



# Lambeau: The Man Behind The Mystique

*David Zimmerman*

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There are precious few individuals who through the sheer magnitude of their success or personalities come to transcend their sport. Truly, they are larger than life. Breaking legendary hallowed ground, these figures are remembered far beyond statistics, victories or trophies. Pioneers, innovators, icons – they are members of a select inner circle of extraordinary achievers. In *Lambeau: The Man Behind the Mystique*, the reader is privileged to meet just such a man – Earl Louis "Curly" Lambeau, a figure who lent a strong guiding hand to help make football the game that it is today.

Astonishingly, even though Lambeau died in 1965, *Lambeau: The Man Behind the Mystique* is the first definitive biography ever written about the colorful founder of the Green Bay Packers, the National Football League's most successful team ever. Fans around the world know all about Lambeau Field, home of the Packers. But who really was the man whose name graces the stadium's walls? Who was this man who dreamed of a football team in tiny Green Bay, Wisconsin, sold the idea to his hometown, and then pushed his Packers into the national spotlight?

Through exhaustive research, author David Zimmerman paints a colorful portrait of Lambeau – a ruggedly handsome man, star athlete and revered coach whose pitch-black curly hair and deep, captivating dimples charmed men and women alike. Ladies from Wisconsin to Hollywood loved him – literally and figuratively. Men who played football under him were willing to run through walls at his command.

Player, coach, salesman, executive, self-promoter, and team psychologist. Lambeau was all of these things. He also was a paradox. An arrogant hero, who laid down the law to those around him, yet was willing to compromise his own moral integrity. Zimmerman peels away the layers of Lambeau's evolving character to reveal a man of equal parts greatness and human failing.

The reader sees Lambeau through the eyes of many who knew him best, including:

- NFL and Chicago Bears founder George Halas who fought Lambeau tooth and nail, yet admitted privately that he seriously doubted pro football would have survived without the likes of Lambeau
- Don Hutson, the incomparable Packer receiver, who was able to stake his claim to greatness because Lambeau was one of the few coaches of his day who believed in the forward pass
- Clarke Hinkle, Johnny "Blood" McNally, "Iron Mike" Michalske, Tony Canadeo and many more Packer greats who remembered Lambeau as a motivational genius, but not much of a football strategist
- Mary Jane Van Duyse, the Packer Golden Girl and drum majorette, who despite being half his age, was Lambeau's girlfriend and fiancé when he found peace in his later years. She held the football legend in her arms as he lay dying at her house in 1965.

From a small town hero and national figure whose private indiscretions contributed to his fall from grace to a mellowing man whose many accomplishments were finally acknowledged at the end of his life, Zimmerman illustrates how Lambeau's life went full-circle. And why sports fans, and football fans in particular, must never forget him.

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