Bay Packers' only division championship team of the 1970s, died of cancer on Thanksgiving at age 75.

Carter is the second prominent member of the 1972 team to die this year. Running back [John Brockington](#) died in March. The 1972 team finished 10-4 and was the only Packers team to win the division between Super Bowl II in 1968, which was Vince Lombardi's final game with the team, and the Mike Holmgren/Brett Favre era in 1995.

[Carter played linebacker](#) for the Packers from 1970 to 1978, after starring at fullback for the University of Minnesota. He was drafted in the third round of the 1970 NFL draft, the 68th player taken overall, and had the unenviable task of succeeding Pro Football Hall of Fame linebacker Ray Nitschke, who was beloved by Packers fans.

"Once Carter took over for Nitschke, Packers fans booed him frequently and lustily thereafter. He was booed during player introductions and just about any time he missed a tackle or a pass was completed over the middle, according to newspaper accounts from that time," Packers historian Cliff Christl wrote about Carter.





Jim Carter, former Green Bay Packers linebacker, waves to fans during a game against the Tampa Bay Buccaneers on Nov 20, 2011, at Lambeau Field. *Submitted*

Scott Hunter, quarterback of the 1972 team, was drafted the year after Carter and took a lot of guff from his teammate, until Hunter realized he was a year older and informed Carter he was done taking crap from him. After that, they were friends. "He was the perfect middle linebacker for our '72 team and defense ... tough, smart, leader on the field, the locker room, and when we were having a cold one in De Pere during training camp or at Boot's place on Broadway after practice," Hunter wrote in an email. "As we got older and reconnected at the Green Bay Packer Alumni Weekends, he dropped the

Middle Linebacker 'tough guy' talk and told me how much our friendship meant to him and how he looked back on that '72 Central Division Championship season as his very best pro football experience. A great guy and teammate."

Carter felt like he could have improved with better coaching. Until late in his career, he did not have a coach who'd ever played linebacker.

"I do wish, in hindsight, we'd had a better coaching staff," Carter said during a 2022 interview. "I was never a great player in Green Bay, and part of that was not having the groundwork from a decent coaching staff. I have no complaints. Life is good for me. I had a nice career."

The 6-foot-3, 240-pound Carter made the transition from college fullback to NFL linebacker well enough. He was named second-team all-NFC middle linebacker by United Press International in 1972, and in 1973 Carter was named to the Pro Bowl, the only Packers' linebacker so honored between Nitschke's only year, 1964, and when A.J. Hawk was named in 2010. He also was named the Packers' most valuable defensive player in 1973 and was defensive captain in 1973 and 1974.





Jim Carter, linebacker, Green Bay Packers 1970-78  
*USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin*

"He was underappreciated, no doubt about it. But I think our whole team was underappreciated," said Mike McCoy, the Packers' first and NFL's second pick in the 1970 draft. "We were the new kids on the block (compared to the Lombardi-era players). We had a lot to overcome. The ghosts were all around us."

Carter was reluctant for a time to return to Green Bay for public events after his playing years because of the booing, but he spoke highly of his teammates and the Packers organization. Eventually, the booing ended.

One of Carter's trips back to Lambeau Field was for a gathering of players who played with and for Bart Starr. "I really loved it. We had a ball. I still feel very close to a lot of the guys there," he said.

Carter also returned in January, when he and Ken Ellis were featured alumni for the final game of the season against the Detroit Lions, and returned again in September for Alumni Weekend.

Carter was raised in South Saint Paul, Minnesota. He played hockey and football for the Golden Gophers and was a 2013 inductee into the university's M Club Hall of Fame.

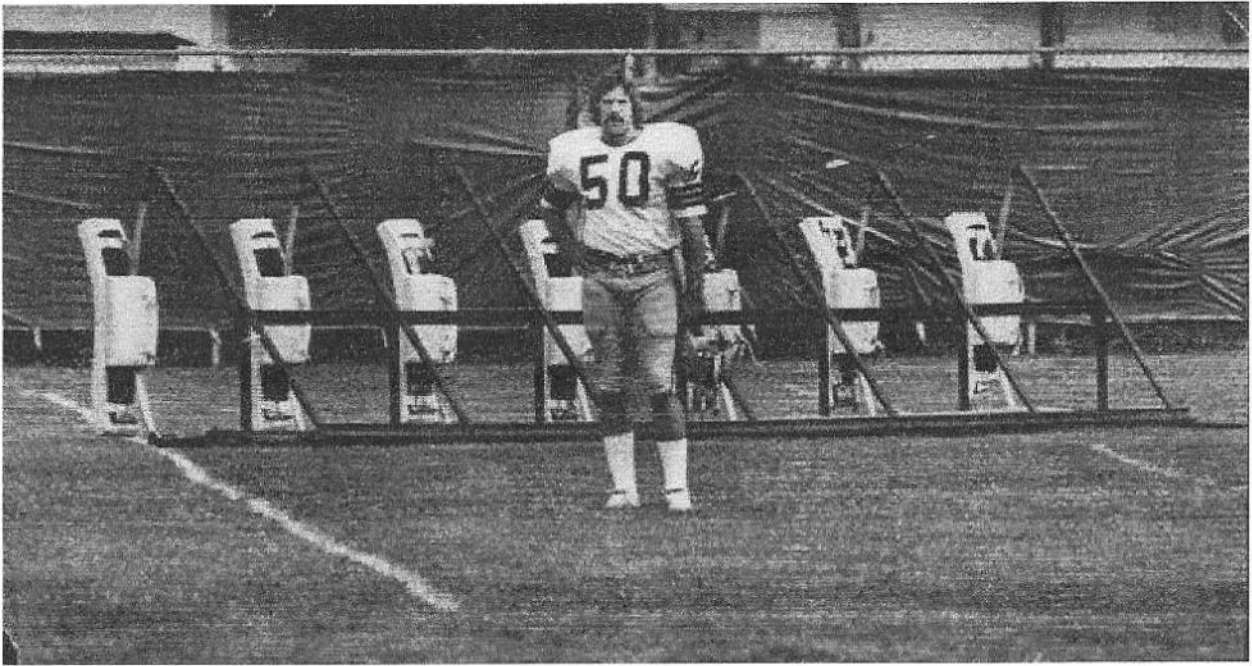
He is not a member of the Green Bay Packers Hall of Fame, although McCoy says he thinks he should be.

Because of his Minnesota roots, he was accustomed to playing in the winter conditions the Packers were used to in Green Bay. He didn't like it, but he was used to it. He did like playing in the rain and mud, and he really liked beating the Vikings, which the '72 Packers did in a key game to win the division.

"Being from Minnesota, I always wanted to beat the Vikings. I'm still that way," he said.

Carter was a businessman and spent time in Palm Springs and the Twin Cities in retirement.





Jim Carter, linebacker, Green Bay Packers 1970-78 *USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin*

As a young single guy, he wasn't afraid to enjoy himself, although it led to trouble eventually.

"I loved playing in Milwaukee. Back when I was single, in Green Bay we hit the streets pretty hard. When we got to go to Milwaukee, a few of us really loved that. It was a great sports town, a great restaurant town, and I really enjoyed that," he said.

Carter overcame a substance-abuse problem and during an interview with the Press-Gazette in 2022 was proud to point that out. "I spent a lot of time in recovery. I haven't had a drink in 40 years. And we had plenty when we drank in Green Bay and we never needed any more."

Carter said he'd given up trying to change his past, a philosophy learned in recovery. He said a lot of expressions such as that work for both football and recovery.

"Jim was a great guy. Easy going. Loveable. An encourager. Tough. Off the field, he was an entrepreneur," McCoy said. "I (was traded) to Oakland. I went

to New York. Life goes on. I saw him at a couple reunions and we really (re)connected. He called me Huck 'n' Buck. He said, 'Huck 'n' Buck, I value your friendship.'"

*Contact Richard Ryman at [rryman@gannett.com](mailto:rryman@gannett.com). Follow him on Twitter at [@RichRymanPG](https://twitter.com/RichRymanPG), on Instagram at [@rrymanPG](https://www.instagram.com/rrymanPG) or on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/RichardRymanPG/](https://www.facebook.com/RichardRymanPG/).*



# Gophers, South St. Paul legend Jim Carter leaves behind a legacy rich in friendship

Old teammates recount fond memories of the hockey and football star after his passing in late November.

DECEMBER 2, 2023 — 3:32PM

## Patrick Reusse

South St. Paul has reached 28 state boys hockey tournaments without taking the title. Twenty-five of those came from 1947 through 1990. There are many gut-wrenching defeats to be remembered for Packers historians over those 44 winters of persistent excellence.

The one I had heard about most often came not in the state tournament but rather in a 1982 regional final against the rival then called Henry Sibley. This was Phil Housley's last high school game, before he would go promptly to the Buffalo Sabres as an 18-year-old rookie.

Sibley defeated South St. Paul 5-3 with an empty-netter. According to Packers coach Doug Woog, the packed house was standing and screaming throughout the third period as Housley made rush after rush in pursuit of the tying goal.

A few days ago, I was told about another of those Packers losses — also in a regional, and in a more-shocking circumstance.

Jim Carter, a legend of South St. Paul athletics, died in late November from the effects of melanoma. He was best known as a powerful fullback for the Gophers and middle linebacker for the Green Bay Packers, but I've always been intrigued by tales of this 6-foot-3 brick as a defenseman in hockey.

Carter's partner for two seasons with South St. Paul was Terry Abram, a high school great and then an All-America for North Dakota. Abram graduated in 1965, a year ahead of Carter.

"We were also the halfbacks for [coach] Steve Silianoff's single-wing offense," Abram said. "I ran left, he ran right. And nobody liked it when they had to tackle Jim."

The 1963-64 Packers, with Abram as a junior and Carter as a sophomore, lost twice during the hockey regular season.

"We were ranked No. 2 in the state when tournament play started," Abram said. "Our first game was against Mahtomedi at Aldrich Arena. We kind of had this attitude, 'Why do we have to go over there to play this game?'"

Abram paused, then came the punch-in-the-gut line: "We lost to Mahtomedi ... 3-1. Their goalie had 56 saves. I hit four pipes myself. Worst bus ride ever, back to South St. Paul."

The Zephyrs' hero in the net was Craig Thaler.

Abram and Carter went to the state tournament with their pals in 1965 and lost to International Falls' dynasty 5-1 in the semifinals. Carter was back in 1966, when the Packers again lost to the Falls 2-1 in the semifinals.

That was Abram's freshman season for North Dakota, and they were not eligible for varsity competition at that time.

"I came down to the old Mariucci to watch our series with the Gophers," Abram said. "Bruce Larson was playing for the Gophers — 'Boots.' I grew up with him. I was in the stands, rooting for Boots and the Gophers.

"I got back to Grand Forks and our coach, Bill Selman, called me into the office. I had been seen cheering for the Gophers. Selman said I was off the team permanently if that happened again."

Those South St. Paul bonds were tight, and remained so through the decades — although not to the point for Carter to inform Abram and other old Packers that he had a short time to live.

"Jim was the best of our athletes, but he never acted like it," Abram said. "He never big-timed anybody.

"He was a private guy. I talked to him not long ago, and he didn't tell me how bad the situation was with cancer. I was very surprised when I heard Jim had died."

Carter's popularity with the other Packers — Green Bay's — was very different than in South St. Paul. Ray Nitschke was running on fumes when he was benched by Dan Devine in 1971 in favor of Carter (drafted in 1970).

The Lambeau fans were 100% hooked on the glories of Vince Lombardi then — and for about 20 more years. The crowd was quiet when Carter made a play and, when he missed one, the fans booed and called for Nitschke.

Carter's career ended in 1978 and he didn't return to Lambeau for 30 years. He was inducted into the Gophers' M Club Hall of Fame in 2013. He became a close friend with Jerry Kill and also Tracy Claeys after they came to the Gophers in 2011.

"I loved the guy," Kill said, when asked about Carter in a text message.

Carter was as offended by the P.J. Fleck spiels about changing culture, Year Zero, etc. as Kill. Even without the Kill friendship, Fleck's over-the-top salesmanship would have offended Carter.

I was talking with a Carter close acquaintance last week and we had a laugh over having had the same thought:

Too bad Jim didn't last another 72 hours to enjoy Fleck being humbled one more time in his dreadful seventh Gophers season.

As Abram summarized: "If Jim Carter liked you, you knew it. And if he didn't like you, you knew that, too."

**Patrick Reusse** is a sports columnist who writes three columns per week. Write to Patrick by e-mailing [sports@startribune.com](mailto:sports@startribune.com) and including his name in the subject line.  
[sports@startribune.com](mailto:sports@startribune.com) 612-673-7129



# Jim Carter

Jim Carter left this world after a brief illness, but on his own terms on November 23, 2023. He grew up in South St. Paul, played football at the University of Minnesota and then in Green Bay for the Packers. After his sports career, he was in the automobile business in Wisconsin. Since his retirement, he has lived in Minnesota and Palm Springs, California. Jim was an imperfect man who worked every day to become a better one. Through his passionate engagement in Recovery, he was able to help many people find their way out of darkness. His level of commitment to help others who struggle with addiction was paramount in his life, and his impact was profound. He was a loyal friend and teammate to so many, and his thoughtfulness, generosity and sense of humor were legendary. He was tough but fair, and when his light shined on you, you were better for it. Jim is survived by his wife, Victoria Miller. Jim said, "In our 30 years together she gave me a life filled with growth, learning, art and creativity, and most of all, unconditional love". His memory will live on in sisters Jan and Mary, stepson Taryn Reuter and his family; wife Venessa and children Talan, Izzy and Malia, along with many friends who loved him deeply. Because Jim's community is spread far and wide, there will be no formal service to remember him. The beautiful words he was able to receive during his illness sent him off surrounded by love. If you wish to contribute in Jim's honor, the Humane Society would be a good choice.

*Published on December 3, 2023*