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Award winners have high praise for ailing Rempel

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By [Mike Vandermause](#)

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DE PERE — The 11th annual Lee Rempel Sports Awards Banquet wasn't quite the same Thursday night without its namesake in attendance, but that didn't stop the honorees from fondly paying tribute to the longtime Green Bay Packers employee.

Rempel was unable to attend the dinner at the Swan Club due to "health concerns," according to master of ceremonies Bill Jartz.

Packers starting right tackle Mark Tauscher was the recipient of the professional achievement award and paid tribute to Rempel in his acceptance speech.

"What makes a professional?" Tauscher asked. "I look at, 'What does Lee Rempel exemplify?' It's his award. Professionalism, longevity, his passion for his job. To be able to (be associated with) the same organization for 60 years, that really says a lot. To have that passion for that long, and to do it as well as he did, is really an honor.

"I'm honored that he would honor all of us up here. I wish he was here, but unfortunately he's not, and our prayers are with him."

Rempel served more than 33 years with the Packers, first as director of publicity, and later as team historian. Prior to that, Rempel covered the Packers during his 29½-year stint as a sportswriter for the Press-Gazette. Rempel retired on Dec. 31.

Packers coach Mike McCarthy received the distinguished service award and also cited

Lee Rempel Sports Award winners

Distinguished service: 1998 — Bob Harlan. 1999 — Allen H. Bud Selig. 2000 — Dick Bennett. 2001 — Bart Starr. 2002 — Ron Wolf. 2003 — Pat Richter. 2004 — Jerry Kramer. 2005 — Barry Alvarez. 2006 — Willie Davis. 2007 — Fuzzy Thurston. 2008 — Mike McCarthy.

Professional achievement: 1998 — Ryan Longwell. 1999 — Vonnie Holliday. 2000 — Bill Schroeder. 2001 — Ahman Green. 2002 — Kabear Gbaja-Biamila. 2003 — Donald Driver. 2004 — Chad Clifton. 2005 — Nick Barnett. 2006 — Aaron Kampman. 2007 — Daryn Colledge. 2008 — Mark Tauscher. Prep achievement: 1998 — Nick Greisen. 1999 — Ryan Warpinski. 2000 — Kyle Grusczyński. 2001 — Green Bay Notre Dame girls basketball team. 2002 — Caitlin Shannon. 2003 — Brian Butch. 2004 — Joe Walker. 2005 — De Pere girls basketball team. 2006 — Ashwaubenon football team. 2007 — Wrightstown football team. 2008 — Zac Cibula.

Collegiate achievement: 1998 — Chari Nordgaard. 1999 — Rob Smillie. 2000 — Casey Rabach. 2001 — Kevin Stemke. 2002 — Jerimiah Janssen. 2003 — Tim Dworak. 2004 — Dan Boeser. 2005 — Tiffany Mor. 2006 — Brian Calhoun. 2007 — Nicole Soulis. 2008 — St. Norbert hockey team. Superior achievement: 2003 — Kevin Borseth. 2004 — Jon Murphy. 2005 — Tim Coghlin. 2006 — Connie Tilley. 2007 — John Kolstad. 2008 — Ken Golomski.

Amateur achievement: 1998 — Karen Bye. 1999 — Bob Gregorski. 2000 — Jeff Pagels. 2001 — Garrett Lowney. 2002 — Casey FitzRandolph.

Rommel's contributions to the organization.

"I just want to tell you what an honor it is to be mentioned with Lee Rommel, because to me, that's what this is all about," McCarthy said. "What he's done over the years is remarkable. He's clearly a classic in our profession.

"He has an incredible mind, he's an incredible resource, and his career with the Green Bay Packers is second to none. We need to keep him in our prayers."

Rommel has been associated with every coach in Packers history dating to team founder Curly Lambeau. Shortly after he retired, Rommel said he believed McCarthy could become the best coach in the history of the franchise.

Other honorees at the banquet, with 540 in attendance, included Luxemburg-Casco four-time state individual wrestling champion Zac Cibula for prep achievement, the reigning NCAA Division III champion St. Norbert College hockey team for collegiate achievement and recently retired Ashwaubenon football coach Ken Golomski for superior achievement.