

**The original documents are located in Box 28, “4/3/76 - Presidential Remarks at Packer's Hall of Fame, Green Bay, Wisconsin” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

### **Copyright Notice**

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Gerald Ford donated to the United States of America his copyrights in all of his unpublished writings in National Archives collections. Works prepared by U.S. Government employees as part of their official duties are in the public domain. The copyrights to materials written by other individuals or organizations are presumed to remain with them. If you think any of the information displayed in the PDF is subject to a valid copyright claim, please contact the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN....

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS AT PACKERS' HALL OF FAME GREEN  
BAY, WISCONSIN, SATURDAY, APRIL 3, 1976

Green Bay has the most famous football tradition in the world, and it's a pleasure to be back here visiting with Bart Starr and others who have continued that tradition which began in 1919.

I look back at my football years with a sense of pride, and I think most Americans who have played the game, feel the same way.

Green Bay's history is one of a winner, dating all the way back to the founder and head coach Curly Lambeau.

I feel a special affinity for Coach Lambeau. After I played in the East-West Shrine game in San Francisco on January 1, 1935, Coach Lambeau offered me a job with the Packers. And after I played in the College All-Stars game in Chicago against the Bears the following August, the Detroit Lions offered me a job. Both teams offered me 2,800 dollars for a 14-game season and back in 1935 that looked like an awful lot of money.

But Ducky Pond, the head coach at Yale, offered me a job for less money -- 2,400 dollars -- which gave me a chance to stay in football but also pursue a long-held ambition to attend law school. I became assistant line coach, junior varsity coach and coach of the Yale boxing team.

I had a tough time convincing the dean of the law school that I could handle law school and my jobs at the same time -- but he finally relented. I entered Yale law school in 1938 and in 1941 I graduated in the top third of my class.

Football made it all possible just as Curly Lambeau made the Packers possible.

Lambeau called the Packers a regional religion and he knew what he was talking about.

It is only fitting that Green Bay have its own Hall of Fame -- the first in the NFL. The Packers have always been first. They were the first professional team, the first to win three consecutive championships, and they were the first two Super Bowl champions.

Starr was the Green Bay quarterback in those first two Super Bowls. I have always been terribly proud of Bart as a player and as an American.

I have seen this team regain its pride and its self-confidence in just one short season, and one of the principle reasons is Coach Starr, who was an apt pupil of Vince Lombardi.

Lombardi realized we are competitive creatures. He wanted the game played correctly, fairly, but he wanted the game played with everything you had, and then a little bit more.

Let me quote him in closing. Lombardi said:

"Running a football team is no different from running any other kind of organization -- an army, a political party, a business. The principles are the same. The object is to win ..."

There will always be a Lambeau among us, a Lombardi, a Starr, to take us places we never thought we could reach.

Green Bay has given more than football to America. It has helped build a disciplined and moral way of life of which we are all proud.

And for this legacy, all America remains in the debt of Green Bay and the Green Bay Packers.

# # #