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Emmy-Winning Reporter Andrea Kremer Reflects on Her Storied Career



Daniel Lewis, Yahoo Contributor Network
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In a one-on-one interview with Emmy-winning sports reporter Andrea Kremer, sports journalist Daniel Lewis listens to Kremer as she reflects on her storied career.

When Andrea Kremer set foot onto Raymond James Field in Tampa ready to begin her pre-game broadcast for [Super Bowl XLIII](#) in 2009, the veteran sideline reporter felt a stomach full of butterflies. It was not the fervor of 70,774 clamoring fans that led to Kremer's nervousness, nor was it the pressure of representing [NBC](#) during its first [Super Bowl](#) in twelve years.

Kremer's jitters stemmed from the breaking news she was about to reveal. She was about to report that Hines Ward, the [Pittsburgh](#) Steelers' injured wide receiver, would play in the game after undergoing platelet-rich plasma therapy to repair a sprained MCL in his right knee.

"You're live on television," Kremer recalls, "and you're trying not to remind yourself that 103 million people are watching you on their screens."

As the camera focused on Kremer, her breaking news spread across an estimated 98 million households around the world, which was the largest TV sports audience at the time.

Though she has logged over 30 years of experience in sports reporting and earned a résumé full of awards and honors, Kremer still recalls how, that evening, her heart raced faster than ever before. A wily veteran reporter, though, Kremer found a clever way around her nervousness.

"My producer suggested this to me...He told me to think about that little girl who used to sleep in NFL sheets with the team logos all over them. Think about being that little girl at the age of 11 who used to sleep in those sheets...and now you're standing at the Super Bowl."

That positive image of her as a young child made her smile and washed away her nervousness almost entirely, and she masterfully delivered the breaking news.

"By the time the Super Bowl is about to kickoff, there is usually nothing new or revelatory that I can say about the game," said Kremer. "And here I was on the biggest stage in sports, and I had big news that nobody else had, and I nailed it. I felt pretty great."

Although she appears a natural now, Kremer never really dreamed of being a television sports reporter. The football bug bit her early as she grew up in 1970s, though the sport was more of a novelty at the time, according to Kremer.

"Some little girls played with Barbie dolls, but I idolized Larry Csonka of the Miami Dolphins."

Before each Super Bowl, she would clip out all the preview articles from newspapers and present her parents with a scouting report. Her father took her to her first [Philadelphia Eagles](#) game in 1971 at Veterans Stadium, where she became an avid fan of the visiting Miami Dolphins.

"I loved the Dolphins and followed them, and the most important thing is that my parents thought it

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was great that I liked football. They were very supportive of me."

Kremer, who currently resides in Massachusetts, graduated from Friends Select School and entered the University of Pennsylvania in 1976. As an undergraduate, she continued to develop her love for writing but had no real idea what she would do after graduation.

"At no point did I ever think that I would be able to grow up and turn into a profession what I really loved. Because truthfully, there were no women when I was growing up that did it. There was no woman to look to and say, 'I want to be a sports journalist like her.'"

Kremer wound up earning a place at the *Main Line Chronicle*, Pennsylvania's largest weekly newspaper, where she soon became the editor of the sports section. After she wrote a story on NFL Films, her mother urged her, "Send them your resume!" She heeded her mother's advice.

She was hired as a producer and on-air reporter for the nationally syndicated show, "This is the NFL." She earned an Emmy nomination for one special and soon after began contributing to Philadelphia radio station WIP's Eagles pre-game show.

Then ESPN approached her in 1989 to recruit her talents. Kremer began serving as ESPN's Los Angeles-based correspondent, providing in-depth reports for studio shows such as "SportsCenter," "Sunday NFL Countdown," and "Monday Night Countdown."

Kremer loves covering football, citing a palpable "electricity" on the field during games. She has experienced this energy firsthand for five seasons, which she spent as the sideline and feature reporter for the Emmy Award-winning "Sunday Night Football" on NBC.

Though football is still her first love, she admits that the [Summer Olympics](#) is actually her favorite event to cover because of its rich history and relevance on the world stage.

In the 2008 Olympics at Beijing, Kremer was front and center for NBC Sports as she covered swimming. She was lauded for her reporting of Olympic icon Michael Phelps' dramatic pursuit of a record eight gold medals that year.

"For me to be part of history and witness Michael Phelps' historic run was just amazing. On the morning of the day that Phelps would win his eighth gold medal, I remember waking up, and thinking, 'Wow, of all the things I have done, there's just nothing like witnessing history.'"

Four years later, Kremer stood on the pool deck once again, this time observing Phelps and Ryan Lochte compete and witnessing Phelps become the most decorated Olympian of all time.

"There is a difference between the Olympics and the NFL. When the Super Bowl ends, the confetti comes down and the stadium is crazy, but the players have time to regroup before I finally have the chance to interview them. But in the Olympics, they get out of the pool and walk right over to you, and the immediacy of it is pretty stunning."

Having covered the NFL and the Olympics, Kremer is a versatile reporter. She has also covered the [NBA](#) Finals and All-Star Game, Major League Baseball's All-Star Game and League Championship Series, [college football](#) bowl games, Stanley Cup Playoffs and Finals, NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament, U.S. Olympic basketball trials, and the PGA Championship.

Kremer's forte is breaking news stories, and she has provided investigative pieces on social issues relevant to the sports world, such as sexual assault and substance abuse.

Among her many accolades, including two Emmy Awards, Kremer succeeds in covering these issues because of her interviewing skills. After all, she has been called "the best TV interviewer in the business of covering the NFL" by *Los Angeles Times*. TV Guide said that Kremer is "among TV's best sports correspondents of either sex" and that her work is "distinguished by her eagerness to calmly ask tough questions and her refusal to pursue the same old story."

Kremer presents these social issues so artfully in large part because she has developed a public trust

with the players. In fact, Kremer had once made a trek to Minnesota to do a semi-routine story on former Vikings receiver Cris Carter, but he instead decided to talk about his drug and alcohol addiction publicly for the first time. He made himself vulnerable, yet he felt comfortable pouring out his struggles to Kremer.

"He was really entrusting me with something meaningful and important to him, and I took that very seriously. It is easy to say, 'Oh my god this is such a great story' and run away with it, but really what you're reporting is somebody's life. And you have to respect that."

Kremer experienced this same dynamic in her longtime work with NBA legend Michael Jordan. When Jordan announced his return to basketball in 1995, all the networks wanted the first in-depth interview. But Jordan specifically chose Kremer, with whom he had built up trust.

"I'm not like, 'Ooh, aah, Michael' when I interview Michael Jordan. Because every time I sit and talk with him about his glory days, I know there's another time when I have to stand in front of him and bring up his gambling."

Jordan has always been Kremer's favorite athlete to cover. She appreciates how he always made time for interviews, even though his accomplishments left no need for extra media attention.

"He was always cooperative, patient, and engaging. I worked with him in the best of times, when he won six championships, and in the worst of times, when his father died. I dealt with questions about his gambling habits and even followed him to the courtroom in North Carolina."

Her success and interest in covering the Summer Olympics and the NBA aside, Kremer still focuses on covering football, her childhood pastime.

In October 2012, she joined the NFL Network as the Chief Correspondent for Player Health and Safety. In this role, Kremer serves as the face of the network's coverage and in-depth reporting on one of the most glaring issues facing football. In addition to the NFL Network, Kremer is also a correspondent for HBO's "Real Sports with Bryant Gumbel."

As she continues her football reporting, she lives with a constant reminder of what helped her find her love for the sport: her border collie, named Zonk.

"If it wasn't for Larry Csonka, I cannot see myself being where I am today," she laughs. "The least I could do is name my dog in honor of him."

Published by [Daniel Lewis](#)

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