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Hank Stram

John A. Drobnicki
CUNY York College

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Stowarzyszenie Weteranów Armii Polskiej see Polish Army Veterans Association.

Stram, Hank (Henry Louis Wilczek; b. Chicago, Illinois, January 3, 1923; d. Covington, Louisiana, July 4, 2005). Football coach, broadcaster. Stram was the son of Henry and Nellie (Boots) Wilczek. The elder Wilczek was a tailor who had wrestled professionally under the name Stramm—German for "sturdy"—and the family's surname was eventually changed to Stram. To make ends meet for him and his sister after his father's death (1938), his mother opened a restaurant with support from the local Polish National Alliance lodge. Stram remained grateful, and later organized the Hank Stram/Tony Zale Silver Bell Sports Award Banquet, held every year to raise scholarship money for local graduating high school seniors of Polish and Slavic descent. Stram would recruit high profile players, including Len Dawson, whom he coached to success. Five of Stram's players were voted into the Hall of Fame, and he encouraged diversity on his teams, recruiting heavily from historically black colleges.

After being fired by Hunt in 1974, Stram became a football broadcaster for CBS, before spending two dismal seasons as head coach of the New Orleans Saints (1976–77). He then returned to CBS, where he worked on both television and radio, including a very successful 16-year pairing with Jack Buck broadcasting Monday Night Football games on CBS Radio. His professional coaching record over sixteen seasons (including playoffs) was 136–100–10.

An impeccable dresser (which he credited to his father), Stram became a fan favorite after wearing a hidden microphone for NFL Films on the sideline during Super Bowl IV, during which he made many humorous comments, which some critics saw as gloating. Stram was voted AFL or AFC coach of the year four times, and was inducted into both the Kansas City Chiefs Hall of Fame (1987) and the Pro Football Hall of Fame (2003). He was elected to the National Polish-American Sports Hall of Fame in 1985. —John Drobnicki


Strasz (The Guard). The Strasz newspaper first appeared April 17, 1897, a month after the Rev. Franciszek Hodur arrived in Scranton, PA, to accept a call to lead St. Stanislaus Bishop and Martyr Parish, which was in the process of beginning to break its relationship with the Roman Catholic Church. The paper, which carried general Polonia news and articles pertaining to the independent movement in Scranton and other Polish communities in the United States, was distributed locally and to other Polish immigrant settlements. Although remaining independent, Strasz became, de facto, the official organ of the Polish National Catholic Church when the Church formally constituted itself at the First Synod in 1904. When the Church-related but independent fraternal benefit society, the Polish National Union of America (Psophia), was organized in 1908, it became the official organ of that organization as well. In 1923, Rola Bożego (God's Field) became the official organ of the PNCC, but Strasz continued to carry Church news into the next century. In the early years, Strasz was published almost exclusively in the Polish language but, as the decades passed, English began to appear and eventually predominated. Strasz was published weekly into the twenty-first century and, for a time, was the oldest continuously-published Polish American weekly in America. In late 2009 it changed to an electronic-only format. Strasz has been edited at various times by hired editors, PNCC clergy, and PNU officers. The first official editor was Stanislaw Dangel-Langsowski with Zdzislaw Lotynski acting monthly as co-editor. Other official editors included Stanislaw Klukowski, Czeslaw Lukaszewicz, Stanislaw Staruszkiewicz, Józef Mastalski, Theodore L. Zawistowski, Regina Gorkowska, Wanda Cytowska, and Mitchell Grochowski. Among regular columnists and contributors have been Henry Archacki, Leopold Dende, Lawrence Orzell, Edward Pinkowski, Robert Strybel, and the Rev. Senior Joseph L. Zawistowski under his own name and nom de plume Stanislaw Okopiszczak. Strasz Printery was one of the earliest union print shops in Pennsylvania. In addition to printing most of the periodicals, books, and other imprints of the PNC Church and PNU, it was a general job printer and printed several unrelated weekly and monthly publications. The Strasz Building originally housed the home offices of the PNU, which eventually bought the paper, the printery, and the building. Under its various auspices, the Polish National Catholic Church was the second largest publisher of Polish language imprints in America in the twentieth century. —Theodore L. Zawistowski


String Band see Polish American String Band.

Strzelecka, Anne (b. Lubelski, Poland, February 11, 1863; d. Castleton, New York, March 5, 1934). Catholic nun. One of the first Sisters of the Resurrection, Strzelecka's par-