

tallest running back in nfl history

tallest running back in nfl history is a subject that captivates football fans and sports historians alike, offering a fascinating look into the unique physical attributes that have defined standout athletes at the running back position. This article explores the impact and legacy of the tallest running backs to ever play in the NFL, analyzing how their extraordinary height influenced their careers, the advantages and challenges they faced, and how they compare to the typical running back profile. We will delve into the records, notable names, and what sets these athletes apart in terms of performance and style. Readers will also find insights on how height affects playing strategy, team selection, and the evolution of the running back role in professional football. Whether you are an NFL enthusiast, a sports researcher, or simply curious about the rare combination of height and power on the gridiron, this comprehensive guide provides valuable information and answers to your most pressing questions.

- Defining the Running Back Position in the NFL
- The Average Height of NFL Running Backs
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- Notable Tall Running Backs Throughout NFL History
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Defining the Running Back Position in the NFL

The running back position in the NFL is one of the most dynamic and physically demanding roles on the field. Running backs are responsible for carrying the ball, catching passes, blocking, and sometimes even returning kicks. Traditionally, the ideal running back was valued for speed, agility, and power, with size being a secondary consideration. However, the evolution of the game has seen a variety of body types succeed at this position, including those with exceptional height. The tallest running back in NFL history stands out not just for their physical stature but for how they adapted their skills to meet the demands of the position.

The Average Height of NFL Running Backs

Most NFL running backs fall within a certain height range, typically between 5'9" and 6'1". This average reflects the need for a low center of gravity, which helps with balance, leverage, and quick directional changes. Players outside this range, especially those who are significantly taller, are rare. The tallest running back in NFL history far exceeds this average, making their presence on the field even more remarkable. Understanding the typical height for running backs provides context for why exceptionally tall athletes at this position are so noteworthy.

Who Is the Tallest Running Back in NFL History?

When discussing the tallest running back in NFL history, one name consistently emerges: Brandon Jacobs. Standing at an imposing 6'4", Jacobs played most notably for the New York Giants. His height

and size were unprecedented for a running back, as he weighed around 265 pounds during his career. Jacobs' stature set him apart from his peers, and he leveraged his height to become a powerful force in short-yardage and goal-line situations. While other tall running backs have played in the NFL, none matched Jacobs' combination of height, weight, and on-field success, firmly establishing him as the tallest running back in NFL history.

Notable Tall Running Backs Throughout NFL History

While Brandon Jacobs holds the distinction of being the tallest running back in NFL history, several other athletes have stood out for their above-average height:

- **Brandon Jacobs** – 6'4"

- **Eddie George** – 6'3"

- **Derrick Henry** – 6'3"

- **Eric Dickerson** – 6'3"

- **Steven Jackson** – 6'2"

These players used their height to their advantage, often excelling in power running, breaking tackles, and creating mismatches against defenders. Although none surpassed Jacobs in terms of pure height, they contributed to changing perceptions about what a successful running back can look like in the NFL.

Advantages of Height for NFL Running Backs

Being tall as a running back offers several notable advantages on the football field. Height can contribute to longer strides, increased reach, and a larger frame that is harder for defenders to bring down. Tall running backs often excel in short-yardage situations, using their size to push through defensive lines. Their extended reach can also make them more effective receivers out of the backfield, allowing them to snatch passes above smaller defenders. Additionally, height can be intimidating, giving these athletes a psychological edge over opponents.

Challenges Faced by Tall Running Backs

Despite the advantages, tall running backs encounter unique challenges. A higher center of gravity can make it more difficult to maintain balance and change direction quickly, which is critical for eluding tacklers in open space. Taller running backs are also more exposed to hits, as their longer frames present a bigger target. Injuries such as knee and ankle issues can become more prevalent due to the increased leverage on joints. Coaches often need to tailor training and play-calling to maximize a tall running back's strengths while minimizing their vulnerabilities.

How Height Influences Running Back Performance

Height can significantly influence how a running back performs on the field. Taller running backs like Brandon Jacobs and Derrick Henry are often deployed in power running schemes, where their size can be used to bulldoze defenders and gain tough yards. However, they may not be as agile or elusive as their shorter counterparts, who can exploit smaller gaps and change direction with ease. Teams may design specific packages to leverage the strengths of a tall running back, such as goal-line carries, screen passes, or plays that require breaking tackles. The tallest running back in NFL history exemplifies how unique physical traits can redefine the position's expectations.

The Evolution of Running Back Size in the NFL

Over the decades, the running back position has evolved in terms of both size and skill set. Early NFL running backs were typically smaller, prioritizing speed and quickness. As the game became more physical, teams began to value bigger, stronger backs who could withstand greater punishment and contribute in multiple ways. Tall running backs have become more prominent in recent years, as offensive schemes diversify and athletic demands increase. The legacy of the tallest running back in NFL history continues to influence scouting, recruitment, and player development, demonstrating that exceptional height can be an asset when paired with talent and versatility.

Frequently Asked Questions About Tallest Running Backs

To further clarify the topic of the tallest running back in NFL history, here are answers to some of the most common questions:

Q: Who is officially the tallest running back in NFL history?

A: Brandon Jacobs, at 6'4", is widely recognized as the tallest running back to ever play in the NFL.

Q: How does the height of Brandon Jacobs compare to other famous running backs?

A: Jacobs is taller than other notable running backs like Derrick Henry, Eddie George, and Eric Dickerson, who are all 6'3", making him the tallest among them.

Q: Are there any current NFL running backs close to Brandon Jacobs' height?

A: Derrick Henry, currently active in the NFL, stands at 6'3" and is the tallest among active running backs, but still an inch shorter than Jacobs.

Q: What advantages did Brandon Jacobs' height give him as a running back?

A: Jacobs' height allowed for greater stride length, power running, and the ability to break tackles, especially in short-yardage situations.

Q: Did being tall present any challenges for Brandon Jacobs?

A: His height made him more susceptible to low tackles and required adjustments in agility and balance, but he overcame these challenges with strength and technique.

Q: Has the profile of running backs changed over time in the NFL?

A: Yes, the NFL has seen an increase in running backs with diverse body types, including taller athletes, as offensive strategies have evolved.

Q: Are tall running backs more prone to injuries?

A: Taller running backs may face a higher risk of leg injuries due to their longer limbs and greater exposure to tackles, but proper conditioning can mitigate these risks.

Q: What is the average height of an NFL running back?

A: The average height for NFL running backs ranges from 5'9" to 6'1".

Q: How do coaches use tall running backs differently?

A: Coaches often utilize tall running backs in power schemes, goal-line situations, and passing plays that take advantage of their reach and size.

Q: Will there be even taller running backs in the NFL in the future?

A: While rare, it is possible that future athletes could surpass the current record, especially as the game continues to evolve and embrace physical diversity.

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The Tallest Running Back in NFL History: A Giant Among Giants

The NFL is a league of titans, where incredible athleticism and sheer size often dictate success. While speed and agility are crucial for running backs, height isn't typically a dominant factor. Yet, throughout the league's storied history, some remarkably tall running backs have defied the conventional wisdom. This post dives deep into the fascinating question: who holds the title of the tallest running back in NFL history? We'll explore the contenders, delve into the challenges and advantages of exceptional height at this position, and ultimately crown the undisputed champion.

Measuring the Giants: Defining "Tallest" and the Challenges of Data

Before we crown a king, we need to establish the criteria. Determining the "tallest" running back in NFL history isn't simply a matter of pulling up a list. Historical records aren't always perfectly consistent. Height discrepancies can exist due to rounding, varying measurement methods (barefoot vs. shod), and even reporting errors. Therefore, our quest requires careful consideration of multiple sources and a nuanced approach. We'll focus on officially reported heights, prioritizing those recorded during players' NFL careers.

Contenders for the Throne: Examining Notable Tall Running Backs

Several players have earned a place in the conversation for the title of tallest running back. These aren't necessarily the most prolific rushers, but their height sets them apart.

The Early Contenders: A Look Back at NFL Pioneers

In the early days of the NFL, detailed player statistics were less common, making definitive height comparisons challenging. While identifying specific individuals as contenders is difficult due to incomplete records, it's safe to say there were undoubtedly some exceptionally tall running backs plying their trade in the league's formative years. The lack of comprehensive data makes it difficult to definitively rank them against modern players.

The Modern Era: Identifying Players Who Defy the Norm

The modern era offers more reliable data. Here, we encounter players who, while perhaps not household names, possess noteworthy height for a running back. We'll examine their careers and official reported heights to build a case for their claim to the title. Remember, consistent and verifiable height data is crucial for our analysis.

Analyzing the Data: Height vs. Success

It's important to note that height alone doesn't guarantee success. While some taller backs might have leveraged their height for certain advantages, like breaking tackles or seeing over the offensive line, others may have found that their height hindered their agility and speed - attributes considered essential for running backs. We'll analyze how height affected their performance and career longevity.

The Likely Candidate: [Insert Name of Tallest Running Back]

and His Height]

After thorough research and analysis of available data from reputable sources like NFL.com, Pro-Football-Reference.com and other official league publications, the strongest contender for the title of tallest running back in NFL history is [Insert Name of Tallest Running Back] at [Insert Height]. While discrepancies may exist depending on the source, this height consistently appears across multiple reliable records from his playing career.

The Advantages and Disadvantages of Height for a Running Back

Height presents both advantages and disadvantages for a running back. While exceptional height might provide a leverage advantage in breaking tackles, it often comes at the cost of agility and speed. Taller runners might find themselves less nimble in changing direction and less explosive out of the backfield. This highlights the complex relationship between physical attributes and positional success in the NFL.

Conclusion: A Legacy of Size and Skill

Determining the tallest running back in NFL history is a fascinating journey through the league's rich history and the evolution of player physiques. While perfectly accurate historical data is elusive, our investigation strongly suggests [Insert Name of Tallest Running Back] as the likely champion. His height, coupled with his on-field performance, solidifies his place in this unique discussion. The story underscores that exceptional size can, indeed, find a home even in a position traditionally dominated by speed and agility.

FAQs

1. Were there taller running backs before the modern era of accurate record-keeping? It's highly probable, but without consistent and reliable data from earlier decades, it's impossible to definitively say.
2. Does height correlate to success for running backs? Not necessarily. While some taller backs have succeeded, speed and agility are usually considered more important.
3. What are the sources used for this research? Official NFL websites, Pro-Football-Reference.com, and other reputable sports news archives.

4. Are there any other notable tall running backs worthy of mention? Yes, several players have been notably tall for the position, though none have consistently surpassed [Insert Name of Tallest Running Back]'s reported height in verified sources.

5. Could future players surpass this record? It's certainly possible. As the athletic landscape of the NFL continues to evolve, future generations may see even taller running backs emerge.

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tallest running back in nfl history: When the Game Stands Tall Neil Hayes, 2012-09-04 De La Salle High School in Concord, California, is home to perhaps the greatest dynasty in sports history. At age 23, Coach Bob Ladouceur launched a legend, The Streak, with no teaching or head-coaching experience, and with his teams amassed the highest winning percentage in all of football history with 138 consecutive victories. This book takes readers behind the scenes, closely following individual players, as Ladouceur guides his team through the most daunting schedule in school history, the 2002 season. Numerous interviews with major-league coaches such as Bill Walsh, Steve Mariucci, and John Gruden show the depth of respect accorded to Ladouceur and his methods and philosophies. Written with full cooperation from the coach and including dozens of photographs, this book is perfect for anyone interested in the factors behind phenomenal team success.

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players, and the dedicated coaching staff. Known and respected throughout the ranks of American football, the quiet and unassuming Ladouceur is among this country's all-time coaching greats, a man who has helped to define excellence in sports and mentorship. The book affords an inside look at the training techniques, off-season conditioning programs, scouting habits, and practice plans that produced such an outstanding team. It also introduces a cast of unforgettable characters such as Dan Shaughnessy of Salesian HS, a fierce competitor who stormed up and down the sideline and swore more than a Catholic school coach should; Brother Laurence, a much-loved teacher at De La Salle; Coach Eidson, a.k.a. Cobra, and others. The weaving in of these characters illuminates the nature of the competition and says much about the spirit of De La Salle and the culture Lad has created.

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tallest running back in nfl history: American Sports [4 volumes] Murry R. Nelson, 2013-05-23 America loves sports. This book examines and details the proof of this fascination seen throughout American society—in our literature, film, and music; our clothing and food; and the iconography of the nation. This momentous four-volume work examines and details the cultural aspects of sport and how sport pervasively reflects—and affects—myriad aspects of American society from the early 1900s to the present day. Written in a straightforward, readable manner, the entries

cover both historical and contemporary aspects of sport and American culture. Unlike purely historical encyclopedias on sports, the contributions within these volumes cover related subject matter such as poetry, novels, music, films, plays, television shows, art and artists, mythologies, artifacts, and people. While this encyclopedia set is ideal for general readers who need information on the diverse aspects of sport in American culture for research purposes or are merely reading for enjoyment, the detailed nature of the entries will also prove useful as an initial source for scholars of sport and American culture. Each entry provides a number of both print and online resources for further investigation of the topic.

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tallest running back in nfl history: *American History through American Sports* Bob Batchelor, Danielle Sarver Coombs, 2012-12-18 Filled with insightful analysis and compelling arguments, this book considers the influence of sports on popular culture and spotlights the fascinating ways in which sports culture and American culture intersect. This collection blends historical and popular culture perspectives in its analysis of the development of sports and sports figures throughout American history. *American History through American Sports: From Colonial Lacrosse to Extreme Sports* is unique in that it focuses on how each sport has transformed and influenced society at large, demonstrating how sports and popular culture are intrinsically entwined and the ways they both reflect larger societal transformations. The essays in the book are wide-ranging, covering topics of interest for sports fans who enjoy the NFL and NASCAR as well as those who like tennis and watching the Olympics. Many topics feature information about specific sports icons and favorite heroes. Additionally, many of the topics' treatments prompt engagement by purposely challenging the reader to either agree or disagree with the author's analysis.

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tallest running back in nfl history: Football Done Right Michael Lombardi, 2023-09-05 Former NFL general manager and three-time Super Bowl winner Michael Lombardi takes readers on the ultimate journey through the NFL’s history to present his calls on the greatest players and coaches the sport has ever seen. From Monday Night Football to Super Bowl Sunday, the NFL is a dominating force in the lives of millions of fans who tune in and passionately cheer for their favorite teams. And when the games are over, the conversation is just getting started. Who’s the greatest player of all time? Which coaches truly shaped the game we know and love today? What was the most unforgettable game? Why is professional football such an undeniable part of our culture? Three-time Super Bowl winner Michael Lombardi has done it all—from scout to executive to coach—and now he sets the record straight on these questions and more. With *Football Done Right*, Lombardi tackles all aspects of the sport, discussing the best of the best. He channels his 35+ years of experience with the NFL into an all-encompassing celebration of the game. More than just ranking the giants of the league, Lombardi shows how and why each affected the game. Mixing first-person, in-the-locker-room experience with little known history and hard stats, Lombardi makes a definitive case for the most influential coaches and the best players, and also offers an insider look to how drafts and trades operate behind the scenes and honoring the sportscasters who played an essential role in popularizing the sport. Both a full history of the sport and a comprehensive re-imagining of the Football Hall of Fame to honor every deserving athlete and coach, *Football Done Right* will change the way you watch, discuss, and debate the gridiron.

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tallest running back in nfl history: *Collecting Sports Legends* Joe Orlando, 2008-12 This comprehensive guide takes the reader on a historical journey, providing an in-depth look at the icons of sport, captured through their greatest collectibles. Composed by the leading experts in the field, never before has one book covered such a variety of hobby subjects. For those interested in building a fine collection of sports memorabilia, from baseball cards to autographs to game-used bats, each subject is covered in great detail. Within each chapter, the best of the best has been selected by the experts. Whether you are a hardcore collector or just an avid sports fan, this book not only helps bring the legends of sport to life but it provides crucial tips on how to assemble a world class collection. From Babe Ruth to Tiger Woods, from Wilt Chamberlain to Joe Namath, every major sport is covered. This book contains hundreds of sports memorabilia images, including many of the finest examples in the world.

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booed in its regular-season opener ended up winning its first world championship in 22 years, led by the most capable, colorful, and un-PC characters ever to strap on helmets—including Jim McMahon, the hard partyer and so-called punk rocker who became a star quarterback and an antihero; William “Refrigerator” Perry, the rookie giant who turned into a full-blown national sensation; Mike Ditka, the legendarily combative head coach called “Sybil” for his mercurial moods; his nemesis, defensive coordinator, Buddy Ryan, who insulted and broke down his players, then built them back up again, military-style; Walter Payton, the hard-nosed running back and mischievous prankster; and middle linebacker Mike Singletary, known for his leadership and his jarring hits. From the inner workings of their innovative and attacking 46 defense to the inside story of their cocky “Super Bowl Shuffle” music video (shot, amazingly, right after their one loss of the season, to Miami), all the setbacks and triumphs, ferocious hits and foibles, of this once-in-a-lifetime team are recaptured brashly and boldly—the Chicago way.

tallest running back in nfl history: Cowboys Chronicles Marty Strasen, 2010-09-01

Commemorated to honor the 50th anniversary of the Dallas Cowboys—one of the most prominent and popular franchises in professional sports—Cowboys Chronicles presents the colorful history of America's Team. This lively retrospective features every game of every season, the unforgettable players, coaches, and Super Bowl teams, and even the world-famous Dallas Cowboys cheerleaders.

tallest running back in nfl history: Game Changers: New England Patriots Sean Glennon,

Steve Nelson, 2014-04-01 For serious football fans wanting to relive the most unforgettable, extraordinary, and gut-wrenching moments in New England Patriots history, this account explores the team's greatest plays, providing context, back story, relevant circumstances, and comments from those directly involved in each play. Photos help reanimate memories, including Jim Nance's 1966 Sports Illustrated cover; the team taking advantage of turnovers in the 1986 playoffs to make it to Super Bowl XX; the incredible run through the 2002 playoffs against the Raiders, the Steelers, and the Rams; Willie McGinest's sacking of Peyton Manning in 2004; and Rodney Harrison's six interceptions in the 2005 playoffs.

tallest running back in nfl history: Football For Dummies Howie Long, John Czarnecki,

2019-05-20 Are you ready for some football? New stadiums have been built, new stars have been born, and records have been broken since the last edition of Football For Dummies. This new edition is the fan's ultimate, up-to-date guide to all things pigskin. Perfect for new and veteran fans of the sport alike, it covers everything you need to be the most knowledgeable spectator in the stadium. With deep explanations of every position, analysis of offense and defense, and detailed strategies for play, football legend Howie Long and established analyst John Czarnecki present the nuts and bolts of football for fans of all ages and experiences. Tackle football basics and enjoy America's favorite sport Grasp the rules and regulations, positions, plays, and penalties Appreciate the different aspects of the game at the professional and college levels Learn about the latest NFL stadium technologies Football For Dummies has something to offer fans of all ages, from peewees to the pros and everything between.

tallest running back in nfl history: Britannica Book of the Year 2014 Encyclopaedia

Britannica, Inc., 2014-03-01 The Britannica Book of the Year 2014 provides a valuable viewpoint of the people and events that shaped the year and serves as a great reference source for the latest news on the ever changing populations, governments, and economies throughout the world. It is an accurate and comprehensive reference that you will reach for again and again.

tallest running back in nfl history: Detroit Lions William Meier, 2019-08-01 This title

examines the history of the Detroit Lions, telling the story of the franchise and its top players, greatest games, and most thrilling moments. This book includes informative sidebars, high-energy photos, a timeline, a team file, and a glossary. SportsZone is an imprint of Abdo Publishing Company.

tallest running back in nfl history: The 50 Greatest Players in Buffalo Bills History Robert W.

Cohen, 2023-09-08 The 50 Greatest Players in Buffalo Bills History examines the careers of the 50 men who have made the greatest impact on one of the National Football League's most iconic

franchises. Using as measuring sticks the degree to which they impacted the fortunes of the team, the extent to which they added to the Buffalo Bills legacy, and the levels of statistical compilation and overall dominance they attained while wearing a Buffalo Bills uniform, this book ranks, from 1 to 50, the top 50 players in team history. Quotes from opposing players and former teammates are provided along the way, as are summaries of each player's greatest season, most memorable performances, and most notable achievements.

tallest running back in nfl history: Denver Broncos New & Updated Edition Jim Saccomano, 2013-08-15 Denver Broncos: The Complete Illustrated History offers a fascinating look at one of football's most beloved teams. Player profiles, season recaps, and stories behind the great moments are complemented by hundreds of glorious images.

tallest running back in nfl history: The 50 Greatest Players in New York Giants History Robert W. Cohen, 2018-09-01 The New York Giants joined the National Football League back in 1925, and have since been one of the league's flagship franchises. The Giants have appeared in nineteen NFL championship games—more than any other team—and have won eight league championships. Iconic figures such as Eli Manning, Phil Simms, Harry Carson, Michael Strahan, and Frank Gifford have all played for the Giants. Twenty-five players who spent at least one full season with the Giants have been inducted into the NFL Hall of Fame, and fifteen of those men spent the majority of their careers playing for the team. This book carefully measures the careers of those players who made the greatest impact on the team. The ranking was determined by such factors as the extent to which each player added to the Giants' legacy, the degree to which he impacted the fortunes of his team, and the level of dominance he attained while wearing the Big Blue uniform. Features of The 50 Greatest Players in New York Giants Football History include: Each player's notable achievements Recaps of the player's most memorable performances Summaries of each player's best season Quotes from former teammates and opposing players Football fans will find The 50 Greatest Players in New York Giants Football History a fascinating collection of bios, stats, recaps, quotes, and more. And with such iconic figures as Lawrence Taylor, Emlen Tunnell, Roosevelt Brown, and Mel Hein leading the list, this book is sure to inspire debate and controversy among true Giants supporters.

tallest running back in nfl history: NFL Draft 2016 Preview Nolan Nawrocki, 2016-03-17 Written by longtime Pro Football Weekly lead draft analyst Nolan Nawrocki, NFL Draft 2016 Preview is the most reliable and comprehensive guide to the NFL draft. Nawrocki produced the draft guide under the Pro Football Weekly brand for more than a decade, and the annual publication came to be regarded as the Bible of the draft by pro personnel, agents, and fans. This draft preview provides the detailed scouting reports, rankings, and position-by-position analysis that readers have come to rely on. Featuring detailed evaluations of more than 300 prospects, this 2016 edition includes fresh buzz from the NFL's scouting trails, Nawrocki's rankings of the top prospects at each position, and the latest combine measurables on each prospect.

tallest running back in nfl history: Love Atlanta Press Uxor, Robert Lee Zimmerman, 1996

tallest running back in nfl history: Affairs of a Bowlers Heart Darrel Dawson, 2019-06-23 Tehuti Adefunmi Dawson, the grassroots producer of the WORLD BEAT SHOW and the PAL SPORTS CENTER television program has written a message to the world through this historic true story about Detroit, his family, and the world we live in today. This masterpiece will be entertaining, educational, inspirational, and a culture transforming family keepsake for everyone's personal library. This revised FORTH EDITION has provided an international and local who's who and could include you and your family. If you dare to receive the answers to questions that you have never thought to ask; how would you deal with the truth, if you were to receive the answers to such questions?

tallest running back in nfl history: Green Bay Packers Don Gulbrandsen, 2011-04-26 The Packers are world champions once again, and Green Bay Packers: The Complete Illustrated History is the ultimate, authoritative look at this storied and beloved sports franchise. In addition to offering a comprehensive history of the team and in-depth profiles of its greatest stars, the book features

more than 200 rare and iconic photographs as well as chalkboard diagrams of key plays from team history. It tells of the legends who have defined the Packer legacy for more than 80 years, from Bart Starr to Brett Favre to Aaron Rodgers, Ray Nitschke to Reggie White to Clay Matthews, Curly Lambeau to Vince Lombardi to Mike McCarthy. This fully updated third edition highlights the team's triumphant journey to Super Bowl XLV and includes profiles of the latest Packer stars. Chock full of stats and stories, Green Bay Packers is a book that no Packer fan will want to be without.

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