

All you have to do is go to Lambeau Field and experience that community of fans that place it changes you . Brian Baumgartner will forever be connected to the city of Scranton . He played the lovable accountant Kevin Malone , in the office , but the man behind Malone was actually born and raised in Atlanta , and he's a diehard fan of the Green Bay Packers . Over the past couple of years , Baumgartner has stayed busy with his podcast , An Oral History of the Office and the Office Deep Dive , as well as a new book . Welcome to Dunder Mifflin , The Ultimate Oral History of the office . Like his friend , Packers quarterback Aaron Rodgers , he's just the right man for the job . I'm looking China Robinson . Those sweet , funky sounds you hear are the Budo Spain , and this is a huge fan . The podcast where stars top sport now . Please welcome Brian Baumgartner , Green Bay Packers , you . So , Brian , thank you so much for joining us on , huge fan . It's great to have you with us today . Your first fan affair was with the Atlanta Falcons . What do you remember about those early days ? So I was a fan of the Falcons back . I grew up in Atlanta and and and rooted for the Falcons and also really rooted for the Georgia Bulldogs . I went down to Athens with friends most home games during during the 80s . They're back the other golden age of Georgia football . But yeah , I was a big fan of the Falcons and the Braves and and so forth . And yes , to the to the dismay of many of my friends who are who I grew up with in Atlanta , many of whom are still there . My allegiances have shifted over the last 12 years or so . I developed a relationship prior to it , right before Aaron Rodgers took over as the quarterback of the Green Bay Packers . So now that's been it's been a long , long time . And as we became closer and closer and developed a relationship spent time in the offseason together , I played a lot of golf together . For me , I just went , What am I going to buy ? Going to root for the Foulke where I grew up ? Or am I going to root for my friend ? Like , to me , it became a no brainer . There's just a lot to love about the Packers as well . And all you have to do one time in the fall or winter is go to Lambeau Field and experience that community of fans that place it changes you . And so you may not root for them , but they're really , really hard team to hate . And now , from so many times going there , I'm so happy and excited to be going in a couple of weeks again . I've developed relationships with friends now in the city . Green Bay lifers and and their connection to the team , the ownership of the fans over the team , you know , in some ways , literally is . It's just such a special special place . So yeah , I'm a you know . Follow me on social media . It's no surprise I'm a big fan of Green Bay . You know , you bring up an interesting point . Geography does play a part in a lot of this right in relationships do too . And I think those are two exceptions , like when you literally cannot get back to your home city enough to feel connected to a team or , for whatever reason , your television package , wherever you are won't allow for you to see like it can be tough . I mean , technology is advanced now , so you know , it makes it easier for everyone to really follow any team . But to be in the in the in the arena is is a very different experience to your point , even about Green Bay . And then relationships do matter , right ? So you mentioned Lambeau Field . Give us just a visual of your first time there and what was different , what was special , what do you remember about being in that environment ? Right . So I , you know , I had become I had started rooting for the Packers and and really A.J. Hawk as well , really good friend of mine obviously played there for a long time of all time leader in tackles for the Green Bay Packers . Actually Great Ohio State alum . My first trip and it was going just getting from the airport and wanting to go by Lambeau Field . And if you've never been . This is crazy to me , but the neighborhood is right there . I remember they talk about it on TV or whatever , but it's right there . All of these houses literally in the shadow of Lambeau Field . And so I'm kind of on the streets . I don't know what they're called but like to go around the stadium . And I took a picture and it's a park like the most classic like Midwestern park with a swing set . And I stopped and I took a picture basically through the swing set and you just see the giant Lambeau Field with the big classic sign right behind this playground . And that just to me , embodies that connection , that community connection , that it's all seamless . And if you live there , obviously , if you live in that neighborhood , that the whole community . It is . It's not like Atlanta , like you're going to go to the stadium or you're going to go there or the Dodger Stadium or whatever , like , it's just such a central focus for that community . Now , for me , it's just incredibly special and up the tailgating stuff . People think of tailgating , as you know , bringing a portable , you know , grill and doing hot dogs or brats or whatever . No , no , no , no , no . The first time I went , brand , I had Matt said , You got to go tailgating with us , and I said , OK , it's cold and snowy , and we drive up to this little house and he's like , I'll go park guys , get out . I'm like , We're at a house . They had converted their garage to a two car garage . They had the like plastic hanging over where the garage door comes up to keep it a little warm inside . There's bars inside . There's like food . They convert . There's a bathroom like that's right inside the house , off of the garage that there's a urinal , right ? So it's like made completely constructed to be a pre-game environment indoors for the game , obviously , like all grills outside food everywhere . And just a little jar . Just a little jar on the bar . No one's guarding it or watching it , which is like , you know , why throw in a few boxed drinks everywhere , whatever you want , however much you want ? And I was like , Well , I've never experienced anything like this . I've heard that Lambeau Field is the coldest place on Earth . Did you feel like you were underprepared for the weather while there ? What time of year was it ? And do you believe that that that is a factor for teams that that come and play there ? Oh , I mean , it has to be right . I mean , anyone who , yeah , not even grown up in the cold anyway , you could be in California , especially Northern California , and it's that it's it's so cold . And you the idea of catching a football is almost like painful in a way like . And to get it or the idea of falling like everything is tensed up for me . I I love go . I'm from Atlanta , right ? I live in Southern California . It was eighty six degrees last Friday in Southern California , so I'm not used to it at all . But I felt like when I went , I was , I have to go when it's cold . I love going that time of year because it is such a unique , such a unique experience . And yeah , I mean it to me , it has to give them an advantage . Yeah , yeah , yeah . No , absolutely . That's the one thing I always hear when people talk about Lambeau Field is like how cold it is , how like , ridiculously hard it is for other teams to adjust . And I'm sure it sounds like it doesn't affect tailgating too much , but may affect that , that pre-game fun and activity . Have you heard of the Lambeau Leap ? Oh , of course . And have you ever participated ? What is that like ? I wouldn't want to try that for sure . I would not want to try that . You know , it's when I am . Plus , I've never scored a touchdown . Let's be clear . No , it's that right . It's that jump up in into the stands after a touchdown is scored . A very , very , very cool tradition you have there . You know , I was I was fortunate enough when I went the first time to be able to walk through kind of the bowels of the building . And I I've never told this story before . Actually , I hope this is like a trade secret . I think it's gimmicky for people like me , but the tunnel from the home locker room out onto the field , I was able to walk through that tunnel and walk out on the field , and there was a button that you can hit . They don't do it on game day . Obviously , they don't need you . There's a button you can hit and it plays crowd noise in that echoes in that tunnel . So like when I walked out , somebody hit the button and it sounded like there were eighty thousand people in the stands as you walked out the tunnel . It's really very , very cool experience . That is really cool , so it's just like they have some kind of sound system built in . It's just , I mean , it's just like I said , probably for idiots like me or somebody that they bring to the game that's like , you want to walk , you want to walk out the tunnel and you can hit a little button and you hear that noise playing . It was cool . This is game day . Let's

change gears a little and talk about game day . What's that like for you ? Do you have a text message group that you're going back and forth with during the game saying we should have done this or that ? A couple of days ago , the Green Bay Packers played the Seattle Seahawks , and my old friend and co-worker Rainn Wilson is a huge Seattle Seahawks fan from Seattle . He's participated in many game days up there like I have in Green Bay , and so right as the game began , he texted and we were we went back and forth until the game was over , so that was a little bit different . That wasn't we didn't talk strategy . I didn't want to relay to him strategy . I thought that we should be doing . But there was there was a lot of trash talking and fortunately for me that he didn't really have anything to trash talk me about . We've talked Aaron Rodgers , but any other recent standout performances from your favorite packers that have stood out this season ? Well , I mean , spoiler alert , Devonte Adams might be the best receiver in all of football right now . I mean , what he is doing is just unbelievable . Aaron Jones , I , you know , I hope he's going to be all right . But AJ Dillon , I was really happy with how he finished off the game the other day . And , you know , it's really fun . I know Aaron's really happy about it having Randall Cobb back in the mix . There been , especially when Devonte was out in the the Arizona Cardinals game that day they pulled through and one that was really exciting and coffee with a couple of touchdown passes . And I am so happy for him and glad that he's back there in Green Bay as well . Is there anything Aaron Rodgers have has ever shared with you about the game that really stood out ? Like , has he ever given you any insight that you would say , Wow , I would only know this because I'm friends with Aaron Rodgers or only get this perspective from him was something he said one time . Not about anything specifically , but you know , you think about you , you know , you think about he's a quarterback . There's a place for the offense . But insights that he has on the defensive side of the field as well is is equally as valuable . And I was sort of thinking about that . I'm like , OK , I figured you weren't in those meetings or whatever . But his job is to analyze defenses , right ? So he so he has his side of the ball , but he's also spending all week analyzing opposing defenses and what they are doing and things that he feels are effective or can be exploited or right . That can only help your own team as well going , Hey , you know , this is something that is really difficult to read or to match up against or that I think just that idea of how complete one a mind he has . But but there's so much more that that the players are thinking about constantly , that you just as a fan , you're not you're not thinking about as much . So in order for the Packers to win the Super Bowl , what needs to happen , put on your analyst . Have for me what needs to take place this season for them to get back to the Super Bowl ? I think if they keep going the way that they're going right now , I think obviously when Aaron was out , that was a loss other than the first game of the year , which I just at this point consider an anomaly . They have been consistently playing the best football across the NFL this year . And I think if they keep going the way that they're going and I , I believe it would be helpful . I'm not going to say it's necessary , but I think getting the one seed and a bye and having people , as we discussed before , have to go to Lambeau . I expect a different result this year in the playoffs . Changing gears a little bit to your big day . Welcome to Dunder Mifflin . The ultimate oral history of the office . Your new book . Congratulations ! Thank you . What were you most surprised to learn when putting this book together ? Well , the reason that I did the book was , you know , we the office was the number one scripted show on NBC for most of the time we were on . And then we stopped . And suddenly , seven years since we filmed our final scene , they start releasing streaming information . Obviously , I have anecdotal evidence meaning like walking through an airport , sitting down at a restaurant . The show became way bigger than it was when it was the top show on NBC , and once the streaming numbers came out , more people are watching the office than any other show on television . And my question was why ? Why ? Why ? How is this app ? What happened early on that made this so and so this book is really an exploration of trying to discover the answer to that question . Was it about the cast that was brought together ? Was it about the way the show was shot ? The director that was brought in initially , the writers that were brought in creator Greg Daniels and his vision were really wanting to go and unpack those early years and and discuss the history of the show to find out why people are still watching it eight years now since we filmed anything . It's incredible . So I had a blast , went back , talked to my old cast writers , crew members , everybody I could find . Forty four people I talked to about the show and got over 100 hours of recorded . Interviews to put this book together and then went into the vault at NBC and combed through thousands and thousands of photos behind the scenes photos that many of which have never been seen before , that we have put in the book , so I'm super proud of it . I'm super happy that people are going to be able to see it now and that and the books finally out available . Incredible amount of research that you've put into this . When you think about those photos , when you think about all of the interviews , they're one story you can share with us . Maybe that stands out of something that you had no idea about until you started this journey to write this book . Yeah , one really huge thing I did . I did never heard this story , but about halfway through the run of the show , there was a writers' strike in Hollywood . Whatever Hollywood means in in the film industry , film and television industry . A hundred days it went on and productions were totally shut down for 100 days straddling the holidays . I think it was like November through February . That's those are rough days . And you know , one thing for actors and directors and writers can be really difficult to be out of work for 100 days . But for our painters and makeup artists and grips electricians , that obviously really difficult and we had become a family at that point . Our our show , we were . We shot on a remote lot . We were the only ones there . Everybody was was on site . And I found out in doing the research for the book . Greg Daniels , our creator at the holidays that year , wrote a personal cheque from his own account every single crew member to help them get through that time . Because we were out of work and I had in this case it was a makeup artists say to me , You know , I will walk through a wall for that guy . I will . I will do anything for him because he was there and showed his love and appreciation and support for us . So . And as she was telling me this story , she was crying . I started like tearing up because , you know , it really speaks to our community . And I think one of the reasons that the show is so popular is , I think when you when you watch the show , there's a lot of snarky things said there's a lot of inappropriate things . But at its heart , it is about a group of people , disparate people working together that ultimately create a family in this office . And I think that that makes gives people comfort and makes them feel good . And I think that's one of the enduring qualities . Welcome to crunch time . Before we let you go a quick crunch time , we need some quick responses from you for some rapid fire questions . As a Packers fan favorite team to beat the Seahawks best game time meal brought , you can spike the ball in the face of one Packers rival player . Who is it ? Russell Wilson . That's a good one . Best football movie , Rudy . OK , we'll take it . It's not a bad one . All right . One word to describe your packers fandom . Intense . Love it . Thank you so much , Brian . Congratulations . I hope the book flies out of the stores , and that is a great success for you . Thanks so much . I appreciate it . Cheers . You can find a huge fan on Pandora , Stitcher or wherever you listen to podcasts . If you like the show , please rate review and share . So other huge fans can find us . 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