

Story Behind Iconic 'Immaculate Reception' Football to Become Feature Film

Award-winning filmmaker Bill McAdams Jr. will delve into the extraordinary journey of one of the most iconic pieces of memorabilia in NFL history.

ALEDO, TX, UNITED STATES, June 25, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Award-winning filmmaker Bill McAdams, Jr. has secured the exclusive rights to the captivating story of the Immaculate Reception football, one of the most iconic pieces of memorabilia in NFL history. The acquisition paves the way for a feature film that will delve into the extraordinary journey of the ball and its profound impact on the Pittsburgh Steelers and the sport of football.



The story of the Immaculate Reception football is headed for the big screen.

A lifelong Steelers fan, McAdams will co-write the upcoming drama with sports and entertainment publicist Michael Misetic. McAdams will also direct the project.

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Bill McAdams, Jr.

The film will specifically center around Jim Baker, a former insurance salesman from West Mifflin, Pennsylvania who is known for having the Immaculate Reception ball in his possession for several decades.

On December 23, 1972, Baker and his then-14-year-old nephew, Bobby Pavuchak, attended the AFC Divisional Playoff game at Three Rivers Stadium between the Pittsburgh Steelers and Oakland Raiders. With 22 seconds remaining and the Steelers trailing 7-6, Steelers fullback

Franco Harris scooped a deflected Terry Bradshaw pass out of midair just inches from the turf and ran it into the endzone for an improbable, game-winning touchdown.

After the play, Baker and Pavuchak raced from their seats, onto the field and behind the goal post to await the extra-point attempt. There was no netting behind the goal posts in those days, so when the ball sailed through the uprights, Baker managed to retrieve it amid the ensuing chaos. He quickly concealed the ball under his nephew's coat as they tore through the crowd and exited the stadium.

Despite receiving substantial offers, Baker has consistently refused to sell the ball because of its profound emotional significance, particularly its connection to his late son, Sam. Sam was born just four days before the historic play in 1972 and tragically passed away in 2005 from a rare form of cancer. For Baker, the ball symbolizes not only a pivotal moment in NFL history but also serves as a cherished link to his son's memory.

"In telling the story of Jim Baker and the Immaculate Reception ball, we delve into the profound intersection of sports, memory, and personal legacy," said McAdams. "It's not just about a historic play; it's about a father's enduring connection to his son and the emotional weight carried by a single piece of leather. This film aims to explore how a moment in time can transcend the field, becoming a symbol of love, loss, and human experience."

Misetic added, "It's a narrative about chance, choice, and the unexpected intersections of fandom and fate."

Baker said, "The football is more than just a piece of leather; it's a bridge to my son Sam, a link to a moment that changed my life and the city of Pittsburgh forever. Holding it is like holding onto a piece of my past, my family, and the spirit of that unforgettable day. It's not just memorabilia; it's a testament to love, loss, and the enduring power of memory."

Last year, McAdams wrote and directed the documentary short "Immaculate Reception: The Game Ball," for which he won a Silver Telly award for Best Director. He also wrote and directed "Jose Canseco: The Truth Hurts." The feature-length documentary about one of Major League Baseball's most polarizing sluggers won several awards, including the Hot Springs Documentary Film Festival's "Moxie Award" and "Best Documentary" from the Boston International Film Festival. Some of McAdams' other notable credits include "Gallows Road" (2015), "Bully High" (2022), and "God's Here" (2024).

Misetic is a Chicago-based sports and entertainment publicist and founder of OVERTIME PR. His dynamic roster of clients includes former NFL star turned actor/producer Vernon Davis and chart climbing singer/songwriter Sarah Reeves, among others. In addition to personal representation, Misetic has worked on publicity campaigns for numerous feature films starring Hollywood heavyweights such as Morgan Freeman, John Malkovich, Bruce Willis, Kevin Sorbo, and more.

Additional announcements on talent attachments are anticipated in the coming months.

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