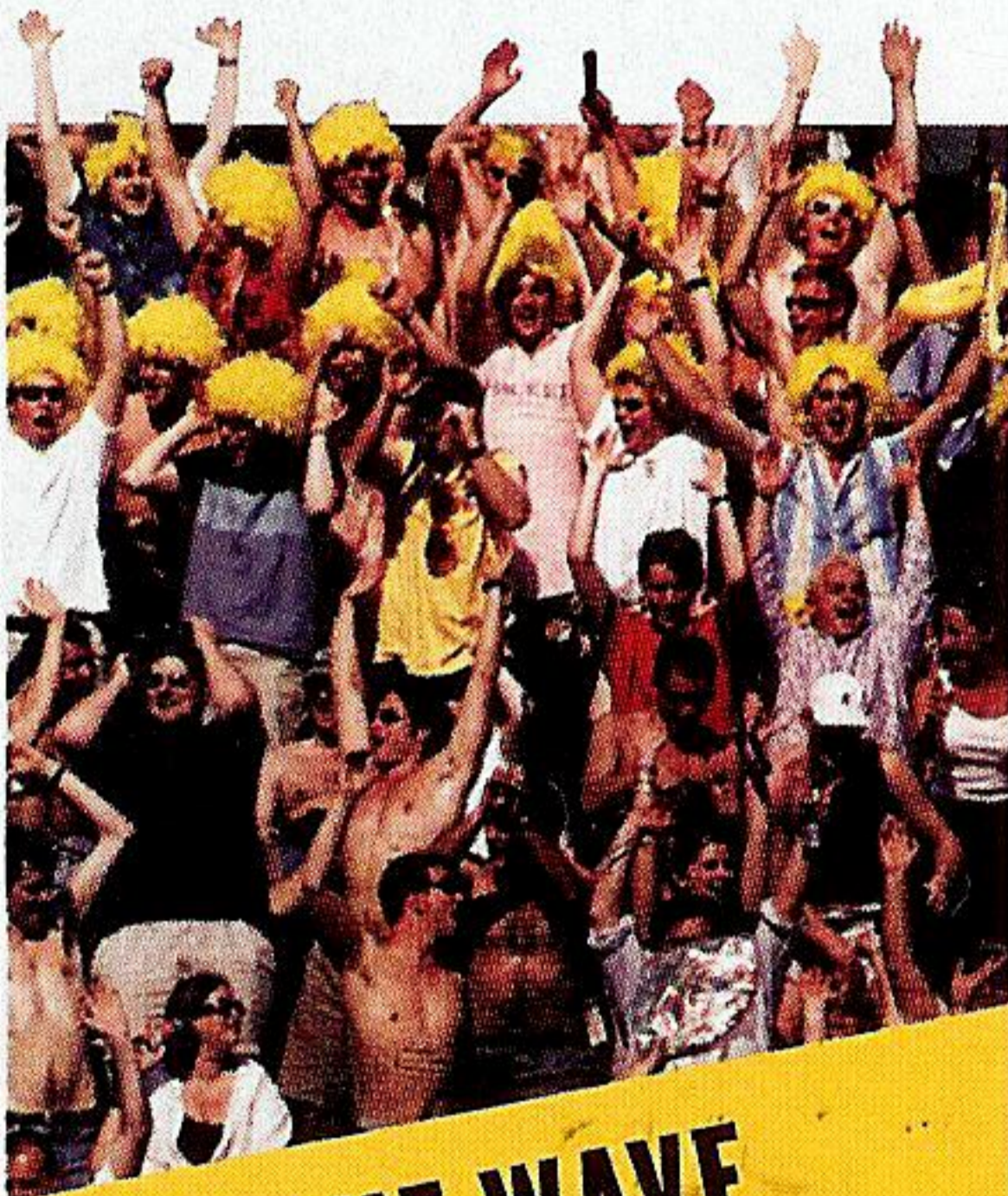


THE GAME MADE ME DO IT

Sport breeds strange traditions, not to mention strange fans. What is it about feats of athleticism that cause average men and women to don hats of cheese, hurl octopuses on the ice, and engage in carnal relations at midfield?

Craig Silverman ventures into the bleachers for a look at sports-fan rituals

TRADITION



THE WAVE

ORIGIN

In dispute. Rob Weller, a former host of *Entertainment Tonight*, says he invented The Wave on October 31, 1981, while cheerleading at the University of Washington. Legendary pro cheerleader "Krazy" George Henderson says he started the cheer on October 15, 1981, during a nationally televised baseball game. Others say it started in Mexico and was first seen by the world during the 1968 Mexico City Olympics.

LITTLE-KNOWN FACTS

Howard Cosell and Joe Garagiola both credit Krazy with starting The Wave. Still, the University of Washington stands by its claim and refuses to answer any questions on the matter. Mexicans, as well as many in the U.K., refer to it as "The Mexican Wave."

TIPS FOR EXECUTION

Begin with both hands palm-down on your knees and slowly lift your arms and torso as you see the wave approaching. Remember: Start The Wave with your legs or you might hurt your back.

BEST TIME TO UNLEASH

When your team needs that added surge to win. If you are over the age of 25, you are not allowed to start The Wave.

WATCH OUT FOR

Being the last one in your section to continue the wave. Never ride a wave too close to its crash – you'll look like an idiot.



OCTOPUSES ON THE ICE

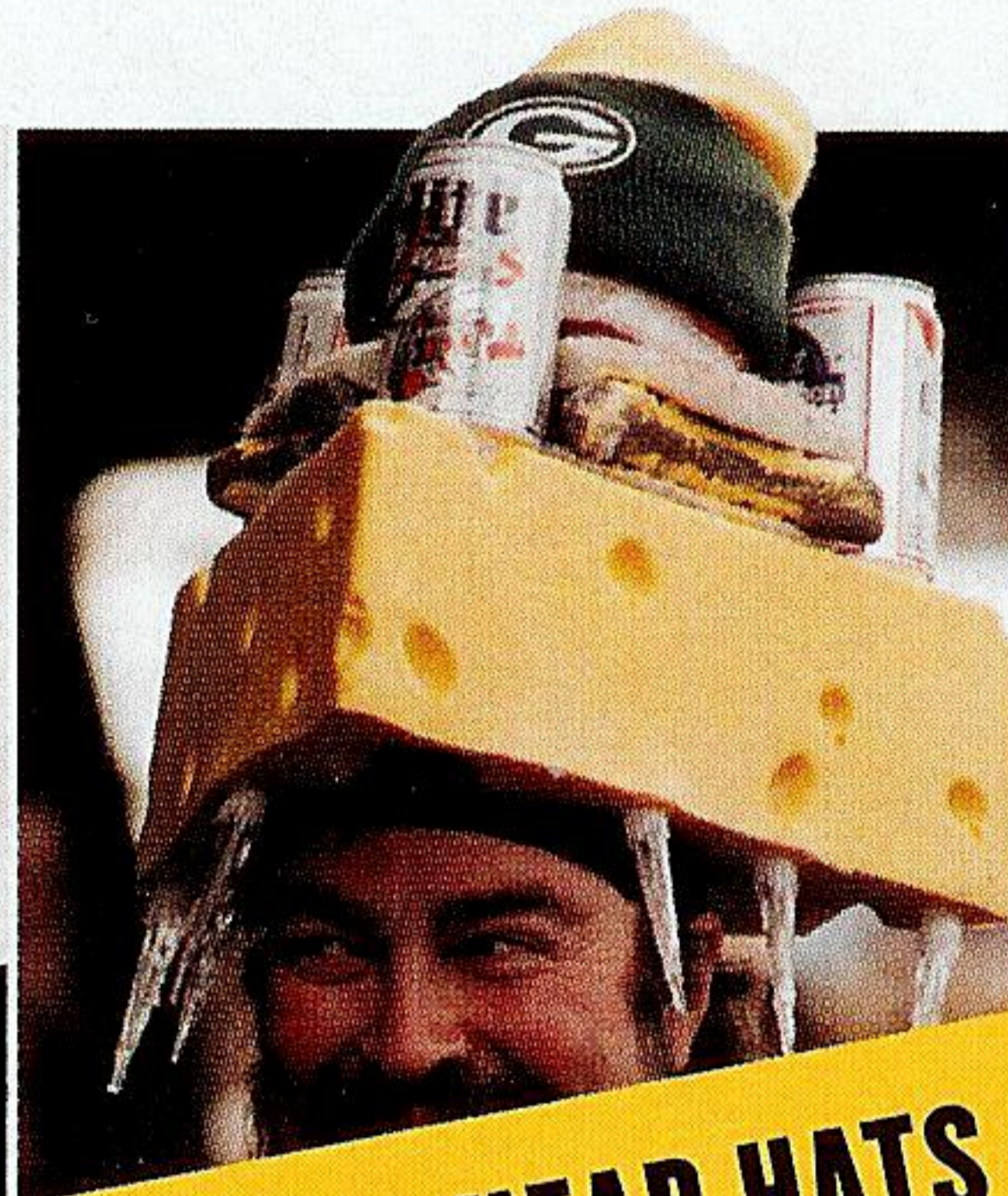
Fishmonger brothers Pete and Jerry Cusimano tossed the first mollusc onto the Detroit ice on April 15, 1952. At that time, with only six teams in the league, it took eight wins to capture the Cup, thus the selection of the eight-legged cephalopod.

Octopuses have no spine, much like the Red Wings. (Go Habs!)

Grab the tentacles and proceed to swing it like a sling, young David. Then smite the ice and quickly sit down.

When the refs aren't looking.

Spontaneous ink release. Suction.



CHEESEHEAD HATS

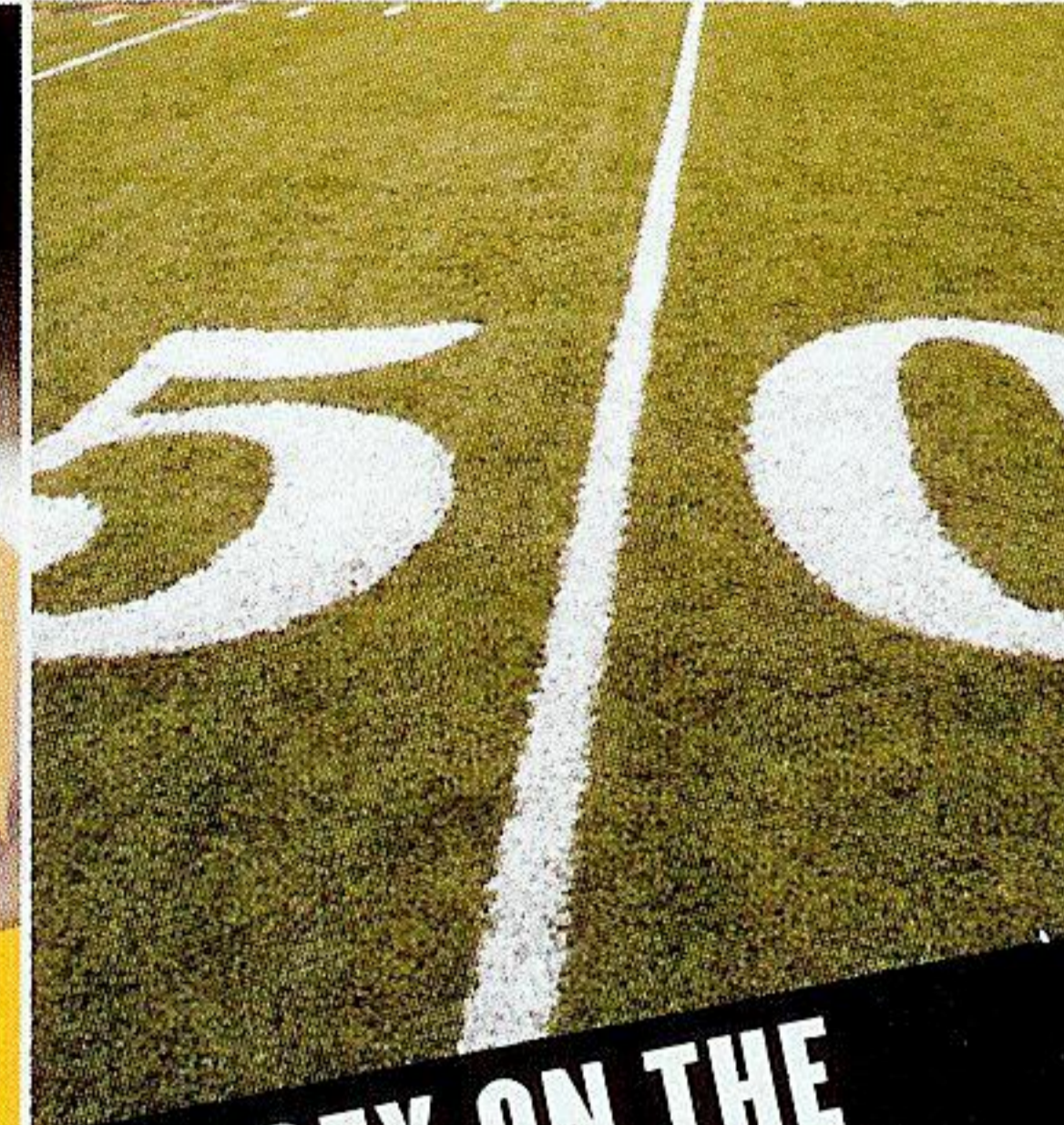
After their Super Bowl triumph over New England in 1986, Bears fans began referring to their closest rivals, Green Bay, as "cheeseheads" in reference to the Wisconsin dairy industry. Foamation Inc. of St. Francis, WI, began selling the cheesehead hats in 1987.

The hats have sold in all 50 U.S. states. "Cheesehead" is also a derogatory term for someone from the Netherlands.

Pair your hat with something green to really set off the yellow. But don't over accessorize; the cheese hat is a bold statement that can stand on its own (i.e., no beer hat underneath).

At a Packers game. While watching a Packers game on TV. While working at Chuck E. Cheese's. When trying to get in a fight in Amsterdam.

Obesity.



SEX ON THE 50 YARD LINE

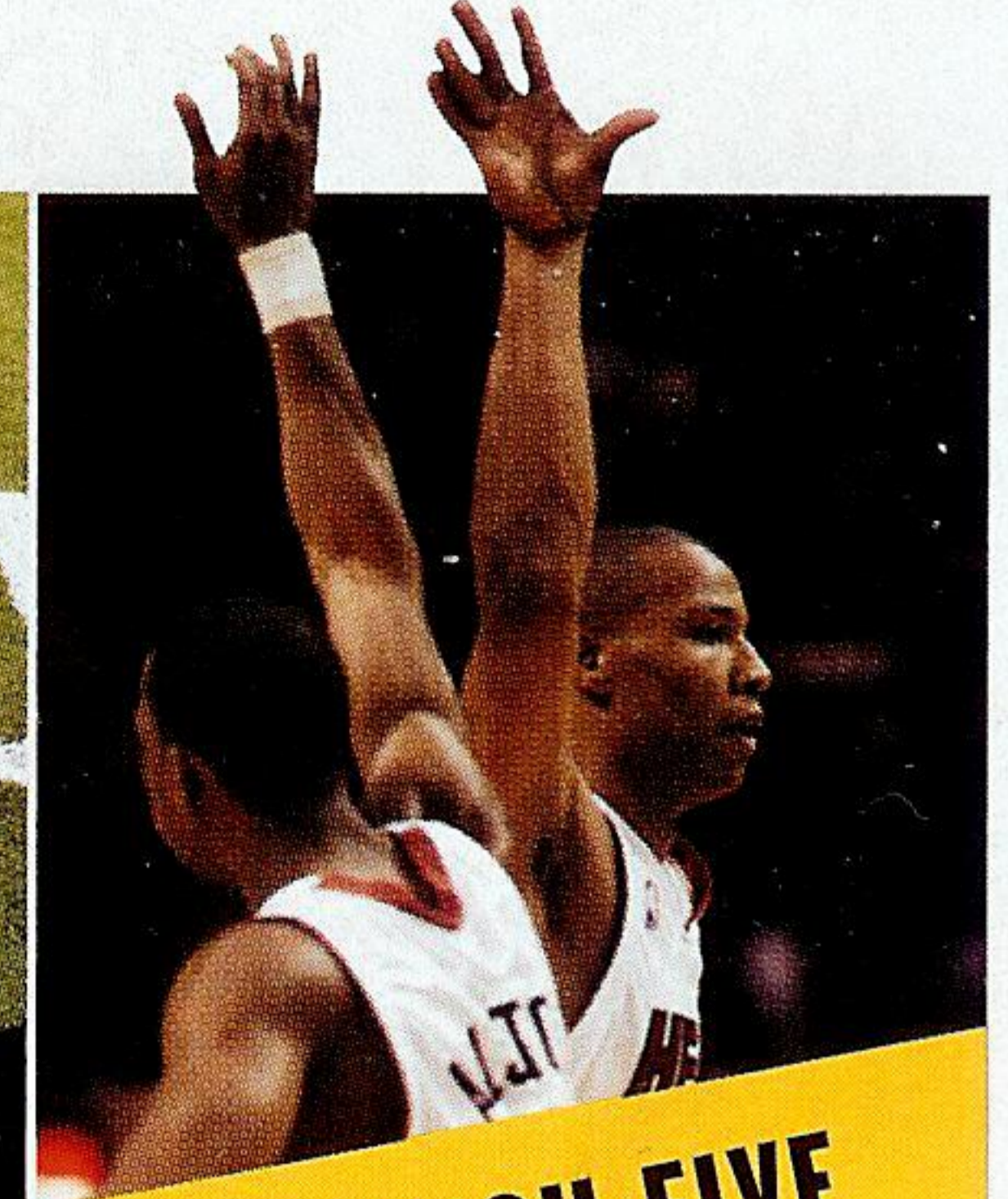
Most likely the ancient Greeks. They had all the fun (not to mention the first Olympics). Either them or that dude named Kenny your uncle told you about when your parents were out of the room and he heard you were heading off to college.

Graduates of Union College in Schenectady, N.Y., attempt to make it on the big "U" at midfield before graduation. But humpers beware: The Phi Delta Theta frat house has a perfect view of the field.

Avoid the chalk lines, bring a blanket, and forget your ID.

Anytime before graduation. At night.

Turf burn or grass stains. Also, knocking her up and leaving your dreams unfulfilled, only to live a life of regrets and missed opportunities.



THE HIGH-FIVE

The first high-five in a major sport occurred on October 2, 1977, when Glenn Burke, an outfielder for the Dodgers, raised his arm and slapped palms with Dusty Baker after Baker hit his thirtieth home run in his last at-bat of the season.

Burke later competed in the Gay Games and died of AIDS in 1995.

Keep palm flat and bend your arm back at the elbow. Be sure to follow through and, for the love of God, never do a "down low" high-five. The "high-10" is only permitted after major plays and both arms must be raised over your head. Otherwise it is a pattycake.

After any goal, touchdown, dunk, home run, hole-in-one, ace, body slam, strike, or bingo. Or when you get on the Jumbotron.

Missing. No matter how drunk you are, no matter how far away your friend is, you must not miss a high-five. And no grasping hands when you do it. That's enough to make you lose your season tickets.