

**D. Moldea interview with Hank Stram**  
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**February 23, 1989**

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Hank Stram was the head coach of the Kansas City Chiefs. No introduction is necessary.

I began by specifically telling him about the Frontline/Piazza charges. Stram was surprised that Emmitt Thomas was the defensive back. "This story is so ridiculous. I've heard it with Johnny Robinson. This is the first time I've heard me being involved with it. I heard that it was Lenny Dawson and Johnny Robinson."

I explained the payoff scene in KC involving the alleged payoff and told him that Dawson had told me that both he and Stram had been polygraphed. "I remember the league calling about that. But I can't, for the life of me, remember that. I remember Lenny Dawson and Johnny Robinson taking the polygraph."

I then read Stram Dawson's quotes.

"I was naive or dumb or whatever. I got a call from a dear friend of mine, Tony Zoppi, who worked in Las Vegas during that hot time. See, I just never paid any attention to it. I didn't even know if we were off the boards or on the boards. The first time I heard about this off the boards thing, Tony Zoppi called me and said, 'Hey, coach, there's a guy here in town, a bookmaker, who I think really hates your team. Everytime he gets a chance, he writes something negative about your team. And I challenged the guy, and he never gave me any verification that a couple of guys on our team were gambling and throwing games. He [Zoppi] said, 'Do you know a guy named Jimmy the Greek?' I said, 'No, I never heard of the guy.' Zoppi said, 'Well, he's a slush guy in Vegas. Everyone hates his guts. He was booking, that kind of stuff.' 'Well, Tony, I never even heard of the guy. I don't know who the hell he is. I never talked to him.' Well, that went on. Tony would send me clippings and was very upset about it. I never paid any attention to it, because, at that time, there were never any names.

"Later, after I started broadcasting and Jimmy was with CBS, he mentioned to me several times that, 'You had two guys on your team who were throwing games: Johnny Robinson and Lenny Dawson.' I said, 'Jimmy, how can you so irresponsibly make those kinds of statements and observations about these two kids. I recruited Lenny. I know the fiber of Lenny Dawson. I know his moral, social, and athletic fiber.' I recruited him as a kid at Purdue. I just laughed at it. I said, 'There's just no way in the world that Lenny Dawson be involved in something like that, nor would Johnny Robinson.'

"Then when we played in the Super Bowl, we got involved in the thing again, about the [Don] Dawson thing.

"They [the NFL] intercepted me at the airport when we came into the airport. And Mark Duncan takes me in his car and says, 'Gee, I have terrible news. Len Dawson's name is [being

mentioned] and Don Dawson and blah, blah, blah, and the story is going to break tomorrow. And it's a hell of a time with you playing the Raiders and the championship and everything. I said to Mark, 'The only thing I'll do is talk to Lenny. I know there is no way in the world that he's involved in anything like that.' But I said I wanted to make sure that I talked to him so when I say he's not involved I'd have a verification from Lenny because if he says he's not involved, he's not involved.

"So I confronted Lenny with it. I said, 'Lenny, here's the story. I just want to make sure that you tell me what happened so that I know what I say is accurate. Tell me, do you know this guy Don Dawson?' He said, 'Yes, sir, I do, coach. I met him when I was with the Pittsburgh Steelers with Bobby Layne. And I never saw the guy again after I left Pittsburgh. Then when I hurt my knee early in the season, he called to ask me how I was and that was the extent of it. And then when my father died, he called me again to give me his condolences. But that's the only time I talked to the guy, coach.' And I said, 'That's good, I thought that's what the case was. But I just wanted to make sure that I could tell the league people that I talked to Lenny, and that Lenny had nothing to do with this guy, except on these two occasions.'"

I then read Stram the Dawson quotes from the 1970 investigation chapter, in which Dawson basically told me the same thing. I never mentioned to either Dawson or Stram that I had contacted Don Dawson which is consistent with my agreement with Don to keep my interviews with him confidential until the book comes out.

The only disagreement between Lenny and Hank was the timing of Stram's initial conversation with Lenny about the investigation. "Gee, I thought sure that I had told Lenny. Mark Duncan told me, 'Don't worry about it. We squelched the story, and everything is fine. And then when we got to New Orleans for the Minnesota game, it was already done and it was coming out the next morning. And we went through the whole thing again.'"

Apparently, this statement is consistent with Dawson's quote to me about his conversation with Stram after the AFL championship game with Oakland. It seems that the story was going to break then but then didn't until the teams arrived in New Orleans.

I continued reading the material from the chapter, including the Danahy quote.

Stram said that it was accurate but seemed to equivocate. When I told Stram that I wanted it to be completely accurate, he again brought up the timing of when he told Lenny about the investigation. "The thing is I thought that I told Lenny but maybe I didn't." I told Stram to give me his story because Dawson did tell me that Stram had talked to him on the plane. He said, "Well, maybe that's when I talked to him."

At this point, Stram made it clear that this was around the time of the AFL championship game, not the Super Bowl which is consistent with Lenny's story, except that Stram says that it was at about the time of the pre-game press conference when he told Dawson. Stram concedes that it may have happened afterwards.

Stram then said that he would call the NFL office to see whether he took the polygraph test after the Frontline program in 1983.

I then read Stram the section about Radio Winer. While I was reading about Winer and the Bonfire restaurant, Stram interrupted, laughing. "Oh, I can tell you that story. I was there [at the Bonfire] with Monsignor Mackey. And Radio Winer was a good friend of the University of Miami when I coached there in 1959. Winer was also a great friend of Andy Gustovson, who was the head coach at that time. So any time we had to entertain visiting players or any dignitaries, Andy would always say, 'Take them down to Radio's and have dinner and show them the beach.'

"So this one particular time, I have my wife, Monsignor Mackey, and we went over to Radio Winer's for dinner. I think this was right after we won the championship in Dallas. We had a great dinner. And my wife, Phyllis, loves stone crabs, and I do, too. So, during the discussion about the good meal we had, I mentioned to Radio, 'God, I wish we could get stone crabs where we are, because we like them so much.' He said, 'That's no problem, I'll just send them to you.' I said, 'Can you do that without any trouble? Won't they spoil?' And he said, 'No, I'll package them up and send them to you in Kansas City.' I said, 'How much will they be?' He said, 'Don't worry about that. I'll send them to you and let you know.' So he wrote my name and address down in his book to send me the stone crabs. That was it.

"I gave him the address and the phone numbers at the house. I told him to call me before he sent them so that I knew what we had to do to pick them up."

I then read the section about Radio Winer and Stram as well as the Ralph Hill quote about the bottom sheets.

Stram didn't seem to know where to go with the discussion after the Hill quote, so I suggested that he just give me his denial that he was gambling. "I never gambled on anything in my life . . . We had a helluva football team. I don't enough about betting."

Stram says that his bill for stone crabs could not have been \$10,000, adding that Winer had only sent him the crabs on one or two occasions.

I then told Stram that his name was also found in Dick Fincher's address book. "Oh, yes. Dick was a great friend of mine through the University of Miami." Stram said he knew nothing about Fincher's gambling activities. "I met these people through Andy Gustovson who was the head coach of the University of Miami. Fincher would provide cars for the coaching staff at the University of Miami [while Stram was an assistant coach at the university in 1959]."

"We were the winningest football team in the history of the American Football League."

I asked Stram when I could call him back to discuss what quotes would be in the book. I suggested the following Thursday at 5:00 my time, 4:00 his time in New Orleans."

"The only thing is I don't know that for anyone to write about it, to dignify all of these things that have been dead, it just brings up something that never happened that people are going to be aware of that were never aware of in the first place. That's the only thing that concerns me about these things. Just like Lenny Dawson, it was such a ridiculous accusation at the time. I just don't know what good it does to bring up something that you were never involved with and then bring people's attention to something that was never written about before. And after all these years somebody brings it up with all the garbage that's going on in sports. And the reputation that I've had in professional football and all the great places I've coached. I even hate to even defend something why dignify something that isn't even close to being true. That's the only reaction I have to it. That's the only thing that concerns me about that."

I told him that the book was coming out in September and that he would probably be hearing about it.

I then tried to pin him down on the follow up interview. "I'd be glad to help you with the book, but I just can't seem to sell myself on the idea that I should be involved in making quotes that never happened."

I told Stram that I was trying to dispel or prove the rumors, adding that everyone I talked to talked about the Chiefs.

I asked him about his health. He just had an aortic valve put in.