

# Viewpoints

## Different memories of a classic game

**N**ow that the Super Bowl is over, I want to give you an interesting perspective on the annual event. A few days before the game, my wife received a brief e-mail from her Aunt Joyce saying that she wanted the Steelers to win the game. This was surprising because Joyce had spent her entire life in Wisconsin. In fact, for many years she lived less than an hour away from the Packers historic Lambeau field.

When asked to explain, Joyce said many of her memories of Packers football games were less than positive. She remembers getting up at 4 a.m. to make holiday dinners. On many occasions her efforts were rewarded by family members and guests who were unwilling to come to the table because the Packers were still playing.

One of her clearest memories is of New Year's Eve, 1967. She and her husband had planned a large New Year's Eve dinner. A week before the party, the Packers earned the right to play in the NFL championship game which would be played on New Year's Eve.

The game pitted Green Bay against the Dallas Cowboys, and it was one of the most memorable games in NFL history. It was a hard-fought contest between two evenly matched teams. The Packers were behind for almost the entire fourth quarter. On their final drive, the Packers took the ball to the Cowboys' 3-yard line. After two unsuccessful attempts to score, the Packers used their final time out. With 16 seconds left in the game many thought they should play for a tie by kicking a field goal.

The Packers' quarterback Bart Starr suggested a quarterback sneak to coach Vince Lombardi. Coach Lombardi's response was, "Well, run it and let's get the hell out of here." Starr did run the play for the winning touchdown.

The game is also remembered because of the weather. Dubbed the Ice Bowl, the

temperature at kickoff was 15 below zero. The marching band had trouble playing their instruments because the woodwinds would freeze and the mouthpieces of the brass instruments would stick to the musicians' lips.

Despite the weather, Joyce's husband and son went to the game, and they have fond memories of the historic contest. Joyce remembers trying to grill steaks in sub-zero temperatures and entertain 25 New Year's Eve guests by herself.

Was Joyce exaggerating the influence football games can have on

family gatherings? I don't think so.

I recall the first time I traveled to Wisconsin to meet my wife's family. When we walked into their home both the living

room and dining room were filled with women. I had just sat down when her uncle stuck his head inside the door, looked at me and said, "The men are outside."

In the backyard, I found all the men drinking beer and sitting on lawn chairs pulled around a television connected to a long, orange extension cord. The television had seen better days, and in the glare of the summer sun the image was almost completely washed out.

I asked what they were watching and the terse response was "the Packers." I thought this was a little unusual because it was early July and the football season hadn't started. After a few minutes I realized that they were watching a replay of a Packers' 1967 championship, a game played decades before my trip to Wisconsin.

Over the course of the afternoon, none of the women came outside to check on the game. I guess Joyce and the other women in the family have a crystal clear memory of the 1967 game that does not require periodic refreshing.

### Top of Utah Voices



### Michael Vaughan

#### Commentary

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