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Fab Favre psyched to be home for Week 2 rematch with Giants



Jan. 15, 2008
By Lesley Visser
CBS Sports

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Brett Favre hesitated, but only for a second. When asked Saturday if he'd rather go to Dallas and put that curse away (he has never won a game at Texas Stadium), or welcome the Giants to Lambeau Field, he smiled.

"In a perfect world," he said, "I'd win in Texas Stadium and we'd win the Super Bowl, but since I'm not a magician, I'll take the Giants here."



Go ahead and bring on the snow -- it's what Favre seems to be thriving on. (Getty Images)

Oh, but he is a magician. Did you see that pass/toss/stumble heave he threw to Donald Lee? On third-and-8 from the Seattle 14-yard-line, Favre somehow eluded the grasp of Brandon Mebane, stumbled away from Patrick Kerney, then blindly flipped the ball to Lee. It was nothing short of Houdini.

"It probably looked bad," said Favre. "I'm not as nimble as I once was."

Even Lee was wowed.

"I watch the Discovery Channel," he said. "Brett's like a lion chasing down a gazelle. The gazelle has no chance."

The Packers rollicked and frolicked in the glorious snowstorm, conditions Favre said he'd waited for all his life. At one point, he threw a snowball at Donald Driver's head.

In their first NFC championship since 1998, the Packers are expecting freezing temperatures, as low as single digits. Packer fans are expecting Favre to lead them to the Super Bowl. And he isn't playing alone.

Ryan Grant has emerged as a running back revelation. Mike Holmgren said Grant reminded him of former Packer Dorsey Levens, and running backs coach Edgar Bennett said Grant "needs only one cut, then he hits it."

Grant, of course, was traded to Green Bay by the Giants. He had not yet established himself when the two teams met in Week 2. And Greg Jennings was inactive for that game with a hamstring injury. So the Giants haven't really seen the Packers' two best players after Favre.

This is not good news for the Giants. The Packers have never lost a championship game at Lambeau. They scored 42 points in a blinding snowstorm against Seattle, and everyone is healthy. When the Packers beat the Giants 35-13 in September, the game was in the Meadowlands.

"We're glad this one is in Lambeau," said Packers coach Mike McCarthy. "You have to respect that the Giants went to Tampa Bay and won, then went to Dallas and won. But we played our best football against Seattle. Except for the two early (Grant) fumbles, it was the best game since I've been here."

The Giants defensive ends, Michael Strahan and Osi Umenyiora, are excellent and play very much like Kerney and Darryl Tapp, but this game isn't expected to be slippery, just cold. The Giants have an advantage if they can rush Favre effectively, but the secondary will likely struggle. Cornerback Aaron Ross has a bad shoulder and cornerback Sam Madison has an abdominal strain.

For the Giants to win, they will need Plaxico Burress and Amani Toomer to somehow avoid Al Harris and Charles Woodson. Brandon Jacobs will have to rumble up the middle, dishing out some punishment himself, and Eli Manning will have to continue to play error free.

One interesting note. The Packers led the NFL in defensive illegal contact penalties, almost double that of the next most penalized team. It's an intriguing approach by Green Bay -- play physical and let the referee decide how "physical" it was. Woodson and Harris were Nos. 1 and 2 in the league in this category.

Mike McCarthy watched the Giants-Cowboys game alone in his office. When it ended, the collective cheer from Green Bay could be heard throughout the state. Thousands of fans have already lined up to buy the few remaining tickets.

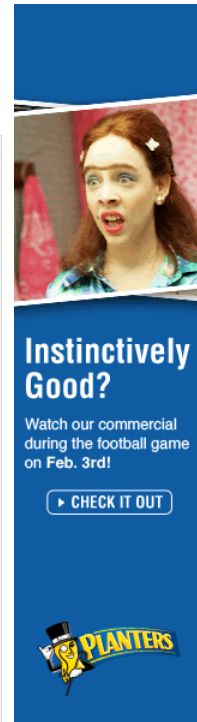
The second-seeded Packers have a chance to follow the same yellow brick road that took them to the Super Bowl in 1996. That year, the Packers won an enormous game at home against San Francisco, then beat the Carolina Panthers at home in the NFC Championship Game.

And, of course, there is a tie to Vince Lombardi. Is there ever a meaningful Packer game not related to the man in the porkpie hat?

In 1961, Lombardi's first NFL title came when the Packers demolished the Giants 37-0 at Lambeau Field. Bart Starr, Paul Hornung and Jim Taylor beat Y.A. Tittle, Charlie Conerly and kicker Pat Summerall. Somewhere Lombardi is smiling.

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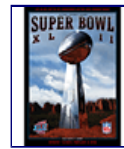
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