

# 2006 Green Bay Packers: Player grades

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## Offense

### WIDE RECEIVERS (8)

**Shaun Bodiford:** Returned kickoffs in two games and played a couple snaps from scrimmage before suffering a broken fibula in Week 9. Made the Lions as a rookie free agent. Tough, fast, raw. **Grade: Incomplete**

**Donald Driver:** Ranked fifth in the NFL both in receptions (92) and receiving yards (1,295). Resilient, sudden, courageous, speedy, fearless and clever. He meant everything to an offense that didn't have enough playmakers. Did most of his damage from the slot. It's hard to imagine that there was a better inside receiver in the league. Had lowest drop rate of his career (3.5%) and averaged career-best 4.95 yards after the catch, which ranks third behind Antonio Freeman (7.3, '98) and Robert Brooks (5.1, '95) among the team's No. 1 wide receivers during West Coast era. **Grade: A**

**Robert Ferguson:** Enjoyed healthy, productive training camp but lost job to Greg Jennings late in camp and didn't have many chances as No. 3 in first month. Suffered dreaded Lisfranc foot sprain in Week 4 and went on injured reserve. Only 27 but hasn't played a full season since '02 and has \$1.8 million base salary in '07. Still capable of competing for the No. 3 job if his foot checks out. **Grade: D+**

**Chris Francies:** Rookie free agent who was cut twice and brought back each time. Ordinary speed and hands but does show some toughness. **Grade: D-**

**Carlyle Holiday:** Overshadowed in Arizona by blue-chip receiving corps but quickly became quasi-No. 3 in late December after being claimed Dec. 5 off Cardinals' waivers. Four-year quarterback, one-year backup WR at Notre Dame with good hands, ball skills, body control and athleticism, plus an average score (19) on the Wonderlic intelligence test. Still raw in his routes, but there's tools to be developed. Rugged blocker. **Grade: D+**

**Greg Jennings:** It seems like a lifetime ago, but through five games he had eight catches for 20 yards or more whereas Driver had only six. Then he suffered a classic ankle sprain in Week 6 and was never the same again. As the star of training camp, he was smooth and fluid, ran explosively and unpredictably after the catch, found ways to get deep and showed a knack for making big plays. Jennings doesn't offer prototypical vertical stretch but has deceptive speed and is a natural route-runner. A classy individual. Might never be a No. 1 but should be a solid No. 2. Even better than Driver in average gain after catch (5.51) and had good drop rate (4.9%). **Grade: C**

**Ruvell Martin:** Fought the good fight, overcoming pink slips from San Diego in 2004 and '05 to make it as Packers' "street" free agent in '06. Didn't start playing until Week 6, but finished with 21 catches for team-high 17.0 average. Clutch 36-yard bomb behind Antoine Winfield was the biggest play in the second victory over Minnesota. Posted drop rate of 7.0%, after-catch average of 4.91. Doesn't mind getting dirty on special teams, trolling the middle or executing crack-back blocks. Long strider with questionable speed. **Grade: D+**

**Koren Robinson:** Serving year-long suspension and can't even apply for reinstatement until mid-September. Will be entering seventh season but won't be 27 until March. Robinson's return depends on if he adheres to his treatment program and what the club has for receivers in '07. Didn't appear special anymore receiving or returning kickoffs. **Grade: D.**

## **TIGHT ENDS (5)**

**Zac Alcorn:** Rookie free agent from the Black Hills played only a few snaps from scrimmage. Probably has the best hands among the tight ends. Will be 27 in August but has enough talent to warrant another look. **Grade: Incomplete**

**Bubba Franks:** Hasn't been the same player since the club took 28 days to get him signed in August 2005. Was shaky last year, much worse in '06. His great hands deserted him (drop rate of 11.3%), as did his powers of concentration (four penalties, only ones by tight ends; two fumbles, his first since '00) and ability to pass block (career-worst 9 1/2 "pressures" allowed, including three sacks). Gave up career-low total of 7 1/2 "bad" runs. Labored running routes, didn't score a TD or have a reception for more than 19 yards. Club has to consider taking \$2 million cap hit, releasing him in off-season and starting over. **Grade: F**

**Tory Humphrey:** Made club as No. 4 TE, contributed on special teams but never had a pass thrown to him before going on injured reserve Nov. 15 with a major hamstring injury. On the short side but can run. **Grade: Incomplete**

**Donald Lee:** Played much better in '05 without a training camp than he did in '06 with one. Dropped too many last year (7.6%), but then came back to drop a shocking five of 22 this year (22.7%). Superbly conditioned athlete. Not an explosive blocker, but seldom misses his man. Proficient on special teams. Figures to get one more shot. **Grade: D**

**David Martin:** Fast becoming a prominent piece of the offense and was having his finest season before suffering a fractured rib in Week 10. Played just one game after that. Big and fast, constantly improving as a blocker during spotty six-year career. Unrestricted free agent whom the Packers figure to re-sign at their number. **Grade: D+**

## OFFENSIVE LINE (11)

**Kevin Barry:** Blew out a quadriceps tendon and underwent surgery May 26 after being re-signed to two-year, \$2.79 million deal (\$1.2 million in bonuses). Doesn't fit cut-blocking scheme. Might draw draft-choice compensation in potential trade to a gap-blocking club. Still isn't out of the woods with the leg and his weight.

**Grade: Incomplete**

**Josh Bourke:** Rookie free-agent tackle from Division II Grand Valley State spent year on injured reserve with lumbar disc problem. Sufficiently athletic to compete at both tackles. **Grade: Incomplete**

**Chad Clifton:** Overcame chronically sore knees to start 15 games without incident. Gifted and grooved pass protector, allowed two sacks in '06 and just 15 in seven-year career. Charged with 14 "pressures," down from 17 ½ in '05 and 17 in '04. Only a handful of NFL tackles protect as well as Clifton. Not an explosive drive blocker, but was better at the point than on back-side cutoffs. Responsible for 12 "bad" runs, fewest among the regulars and down from 12 ½ in '05. He had just six in '04. Played with greater intensity, trimming penalty count to six after averaging 9.3 from 2004-'06. **Grade: B**

**Daryn Colledge:** Second-round pick from Boise State, where he was four-year starter at LT. Wasn't ready in August but, when a second chance beckoned in mid-September, he most assuredly was. Started 14 games at LG and didn't allow a sack. Started one game at LT for an ill Clifton and yielded two first-quarter sacks to Miami's Jason Taylor before making impressive adjustments. Developed into an effective pass protector, a good cut blocker and a so-so drive blocker, finishing third among linemen in "pressures" allowed (19) as well as "bad" runs allowed (14½). Needs upper-body strength. A dedicated lifter. **Grade: C**

**Junius Coston:** Bounced between guard and tackle in camp, failed to impress and then didn't play a down during regular season. Will be entering third season, but doesn't turn 24 until November. Has more than enough talent to compete, but hasn't shown much competitive fire. **Grade: Incomplete**

**Tony Moll:** Clearly ranked No. 6 among the six linemen who played. Still, he was a better player than the guards of last year, Will Whitticker and Adrian Klemm. Given improved strength and refinement in technique, he should have a bright future at any of four positions. Fifth-round choice started five games at RG, then five at RT in only second year as an offensive lineman. A fighter with enough self-confidence to shake off tough times. Gave up more sacks (four) and "pressures" (23 ½) than anyone on club and ranked third on offense with five penalties. **Grade: D+**

**Tony Palmer:** A seventh-round draft choice from Missouri who was claimed off waivers from St. Louis on Sept. 3. Never played. The Rams admired his nasty run-blocking ability, but were skeptical about his ability to grasp a system. Outgoing coordinator Jeff Jagodzinski and O-line coach Joe Philbin insist that isn't a problem. A physical wide body at guard who loves practicing and playing. **Grade: Incomplete**

**Jason Spitz:** Early-season thigh injury was the only reason why he started 13 games rather than 16. Brawler-mauler type. Better in a phone booth than on the move. Well-tutored at Louisville, he entered the NFL knowing the score in terms of temperament, toughness and strength. Seemed to wear down in the final month. Allowed the most bad runs (17 1/2) and the fourth-most "pressures" (19 1/2). Carries himself a lot like Frank Winters. **Grade: C-**

**Mark Tauscher:** Missed Weeks 10-14 with a torn groin, but refused to cash in the season and was back starting in Weeks 15-16. Charged with one sack, giving him just 12 in seven-year career. Doesn't always look pretty in protection, but plays the angles and is athletic enough not to stay beat. Seemed somewhat miscast early in cut-blocking run scheme, but by season's end might have been the best cutter among his linemates. Moves into high-rent district in '07 (\$4.089 million cap salary), but Packers should be only too glad to have him. **Grade: B-**

**Tyson Walter:** Signed off the street Nov. 25 to provide protection at all five positions. Never played. Will be an unrestricted free agent and probably won't be back. **Grade: Incomplete**

**Scott Wells:** Entered the season as a question mark with just four starts at center and ended it as an established starter with a fat new contract. Sandwiched between rookie guards, he used superb strength, leadership skills and intelligence (30 on the Wonderlic) to keep the middle firm for Brett Favre. Allowed fewest "pressures" (11) on line, but the second-most "bad" runs (17). Quick and aggressive to the second level. Relies on balance, strength and pride to avoid getting rag-dolled by bulk. A worthy successor to Mike Flanagan. **Grade: B-**

## QUARTERBACKS (4)

**Todd Bouman:** Brought on board by Mike McCarthy as a Band-Aid Nov. 21 after Aaron Rodgers went down. No reason to bring him back. **Grade: Incomplete**

**Brett Favre:** The legendary one accepted the task of directing a youthful team in full rebuilding mode and ended up taking some pride in a .500 finish. After ranking an unsightly 31st in pass rating (70.9) in '05, Favre moved up a few notches to 25th (72.7). For the second consecutive season, he was considerably better early than late. This year, his rating of 81.3 in the first nine games was followed by 61.0 in the last seven. At Mike McCarthy's behest, Favre toned down his impulsiveness and had 23 turnovers, down from 36 a year ago. He was 1 for 3 in win-at-the-end situations. His vision and bounce-back release were key factors why opponents sacked him merely 21 times. He had to learn vastly new terminology and proved a nice fit in McCarthy's frequent call-at-the-line system. No longer is Favre a threat to run. His accuracy deep has diminished. And his hair-trigger reflexes have lost some juice. Still, he is capable of making any throw, still has a blue-chip arm and is an all-time competitor and tough guy. If Favre thinks he can postpone the inevitable physical decline at 38 as well as he did at 37, there's little reason to think he's going to retire. **Grade: B-**

**Ingle Martin:** His arm might be stronger than Rodgers' and he probably is more athletic. Plus, he has a quick snap release and doesn't have to wind up to throw downfield. Developing him is worth the time. **Grade: Incomplete**

**Aaron Rodgers:** In four exhibition games, he was impressive in the first, very average in the second, not very good in the third and awful in the fourth. His only regular-season appearance of substance was the second half against New England. It wasn't pretty. He held the ball for three sacks. He bolted the pocket prematurely. He wasn't crisp in his progressions. And his body language hinted of irritation with his teammates. However, he played at least the fourth quarter with a broken foot that probably will sideline him until spring. No one is sure if he can play or not. **Grade: D**

## RUNNING BACKS (7)

**Arliss Beach:** Big rookie runner flashed some speed and some elusiveness in camp. Spent season on injured reserve with ankle injury. **Grade: Incomplete**

**Ahman Green:** Counting incentives, he earned about \$2.9 million on a one-year deal while playing 14 games and gaining 1,059 yards. As an unrestricted free agent a month away from his 30th birthday, he will weigh an expected offer from Green Bay against testing the market. Green averaged 3.98 yards per carry in '06 and 3.31 in '05, a sharp departure from his 4.67 in 2000-'04. He stumbled too often at the end of runs, caught the ball poorly (career-worst drop rate of 12.7%) and had merely four gains of 20 yards or more, down from an average of 13.6 from 2000-'04. Nevertheless, he continued to attack defenses, seldom going down without a fight. Because of asthma and other maladies, his playing time was just 67.5% in the 14 games. **Grade: B**

**William Henderson:** In each of the last three years, the Packers had a fullback prepared to take his job. It was Nick Luchey in 2004, Vonta Leach in '05 and Brandon Miree in '06. Each time, Henderson played more snaps. Granted, his playing time did decrease from 33.9% in '04 to 27.8% in '05 to 24.3% this season. Henderson has a contract for minimum wage in '07, but after turning 36 in a month it might be best for him to call it quits. Henderson adjusted to the new system and blocked better in the second half, but he fell off as a receiver. **Grade: D+**

**Noah Herron:** With Ahman Green taking frequent breathers, Mike McCarthy gave him 13.9 snaps, mostly on third down, in the role previously held by Tony Fisher. In 66 touches from scrimmage, his longest gain was just 19 yards. Herron isn't as fast or as good as Fisher, either from scrimmage or on special teams. **Grade: D+**

**Brandon Miree:** He played 144 snaps to Henderson's eight in Weeks 4-7 before suffering a hyperextended elbow late in Week 7. After sitting out three games, he played with a brace and alternated with Henderson in Weeks 11-16. The elbow, however, limited his aggressiveness. Miree isn't a blow-'em-up type blocker, but this offense doesn't require that. He's athletic for the position and a good fit for the scheme. **Grade: D+**

**Vernand Morency:** It's hard to find a scout who would want Morency as a starter, but most would like him as a No. 2. He's quick into the hole, has shake-and-bake in the open field and enough speed to go the distance. His hands, pass blocking and toughness all seem adequate. And the game isn't too big for him. **Grade: C.**

**P.J. Pope:** After being plucked Oct. 31 from the Bears' practice squad, he played in just one of nine games. He's a rookie free agent worth another look. **Grade: Incomplete**

- Bob McGinn

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