



Tom's Message Board



By the People and For the People

I was 10 years old when I became a Packer fan. In my neighborhood growing up we played a lot of football in the field behind our houses. We all picked a team to call our own and while the NY Giants were the most popular – being “local” and with a tradition of holding their summer camp at St Michael’s College – I adopted the Green Bay Packers because they were the first Super Bowl champions and they had a coach named Vince Lombardi who simply couldn’t be ignored. Bart Starr, Jim Taylor, Paul Hornung, Forrest Gregg, Willie Davis, Ray Nitschke, et al were gritty and tough with a legacy of league championships, a famous Ice Bowl, and the first two Super Bowl victories. I was a proud “owner” of the Packers and added their logo to my helmet with magic marker.

I never waned from my loyalty during the lull between Super Bowl II and XXXI even though our local media broadcast the Giants and Jets every Sunday (before the Patriots got good) with only the occasional Green Bay appearance. Their 1996 Super Bowl win was accomplished with an unknown yet still gritty and tough roster. Mike Holmgren gained notoriety for coaching this championship team, Reggie White was their spiritual leader, and an up and coming QB in Brett Favre was making a name for himself. In honor of that Super Bowl, my wife Sue surprised me by arranging for a friend of hers from Wisconsin to send her an authentic cheesehead which I proudly wore to our Super Bowl party (thankfully no cameras were present).

In 2004 my 13 year old daughter – by now a Packer fan like her dad – and I made a pilgrimage to Lambeau Field to finally see our boys in person. It was the quintessential sunny October Sunday afternoon and Brett Favre, Ahman Green, Donald Driver, and company ran all over Dallas 42 – 10. Between the legendary tailgating, to the renovated stadium, to my kindred soul-fans in the stands, to having my daughter with me... this trip will always remain in my top 10 list of life experiences.

To this day many people ask me how I came to be a Green Bay Packer fan. My response is an abbreviated version of this story. This year’s team rivals 1966’s with personalities of true grit and heart. With 13 players on injured reserve most of the season it’s a miracle they even made the playoffs. That they won the Super Bowl is a testament to coaches McCarthy and Capers, and to their MVP leader Aaron Rodgers. This guy’s for real and thankfully the Packer management saw his spark early on in college when no one else would draft him. His calm demeanor, command of the field, and poise exemplify the younger Favre... but even more. He’s demonstrated true leadership at his young age (27) and I see nothing but green lights ahead for him.

I believe the Packers are arguably our nation’s team. In an age when sports and entertainment have gone completely Big Ticket, Big Money, and Big Ego, isn’t refreshing to know that there’s still one professional sports team that’s owned by the people and for the people. With 112,000 shareholders, the Green Bay Packers are owned by their fans and the citizens of Green Bay, Wisconsin. Congratulations to the Packer players, coaches, management, and the fans like me everywhere that remain true for moments just like this.

Savoring the sweet joy of accomplishment... Go Pack Go!

Tom Brassard
President

**FYI, Carnac is 1 for 1 in his
2011 predictions so far!**
(see last month’s Printips)