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Sports & Recreation

Green Bay Packers: Trials, Triumphs, and Tradition
William Povletich
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The distinctive green-and-gold team colors of the storied Green Bay Packers are proudly worn by supporters and fans around the world. Even those who don't follow professional football and have never set foot in the state of Wisconsin boast that they are loyal Cheeseheads.

Perhaps the team's allure is being located in the lucrative National Football League's smallest market with a name derived from a canned meat-packing sponsor. Or perhaps the fact that a fan can buy stock in the team and become a team owner makes the Pack truly special. No other team in the league invites that sort of involvement. And it works. Game-day sellouts are the norm. The wait time for a season ticket is thirty years.

William Povletich sheds ample light on this decades-long phenomenon and addresses the mystique at length with this comprehensive history of the team, the organization, and the fans that put the Pack and this remote town on the sports map.

More than a straight, dry history, the book shares locker room strategies by the team's resourceful coaches, including Vince Lombardi, Mike Holmgren, and Mike McCarthy, and marquee quarterbacks Bart Starr, Brett Favre, and Aaron Rodgers. Pacing this chronology by themed chapters, the author invites readers into the heated NFL board meetings, showing a young league struggling and developing, with various teams folding or moving to more inviting cities while the scrappy Packer organization slugs it out in this small factory town. The timeline takes the reader up to the team's 2011 Super Bowl win with hundreds of archival photos that greatly enhance and personalize the long journey.

The author, a Wisconsin native, has written three other books on Wisconsin sports, including a history of Packer legends, and is an award-winning documentary filmmaker.

Like any team, the Packers have endured their fair share of highs and lows. But the highs have made any criticism worth it: during the successful 2010 season, the planned roster-building paid off with a team stacked with enough talent to take them to the Super Bowl.

"It began blossoming at the top and budding at the bottom as the season progressed," Povletich writes. "It seemed there was a bud ready to blossom and take its place."

Karl Kunkel