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Herb Adderley, Dave Robinson return to Lambeau

Posted Nov 27, 2012



Ricky Zeller
packers.com contributing writer

Green Bay Packers greets co-author book about 'Lombardi's Left Side'

The RV is warmed up, the tires have been checked and the bags have been loaded, as two Packers legends return to Lambeau Field. It's a 16-hour drive, but former cornerback Herb Adderley and linebacker Dave Robinson will be back in Green Bay this week and, as always, not taking the easiest route.

Adderley, inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 1980, and Robinson, a finalist for election to the class of 2013, have written a book, "Lombardi's Left Side," that not only documents their playing days under Coach Vince Lombardi but also shares what it was like for them to be NFL players in the 1960s. On Thursday, there will be a reception at Lambeau Field and a book-signing event for fans.

Adderley, however, doesn't even entertain the notion of stepping on an airplane, even though they're coming from the Philadelphia area. Robinson liked the idea of a lengthy road trip with his old friend. Adderley hasn't been to Lambeau Field in a decade, while Robinson has been a frequent visitor over the years.

"When I was in the NFL, I hated every minute of flying, but I dealt with it," Adderley said. "In my career, we flew two-propeller planes, then four-props, then jets, with the planes shaking. I love Green Bay and always look forward to coming. It refills my tank and brings back good memories."

"Lombardi's Left Side" has a different angle about the Packers' glory years than those that have been written by some of their former teammates. Along with end Willie Davis, Robinson and Adderley anchored the left side of what is one of the most famed defenses in NFL history. The championship years have been documented by other publications, but not by two players who helped break the league's color barrier, through the help of their head coach.

"Herb was the first African-American drafted in the first round by the Packers, and I was the second," said Robinson. "Lombardi took that chance. Back then it was common not to pick black players until the third round. It was the turbulent sixties and we went through things even my son doesn't understand. Explaining all of that is in the book."

Adderley kept a diary of those years and credits Lombardi with changing the culture in the NFL. He has new details about the teams and landmark games he was a part of. He also details taking on Wilt Chamberlain in high school basketball games – which Adderley considers one of his greatest thrills – and growing up playing against childhood friend Bill Cosby.

"Bill was a good athlete," Adderley said. "One time at the Los Angeles Coliseum we were playing the Rams and Bill wanted to get on the field. I went up to Lombardi during the game and he looked at me like I had a hole in my head. Then he took the pass off his pants and gave it to me for Cosby to get on the sideline."

While Robinson is proud of his input, he finds Adderley's contributions fascinating. The two were teammates from '63-'69, both were voted to the NFL's all-decade team, and they remain close friends, but Robinson said he still learned a lot during the process of creating the book. It was written with Royce Boyles, and Cosby wrote the foreword.

"Herb added so much that it makes the book special," Robinson said. "I'm looking forward to the drive just because he hasn't been to Lambeau Field for so long. They say the left hand washes the right, so we were an excellent team. It created a bond that has lasted forever."

Tickets for Thursday's event from 6-8 p.m. are available now at \$75, and include admission for two, an autographed book, appetizers and two drink tickets. The event will also feature a Q&A session with the players. Tickets can be reserved by calling (920) 569-7512, or can be purchased at the Hall of Fame desk in the Lambeau Field Atrium.

If fans are unable to attend, the Pro Shop is offering a free book signing on Saturday, Dec. 1, from 2:30-4 p.m. The two will only sign copies of the book at the Pro Shop signing.

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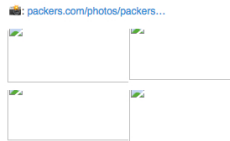


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