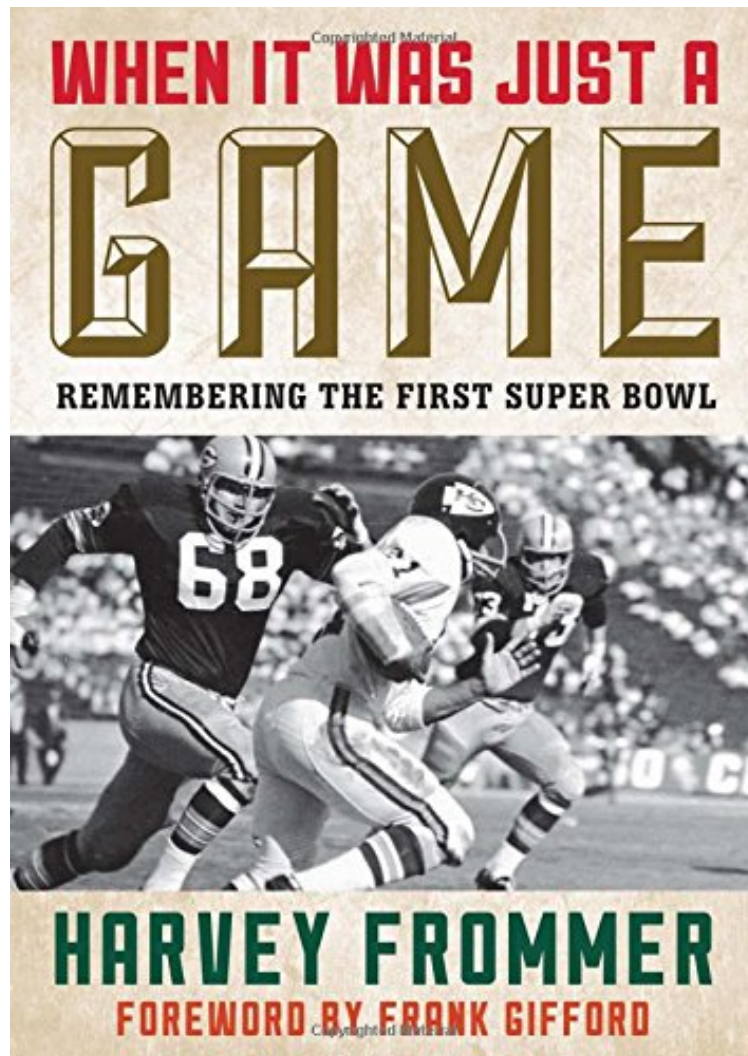


When It Was Just a Game: Remembering the First Super Bowl

Harvey Frommer

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Harvey Frommer : When It Was Just a Game: Remembering the First Super Bowl before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised When It Was Just a Game: Remembering the First Super Bowl:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Crank up Mr. Peabody Shermans Way Back Machine'By aflCrank up Mr. Peabody Shermans Way Back Machine: if one were able be magically transported back a simpler time sports, When It Was Just A Game: Remembering The First Superbowl is the narrative equivalent, next best thing to having been there in 1967. Quite the flashback, definitely not a bad trip down memory lane Kansas City Chiefs the AFL Green Bay Packers NFL, lead-up to the game, game itself and post script what is now (but wasnt then universally) called Superbowl or Americas Game; that approaching 50 years later it is both, indisputable. Minor quibbles aside (a

few typos and some players, fans/others memories that differ/are erroneous in some cases likely due the passage of time), the book is a keeper if you want a one-stop source for quotes and flavor of the time. There's not much in the way yesteryear I have not experienced or read re: that era's Chiefs, who were my childhood heroes. This book remembers it all and I state with much satisfaction, affirms what has long been the case/known but not trumpeted despite post game comments to the contrary, the Packers Vince Lombardi, in particular indeed did believe the Chiefs were in fact legitimate, capable of beating the Packers. 7-0, 7-7, 14-10 21-10 until but :51 seconds remained before start the 4th quarter a rout does not make - in fact, an missed KC field goal second quarter successful puts KC in the lead 10-7. Other than a video effort courtesy one enterprising individuals compilation nigh on 98% of the games plays via highlights coaching film (readily available for viewing online), until such time an actual network broadcast Superbowl 1 is made available the general public, When It Was Just A Game will ably suffice. Subjective opinion mine, the NFL is currently exercising its usual Self-Serving tack, unable to agree on a fair price with an individual who has in fact provided most of the CBS network broadcast of that day (via primitive technology of the time videotape) to the Radio TV Museum. These tapes reportedly contain most of the game and have already been restored; now we wait, perhaps until the 12th of never. That a replay of the game was shown later that same evening January 15, 1967 yet neither local affiliates NBC and CBS or the networks kept a copy (they claim), unbelievable sad. One game does not determine supremacy that the GB Packers won 5 Championships in 7 years (and fell 4-points shy another one) is indicative said however... latter day Patriots/other modern day teams accomplishments not of the same echelon. On that day 1967 however, Green Bay won, yet as stated afore, it was a game which, save a missed KC field goal had the Chiefs leading 10-7 2nd quarter. While said was not alluded to in the book and hardly ever conversations otherwise, becomes more than just another case what if; wishful thinking or no, had the Chiefs gotten the lead even once, momentum might well have changed the course that game. Make no mistake, Packers remain the greatest football team ever, despite not necessarily having had the best players in terms athletic prowess. Individually, the young Chiefs matched according many surpassed Green Bay in that aspect, certainly in size, speed strength which is why I've never subscribed the opinion some today's players/teams would dominate those teams yesteryear via same advantage, could they play one another. Veteran GB's experience/execution was the difference in how the game played out. Part parcel, that 9-months earlier the Packers had escaped with but a 7-point win over the Bears, and 7-months aft Superbowl 1 the no longer NFL-virgin Chiefs beat those same Bears by 42 points, 66-24, intriguing at minimum. Yes, nod the lyrics a popular song of that time, those were the days my friend, we thought they'd never end picture of a true rivalry at its height : AFL vs NFL; today's NFL pales in comparison. All that to say, 'When It Was Just A Game: Remembering the First Superbowl' is a great book and one chock full of memories. Highly recommended. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. The Super Bowl Book I have Been Waiting For By Customer As a Stram-era Chiefs fanatic and historian and a student of Lombardi's Packers I found this to be an outstanding book and read and very accurate. Will read again. Well balanced and simply well done. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Robert J. Lentz Great book to have and read of the early years.

Written by acclaimed sports author and oral historian Harvey Frommer and with an introduction by pro football Hall of Famer Frank Gifford, When It Was Just a Game tells the fascinating story of the ground-breaking AFL-NFL World Championship Football game played on January 15, 1967: Packers vs. Chiefs. Filled with new insights, containing commentary from the recently discovered unpublished memoir of Kansas City Chiefs coach Hank Stram, and featuring oral history from many who were at the game media, players, coaches, fans the book presents back story and front story in the words of those who lived it and saw it go on to become the Super Bowl, the greatest sports attraction the world has ever known. Archival photographs and drawings help bring the event to life.

One of the main points of this . . . oral history is that the Super Bowl has become such a spectacle and de facto American holiday that it's easy to forget it began as a simple football game just 50 years ago and didn't even sell out the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum. That inaugural event was organized to determine the 1966 professional football champion between two warring leagues that ultimately agreed to merge. The Green Bay Packers, coached by the legendary Vince Lombardi, represented the older league. The American Football League representative was fortuitous as well, in that the larger and younger Kansas City Chiefs, coached by Hank Stram, were emblematic of the upstart leagues strategic originality. After a competitive first half, the savvy Packers blazed ahead. Frommer (Five O'Clock Lightning) notes that both teams were in the forefront of employing African American players. This is a well-executed retelling of the game and its surroundings from all points of view: officials, coaches, players, the media, and even fans. Among the narratives best parts are the late Stram's detailed recollections from an unpublished manuscript made available to the author from Stram's son . . . Consistently fascinating, this book will appeal to all football fans. (Library Journal) In this detailed oral and narrative history, author Harvey Frommer dramatically creates a narrative arc that brings back the time. (Frank Gifford, NFL Hall of Famer) Harvey Frommer is one of the most intelligent and informed observers of sports on the American scene. It is always a pleasure to read his work. (Roger Kahn) Read it from cover to cover. It's a masterpiece. Vince Lombardi would have loved this book. It's a winner, he would have proclaimed. You'll

love it, too. Harvey Frommer, through the voices of the participants and significant others, tells a rollicking adventure of the very first Super Bowl. The material is fresh and fascinating. I couldn't put it down. (Peter Golenbock, author of *Landry's Boys* and *The Bronx Zoo*)

As the Super Bowl nears its 50th birthday, Frommer (*Five O'Clock Lightning*), a veteran sports writer, expertly takes readers behind the scenes of the historic first game between the Green Bay Packers and Kansas City Chiefs on January 15, 1967. Using a slew of oral interviews from players, coaches, and league officials, Frommer demonstrates how the veteran NFL and the fledgling American Football League imposed their will on American sports and fought to dethrone baseball as the national pastime. Frommer's well-researched account tells how the controversial merger of the two leagues, under Commissioner Pete Rozelle's stewardship, developed American football from 14 NFL teams in 1965 to a combined 24 teams in 1966. Frommer also highlights the eccentric character of the opposing coaches, the tough Packers head Vince Lombardi and the strutting Hank Stram, as they piloted their teams, the bigger Chiefs against the more experienced Packers, to a 35-10 victory for the latter. This complete overview of the mythic first Super Bowl is a win for all football fans. (Publishers Weekly)

If you ever wanted to know everything about the first Super Bowl, the merger that led up to its creation, how the NFL-AFL rivalry started in the first place, and everything in between, noted sports author Harvey Frommer has written the perfect book for you. *When It Was Just a Game: Remembering the First Super Bowl* is a book that delivers even more than the title suggests. Frommer gives you the full background leading up to Super Bowl I (then known as the AFL-NFL World Championship Game) as well as great insights into the historic game itself from his dozens of interviews of those closest to the action. Frommer's piece is a detailed oral history of how the NFL and AFL started, what led to their merger, and ultimately their inaugural championship game in 1967, which has gone from an innovative inter-league matchup to the must-see mega sporting event it is today. The idea for this book was always in my head, said Frommer in a recent interview with *Epoch Times*. I was fortunate really, to find guys who had played in the game, people who saw the game, and media who covered the game. Frommer then combined his recent interviews with those he had previously conducted with influentials like Howard Cosell and Pete Rozelle originally for his thesis and the result is a one-of-a-kind classic. In addition to the bigger picture of how the Super Bowl came about are a number of lesser-known anecdotes. Examples like why Pete Rozelle had to spend two hours pretending to wash his hands in the bathroom while waiting to be elected commissioner, why Hank Stram made sure every player had gum in his locker before kickoff, and the battle between Rozelle and Vince Lombardi about where the Packers would practice leading up to Super Bowl I, and many more are revealed in Frommer's book. Frommer himself admits that most of the interviews he did yielded new information that even he, a football historian, hadn't heard of, like the fact that Vince Lombardi and Hank Stram and the Green Bay Packers and the Kansas City Chiefs really paved the way for the African-American football players to become dominant, said Frommer. That Super Bowl had the most black players in professional football ever competing on the same field at the same time, he said. In addition to the backdrop leading up to the big game itself, the book puts the reader right into the halftime locker-room scenes of both teams. While the pressure-free Chiefs had passed their way through mighty Green Bay's defense and only trailed 14-10 at the mid-way point, Green Bay was feeling the weight of the entire NFL which was expecting them to not only win, but to thoroughly dominate the winner of this upstart league in their first-ever matchup. But Lombardi, only the greatest coach in NFL history, knew just what to say, according to former Green Bay Packer Willie Davis, who takes you right inside the locker room in Frommer's book, to listen to Lombardi's speech: "We played 30 minutes of football adjusting to the Kansas City Chiefs, and were probably okay, but what I want you to do is go out and play 30 minutes of Green Bay Packer football and see how the Chiefs adjust to you," Davis recalls Lombardi saying. "We all looked at each other and it was like, 'Wow!'" he added. It's the kind of insight only Frommer's must-read book has. Highly recommended. (*Epoch Times*)

Not only readers who are interested in football history will enjoy this book, but also readers who are only familiar with the phenomenon that the Super Bowl has become today should read this. It will give those readers a sense of what the event was like at that time and appreciate what it has become today.' (*The Guy Who's Sports Books*)

"While the scope of the Super Bowl has reached proportions bordering on overwhelming, Harvey Frommer's *When It Was Just a Game: Remembering The First Super Bowl* reminds us why it captured the American sports fans' passion in the first place. It's a great read for any lover of football, especially those who appreciate the game's history." (*Valley News*)

Written by acclaimed sports author and oral historian Harvey Frommer and with an introduction by pro football Hall of Famer Frank Gifford, *When It Was Just a Game* tells the fascinating story of the ground-breaking AFL-NFL World Championship Football game played on January 15, 1967: Packers vs. Chiefs. Filled with new insights and featuring oral history from many who were at the game, the book presents back story and front story in the words of those who lived it and saw it go on to become the Super Bowl, the greatest sports attraction the world has ever known. Archival photographs and drawings help bring the event to life. About the Author: Harvey Frommer is a noted sports author and oral historian. He has written more than forty-two sports books including *Remembering Yankee Stadium*, *Remembering Fenway Park*, and the autobiographies of Red Holzman, Nolan Ryan, and Tony Dorsett. Cited in the *Congressional Record* and by the New York State Legislature as a sports historian and journalist, Dr. Frommer is a professor in the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies Program at Dartmouth College. He lives in Lyme, New Hampshire.

with his wife, Myrna.