

Letdown/Packers had 'no spirit,' fan says

» From A-1

Indiana to watch her beloved Packers, said she wondered if the players had wilted under the cold, blustery weather conditions. For whatever reason, Obershaw said, the Packers were just not themselves.

"It looked like nobody had their groove on," she said. "It's just so sad."

The crowd of 70,000-plus did its best to provide a spark during the game, waving rally towels, filling the stands with green and gold and cheering loudly at every opportunity.

In the end, however, those same fans sulked out of Lambeau Field with long faces and bitter memories.

Maggie Milhaupt of Appleton said she got the impression that people in the stands wanted a victory Sunday more than the players on the field did.

"There was no spirit," Milhaupt said.

Jeff Charlesworth, a season ticket holder from St. Paul, Minn., said he was angry that the reigning

Super Bowl champions could not show up to defend their title with more zeal and determination.

While the Giants appeared fired up, Charlesworth said, the Packers looked complacent.

"We were flat," he said. "They kicked our butts."

So, the dreams of back-to-back Super Bowl championships ended for a community that was more accustomed to thrilling victories this season than crushing defeats.

Long after the game ended and the stands were nearly empty, Jacob Shell of Florida remained in his seat, staring down at the field and wondering what went wrong.

"I just can't leave," he said.

Bill Welch of Genesee trudged toward an exit and found himself already looking ahead to next season.

"We're still a contender," he said. "You can't count us out — that's for sure."

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