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Chiefs Star Lenny Dawson

Kansas City fans have cheered on their Chiefs for nearly half a century now. The team had its origins in Dallas where it was first called the Texans, but that three year tenure ended when it moved to its present location in 1963. Although they were one of the original teams in the old AFL, they are now a proud member of the American Football Conference in the NFL, and are located in the League's AFC West. Fans of the Chiefs know that their team has seen its share of superstar players since it first arrived in the city. They also know that Lenny Dawson will always be remembered as one of the absolute greatest of all.

Len's college days

Len Dawson played quarterback for the Purdue Boilermakers before going on to the professional level. When he was being recruited he had his choice of schools to attend, and both were attractive options. He ultimately settled on Purdue University rather than Ohio State because he had misgivings about being a part of the Buckeyes' split-T system of offense. As it turned out, the Boilermakers were the perfect fit for Dawson. He went on to compile a three-year career of more than three thousand passing yards, and was the Conference's top passer in each of his seasons in the Big Ten.

Finding a home in the Pros

Dawson's entry into the NFL was much-heralded. Despite that fact, his experience with the Steelers was less than satisfactory, and even after being traded to Cleveland he found himself unable to acquire the starting job at quarterback. In truth, he had very stiff competition at both locations. In 1962, he signed with the then-Dallas Texans and began to find his stride. His first season with the team resulted in him being the touchdown and yard per attempt leader, as well as the MVP of the AFL. When the team moved in 1963 to Kansas City, Dawson went with them.

Chief of Chiefs

As a Chief, Len got his old accuracy back. This was important, because the Chiefs were using that same mobile pocket system that he had experienced in college. He soon became the AFL's perennial passing leader, with his 1966 season being so successful that his team was invited to participate in the AFL-NFL matchup that is now known as Super Bowl I. Against the then-dynasty of Lombardi, Starr, and the rest of the Packers, there was little that the upstart Chiefs could do to stop the Packers from winning the game going away. Nevertheless, Dawson was still in competent form during a losing effort, as he compiled more than 200 yards passing and one touchdown.

Back to the Bowl

Three years later, Dawson once again took his team all the way to the AFL title and into Super Bowl IV. This time, there was no Bart Starr or Green Bay Packers to stop him and he instead led the Chiefs to a victory over the NFL's Minnesota Vikings. It would be the Chiefs' one and only Super Bowl trophy. Dawson retired from the game in 1975, and was formally inducted into the NFL Hall of Fame in 1987. To Chiefs fans everywhere, he will always be remembered as one of the first men to show the world that the AFL could compete on the same stage with the NFL and win.

Freddie Brister is a huge fan of all sports and recommends checking out his [Kansas City Chiefs Blanket](#) and [Kansas City Royals bedding](#) at his shop.

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