

# Packer backer savors mean green season

BY WILLIAM COUTANT  
STAFF WRITER

**D**riving down the hill heading east on Shawanese near downtown Farmington, you might catch a glimpse of a Green Bay Packers flag flying respectfully under the U.S. flag.

That is where die-hard Green Bay fan Jim Dinsmore lives with his wife Mary Anne, their 16-month-old daughter Olivia and their two dogs.

"I grew up in small-town Wisconsin, about 20 miles north of Milwaukee," says the marketing and communications specialist who writes technical publications for the auto industry. "You grew up a Packer fan."

And Dinsmore, 36, who played high school ball before attending the University of Minnesota, says he doesn't mind the team's prosperity. Heading into Sunday's game at the Silverdome, the Pack is 11-3 including the 41-6 shellacking of Denver, the AFC's top team.

But Dinsmore is not gloating a bit. "They (Packers) stunk for years and years," he said. "People my dad's age were big fans during the great years of Vince Lombardi. We've had some bad teams in the meantime."

In fact, recent Packer history to the contrary, cheese heads and Lions fans have both had their share of dismal seasons.

With the exception of the early 1960s, the 10-4 team of 1972, the 10-6 team of 1989 and last year's 11-5 Packers, there hasn't been a lot to cheer about in "Title Town, USA."

And if Detroit fans can point to some losing coaches such as John Keadie (1942, 0-8), Tommy Hudspeth (1976-77, 11-13) and Darryl Rogers (1985-88, 18-40), the Packers have a few who have not quite lived up to Vince Lombardi's standards.

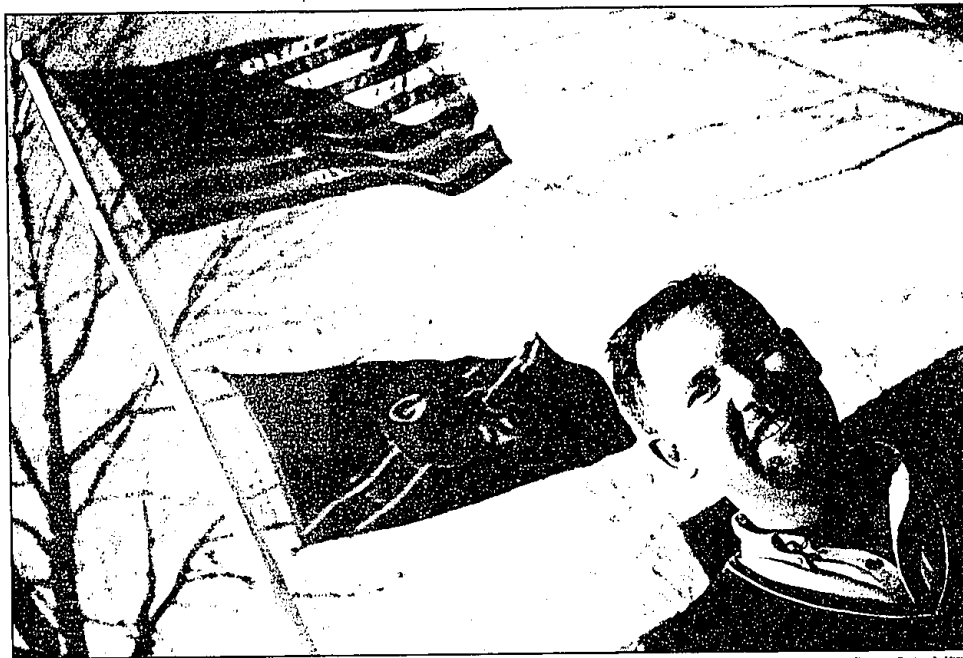
Sure, the famed coach was 98-30-4 during his tenure from 1959-1967. But Gene Ronzani (1950-53, 14-31-1), Lindy Infante (1988-91, 24-40) and Lombardi's predecessor Ray "Scooter" McLean (1958, 1-10) won't win any accolades. With the exception of Lombardi and Earl "Curly" Lambeau (1921-49, 212-106-21), no Packer coach other than current head coach Mike Holmgren have had winning records.

Dinsmore has had to settle for a lot of losing seasons and curious draft choices, but he's definitely enjoying the ride now.

"Most years that I've been here I've gone with a friend to the Silverdome once a year to watch them (Packers) lose," he said.

Dinsmore also raised the University of Wisconsin flag a few times, especially when the Badgers have fared well. But he doesn't rub it in people's faces, especially the many friends at work in the auto industry who still root for the Honolulu blue and silver.

"It's not a matter of thinking that the Packers have some kind of dynasty," he said. "Packer fans are just enjoying the good times. It's not something we expect every year."



STAFF PHOTO BY SHARON LEMIEUX

**By the Bay:** Farmington resident Jim Dinsmore stuck by his beloved Green Bay Packers football team during the lean times, which makes this season's success all the more enjoyable.

And even though Dinsmore was able to see Green Bay's exciting overtime win over San Francisco in week seven, the loss at Dallas in week 11 reminds him that success isn't always wearing the green and gold.

"One thing about people from Wisconsin is that we like to laugh at ourselves," he says, explaining the phenomenon of adults wearing what looks like a wedge of cheese as a hat. "No, I haven't gone that far. I'm not that much of a fan."

This from a man who went with his wife to a

Packer game on their honeymoon and stands with his weekly "Packer Report" newspaper.

"The game (honeymoon weekend) was against the Vikings," he recalls. "We lost miserably."

Dinsmore loves living in Farmington. He followed his parents when they moved from Wisconsin and has stayed even though they have moved back.

"I like the Midwest," he said. "Really, outside of Wisconsin, this is probably the best place I could

be. To be honest, I'd like to see the Lions do all right, except when they play Green Bay."

That game is this weekend. And although Detroit has had a disappointing season, Dinsmore has been brought up on tales of the "Thanksgiving massacre" of 1962 when the Lions handed the great Packer team its only loss of the season.

"My wife just knows that for 16 weeks, or hopefully longer, I'll be either in front of the TV at home, in a bar or a couple of times at a game."



PHOTOS BY TOM HOFFMEYER

**It's a wrap:** Farmington Area Goodfellows volunteer Pat Teeple helps separate toys into their appropriate age groups to prepare them to be packaged Monday.



**Towels to go:** Megan Donoghe, left, and Jenny Reeve, both of Farmington Hills, fold dish towels that will be included in packages delivered to needy seniors.

## Goodfellows get ready to deliver goods

**G**ood news to a Goodfellow: The number of volunteers increases while those needing assistance decreases.

That's the case in the Farmington area this holiday season. Farmington area Goodfellows make their deliveries Saturday.

Some 165 families will receive help, down from 225 last year. Seniors getting assistance is down to 130 from 160 the previous year.

By contrast, 75 National Honor Society students and 45 individuals with vans have pledged to help make deliveries. Some 14 people helped pack items at the Goodfellows Farmington Hills warehouse Monday.

"The work gets done real quick when you have that type of help," Chairman Dick Topper said.



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