



Has Moxy the dog solved one of the biggest US mysteries: What happened to Jimmy Hoffa?

By Peter Sheridan, November 1, 2023



EXCLUSIVE: Legendary US union boss Jimmy Hoffa disappeared without a trace in July 1975, almost certainly murdered by the Mafia. Now, after a fresh three-year probe, investigators believe they may finally be on the verge of recovering his remains.

The dog circled the ground eagerly, buried her nose in the earth, barked excitedly and sat down with a look of pride – and one of America’s greatest murder mysteries may finally have been solved.

Moxy is a cadaver dog, a German Shepherd-Labrador mix trained to sniff out decomposing human remains and, beneath her sensitive nose, investigators are convinced they have finally discovered the body of legendary union leader Jimmy Hoffa, killed by the Mafia in 1975.

“We believe we’ve found him,” says Thomas J. Colbert, head of Case Breakers, an investigative group comprising 40 former federal agents, detectives, police, sheriffs and forensic scientists who have spent three years probing Hoffa’s disappearance. And yesterday, the FBI agreed to reopen the case to pursue the dramatic new leads.

“It’s incredibly exciting. The K9 cadaver dog team targeted Hoffa’s body exactly where a dying corrupt cop who worked for the Chicago mob said we would find it.”

Hoffa’s corpse was ignominiously buried beneath the third base plate of the Milwaukee Brewers’ baseball stadium in Wisconsin, investigators believe. After the ballpark was demolished to make way for a new arena, he now lies beneath a concrete car park beside a children’s baseball field.



The trail to Hoffa’s last resting place led from a note, theatrically scrawled by a corrupt cop on an Ace of Spades playing card, to the baseball park where satellite imagery and ground penetrating radar helped pinpoint his likely grave.

“For 48 years the FBI, police and hundreds of investigators have searched for Hoffa’s body in vain,” says Colbert. “Dozens of supposed grave sites have been dug up, yet Hoffa remained elusive – until now.”

Hoffa’s disappearance has become a modern American myth, immortalized in film, TV and books.

Colbert's team claims an enviable record of solving cases that long-thwarted detectives. They believe they have exposed the serial murderer known as the Zodiac Killer, and identified the plane hijacker known by the pseudonym D B Cooper, who parachuted from a plane with \$200,000 in ransom in 1971 and was never seen again.

Charismatic, controversial and thuggish, Jimmy Riddle Hoffa (right, at government hearing) was the most influential man in America after President John F Kennedy – according to the president's brother, US Attorney General Robert F Kennedy. Elected in 1957 to lead the nation's biggest labor union, the powerful International Brotherhood of Teamsters, representing the nation's two million truck drivers, he could bring America's distribution network to its knees.



Hoffa worked hand-in-glove with the Mafia, wielding enormous power backed by force, and was hailed as a working-class hero as the government tried in vain to quash him. Even after being jailed in 1967 for jury tampering, conspiracy and fraud, he won re-election as union president while behind bars.

Released in 1971, he ran for re-election despite violent opposition by the Genovese crime family, who feared Hoffa would stop the union's pension fund investing in mob-run Las Vegas casinos. Hoffa, then 62, vanished on July 30, 1975, after meeting with Mafia mobsters at a restaurant in suburban Detroit.

The FBI had no lack of suspects, but in the absence of Hoffa's corpse, no one was ever charged. But three years ago, Colbert and his team of Case Breakers came upon a huge break.



Colbert explains: "A corrupt cop, Harold Walthers (far left), who worked closely with the Chicago mob, showed his niece Michelle a playing card in his dying months. On it, he had written Jimmy Hoffa's name, the name of Chicago mob boss Joey Aiuppa (with glasses), and a location: the 3rd base at the former Milwaukee County Stadium. "Walthers faced charges of extortion, fraud and bribery, though he was never convicted. He was close friends with Aiuppa, who let Walthers

live in the pool house on his estate for two years."

The dirty cop confided to friends about Hoffa, including Patti Pierce, 78, of Woodruff, Wisconsin. She said: "We went fishing, and he told me he knew where Hoffa was buried.

"He said he'd done surveillance on Hoffa for the mob, and wrote the secret location of his grave on a playing card."



Walthers showed the playing card to his niece Michelle, saying: "If anything ever happens to me, you'll know what to do with this." Colbert explains: "It was his insurance policy." When Walthers died, his niece inherited his small estate, including the playing card. Former police commander and FBI anti-terrorist investigator Jim Zimmerman (left), who launched the Case Breakers' probe, says: "Walthers' niece was afraid to take the information to the FBI, fearing that the mob might kill her and her extended family, so she kept quiet for years.

“But in 2020 she came forward, and I persuaded her that almost everyone involved in Hoffa’s disappearance was dead by now.

“Walthers was a dirty cop who set up an armed robbery, was booted out of the Chicago police department, and was close friends with mobster Joey Aiuppa, living next door. Even if Walthers didn’t personally bury Hoffa, Aiuppa could have told him where Hoffa was dumped.”

Walthers’ Ace of Spades note suggests that Hoffa’s body was moved in 1995 from its original hiding place, which the Case Breakers believe may have been in the remote woods around the corrupt ex-cop’s Wisconsin home, where he lived in retirement.

“Who knows why the mob wanted Hoffa’s body moved?” says Zimmerman. “All we know is that Walthers remained close to Aiuppa – he boasted that every year men in suits arrived in a black Cadillac to give him a cheque – and that Aiuppa apparently told Walthers where Hoffa was being moved.”

But in 2001 the Milwaukee stadium, above, was demolished to make way for a new arena, and the old third base was buried beneath a car park.

Satellite positioning was used to find the precise spot where Hoffa’s body supposedly hides today, and ground-penetrating radar confirmed that the earth at that spot had been excavated and refilled.



Cadaver dog Moxy was given a vast area to search around the old baseball field, but indicated a positive hit precisely at the site of the old third base where investigators believe Hoffa is interred.

“I did get positive indications from my dog to the odor of human remains,” says handler Carren Corcoran. “Compelling, for sure.”

But she cautions that the presence of human remains does not guarantee they are Hoffa’s, and an old civil war cemetery 500 yards from the site could also be affecting the results.

The Case Breakers presented their evidence to the FBI, which is understandably cautious after numerous failed excavations.



“The FBI’s Hoffa case agent in Detroit has agreed to pursue our findings,” reveals Case Breakers’ forensic expert Jim Christy (left). “While skeptical, the FBI agrees it warrants a full investigation.”

More than a dozen former mobsters have claimed to have killed Hoffa or disposed of his body: confessions aimed at making them Mafia legends, while often helping them sell memoirs or win TV deals.

Yet Colbert has little doubt that his team has found Hoffa. “The human-remains search dog stopped at the exact spot where the dirty cop said Hoffa’s body was buried,” he says. “We owe it to Hoffa’s family, and to history, to solve this case.” ##