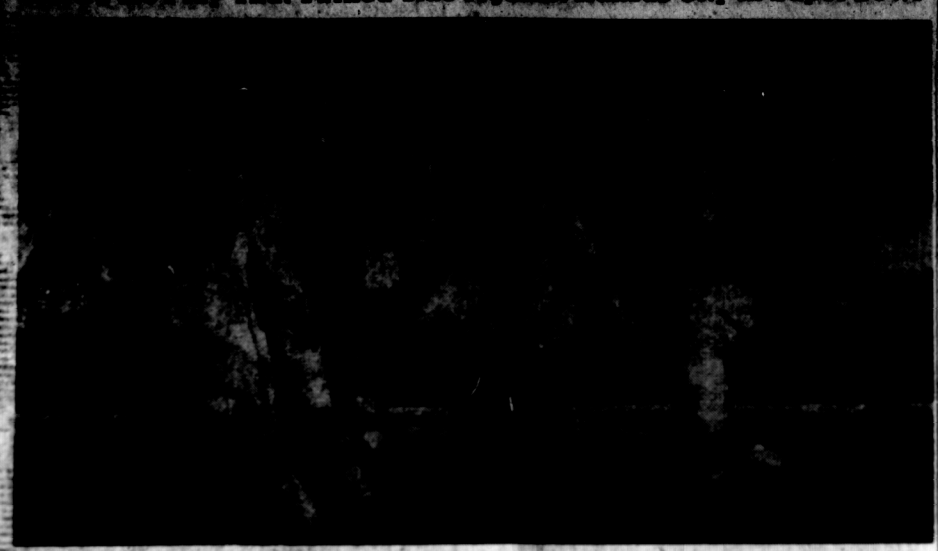
Play That Turned Tide Against Kansas City in Super Bowl



THIS INTERCEPTION AND RUNBACK BY PACKERS' WILLIE WOOD (24) SET UP THE KEY TOUCHDOWN
Covering on Play Are Mike Garrett (21), Henry Jordan (74) and Dave Hill (73). Wood Was Stopped on 5-Yard Line (AP Wirephoto)

Interception of Dawson Pass Puts Packers Into Perfect Victory Orbit

By LARRY FELSER
Buffalo News Staff Reporter

LOS ANGELES, Jan. 16 — A small boy dashed out to the Tunnel 21 concession stand Sunday during halftime intermission at the Los Angeles Coliseum and talked the vendor into exchanging a Green Bay pennant for one celebrating the Kansas City Chiefs.

If the precocious opportunist had any real foresight he would have returned at 2 minutes 5 seconds of the third quarter to get back his Green Bay flag.

At that precise moment, the National League champions settled whatever question there was about who had the best football team in the universe.

Len Dawson, the Kansas City quarterback who had muffled the NFL horsblowers for the previous 20 minutes, made the fatal error at that moment. He threw a pass he was unprepared to throw. Willie Wood, the Packer free safety, pounced upon it and returned it 50 yards to the Chiefs' 5.

That interception was the iceberg in Kansas City's Titanic. It turned a vicious, close football game into a 35-10 humiliation for the Chiefs and the American League in the first Super Bowl game ever played before a disappointing 63,036 in sunny Memorial Coliseum.

Dawson Mistake Bore The Mark of Fatality

For the 2 weeks preceding this game, anyone who had even worn a pair of hip pads harped on the idea of the essential role mistakes play in a game like this one.

As it turned out there were lots of mistakes.

Just as any quarterback in the AFL could have predicted, the Chiefs corner backs, Willie Mitchell and Fred Williamson, made three or four apiece.

SPORTS

Williamson was knocked out tackling Taylor and was assisted from the game, but recovered on the sidelines.

Andy Rice, the over-matched rookie defensive tackle, contributed some cheap yardage to the Packer attack.

Punter Jerrell Wilson got off a line-drive kick, which was returned for twice as much yardage as it should have been.

Even the Packers made mistakes. They jumped offsides. A jittery lineman cost his team a touchdown by moving illegally before Bart Starr looped a 64-yard pass to Carroll Dale. They seemed hypnotized by the running of Mike Garrett.

But none of these mistakes bore the mark of fatality.

Dawson's did.

It was the first time Green Bay had blitzed all afternoon. Lee Roy Caffey bore down hard upon Dawson. In his haste to deliver it to tight end Fred Arbanas, Len hung the ball in front of Wood. Willie clutched it and raced to the 5 before he was struck down.

Packers Begin to Play Super Brand of Football

"We were kind of sparring, feeling them out," said Willie Davis, the defensive captain. "That interception stimulated us."

Elijah Pitts swept between Rice and defensive end Chuck Hurston into the end zone on the first play after the interception.

All the verbal bruises the AFL had been taking from the NFL for seven seasons would turn to physical ones.

The Packers started to play the magnificent football of which they are capable. And Dawson, who kept his poise 2 weeks ago in the Buffalo game when the Bills punished him eight times for losses, finally lost it to Green Bay.

Otis Taylor, the great KC flanker, lost his double coverage and broke open on a sideline pattern. Dawson's pass fell 5 yards in front of him.

Faced with a 3-and-1 situation, Dawson sent power back Bert Coan on a sweep and linebacker Caffey dropped him for a 3-yard loss.

His teammates took a long look at Lenny the not-so cool and their palms began to sweat.

Dawson Loses His Poise, Starr Gains Momentum

Offensive tackle Dave Hill, who had made an anonymous party of Davis in the first half, caved in and Davis became Dawson's chief tormentor. Tackle Henry Jordan began to solve guard Ed Budde. The "moving pocket," which allowed Dawson to complete 11 of 15 passes in the first half, was foiled when Packer linebacker Dave Robison was sent to assault it.

And while Dawson lost his poise, Starr gathered his.

Bart rang up first downs like a super market cash register on Saturday morning.

A 13-yard pass to Max McGee made it 28-10 just before the third quarter ended.

Pitts smacked over from the 1 midway in the last quarter and the AFL contingent was wishing it would get over with.

How could it end this messily?

How could a team which battled the seasoned Packers nearly even for the first half, end up a bloated punching bag?

The answer is Bart Starr, the great Green Bay quarterback who was named the game's outstanding player.

Starr was confronted with nine third-down situations in the first half and converted seven of them into first downs. He went 5 for 7 in the second.

"He's a great quarterback," said KC tight end Fred Arbanas in admiration.

Even in the First Half, Starr Was the Best

Even in the first half, when most of the talk was on the gritty show put up by KC, Starr was the best. He fired 37 yards to McGee for the first score.

The Chiefs tied it on Dawson's 7-yarder to Curtis McClinton after a 31-yard Dawson-Taylor pass.

But Starr came back — twice, in fact.

On a 3-and-1 situation, he made Williamson bite for his play-action fake and passed for a 64-yard scoring bomb to Dale. It was called back for illegal procedure.

Eleven downs later he dispatched Jim Taylor around left end for a touchdown.

The Chiefs made one more stab on Mike Mercer's 30-yard fieldgoal before intermission.

But as middle linebacker Sherill Headrick put it:

"The turning point was when Green Bay came out for the second half. They decided we were a better club than they thought, so they knew they had to play ball.

"They did."

SCORING

Green Bay	7	7	14	7—35
Kansas City	0	10	0	0—10

GB—McGee 37 pass from Starr (Chandler kick).
KC—McClinton 7 pass from Dawson (Mercer kick).
GB—J. Taylor 14 run (Chandler kick).
KC—FG, Mercer 31.
GB—E. Pitts 1 run (Chandler kick).
GB—McGee 13 pass from Starr (Chandler kick).
GB—E. Pitts 1 run (Chandler kick).

TEAM STATISTICS

	GB	KC
First downs	21	17
Rushing yardage	128	77
Passing yardage	226	142
Passes	16-24	11-22
Passes intercepted by	1	1
Punts	4-43.3	7-45.3
Fumbles lost	0	0
Yards penalized	40	36

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

RUSHING

G. Bay	Att.	Yds.	K. City	Att.	Yds.
J. Taylor	16	53	Dawson	3	34
Pitts	11	45	Garrett	4	17
Anderson	4	30	McClinton	4	14
Grabowski	2	2	Beathard	1	4
			Coan	3	1

PASSING

G. Bay	Att.	Comp.	Yds.	TD	Int.
Starr	23	16	250	2	1
Bratkowski	1	0	0	0	0
K. City	Att.	Comp.	Yds.	TD	Int.
Dawson	27	16	211	1	1
Beathard	5	1	17	0	0

PASS RECEIVING

G. Bay	No.	Yds.	TD	K. City	No.	Yds.	TD
McGee	7	138	2	Burford	4	67	0
Dale	4	59	0	O. Tay'r	4	57	0
Pitts	2	32	0	Garrett	3	28	0
Fleming	2	22	0	McCl'n	2	14	1
J. Tay'r	1	-1	0	Arbanas	2	30	0
				Carolan	1	7	0
				Coan	1	5	0

Super Bowl QBs in Trouble

THAT K. C. HELMET BELONGS TO LEN DAWSON
Hit By Steve Wright (72), Jim Weatherwax, Dave Hathcock (45)

Top Six NFL Teams Better Than K. C., Says Lombardi

By Buffalo News Staff Reporter

LOS ANGELES, Jan. 16—The telegrams taped on the dressing room walls were like mocking props.

Wild Woody's Grocery Department wished the Chiefs well. Zeppis Pizza Parlor urged their heroes to go get 'em.

But even the combined resources of the American Telephone & Telegraph Company couldn't have helped the Kansas City Chiefs in the second half of Sunday's Super Bowl game and they knew it.

• • •

DID YOU LOSE your poise?" A Dallas writer asked quarterback Lenny Dawson.

Dawson might have lost it on the field, but he kept it in the dressing room. He answered the question politely.

"No, I don't think I did," he said.

"It's not the end of the world," said Fred Arbanas. "But the way we played in the last half."

In most losers dressing rooms the contestants are either silent or sullen.

The Chiefs were nearly apologetic.

• • •

OVER IN the Packer's dressing quarters, Vince Lombardi patronized the Chiefs and the AFL, as he is inclined to do.

("They don't rank with the top six in the NFL, but they're not down with the bottom six, either. Somewhere in between.")

• • •

THE AFL WILL LISTEN to this for the next six months, at least, and the Kansas City players know they are to blame for it.

• • •

LEN DAWSON [illegible]

Dawson nodded.

"Yes . . . Yes."

• • •

"WE WANTED to go at them," Hank Stram, the Kansas City coach explained. "They were playing deep and off our receivers. We wanted to throw in front of them."

• • •

STRAM TRIED to go further in justifying his game plan, but it all seemed futile.

It was obvious that he had been outcoached by the preening Lombardi.

Stram's tripple-stack defense and moving pocket gave the Packers a lot of trouble in the first 30 minutes, but those problems were solved at halftime.

FACKERS BEST IN PRO FOOTBALL SUNDAY

By Jack Kemp

Chiefs Learn Even One Mistake Can Cost Them, Says Bills' QB

Special to Buffalo Evening News

LOS ANGELES, Jan. 16 — There were two football games here Sunday. The first half comprised one and the second half the other. The first game or the first half proved that Kansas City had a good team and could move the ball by running and passing against Green Bay.

Unfortunately, a half doesn't make a game or a team. The second game or second half proved how costly it is to make a mistake against such a finely tuned team as the Packers. An errant Kansas City pass gave the Packers the impetus they never lost as they went on to demolish the Chiefs, 35-10, in the first Super Bowl classic.

It showed that Green Bay is what this bowl game implied, a super team. They have established their dynasty in the 60's the way the Cleveland Browns achieved theirs in the '50s.

A Super Team Sunday

Sunday no team in pro football could have stayed with the Packers. They are truly a super team.

Although I don't buy the theory that a single play makes or breaks a game, particularly when there is sufficient time for a team to come back, Kansas City was not the same club after Willie Wood's interception of Len Dawson's third-quarter pass.

Of course, in analyzing the cause and effect of a single play you must look at the over-all team and not merely at one player. Dawson threw a bad pass which was picked off, and many observers point to that as the turning point of the game.

But in the second half, before and after the interception, Green Bay was having much success in beating the Chiefs up front where it counts. This resulted in Dawson's being pressured more frequently and eventually caused his individual downfall and collectively the downfall of his team.

Force Dawson's Hand

Leroy Aldridge and especially Willie Davis tore apart the Chiefs' protection. Every time Dawson would roll out in the "moving pocket" Green Bay's strong linebackers Dave Robinson or Lee Roy Caffee, would shoot in to force Dawson's hand, something they had not done in the first half.

I was equally impressed by Bart Starr whom everyone said could not come up with a great game twice in a row. He did and proved himself the biggest difference between the teams.

As I mentioned in The Buffalo Evening News last week, Starr had been frequently pinned off by pro football observers as an average quarterback playing with a great team. Sunday he proved himself a great quarterback on a great team.

Not having had an opportunity in the last seven years to observe the National Football League close at hand, two things stand out in my mind. One, quite obviously, Green Bay has earned its consistent superiority in the NFL by being a team that makes a minimum of errors and is quick to capitalize upon mistakes of its opposition.

Bills Beat K. C., 28-14

Two, less obvious, is that Kansas City showed in the first half when you minimize your own errors, a team such as the Chiefs or our Buffalo Bills is capable of giving the Packers all they can handle.

Naturally, much credit must be given Green Bay and Coach Vince Lombardi. The Packers earned the right to be the first team recognized as world champions.

Still, I can't help but remember that on the one day when the Bills were sharp as a unit, we defeated Kansas City, 28-14.

Still later, as the same clubs met when both were physically and emotionally at their peak, the final score was K. C. 31, Buffalo 7.

So half the Packers today. Tomorrow they'll have to prove themselves all over again. Football is that kind of a game.

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K.C.'s Stacked Defense Hampers Pass Rush, Says Vince Lombardi

By AL COHEN
Buffalo News Staff Reporter

LOS ANGELES, Jan. 16 — "They dared us to pass. So we did," said Vince Lombardi, coach of the world champion Green Bay Packers by reason of their 35-10 victory here Sunday over the Kansas City Chiefs, in the first Super Bowl football game in history.

"The Chiefs stacked their defense, which dictated we should pass. They do a lot of unusual things on defense," the Green Bay coach continued, "but they can't get a good rush on the passer with that stacked defense."

Lombardi also said he doesn't think the Chiefs are as good as some of the top teams in the National League.

"They're a good team with lots of speed, but don't compare with some of our better teams," he remarked, then added, "I have nothing more to say."

Game Ball Pleases Lombardi

Presented the game ball, the 12th voted him in eight years as head coach, Lombardi commented:

"This I'll cherish. It's something extra special."

The American League coach, advised of the Lombardi remarks said: "That may come back to haunt him one day."

Other Packers were more generous in their evaluation of the Chiefs.

Said quarterback Bart Starr, voted the game's most valuable player: "They're a good team. We just executed better in the second half. It's that simple."

On the TD to Max McGee, the first of the game, Starr said: "On their blitzing, we know Max would be rough to cover, so I threw long. It wasn't very good, but Max made a wonderful reception."

And Max replied jokingly: "And some of the passes you threw were behind me."

"I Gambled," Says Wood

Defensive safety Willie Wood, whose key interception at the start of the third was believed to break the game open, commented:

"We made some adjustments during intermission because we were disappointed with our defense in the first half. We talked it over and decided to disregard the play-action pass, which invites defensive mistakes. So I covered Fred Arbanas and gambled, taking it on the shoulder.

"But there was too much indecision on my part on the 50-yard return and Mike Garrett finally caught me on the 5-yard line. Mike and I, incidentally, are friends and I've invited him to my wedding on Feb. 5."

No Surprises for Jordan

Said Henry Jordan, the Packers defensive tackle: "They didn't surprise us with anything new. We had faced all the formations they presented.

"But, as soon as we adjusted, we controlled the play. They've got a lot of strong players, but they're not too maneuverable. That (Len) Dawson is quick as a cat."

At the other end of the dressing room, Chiefs' Coach Hank Stram was parked in a corner as steam from the showers brought beads of perspiration to his forehead. He said he had no excuses.

Dawson Threw Off Balance

"They're the world champions now, and we congratulated them," Stram said. "There wasn't any one thing to which we could point for the loss. The intercepted pass to Arbanas seemed flat. Lenny (Dawson) threw the ball before he got set. I think the American League was well represented and provided a good game."

Said E. J. Holub, K. C. linebacker: "Right now they're the best. But we'll be back."

"Packers Got the Big Play"

Said Curt Merz, Chiefs' guard: "The interception was the turning point and we had to play catch-up football."

Tangle With Buck? 'Not Me'—Taylor

Special to Buffalo Evening News

LOS ANGELES, Jan. 16 —"That big devil is too big to tangle with," said Green Bay's Jim Taylor when asked about his joust with Buck Buchanan late in Sunday's Super Bowl football game. Big Buck threw Taylor to the ground. Jim weighs 215 to Buchanan's 6 feet 7 inches, 287 pounds.

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