

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON
ORAL HISTORY OF HOUSTON PROJECT

“Houston Sports”
Thomas Tellez

Interviewed by: Ernesto Valdés
Date: July 22, 2008
Transcribed by: Michelle Kokes
Location: University of Houston Athletic Alumni Center

EV: This is Ernesto Valdés I’m interviewing Coach Thomas Tellez and we are at the Graduate Athlete...

TT: Athletic Alumni Center.

EV: Okay. And what’s the address here on Cullen?

TT: It’s on Cullen but I don’t know... I can’t tell you the address right now.

EV: I’ll get it. Okay just give me your full name if you would please Coach?

TT: Thomas Tellez or Tellez it’s Tellez in Spanish and Tellez in the English version.

EV: Do you have a middle name?

TT: No middle name.

EV: Where were you born sir?

TT: I was born in Los Angles in 1933.

EV: Were you educated in schools in Los Angeles?

TT: Yes. Well, I was born in Los Angeles October 17, 1933 and I attended grammar school in Bell Gardens, California which is just outside of L.A. and I went to school in Bell Gardens for a couple years and then we moved to Montebello, California and that’s where I spent most of my....all of my high school career was in Montebello, California.

EV: Did you play sports when you were in high school?

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TT: Yes I played sports in Montebello High School. I played football and ran track.

EV: What position were you in football?

TT: I was a half back, defensive half back and offensive half back.

EV: I assume you lettered?

TT: Yeah I lettered.

EV: Track, what did you run in track?

TT: I was a hurdler and a sprinter, quarter miler.

EV: Did you set any records or anything?

TT: No, I was a better football player than I was a track athlete at that time. I would say that I was a little above average in track and field. I was a better football player but I wasn't very big and... but I went on to, you know whether I would go on to college and play was borderline. I did play, I lettered in varsity football and the same in track and field. Then I attended Fullerton Junior College where I played football at the college level and ran track, basically the same thing. I was a half back and defensive and offensive. I played at Fullerton Junior College for two years and then I received a scholarship to Whittier College, on a partial scholarship to play for Whittier where I played two years and lettered and ran track. So, you know, I had a pretty good athletic career but that was not my main goal of going to college. My main goal was to get a degree and start coaching. So I did get my degree in biology and physical education and then when I started, I signed a letter, a teaching contract to coach in high school. Well after I graduated from Whittier College I spent one year getting my teaching credentials. So when I received that I signed a contract with Buena Park High School and was going to... was all set to coach, the assistant football coach and head track coach and I was

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drafted into the service. So I went into the service in 1956 and I was stationed in Germany and I was in there for two years. After I got out I came back to the same high school that I had signed the original contract, Buena Park High School, and I coached there for three years and I coached varsity track, I was the head track coach and I was the assistant football coach for three years. Then I moved to Fullerton Junior College where I had played football and ran track and I was their head track coach and their head cross country coach and I was there for eight years.

EV: Did you all win any district titles or anything when you were there?

TT: Yeah, at Fullerton Junior College, I didn't win any at Buena Park High School but I had some pretty good teams and it was a fairly new high school so it was kind of in the building years and in fact it was a brand new high school when I first signed the contract and then after two years of the service and I came back it was only two years old, so it was kind of still building. I had one real good athlete at Buena Park High School named was Jan Underwood and he was a half miler and he was second in the state but he ran 151.8 which is a pretty good time for 1960, 61. That was a good time, still is a good time in high school for the half miler, so I had him. Then at Fullerton Junior College I did win conference titles in track and conference titles in cross country.

EV: What was your MOS [Military Occupation Specialty] when you were in the service?

TT: I was in the medical corps.

EV: Where did you go to basic training?

TT: Fort Ord, California. It was an infantry. I was a medical company connected to the 85th Infantry. When I got... they drafted everyone of college age that just got out of

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college and they shipped us by transport, shipped, down to... we left from San Francisco, went all the way down to the Panama Canal and went all the way up the Atlantic to Germany. We replaced most of the high school....or in the army that was there, a lot of them were high school [kids] and they weren't having too good of relationships with the Germans at that time. In fact it was a lot of problems going on between the army and the civilians. So when they brought us all in there - they thought we are all college, most of us are college graduates, practically everybody that I knew was just getting out of college. So they were hoping that we could, being older and everything, that we could have better relations. I think that's what happened. So I was stationed in Bandberg, Germany which is in the southern part with the 85th Infantry and I was medical company with the 85th Infantry and then we went out on maneuvers and that was when... when all the Russian tanks were on the border, you know, we'd go down for maneuvers down there and there were alerts all the time, you know you'd have to pack up the whole company and go out there and play, you know, army. Then after a while I decided that I'd rather do something else. So I went out for the football team. I played a little football and then I finally got into coaching football there was a lot of good guys on the team and I just, I wasn't very big so I decided that I'd rather get into the coaching part so I did coach a little bit and then I went out for track and ran track and then we had some pretty good kids. So, instead of running I started coaching. Then I coached for about a year in Germany. We had some pretty good athletes and that was a pretty good experience. Then before I got out I ended up working in the dispensary, you know as a corps man, and then I was... came back and was discharged in 19... let's see that was '58.

EV: Did you get to do any traveling through Europe while you were there?

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TT: Yeah, my wife came over after I was stationed there and she was over there for a little over a year and we did travel. You can travel all over Europe and so that was a lot of fun.

EV: Even on GI pay you can make it pretty good there in those days.

TT: Oh yeah. Well you can go through five or six different countries in a day.

EV: Exactly.

TT: You know it was pretty cheap. You could sleep in your car on a country road and then you could go down and buy things to eat pretty cheap so we got to see a lot of the country and it was a great experience for my wife and me.

EV: Oh we kind of missed that fact didn't we? You met your wife in college or high school?

TT: College. We both graduated from Whittier College in California. She was native of Laverne, California. She went all four years to Whittier College and I went two years and we met and we got married just before I went in the service. Then she came over there after I had gotten there and settled down and found out, you know, they didn't encourage wives to come over there but most of the guys were college graduates and so, you know there, they couldn't intimidate us like they could high school kids. So a lot of us brought our wives over and we got apartments in economy, you know out in the city. So we lived off the base and commuted into the city... or into...

EV: That's right it was about 10 years after the war so the [REDACTED] (10.1), right about ten years after World War II '45, '55, '56?

TT: Yeah.

EV: So it was pretty cheap to rent out there wasn't it?

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TT: I can't remember what the rent was but it wasn't expensive or we didn't have any money. I think my wife had taught one year before she came over and so we didn't have a lot of money and we managed to borrow some money and we bought a car, a little Volkswagen there and that's how we traveled all over. There was a lot of GI's at that time that went over with me that did the same thing. They bought little cars. In fact we traveled with another couple that I had met in the service and we traveled all over Europe together and so a lot of people, a lot of the GIs were the same, they brought their wives over, lived on the economy and traveled Europe.

EV: All those neat things you can do when you are young and crazy.

TT: It was interesting but I think that the fact that I coached football and coached track and then I officiated basketball also and that was a good experience. So, you know, I kept busy doing that because there wasn't too much going on at that time other than... you know the Russians were right there but, you know, they weren't...no one was doing anything they were just having alerts all the time which turned out to be... you know you get used to the alerts and nothing happens so... But it ended up being a good experience to be in the service anyhow and especially to get a little bit more experience coaching because I wasn't very old and I didn't... I matured a little bit in the service which really helped. So when I went back I thought I was more prepared to coach and teach.

EV: Was your wife an athlete?

TT: No she was a song leader. But she comes from a family... she played sports in high school but not, you know, that good. She was a song leader at Benita High School but she had two brothers that were very fast and one of them went to Stanford on a track scholarship and, his name was Keith **Brownsburger** and he ran for Stanford for four years

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and he became a doctor. He and his family moved to Alaska, to Anchorage, and he's been in Anchorage the whole time. But he was a very good sprinter and her younger brother was a very good sprinter in high school also.

EV: So she brought some culture into your life?

TT: Oh yeah. She was very smart and her parents were teachers and her dad was a superintendent of schools and so she brought a lot of my life that I had never been exposed to, you know, just totally different, comes from an academic background. I mean she read more books in grammar school then I read in my whole life. I mean she read everything. Where in my family, no one encouraged us to read, I mean they encouraged us to go to school and not miss school and my dad encouraged me that we had to go to school. But as far as reading books or anything like that, no it was all done in school. But in her case, I mean, her family was teachers and her... all of her family were teachers and they went to Laverne College in Laverne, California and they were all teachers and they all graduated from there and they were teachers in the community so everyone was a teacher. So that was... going into that family was a totally different background then what I was used to but it was very good. No, my wife was pretty smart.

EV: Tell me something about your family. You tell me where are your parents from?

TT: My mother was born in Mexico in Coahuila Mexico and she came... she came over into the United States in 1907 as a young girl. They, her father moved them, sent them up in the United States to get out of the revolution at that time in Mexico. So she came up into El Paso and then from El Paso my mother's family moved to California. My dad was born in El Paso, Texas and he migrated to California at a different time.

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They both migrated to San Bernardino, California. I think that is where they met and got married and then they settled in Los Angeles.

EV: Did you ever get to meet any of your grandparents?

TT: Yes, my grandmother on my mother's side. I got to meet her and she lived in L.A. and I don't remember her very well. She didn't speak English, mostly Spanish and of course that's where I learned my Spanish, you had to. My parents didn't really, you know, we spoke Spanish but not in the home. My mother did, my dad didn't speak that much, he could but didn't speak that much Spanish. I don't think...we were encouraged more to speak English not to speak Spanish. I only spoke Spanish when I had to, my grandparents or my aunt on my mother's side. My dad's family spoke mostly English they never spoke Spanish that I can remember, my uncles I never remember them having to communicate with them in Spanish only my mother's side of the family.

EV: Then... by the way do you remember your training company at Fort Ord?

TTk: My company?

EV: Yeah, your training company. I went to Fort Ord but I got transferred... D-3-1 was our...

TT: I don't remember that.

EV: Beautiful place to be trained.

TT: Oh yeah. It was surprising it could get at Fort [REDACTED].

EV: Incredible.

TT: But it was a great... I mean I enjoyed it. I'd drive home on the weekend when I got a pass a bunch of us would get in the car and drive all the way into L.A. and there were three or four of us that lived in the same area and we'd just drive. After we'd get

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out on Friday night we'd just drive all the way home and then come home on Monday morning in time for reveille.

EV: Man that was a different army! A few years later we didn't get passes that easily, I think half way through basic we finally got a weekend pass.

TT: Yeah.

EV: It was Christmas because that was in the winter time and it snowed in Monterey for the first time in Monterey in 35 years.

TT: That was a beautiful place to be in a... you know, get your basic and everything that's a good place to be.

EV: Coach where did you get the inspiration to say, "I want to be a Coach"? When was your deciding moment?

TT: Well, I would say that in high school when... after my junior year in high school I had a biology teacher, her name was Mrs. Cox, who was an elderly lady and she didn't have any family but she was a great biology teacher and I just caught hold in biology I just loved it. So I really liked animals and at one time I thought about being a vet but I knew I wasn't going to achieve that, I knew my abilities and I felt that I could be a teacher and I wanted to be a biology teacher. She made it come alive. Because I loved animals and I don't know it just opened a whole new window for me and she was a great teacher. Also my coaches I had a great group of coaches at Montebello High School, a great principal, a great administration and they were just so supportive of everybody, especially me. So I ended up playing football and I didn't think I had a chance to play varsity but they did and that gave me the motivation to go out and to keep playing in college. So, then I wanted to be a coach. There was no doubt in my mind. By the end of

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my senior football year I wanted to be a coach and I wanted to go to Whittier College where they [my coaches] went to school and I wanted to play under a coach by the name of Chief Newman who was the head coach at Whittier college and a great guy, an Indian and that's who my coaches had as a coach [when they played] and I really wanted to play under him because he was supposed to be a hard coach but you knew where you stood. But I ended up... he ended up retiring before I got to Whittier and I ended up having George Allen who was pretty famous coach after that.

EV: The Washington Redskins George Allen?

TT: Yeah the George Allen, he was the coach of the Chicago Bears. But I had George Allen when I was there.

EV: The hated George Allen?

TT: Huh?

EV: The hated George Allen from my perspective I was a Cowboy fan (laughter).

TT: Oh yeah right, well George Allen was a pretty smart guy and wrote books but I still feel my high school coaches and my junior college coach were better coaches. I mean as far as relating to the athlete I thought they were much better. But George Allen is a very smart individual and...

EV: He sure knew how to rile up the audience.

TT: Yeah.

EV: So you kind of messed around with the idea of maybe a vet and biology and then coaching?

TT: Yeah I wanted to be a coach. I thought about being a vet at the beginning and then got into biology, thought about being a veterinarian and then I decided coaching is

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what I want to do. From the time I left high school I knew what I wanted to be, and I just knew what I had to accomplish. I wasn't a brilliant student I had to study very hard to get the grades it wasn't like... I didn't have those skills that I should have had, that I should have gotten earlier in my career but I studied hard that's how I made it. I wasn't a very good test taker but I could study and get the grades. That's how I made it I just studied hard. That's how I made it. I didn't take tests very well. You know there's a lot of minority kids that can't take tests well. I mean its not that I didn't have the skills to do it or the intelligence I would just get real tight. I'd get real emotionally uptight and I just couldn't take them. So... but I know that I had the intelligence because I had cousins that some were teachers and they were in college and I got a lot of support from them so it wasn't like I didn't have relatives that weren't in college that didn't give me support. I did get support but I didn't have a lot of... I wasn't very secure in taking tests but I would study and I studied very hard in college to make it.

EV: Did you have any siblings coach?

TT: Yes I have two sisters and a brother; a brother and a sister that are older and one that's younger. We all graduated from college, teachers. I don't know my sisters didn't really get into teaching that much but my brother retired as a teacher in [REDACTED] California, very good teacher, junior high... elementary and junior high, very good. My two sisters graduated, spent a little bit of time teaching but not a lot they raised families.

EV: Are they still out in California?

TT: Yes they are all in California.

EV: Do you go home very often to visit?

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TT: No not a lot. My younger sister's husband was Darrell Rogers who was a head coach at Arizona State and he was also the Detroit Lion head coach. Then he finally got out of that and he was Athletic Director at Southern Connecticut University, so they were back there as he was AD for Southern Connecticut. When he retired they moved back to Fresno, that's where my sister went to school, Fresno State, and that is where he went to school and that's where they met at Fresno State. But they are all... his they are in Fresno and a lot of their kids are in Fresno. My other sister lives in **Sylmar** which is just outside of L.A. and her husband is a minister and he is a retired marine. So he is a retired marine, went to **Biola** College, got his degree and became a minister.

EV: Protestant minister?

TT: Yeah.

EV: In your family were you all Catholic?

TT: No, my dad was not Catholic and my mom was Catholic. At the beginning we were raised and baptized Catholic but then we kind of left the church, we didn't...my mother didn't but my dad never was a member of the church and my... the rest of us became Protestant. We went and found our own way and it wasn't something that my mother was very strong and a very wonderful woman. My dad was not. We never were forced to do anything. We had to make up our own minds and it just turned out that, you know, we all went the Protestant direction. I don't know why but we did. But you know I think believing in God and Jesus Christ is the main thing.

EV: Yeah. Do you go to church right now?

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TT: I don't go to church necessarily regular but I am a Christian and I have, I am definitely a Christian. I believe in God and Jesus Christ and I belong... my wife and I belong to the Presbyterian Church.

EV: Really?

TT: I haven't... where I live right now I haven't really, I've been to the Presbyterian Church there in Crockett, Texas but not recently. But I guess you can call me a born again Christian and I firmly believe that there is only one way and that is God and Jesus Christ.

EV: My grandmother came out of Mexico as a Presbyterian. They organized like South El Paso where most of the Mexican refugees first came, organized "El Divino Salvador," which is the Mexicans American Presbyterian Church. But, anyway, have you, did you ever hold any office in the church such as a deacon?

TT: No I never held an office. We'd go to the Presbyterian Church when the kids were younger, fairly regularly but being a coach you just go on all the time and Sunday's your day to rest. I mean that's the day you have to rest because you're gone all the time. My wife was a member of the Brethren Church in Laverne and that's how she grew up and we were married in the Brethren Church but then when we became... we went there and when we moved to Texas we got into the Presbyterian Church.

EV: How did Houston get a hold of you, how did you get a hold of Houston? How did you manage to get from Southern California to here?

TT: Okay. When I was coaching at Fullerton Junior College for eight years and the coach whose place I took was Jim Bush. Jim Bush coached at Fullerton High School when I was going to school at Fullerton College. Then he got the Fullerton Junior

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College job and then I went on to Whittier and then during the summer I would give swimming lessons and life guard [training]. I gave swimming lessons to his kids, a lot of those teacher's kids, I had them, you know, every summer and I had them and taught them all how to swim and dive and things. When he left Fullerton College he went to Occidental College and I took his place at Fullerton College. Then he went to UCLA and he was at UCLA and I spent eight years as the head coach at Fullerton Junior College and then he asked me to be his assistant at UCLA. So I went to UCLA for nine years.

EV: Boy, that must have been pretty nice.

TT: Yeah, UCLA was a great school, a great school we had very good athletes there were very good young men and produced... we managed to produce some pretty good athletes. After nine years at UCLA I wanted to leave. I was an assistant at UCLA and I thought it was better that I would try and get a head job. I wanted to kind of use my own philosophy at coaching and when you are an assistant you don't necessarily have your own philosophy and I just wanted to be a head coach again. So I decided not to go back to UCLA in '76 and there were two jobs that opened up in the United States at that time... at least the only ones I heard of. That was University of Houston as the head track coach and the Athletic Director at UCLA knew the Athletic Director at Houston, they were pretty good friends. So the job came open and that was one prospective job. The other one was being the trainer for the Dallas Cowboys. They recruited me pretty heavy to go to the Dallas Cowboys as their conditioning coach. You know, Tom Landry and Gilbert and I don't... then I went to Houston to interview with them and Harry Falk was the Athletic Director and I liked him a lot and at the end I decided to stay at the University. You know... I just spent too much time learning about track. I spent my

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whole career finally getting to really understand what track and field was all about and I just didn't feel I could give that up. So I came to Houston. I enjoyed it. I enjoyed my years here at Houston and I think we produced some pretty good athletes here and I'm glad I made that choice because I think I was the better track and field coach then I would have been a conditioning coach at Dallas. However my assistant at Fullerton Junior College, Bob Ward, I recommended him for the job with the Dallas Cowboys and he got it. He was there for many years until Landry retired or whatever.

EV: What year was that '70?

TT: '76 that's when I...

EV: Bobby Hays was there?

TT: Bob Hays came I don't know right after that maybe I'm not sure. Yeah he came later. I can't remember who was there at that time in '76 but they obviously, they had a good team. I just don't know... I worked with football at UCLA, helped Dick Vermiel and I think that shows how things got started with me involved in football as far as the conditioning, running, and physiology of exercise and I don't think the football coaches were really up on that and I think it was... well anyhow it kind of worked.

EV: As I recall back then the coaching was, I mean for the athlete's anyway, you couldn't drink Coke Colas you couldn't have sex before the game, you couldn't mess around with your girlfriends, you couldn't drink water during practice, you just spit it out and that went on for a long time didn't it.

TT: There were a lot of things going on, just training, just basic training and I think there was I think the pros noticed it first. I think Tom Landry and that organization was a first class organization and they wanted to get involved with the weight training and

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running and things like that and conditioning for maximum performance and it was very enticing for me to go there and, it was a great organization, great people but it was kind of overwhelming for me as an individual. I think for my assistant Bob Ward, it was better for him to go there and me to stay in track and field at the university level. I really like the university setting, you know, being involved with the university and the academic part of it. Harry Falk the Athletic Director I just thought the world of him. So I chose Houston.

EV: Coach who, who did you have playing for you at UCLA at that time. Wasn't there a quarterback Garry Beban or something like that?

TT: Gary went right after that. I mean he was there right before I came and then it was the son of the former great runner from Michigan Tom Harman.

EV: Tom Harman, okay the actor now.

TT: Yeah, his son was a quarterback at that time. Gosh I can't remember all those guys it's been so long and a while back.

EV: But neither one of those two made it good in the pros did they?

TT: No.

EV: I mean Gary Beban I can't remember him ever being in any team but he may have been in some other obscure team and got drafted and I know Harmon played a little bit for them and then he just kind of faded and went into acting.

TT: I can't remember when Dick Vermiel went to the Rose Bowl that's when I kind of helped him at that point. It was the coach before that was... gosh my mind I can't think of it, but when Dick Vermiel came there, and he was a very good coach. I've never known a coach that worked so hard as him. I mean he worked day and night and he was

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the type of guy that wanted to find out about anything. You know his ego was not so big that he didn't ask for help or find out how to make his team better and the athlete's better. He was successful because he was that way. He was a hard worker, smart guy but mostly a hard worker and got along with his athletes very well. I mean he was the nicest guy that you could be around.

EV: He almost worked his way into the grave as hard as he worked.

TT: Yeah, he worked hard there was no doubt about that. He worked sometimes too hard I thought but he was good, he was a good coach.

EV: There was something else let's see... when you said you had your different philosophy of coaching could you put in layman's terms what your philosophy was?

TT: Well it was, you know, I approached track from more of a bio-mechanical point of view, you know where you have reasons why you do things and it all works, you have to go back and do a lot of studying, you base everything on Newton's laws and you know the laws have been set down by people that were smarter than me on action/reaction acceleration those laws that presented from Newton, Galileo, Copernicus... all those people, you know, contributed to how the human body works. It's nothing new, they did it all. I think in order to really understand track and field and really be a good coach you have to have a background in bio-mechanics; you have to know how the human body works. Even though you've taken college you don't really get it then and you have to do more studying and more film watching and be able to tell the athlete why you are doing what you are doing with him, why you are asking him to do this. It would be no fun for me to coach if I didn't know why the athlete was good and why he wasn't good bio-mechanically. If I can explain to him a better way of doing it and explain to him, "This is

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the way you do it based on this way" then it is easier for him and he gets a results right away and that is what makes coaching rewarding for me. The kids, once they understand that and they know you are coaching them, there are rhymes and reasons why you are telling them what you are telling them, not just telling them, "Because I told you, because I'm the coach and you're the athlete. This is why I'm telling you because biomechanically this is correct." You have to base your coaching philosophy on science you can't just base it on just what you think. You have to base it on science and then the art of coaching is taking that science and being able to get it to the athlete, being able to communicate that to the athlete, being able to use it with a vocabulary and showing him on film why you should do it this way. "This is what you did that made you great. This is what it is going to do to make you better." So I wanted that philosophy I just didn't... and then handling kids I thought I was able to handle athletes a little bit different and I wanted to do that again... you know you want to run your own show is basically what it is. Your assistant, you're... the head coach has got his philosophy and you do that not so much in the... you know I had my area of all the field events and I coached all the field events, all the throwing events, jumping events and I coach all the field and it's a little bit different you have to be a little more scientific in the technical events and I just felt that I wanted to go more in that direction and I wanted to handle everything myself. That's what I did at Fullerton Junior College when I was the head coach and I was successful there. I think that your goal is to be the head coach and be able to be a head coach at a major university and compete against everybody else in the United States so that was my basic philosophy and I wanted to incorporate that more into the philosophy of coaching.

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EV: Coach when you say biomechanics is that something you developed or is that something you were taught in school?

TT: Oh no... kinesiology is the same thing it just... biology and mechanics came into kinesiology where you are using... or biomechanics is biology and mechanics... you know physics and everything coming together to explain movement and it's... that's just a new word. It was mechanics and it was kinesiology.

EV: So you start with the guys in the starting blocks and that's where you begin using your...biomechanical teaching?

TT: Oh yeah, there's got to be a reason why you do everything, a biomechanical reason. I mean you don't just put kids in the blocks and tell them to get in the blocks and let them go and if you have a philosophy that you can't give a reason why you are doing what you are doing. To me I had to give a reason to those athletes why I wanted them to do it the way I wanted them to do it. Not just because, "I'm the head coach and I tell you these are the reasons." When you do that kids learn and they get better faster and they don't develop any problems psychologically because they are trying to find something and here you are giving it to them, they understand why and this is what you practice and this is what you do in the meet. There is no sense in practicing something if you don't do it in a meet. To me that's the big challenge, practice this way because it's correct, now go to the meet and do the same thing.

EV: I'm going to ask you to interpret this because I was taught as a layman what you are talking about, then I assume you as the coach have to study that athlete's body, his legs, his arms, how long, how strong, his morphology and all this do you have to study those things and know which... where to tell them to...?

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TT: You have to be able to, and you know there hasn't been a great athlete that's been invented in the last... you know we have great, genius athletes. I mean we have geniuses. They do it, they just do it because they are geniuses and what we've done is we analyze them and then we come up with a new criteria for coaching. Well that athlete, the reason he is good is because he applied physics or biomechanics correctly. He didn't know it but that's the way the body works the best. People think the body works the best a lot of different ways, it doesn't. There are certain ways the body works the best and those are the things that a coach has got to find. How did the body work the best?

EV: His body?

TT: His body but basically every body, you know, as long as you have arms and legs that working the same that gravity works on you just like everybody. That is basically what you are doing. You are taking gravity and we are trying to overcome gravity and the arms work a certain way better in a certain event. In the throwing events you would be surprised how similar they are; throwing a baseball, throwing a javelin, throwing a shot, all striking events are very similar in the biomechanics. There's not a lot of difference, in fact, there's very little difference basically on how the body should work and it's the same in sprinting. There's not ten different ways to sprint. There is one way to run fast and those people that run fast, run pretty much that same way. Those are the things that you have to find out.

When I got my masters degree from Chapman College in California and I did my thesis on the mechanics of shot putting using cinematography and I took three cameras and shot them at the same time using three different angles: back, side and top and I shot the throws of a thrower that we had at Fullerton Junior College that was pretty good. I

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filmed him at the same time from three different angles and then I analyzed him and what he did. The path of the shot, every arm, what every arm and legs did. I did a segmental analysis of that. Once you do a segmental analysis and you look at all that film and you start finding out velocities, angle release and horizontal velocity rotational things, it wasn't a doctoral thesis it was a master's thesis but after you do one then you can do almost anything. You take anything and that's the way you look at it. You look at it from the biomechanical point of view and you do film and watch film at 64 frames per second which is just slow and you look at every one of those frames and you could see exactly what the foot is doing, the arm's doing, the body's doing relative to itself and you are shooting from three different angles and you have three different views so you can find out very quick how the human body works and I did that. Then I could take other events and I did my own analysis using the same techniques as I did on that masters' thesis and then I started looking at every event and my career and UCLA and Houston was building models of all the different events on how they should be coached. What they should look like, the biomechanics of them, what they should feel like and the vocabulary that I developed in order to teach them.

EV: What would you say is the most complex of the field events physically?

TT: Well they are all basically pretty much related but I would say that one of the hardest events is the discus and the hammer. The hammer is very complicated. They are complicated if you don't understand what makes them go. But I think the discus is kind of difficult to do. They are all difficult when you get them at a certain level. You know when you get up to the very world class level. Then they are all very difficult and every event is difficult and the athlete has to be much better, technically better to be able to

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compete at that level. I can't tell you how much film I have looked at over the years but I've looked at a lot of film of all the way back as far back as I could go. There was a gentleman in California called Orm McMurray who took film of every track meet, you know every Olympics, every major track meet from way back and he got film and he sold it and I bought all that film and went back and looked at it. It was 8 millimeter film and you had a crank camera and I looked at all that film and I took... every event and I went back there and just watched to see how it progressed over the years. The other thing I did that I thought was really helpful was this gentleman had an airplane camera that shot 600 frames per second and he wanted to develop strips in all the events to...

End of Side A, Tape 1

Start of Side B, Tape 1

TT: taken that film and he wanted me to look at it and take out the frames that made continuity of the whole throw but 600 frames per second, you know, there was... for one start there must have been unbelievable amounts of frames, pictures going like this and I would go through every one of them and then I'd pick out the frames that best characterized the movement. You know, I had to put it in strips of about 15 frames, on the ground, off the ground, what I felt had good continuity in about 15 to 20 frames or whatever the event was. So after looking at all those frames that slowly you just know how the human body works and if you don't do that... if you don't do segmental analysis and watch film frame by frame by frame then you are going to miss a lot.

EV: Do you do that for the opposition? I mean if your runner is going against like Carl Lewis may run against some great Russian or some other sprinter or something did you study that other sprinter to see what he was doing wrong?

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TT: Well I don't necessarily do that because the main thing is that the sprinters I have do what is right. It doesn't really make any difference what anyone does. I don't know what they do but I have done analysis of other people, of other runners if I thought they were good. Yeah, I did them to see what they were really doing that was similar or different than what I was coaching and I've learned over the years with athletes that I felt were geniuses and I've watched them and then analyzed them and come up with my own idea if I felt that other athletes were doing things better bio-mechanically then those are the things that I started working on. I lost my train of thought.

EV: Do you have strategies that you use like in... like in a 100 yard dash against maybe a cross country or...5,000 meter when you pace yourself?

TT: Oh yeah. There's difference there's a lot of research that's been done. If you just take distance running and distance training and you take all the research that's been done on developing a distance runner, there is just a lot of it out there. We've done so much in this country. We are leaders in the world. There is no other country that has done more research than we have over the years on biomechanics of the different events. Coaches that wrote their masters, their doctoral thesis on track and field, I mean we've done it. We were lacking I think in biomechanics in this country for a long time. We had great athletes but we were lacking in the coaching department of biomechanics. I think in the late 60's, early 70's that started to come around. Jeff **Deisland** who was from England kind of brought in biomechanics to coaching track and field and biomechanics into sports and I thought that opened my eyes and opened up a lot of eyes of coaches in the United States that we had to do more out there to develop better athletes. That's when I got stimulated into trying to find out more answers but there is strategy involved.

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EV: Which was....?

TT: There is strategy and it varies with the different events but there is strategy in the 100 meters, there's one best way to run the 100 meters I think. Not too many people are doing that until I was doing it. I taught the sprinters how to run the 100, the rhythm of the 100 meters, so the biomechanics of how best to run the 100 meters and I don't think that was going on a lot of... they would fire the gun the kids would run to the other side and whoever was the winner but there's more to it than sprinting fast and that.

EV: Let me nudge in there a little amateurish stuff: don't the arms have a lot to do, the strength of the arms in dash?

TT: Well the strength of the arms or more on how they work mechanically, yeah they do, there's a lot to it. There are a lot of people that don't concentrate on the arms because very fast people, the body work correctly. But there's some kids that don't use their arms correctly. There's some people that coach and think the "well the arms are just for balance they don't do anything." Well they do a lot more than people realize in sprinting or in anything I think they control the range of motion in your stride pattern and also the tempo of your running they control it. I think a lot of work needs to be done in that area. I think the mechanics are there it's just the coaches don't spend enough time with it. I think they have to spend more time on the arms to know how they work and how they contribute to sprinting, or all types of running.

EV: When was your first Olympics? When was the first time you went as a coach?

TT: Well as a coach I went in... well I was a coach in '80 but we didn't go to the Olympics because of the boycott in Russia. President Carter boycotted and so we didn't go. I was coaching quite a few kids that were on that team and we didn't go and they

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were getting older and that was their last shot which was very disappointing. I don't think we should have boycotted I don't think it helped, at least...No I don't think it helped I have no reservations in saying that the boycott did not help the political thing about, you know the United States and Russia. The Russians boycotted in L.A. so you know it didn't prove anything politically I don't think. But I don't think that was the way to express ourselves personally. I don't think that all of those Olympians that had an opportunity to compete, you don't have very many chances...

EV: Yeah that's a tragedy.

TT: But anyhow, President Carter did take us to, brought us all to Washington, D.C. and we got to meet him and tour the White House and that was very nice it was good that he did that but it was not like competing in the games.

EV: Yeah, well we're kind of facing the same thing with China. They are talking about doing the same thing there but it will probably not go through.

TT: So '80 was my first coaching position but we went over to Europe and I coached over there but as an assistant coach, then in '84 I was also an assistant coach but I was Carl's coach and Kirk Baptiste's coach so I had a dual role. I was their coach and then I was coach for the American team, the U.S. Team which really... when you are a coach for a U.S. team it's mostly managerial, you know, you are just making sure the guys get to the track and on time and if they need any equipment you are getting them the equipment and mostly it is making sure they are on time to the event so they will make it. But it's not coaching unless someone wants you to help them but unless you have athlete's there, there is very little coaching. In '84 I had Carl and Kirk Baptiste who I

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was coaching so I was involved as a personal coach and also as an assistant to the U.S.

team.

**EV: How did they do that year I don't remember?

TT: Well Carl won four gold metals in L.A. and he was the second man to ever do that and Kirk Baptiste... they were both students here at University of Houston, got the silver metal in the 200. So it was a pretty good year for the University of Houston and also for the athletes that I had the privilege of coaching and also Carol Lewis was there and she didn't get a metal but she had sprained her ankle two weeks before in training and I think she could have got a metal but she didn't but she was there also as persistent. So we had three people that were there that I was responsible for. Carol was just coming in to Houston and her mom was her coach in high school and I was just getting her but she was there in '84.

EV: It must have been a fantastic thrill to have had... number one you get pretty rod up yourself in terms of your butterflies...

TT: Yeah it was, that year Carl was very good and everybody knew it and there was a lot of expectations and I never said that he would win four gold metals and I don't think he ever said it but we were going to attempt it. That was not my... my first concern was him winning the long jump and getting the gold metal. Anything past that was going to be up to him. So in the world championships in Helsinki in '81 at that time, before that happened we were deciding that we were going to try to get the four gold metals. We did three events there and it turned out alright and he felt that "Yeah I think I can do it." Because I had never had the experience of coaching anyone that won four gold metals. The coach, Jesse Owen's coach, I didn't know him, and he was probably had passed at

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that time. So I had no feedback from them, well what is it going to take? So we had to be very careful and injuries... if you get an injury it's over with. If you drop the baton in the relay it's over with you don't win four gold metals. So there's some things that are kind of out of your control but you try to do as much to take the luck out of it. So in the long jump we practiced on jumping and winning on the first jump. We worked on that all year and the year before the Olympics. First jump: you win the event. You don't foul, you win the event. So you don't take that energy. You know you jump six times in the long jump and then you have the 200 and the relay to go, I mean that takes a lot out of you. So we practiced jumping one time and winning, winning in one jump. And in L.A. the long jump was at night and Carl had kind of a sore hamstring and they switched it around for T.V. so we are going kind of against the wind, the cross wind and in L.A. it gets cold at night. We practiced for this, regardless of the weather and he did jump 28 feet on his first jump and that... I knew that was going to be the winning jump. I told him not to take another jump, just that one but he took another jump. It didn't really jump he just aborted it but... fans and the press really got on him for only taking one jump but I'm the one that told him to do that. I couldn't have him take the chance of hurting that hamstring and not being able to run the 200 and run the relay. So they didn't ask me, they didn't ask Carl, it was me that told him not to do that, we had practiced that. In Sole in '88 he took all six jumps and lost the 200 to a teammate Joe Delouch. So that jumping and you're jumping 28 feet, 27, you're jumping six times that takes a lot out of you, especially if it is cold and you've got a sore leg anyhow. So, you know, people don't understand that and it was hard to explain it. No one really asked me, the press didn't ask me "Why?" and they were kind of angry at Carl because, "Why?" the fans

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were angry because “Why didn’t you try to break the world record?” Well they had a lot of expectations with Carl but you don’t try and break world records in the Olympics games it’s very, almost impossible to do because the only thing you are thinking about is winning. Our... the goal was to win four events that was the goal. Not to break records but just to win them is hard enough, let alone break records. If records come they come because of the competition and everything is just right. But I don’t feel that you can plan on breaking records I think they’ve just got to come as a byproduct of the competition, the facilities, the wind and just the frame of mind that the athlete’s in. So that was nerve racking because you go through the 200 and then you go through the relay that if you drop the baton then you don’t win four goal metals. But everything worked out he won four gold metals so Carl deserved every one of those because he worked hard to earn those four gold metals. It wasn’t easy to do and it wasn’t easy to coach him because of my experience, or lack of experience in coaching someone like this. I had to play the percentages and I had to say, “Take one jump that’s it.” The fans didn’t like that. They wanted him to jump all six times and break the world record and he wouldn’t have won the 200 his teammate would have beaten him and he wouldn’t have won four gold metals perhaps.

EV: I guess what I am trying to get to, did your kids come back to your room and pat yourself on the back and say, “Man that was good!” I mean if I put myself in your situation I think I would have just teared up with happiness, you know.

TT: Well I was more relieved than happy that he was able to do it. Because it is quite an accomplishment and you know you’ve got to play the percentages as far as what’s best for the athlete. If he wanted to win, he wanted to win four gold metals he wanted to try

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and win four gold metals. I didn't...it wasn't up to me it was up to him. My job is always to give him the resources to do that, to coach him as good as I can, and this is everyone that I've ever coached. My job as a coach is to give that athlete the resources and take him as far as he wants to go or as far as his ability. That's my job, that's what I get paid to do I'm a teacher. I'm no different from any kindergarten teacher, any high school, any teacher that knows... that has hopefully the expertise and they like kids, they like to teach that's my job. I just feel that that is what I'm getting paid to do and I don't think any more of it than that, that I'm getting paid to do that job. I was getting paid by the university to coach for the university and Carl was a student and I wanted to coach him, that's what my job is and I guess I learned that from my high school coaches. That philosophy is that you are a teacher number one, number one you are a teacher. I was so glad that I was able to finish and get my degree and get my credentials to be a teacher. That was important to me. So after he won four gold metals people asked me, "Well what was the biggest thrill?" It wasn't... it's not necessarily the athlete winning the metals. It was that they accomplished and I had a hand in developing them to reach that potential. I think Carl in every event knew what he was doing. He had a good idea of what he was going to do and how he was going to do it and he did it. Now that to me is the thrill of coaching is that when you coached him to do the things that he did and that kind of... in that kind of arena when there's 90,000 people right there and the world is watching and he's doing it. But he's the guy that has to do it so the accolades and rewards just come to him. I was the guy and the thrill that I get is that I helped him get there and that's about it.

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EV: Did you draft Carl Lewis or did he just pick U of H for some reason? He's from north somewhere isn't he from New Jersey?

TT: He's from New Jersey, south New Jersey... Willingborough, New Jersey and he went to high school there and his mom was the coach at one high school and his dad was a head coach at the school in the same district. So they had a lot of competition going between them, you know one school against the other. Willingborough against and I can't even remember what the other high school was named. That's where he was raised and that's where he had his track season. I think that Carl was a soccer player and then he just kind of got out of soccer. Carl is a different kind of a guy. If you... Carl is a pretty smart athlete, really smart. He knows his body he knows what's right and what's wrong, he knows, he can tell. If someone is telling him something he knows, "hey that's not right. I know better." He is a very intelligent athlete. If a coach is starting to demand things of him and they don't make any sense he's not doing it. He will definitely not do it. For some reason we hit it off. I told him about the long jump and I told him what I thought he needed to do to get better, what he did that was good but I showed him on film and I presented the facts to him and he relates to that. Everything I told Carl I told him why we were going to do it. I didn't just tell him, I told him why we were going to do it. I asked him the coach relationship was close. It wasn't the coach was way up here and the athlete way down it was pretty much... you could do that with him because he was pretty mature athlete and understood really what you were talking about very quick. If you explain things to him he could pick it up and he could go do it better than any athlete that I've ever been around and I've had some good athletes that could do that but he could do it the best. Anyhow when he came out of high school I really didn't

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think we had a chance to get him. For some reason I said, "We can't get that guy there's no sense in me recruiting him, he's too good, he won't come down here." I don't know I just felt insecure about it and I just felt that he wouldn't come down here. My assistant coach kept telling me, "Why don't you just give him a call?" I said, "No he's not going to come here, we don't have a chance to get him." Anyhow he kind of talked me into calling him. So I called him and I just told him about it. He was interested. However he had taken all of his visits. He couldn't take any more under the NCAA rules. So he couldn't come down here to visit, we couldn't pay for his way because he had taken all of his visits. I said, "Well we can't take any visits and I can't go there so I don't know what to do." Well I could have gone there but he couldn't come down here to see the school or anything. So he said well I'm going to Puerto Rico and I'm on my way (he went down there for a clinic) on my way I'll pay my own way and I'll go through Houston and I'll stop there (which he could do). He could stop here and he'd have to pay his own way. So he did that he visited the University and that's when we talked about jumping and everything. He left I didn't think that he would ever call me back again. There were so many schools after him it was just unbelievable, every school wanted him. I just felt, "Well I did the best I could." Lo and behold he called me up and said, "I'm coming." I could not believe it. I just about... it floored me that he made up his decision on coming. So I went to his house to recruit him and to sign him and his dad really didn't want to sign, his dad didn't want him to leave but his mother said, "He should go where he wants to go." So it kind of testy there with his dad and his dad was a great guy but he was testy he didn't want to sign. Carl he said, "Dad sign, I'm going to Houston." From the point where Carl made up his mind he did not waiver about his decision. That's the way he is

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about everything he does. Once he makes up his mind he's a very loyal individual and he never changed his mind, no matter what he will not change it. If he feels he's right, and it's in his heart and his head that that's what he wants to do then he will not change his mind and that's what he did, he never changed his mind I couldn't believe it. Never waivered from the time he said "I'm coming." And there was a lot of pressure on him not to come to Houston to stay on the east coast, dad wanted him to stay there. He said, "I'm going to Houston."

EV: Do you know why he made that decision?

TT: I have no idea. The only thing that I can think about is that we... our relationship was good. I told him I didn't care if he sprinted or not. "I wanted you to be a long jumper. I want you to be the world record in the long jump. I think you can break the world record."

EV: Excuse me did you see that from his high school?

TT: Well he jumped 26.9 and that was the national record at the time in high school. You didn't jump very much in high school because he had a bad knee but that was pretty good. I had seen him as a junior at the Penton Relays but I didn't know who it was at the time running in a relay and his team was kind of last but I saw him coming in, get the baton and really make up ground and he was long legged but he was making up ground and I just noticed him and didn't think too much about it but it was him. I said, "That kid's a great sprinter he is..."

EV: Was he an anchor?

TT: Anchor leg, yeah he was an anchor leg. If you're ever going to have a person on the anchor leg of any relay team, Carl is the one you can get. I mean he is...

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EV: Yeah I saw some of the stuff he did he was phenomenal.

TT: Yeah he is a great anchor.

EV: I mean he came from behind in several...

TT: Yeah he was great he was phenomenal. He is a great competitor. You put him on a relay... a lot of people think he is more of an individualist, individualistic you know. He was a great team man. He is great. If he is behind his teammates and he likes them he will run his heart out. If he doesn't like somebody then he won't. He has to be...

EV: Wasn't there a conflict with [REDACTED] (22.7) Burrell or something he had some conflict with...?

TT: No he never had any conflict. He had conflict with other sprinters that felt that he was over the hill and shouldn't anchor and didn't want him to run in Atlanta.

EV: I remember something but I think it might have been the sportscasters making up some nonsense.

TT: No it wasn't between those two guys, anyhow.

EV: I have to ask you just for my own edification, I've always found... and I could never... I couldn't pole vault four feet if I had to. But I always found it to be an amazing sport of timing and upper strength...upper body strength is that... did you coach it?

TT: Oh yeah I've coached many vaulters and it is a very difficult, it's one of the most difficult in the throwing disc is hard but in the jumping events pole vaulting is definitely hard. It's an element of fear involved. You know you fall or you do the wrong thing you can get hurt, the same with hurdles that's another event. You know they say in track and field don't base the championship on hurdlers and pole vaulters because those events are dangerous and anything can happen in them. However, one of my favorite events,

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probably the favorite is the pole vault because there's a lot more coaching involved in that event. I mean it is pretty technical. It's simplistic but technical but the fact that there is fear involved and you can get hurt makes it a difficult event. There is something about pole vaulters that I really like. They are different in certain ways. They are just go for it type of guys and in my situation they have been the best kids, usually some of the best kids on the team very helpful and everything. I don't... I think speed is the important thing on every event, every jumping event, everything is speed. If you've got speed then if you don't mind getting on a fiber glass pole and the feeling of fling then speed is critical and then height. You have height and you've got speed those are the two factors that I think are crucial and if you are not afraid and you start learning from the very beginning. It's all about learning the event. Anyone can vault if they want to do it and then it is the teaching part of it. If you teach them right when they first pick up a pole and you've got them going in the right direction then it's not dangerous and it's not hard, it's easy. It's just like any event: you learn how to do it. But you have to have that idea that "Hey you're not going to mind getting off the ground here." You don't have to have any I don't think extremely great gymnastics ability. If you can dive off a diving board and do summersaults, back summersaults or back flips and you are able to do that then you are able to vault. It's the fiber glass pole bending and if that is different. Holding on to a pole.

EV: That came in the '70s didn't it?

TT: No it came in, in the late '60s, yeah late '60s in California is where the fiberglass pole was developed.

EV: Yeah that is just poetry.

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TT: Oh yeah it is a beautiful event. But it is a difficult event and you have to have a little courage and kids want that... they see it and they want it right away. They want that feeling of flying, they do. Vaulters want it and they usually want it at a young age it's just exciting. Those are the kids that vault. I think that you can teach it to, kids can develop themselves and reach out a pretty good level of success if you just do things right. My older son was a pole vaulter and I started him from the very beginning. He became a pretty good vaulter, not a great vaulter he wasn't that talented but I think I spent a lot of time on his technique and he was able to vault pretty good when he was young and had a good career but not a great career because he wasn't that talented. He wasn't tall and he wasn't fast. He just had a little bit of skill and a little bit of wanting to fly and I think I spent a lot of time with him but he did alright.

EV: Did you ever do it?

TT: Yeah when I was a kid, it was really funny but I remember going down to the river and this is on my own I don't know where I saw people vaulting it must have been at the high school with bamboo poles at that time I was in grammar school and my brother was five years older so I would go to the high school to watch him run and he was pretty fast but I'd seen these vaulters vault and it kind of looked interesting to me. So I went home and built... I went down to the driver and cut bamboo poles, bamboo down at the river and I brought them home and taped them and I built some standards. And I started vaulting, you know I'd take it down to the grammar school in the sand pit and I'd make a little hole and I'd vault with bamboo poles.

EV: Really?

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TT: Eight and a half standard and yeah I did that on my own. I had some kids that did it. I just did it. I thought it was really fun to do. Then in high school I really wanted to do it. That's what I wanted to do but the coaches wanted me to run. They didn't... you know at that time they thought that you had to be really big in the upper body and strong and we had a kid that was really strong and I wasn't very big and not really strong even though I was a fairly good diver I could do stuff... I really wanted to do it I thought I could be pretty good I had pretty good speed and didn't think... I wasn't afraid and I thought I could do it but they wanted me to do other things, more things. They didn't want me to just... because usually the vaulters were just vaulters they didn't do anything else. They wanted me to run the hurdles and sprint and run the relay and things like that so I just went in that direction.

EV: What are they at now coach you're over 18 feet now?

TT: Oh no 19...

EV: They went over 19?

TT: 20 feet, over 20 feet.

EV: Man where was I? When did they do that? That hadn't been too long ago?

TT: No not too long ago but it's been [Serge Botcub, \(28.0\)](#) Russia but I don't think the record is that high I think it should be higher. I think there's different things that have kept our progress here in the United States and I think we have vaulters that could probably go over 20 feet but I think we run into different philosophies in this country and it sets us back. So that's my opinion.

EV: Would you want to expand on what that is?

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TT: Well not... I can't really explain it, I can't really explain it in words what it is but you know there's a lot of folklore going on in vaulting. Because of the nature of the sport there's a lot of crazy ideas that's going and when someone gets and idea and... a coach gets and idea and then he says "Well we're going to do this, this is great." And it's not great. So everyone starts doing it. Coaches learn it, athletes learn it and so they start doing this and it takes away the progress. Instead of teaching the basic fundamental they start teaching something else that has no business, in fact, it is deteriorating from the sport. It keeps the sport from progressing. I think we've had different philosophies that have been started and it set the progress of vaulting back instead of staying with the basic mechanics and the basic technique they start trying to find other things that they think is going to make you vault higher and they don't. The pole vault is like that. There's so many different ideas and then foreign coaches have a lot of different ideas and they think...they don't have any good ideas. I mean the fiberglass pole was developed in this country, we started it and I was right there when we started fiberglass vaulting in junior college and the high school, the coach there started it in high school and so, you know, we went through all the technique and all the problems and there was a lot of material written about fiberglass vaulting in this country. So I know pretty much the basic, what science tells us about it. Instead of sticking with the science and working on the technique we didn't do that. We tried to...because kids weren't vaulting we tried to do different things to make them vault higher and it wasn't right and it set us back because we went in that direction instead of staying with the basic fundamentals.

EV: Did we just have a woman that just popped up? Didn't she just set a new world's record or something?

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TT: American record. A Russian has the world record. Both the Russians have the world record. I think the American has the ability to beat the world record and she vaulted pretty good. She's basically sound and it would be nice to have a little bit more speed than she has but she is technically sound. Her coach is doing a very good job with her and right now she is pretty sound I hope these kids stay with that and she'll develop. She'll get a little bit stronger and a little bit faster as she matures and I think she is very capable of breaking the world record.

EV: Coach is there a different way that you coach a man as opposed to a woman?

TT: No I think it is basically the same. I think maybe the temperament is a little bit different you have to have a little bit temperament but as far as mechanics and everything, it's the same, you coach them the same way. Women can do amazing things, it's not like they can't. They can do amazing things. They can do everything the guys can do. But you know they are... I think a coach has to have certain skills to really coach women and my skills were with men most of my career. Then I had to coach women and I was still... I coached them just like I coached the guys. I wasn't... I just coached them I may have raised my voice a little bit and maybe get on them a little bit like I would a guy. A guy would never think two seconds about the way I raised my voice but a girl may. She may interpret that as being mad at her or not... or whatever. But I think there is a knack for coaching women and I think there's a lot of men that do a good job of coaching women and I've had to learn to do it and I have done it and they have reached a pretty good level. But I would say that my, if I had a choice I'd coach men and not women.

EV: Was it like Tom Hanks in that movie, "There's no crying in baseball!"

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TT: Yeah.

EV: "No crying in track."

TT: Yeah it's kind of like that in ways. I think guys have different issues than women have issues and I'm not going to put... I'm not going to say... women can do anything a man can do. I mean bio-mechanically, technically they are very good. They concentrate very well. They are really into what they are doing, not that guys aren't, but women are really... focused, they are really focused. But there are other issues that you have to deal with. But it is definitely not their skills, they have the skills, they definitely can be as good, relative to their strength than a guy can be. They are amazing athletes. Again, I think it's my, maybe I'm not skilled enough in coaching women. I think you do have to be skilled in coaching women to get the most out of them. I do I think there is a knack to doing that.

EV: So over your career have you gone overseas to coach or teach or instruct other track teams?

TT: Yes I've done clinics all over. I've done a lot of track clinics and helped a lot of athletes over the years in different countries. They have come here to the United States I've worked with them. The Japanese, oh I can't name them all. But foreign athletes, and we've had foreign athletes on the team at UCLA we had quite a few of them and here we've had a few but not as many. My philosophy is that I'm going to give the scholarships to the kids first. I think they deserve it. Here at Houston I didn't recruit heavily... I didn't recruit foreign athletes. If they wanted to come they could come but I didn't go out and actively recruit them because we didn't have the money to recruit them number one and number two I just felt that the scholarships and this is philosophically, I

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wanted to give them to Americans and not to foreigners, foreign athletes. However, we have had them here but we didn't actively recruit them, at least when I was here. I didn't go out and spend time in Europe. Coaches spend time in... a lot of time in Europe going to the National Junior meets and getting to know coaches and trying to develop pipelines to get their best athletes to come to the United States. But I've always felt especially now that scholarships, that they cut back scholarships, that the scholarships first is for the Americans and developing American athletes in college, because college is where we develop athletes in the United States. That's one of the big things about our country is development of our athletes. If we don't develop them, then what happens to them after college? They don't get that development and foreign athletes don't get that they don't have the system that we do of high school competition, then college competition and then open and Olympic competition. But I just felt that if I was going to give a scholarship I should give it to the American. However, when you coach a foreign athlete he spoils you because they are so good. You never have to worry about their grades. They are always good students. They are always very responsible. They are very coach-able. They listen... I mean they are just phenomenal athletes to coach but you get spoiled and pretty soon that's all you want to have is foreign athletes around and I don't think that is fair. I mean for an American university and the money that is put in by our taxpayers that I should go out and recruit all foreigners. Number one you can go out and get the very best foreign athlete if you want. I mean there is very little coaching and development. The thrill I get out of coaching is developing athletes. When they are freshman they come in and you develop them and get them better right through college and then hopefully you get them ready for Olympic competition. At one time I said there's three metals in the

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100 meter dash three metals. Here's Jamaica that have very good sprinters and they are catching up all over. Jamaica, Nigeria... the African countries. Right now Kenya and Morocco dominate all the distance races. We can't compete with them right now. The sprints could be the same thing. You get one sprinter from Jamaica that is very good, you get another one from Nigeria that's very good or from anywhere... that's two metals pop perhaps. We are fighting for one metal. I could see that happening so I said, "I'm developing American athletes for the USA team" and that's what I started to do with Carl. I developed them and I stayed right with them. I coached them after they left the university and tried to develop athletes for our US Olympic program because I was afraid that the way the world was catching up and athletes were coming here and getting... foreign athletes were coming here and getting the value of our coaching and our system that it wouldn't be too long before there, there's only three metals we'd be scraping for a metal. So it hasn't happened necessarily in the sprints but it's getting closer but it has happened in other events.

EV: Well how much is that is being impacted by the de-emphasis of athletics in high school, physical education training in elementary and high school?

TT: Well I really think that doing away with physical education in high school and junior high school is one of the worst things we could have done in this country. It led to a lot of things I think health and everything and I think that they are de-emphasizing sports, especially track and field, the scholarships are getting less and more for woman, which I can see they should because women were behind, but they are cutting back on scholarships and they are cutting back on teams, men's teams to have the title nine quota. You have to have the same number of men scholarships as women scholarships. So they

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have cut down men's scholarships in a lot of schools and eliminated men's teams. So that has hurt our programs and I think there is a lot of foreign athletes which is fine and they are taking away scholarships which is: okay. I mean the idea of collegiate athletics is we let all kinds of foreign students in to be... to get an education. Well they feel that sports is the same way. It isn't the same way. Well if we let everyone in we can't hold athletes back and I can understand that argument. But on the other hand I can understand the argument that this is a national collegiate championship, American championship. As a result now they... in the NCAA All American, is not All American.... Well they do give All Americans certificate, you are All American. Well they give the top (I don't know if it is six to eight) American All American but if there are any foreigners in there they don't give them All American certificates.

EV: Really?

TT: So they have done that. So there for a while all the top guys are not Americans but they are getting All American championship certificates so they have changed that a little bit. It's a problem. It's not a problem if the collegiate champions are just collegiate championship then it doesn't make a difference if it is foreign or anything they are all collegiate they are all the same regardless of its it American or if he is from Kenya or whatever, they are all collegiate which is fine and that's their idea. However, when you go out and you recruit half your team or all your cross country team and they are mostly foreigners, Kenyans then I don't know about that. I'm not criticizing other coaches for doing it because they may be in a school where they can't recruit very many kids, as opposed to A & M who can recruit anybody well El Paso can't recruit the kids that A & M recruits. They just don't want to go to El Paso well what does a coach do? He's

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responsible for developing a team so he's going to go out and recruit the best team that he can and he's going to bring in Kenyans to have a good distance program if he's going to win, otherwise he can't win. I can see that point of view also.

End of Tape 1

EV: At one time wasn't UTEP known as University of Kenya in El Paso or something?

TT: Yeah at first I think Ted Banks who is the coach there who is from California and he is an excellent coach, Ted Banks is a great coach. It doesn't make any difference if it is a Kenyan or whomever, he's developed some great athletes. But he brought in... I don't know if they were there before him but he brought in Kenyans and they won with Kenyans. I think they were there... I think they started bringing them in before he got there but yeah they won the championship with all Kenyans and there's been other schools that have done the same thing it's not just El Paso, several schools have done that, several schools that are really good track schools that you could recruit very good Americans to have recruited foreigners that's what I don't understand. You know if you are a school that can't recruit very many good athletes period, you are in a location then I could see recruiting athletes and I've known some coaches who are very good coaches that have several foreign athletes and have won with them. I don't... I have nothing against that. I wouldn't do it because that's just me but I don't have anything against other coaches doing that. They are good coaches. You have to be a coach in a different way but I'm more into development and into Americans then I am to recruiting a team that I win right away with. But not all Kenyans are good. There's a lot of schools that have Kenyans that are not as good as the good Kenyans. They are real good Kenyans and

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then there's not so good Kenyans and you want to get their good Kenyans. But I find it hard for a school that can recruit anybody, in a good area, has a lot of prestige that can recruit good Americans that they have to go out and recruit foreigners. I have a problem with that. Little schools that can't recruit the best kids I can see where they could go out and get a few foreigners to fill in and have a good team or have good individuals but a school that's already got, can get them that they will have good athletes, great athletes that will walk onto the school and pay their own way just to go there, I don't see why there is any need for them to go out and recruit better athletes from other countries.

EV: Well there was some controversy some time ago about those Mexican-Indians the _____ (2.4) do you remember anything about that? Do you remember that little controversy that popped up? I don't remember why they couldn't run. It was something... they gave some reason why they couldn't run for the Olympics but those guys they'll run forever I mean you can't stop them!

TT: Well there's a lot of good athletes in Japan but it's the English part, here at the University of Houston you have to pass the TOEFL and they don't mess around they don't give you any slack. You have to pass the TOEFL or you're not getting in. I don't care how smart you are. You have to pass the TOEFL so it's harder to get in, especially if you don't speak English.

EV: _____ (3.0) Why couldn't Mexico say, "Okay we are going to run these _____ Indians in our distance?"

TT: They could if Mexico wanted to, if they qualified and they can send one to the Olympics that doesn't have to make the qualifying standard but Mexico doesn't do it. They have their own championships and they can do it. Mexico has a lot of good athletes

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there and a lot of good ones over the years. In fact they have got two pole vaulters right now that could be very, very good; one could be excellent, excellent he could be the best. So it is a matter of how much emphasis they want to put on their Olympic program, of getting more athletes to the Olympic games and; however they don't put that emphasis on. But Mexico has got some very good athletes.

EV: How do you keep up with all these development all these athletes and you can tell me that there is a sprinter in Norway and there's a guy down in...

TT: Well publications.

EV: Publications?

TT: Track and Field News has all the best athletes, it has a list of the best, 50 times or distances in the world you can get them off that, or now you can get them off the internet so you can tell everywhere and then there's Junior World Championships and you can go to that meet and see all the best ones and you can see the age group track and field, the National Age Group Track, you can go and watch their championships that's going to be held this weekend (I can't remember where it is) and you can go there and start recruiting, looking at the kids when they are real young and see how they come up.

Track and field I think there is not as much emphasis on it. There's not as many scholarships and football and basketball are taking away from a lot of our athletes. Soccer is taking away from the athletes. There's baseball but football and basketball have taken away a lot and soccer from track and field. There's a lot of good distance runners that play soccer that would be excellent cross country runners and sprinters too but they are being taken away by football, basketball, soccer.

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EV: So when did you wake up one morning and say, "Okay it's time to retire"? What made you retire, what made you think?

TT: Well the biggest reason was my wife's health. She wasn't... she was at the point where I couldn't be away from her so I retired and spent a year taking care of her and it was pretty difficult at that time but it was a great year to be with her and just not think about anything else but her. So that's probably the main reason I got out of it. That was the main reason. If it hadn't been for her I might have stayed around a little bit longer. But I think if she hadn't have been ill I think it would have been time for us to take trips and she liked to travel, she enjoyed traveling but her eye sight was bad and she couldn't see things even if we traveled. We took one trip before she passed away and she couldn't see. I'd look out there and say "Look at that isn't that a beautiful sunrise?" and she said, "I can't see it." So that was not very good. Then after that I just spent the year taking care of her. But anyhow and then I just decided that I had enough. Computers were coming in, more paperwork. More... just tons of rules and the NCAA mantel started out really getting huge about all the rules you have to go, which is good, you've got to have rules otherwise coaches would break all kinds of rules, that's why the rule book is coaches find loopholes in the rules so they have to keep making rules on rules on rules. I don't know I just felt it was time for me to get out. I'm not a computer person and I didn't want to be so I just felt it was time and then I retired for a while and then I was asked to come back to coach this U.S. Army team and I coached that for a couple years and then I decided then I didn't want to do it anymore and they were kind of tapering off the U.S. Army team because of Iraq and so then I retired again from that and then Carl asked me to coach these athletes this past year and it's been interesting, I've enjoyed it. I

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don't have any paperwork or anything to do I just coach and that's been enjoyable and the athletes are very enjoyable and to coach and I can concentrate on nothing but coaching them. You know when you do that you can really focus in on better ideas to get your technique across. I can give it a lot more thought, which is good.

EV: Does he have some type of an organization a camp or something that he is running on track? When he asked you to coach these guys on what premise was he asking? He knew them and knew you were a good coach or did he have some program that he wanted you to help him with?

TT: No these... no I coach them. They have to work under my philosophy or whatever. We are working together to get the job done. What Carl has done, he's got these athletes together. He wants to have a coaching environment where they can go get coached. He had a few athletes that he wanted me to coach and he pays me to coach them. Not a whole bunch but he pays me to coach them. I wouldn't ask for a lot and so I coach them. There are some U of H grads that I have volunteered to coach and there's some athletes about four or five of them that he got from different countries and from the United States for me to coach. You know they want to come here and coach. Their federations want them to come here and have me coach them so that's what I did and we are completing our first year. I think most everyone improved and we have two going to Beijing that have dual citizenship. One is going from Bermuda and one is going from Jamaica. They are not yet of the ability to make the U.S. team I think. I think one of them could have perhaps. But she wanted to make it and she wanted to get to Beijing and experience it and she had a better chance, and he had a better chance from their own

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countries, their other countries so that's what they did. But Carl asked me to coach them.

It doesn't... that's what he asked me to do and I'm coaching them. But that's it.

EV: How many children did you have?

TT: Three. I have three. I have two boys and a girl and my older son is a professor of education at the University of California Santa Cruz. He's just... publishes just like a doctor would whatever they do in the ivory tower of academia but he could have been a very good coach but he wanted to get into the education academic part of it. He is involved in Mexican-American studies and...

EV: Is he really?

TT: Yeah. He was in the department here and then he left and went to California.

Better job, more money, so...

EV: Were your children born in Texas?

TT: No. They were all born in California and then we moved when my older son was a junior in high school and my daughter was in junior high and my other son was in grammar school. But my older son is a doctor of education and my daughter went to the University of Texas in Austin and she got her degree in Chemical Engineering and then she got out and then she went to Southern Methodist and got her MBA and now she is raising three kids and she is teaching and she wants to get into teaching high school science. My younger son is an assistant, head assistant coach here... or assistant head coach here. He is a good coach and a lot like me. We like to coach and like to teach.

EV: Track and field, he's also in track?

TT: Yes in track. He's an assistant to Leroy Burwell and he's been here... he must be either... he's been here longer than anybody, there might be one other coach that's been

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here longer. He started here as a grad student working with me as a grad student and just kind of worked his way up. So those are my three kids. They have all done well. They are all good kids. I never had any problems with them or anything they are all just real good, they take after their mom.

EV: How many times have you been made into a [REDACTED] (Spanish for grandfather 12.2), a grandfather?

TT: Seven times.

EV: Really?

TT: I have seven grandchildren.

EV: Can you remember all of their names?

TT: Yep I do remember their names.

EV: I only have three and I'm having a hard time remembering.

TT: No I remember their names. I do now at first I used to have trouble with them but I do remember them now. I've been around them long enough now that...

EV: I understand you are somewhat of an equestrian these days you like to ride horses?

TT: Yeah I like to ride, I just have a couple of horses and I like to ride. I don't know... when I was younger I had a horse in 4th and 5th grade, just a horse. I rode it for a couple years and then I got into sports so I sold it. I just didn't have the time for it anymore. I loved horses and when I was in grammar school and junior high, especially in grammar school I used to go to Saturday movies, on all westerns. I used to get on the bus, by myself, and go down to **Delvadere**, which was about... you had to take the bus it was maybe ten miles down the road from Montebello. I used to go there every Saturday

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and watch, they used to have about three western films. I love westerns, I love cowboys and I don't know...

EV: I still like them.

TT: Oh I do too.

EV: I can still get off to a western.

TT: Yeah I love westerns. But when I got into athletics and coaching I just... it just kind of went to the back of my mind. Then at 55 years old all of the sudden I just had to have a horse, just out of the blue I had to have a horse. I don't know why but I just got, I felt... I got to the point in my life, at that age where I felt, "I can have a horse." I knew what I needed to know about track and field and I think I can have a horse. Just to get my distraction, as something else, to train the horse which is kind of the same thing. So around 55 years old I don't know what it was I just started looking at horses and, you know, I hadn't... I had rode a horse since I was kid but not very much, maybe one time I rode a horse but I hadn't been on a horse in years and years and years. But I had to have this horse. I went down and I looked at some of them and I just got this horse, I just bought it. I boarded it and I've had horses every since when I was still coaching and I'd go on the weekend and, or whenever I had time and ride the horse and train it.

EV: Are there any special kind of horses that you get?

TT: Well the first... I didn't know anything about horses. I mean I knew of them. I was watching pictures and everything, watching westerns and all that but I didn't know much about the breed or anything like that but it happened I bought an Arabian which is probably the worst horse you can buy not having any experience with them all these

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years. They are intelligent but they are flighty. But I bought this Arabian and I don't know why I liked her, I just like her, a little mare.

EV: Magnificent animal, they are gorgeous animals.

TT: Yeah they are really beautiful horses and they run beautiful and they are really intelligent. But anyhow I got this horse and it was kind of, I don't know what he did when he was little, it was two years old at the time but he didn't do very much training or imprinting when she was a baby because she was scared of everything, EVERYTHING. She wasn't mean or anything, she wouldn't kick you or anything but she was afraid of everything, I mean anything. She'd be moving back and forth. I said, "I don't know about this." It took a while and some help before I could ride that horse.

EV: (laughter) Did you break her?

TT: Well I had people help me break her yeah. She was scared of everything. There wasn't one single thing she wasn't scared of. When I got on riding it finally, I mean it was... you know moving cars, anything, you know a piece of paper it was squirrelly. I still have her. She's 20 years old and I did break her. I read a lot of books and looked at a lot of videos of people that trained horses and finally I got the knack. I finally learned how you are supposed to communicate with a horse because it is totally different. It is a whole different ball game than coaching human beings. Physiologically it is the same, the same systems and everything but mentally it's a different thing, how you approach a horse and how you train it. I got some material on this one trainer whose name is Pat Perelli and read his book for the first time and I finally, finally after reading all this stuff, he put it together for me where I could understand it and do it. So I went to a clinic, not that he was there but some of his teachers that he had trained to go out and train other

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people and I took my horse there and I finally got the hang of it. This is something I did just after work or on the weekends when I had the time and I had help from other people that were breaking that trained horses. After I read his material and everything and had watched the video and went to that clinic then I knew I finally got the hang of it. There is a whole different ball game when you are training horses and if you know how to do it you can make a horse do anything. I mean, any horse, but you've got to understand them, where they are coming from.

EV: Did you read "The Horse Whisperer"?

TT: Yep, I've read it.

EV: Is it pretty much?

TT: Yeah it's basically the same thing but I think Perelli has gone... he's published a book on how to do it. I mean where you can understand it. You know most of those books you don't really understand it but...but he put it in such a way that I understood it. When I went there I saw him do it and I understood and I finally got the hang of how you're... what a horse thinks, you know, what do they think? It's what they think. They are prey animals... everyone is trying to eat them up, the cougars and everything. That is why they are flight animals. They get scared and they are running. It's not that they are trying to be mean but they are prey animals and something is after them trying to eat them and you've got to get that mentality to understand where they are coming from and they have to understand where you are coming from. After a while you make a connection and then you can make them do just about anything you want.

EV: You know I saw... at the time when I was growing up, maybe college, early years of college I saw a bull fight by a very famous, probably at the time the most famous

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Spanish, well he might have been Mexican, bull fighter Carlos [REDACTED] (18.7) he was... he is about your build. You look a lot like him as a matter of fact. But he fought... he'd been around for a long time so he didn't do the early parts of the bull fighting. The early parts of the bull fight he did it on horse. He put the [REDACTED] on and a ragged stallion. It's funny I saw several of his movies... of his fights and then I remember the movie that John Wayne made about the Alamo and that ridicules piece of... I could tell there's a scene in there where the Mexican officer comes up to deliver a message to the guy in the Alamo and I could tell by the way that he was riding that was Carlos [REDACTED].

TT: Really?

EV: Yeah that's how much I studied him. So when he comes up to the walls of the Alamo and he takes... you can see that it is him.

TT: I'll be darned.

EV: But he had these beautiful Arabian horses in the bull fight so when you try and [REDACTED] the people after them (laughter). I mean those horses would just stay... the horns would be right there and...

TT: Arabians are really smart I love them. I love those horses. I probably shouldn't have gotten an Arabian because I didn't have any experience but because you have to know what you are doing. All horses are the same. If you know how to train them you can train them.

EV: Well how many do you have now?

TT: Well I had three Arabians.

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EV: Oh you kept with Arabians?

TT: Yeah I stayed with the Arabians because I liked them so much and I raised them from two years old. The other two I could do. I had a little bit of help but I did most of it through Perelli. I'd get on them... I'd ride them anytime. But, you know I wasn't spending enough time with them. You know you have three and you've got to ride them. If you don't ride them there's no point in having them just eating the pasture. They have got to be ridden. They don't like to be ridden. They like to eat and sleep and eat. That's what they like to do. But you know you have to ride them. I think they enjoy being taken out. So I gave two of them away to families that have kids because they love them, especially girls, they love horses.

EV: What is that connection coach between a woman and a horse it's just mysterious?

TT: When I start... when I got that horse and I boarded it at a stable I was the only guy there. All of them were women and young girls. You know what? Women have this... there were a lot of women that had the same experience, when they got to 55 around 50 they got a horse and they never had one. But they always wanted one. I couldn't believe it.

EV: I just think you do crazy things when you are 50-something you just say, "To hell with it." I've been putting all this stuff aside and now it's time for me.

TT: Well you know Arabians at one time were a long time ago you couldn't buy them they were too expensive but now you can buy a different, they are the same as any other horse, well a lot of them. The better horses are all pretty expensive but at one point you couldn't touch an Arabian. I mean I had never been... but now you can buy them cheap. You don't have to spend a lot of money on them.

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EV: Are they well bred?

TT: Well some of them are, some of them aren't. You can get a real good horse from Kellogg's Arabian Horse Farm that I knew for a long, long time you can get one that's pretty good for \$3,000. One that doesn't have... to the human eye, it's got too much white on it and they won't...if it's a male they will geld it and they won't use it to stallion they will geld it and it's got that deal so they will sell it cheaper because they have that characteristic or whatever. So they will sell it cheap. They will range there from \$15,000 all the way down to \$3,000. I got the \$3,000 one. That was pretty expensive for me. I got it for my granddaughter but they moved to California. She rides but... she's the only one that really loves... well they all like to ride a little bit but they are all into sports now. But she is the one that really got a hold of it, she can really ride.

EV: Do you have any other animals you are raising?

TT: No right now I can't because I don't have the time. I'd like to. I don't have cows. I wouldn't mind having a couple just to have them but... or a donkey I'd like to get a borough. I am going to do that when I do retire for sure and stay up there then I'll get a borough.

EV: I've got some friends of mine who are raising boroughs.

TT: Really?

EV: Yeah just outside of Nelsonville or Bellville.

TT: Bellville really?

EV: Just a little west of Bellville and she... they started raising boroughs, do you know what they did, they wanted to raise some mustangs but they went to the northwest to get the Russian mustangs. Because we hear about the Spanish mustangs up in the

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southwest without remembering that the Russians had tried to settle North America in the Pacific Northwest. So they are a little bit different. Their hair comes down over the hooves as I recall a little bit, their mane is curlier...

TT: Oh yeah.

EV: But they are beautiful horses and I haven't talked to them in a long time.

TT: I want a little borough with big ears.

EV: Yeah with a little cross on their back?

TT: Yeah. Well do they sell them?

EV: Yeah that's what they do.

TT: Yeah well I'd be very interested.

EV: They live right outside. I'll check this week to see if they are still raising them because she had a neat little boroughs. They got them... first of all they got them to chase over the [REDACTED] (23.7) did you know they did that?

TT: Yeah I know that everyone up where I live but were mules or jackasses.

EV: [REDACTED] they'll make you turn the other way.

TT: Oh yeah they are mean when they want to be and they yell and bray and let you know but I'm going to get one because I think the kids will like them you know.

EV: We used to get them in El Paso because they come out of the mountains, the old [REDACTED] used to have the rock [REDACTED] that was there and the Mayans that are there. A guy just let them go and then they watered down into the [REDACTED] where we lived and we used to capture them and ride... But we thought they could be [REDACTED].

Whenever they wanted to go home they would walk across our fence. Yeah it was a lot of fun to ride them we had a good time.

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TT: I know that your background has got to be more Spanish like mine. Because I traced my name back... you know I had someone trace it back to Portugal, Spain.

EV: Oh really?

TT: Yeah.

EV: Oh the Portuguese and Spain?

TT: Yeah back to Spain and I can't remember what Tellez means, leather something... I don't know I can't remember what it was. But you know there is a history of the name, goes back there... I know the you are Spaniard or something you're not Aztec.

EV: No... well I say no I am. I'm half Indian.

TT: Right you probably have Indian blood so do I.

EV: I'll tell you how I found it out. Well I knew because my grandmother told me and I look at her father and I could see some of my relatives and [REDACTED], you know real dark skin, prominent nose... very, very Indian. But not to confirm that but I had my... National Geographic has this if you send them \$100 and they'll send you your deep DNA, 10,000, 30,000 years ago. So I sent this thing where your DNA thing started.

TT: I'll be darned!

EV: So I did that... but you do it for all the males in your family. This will show the male Tellez. You don't get... you'll have to get your sister or one of your daughters to do it for... no one of your sisters or your aunts to do it for your mother's side of the family. But so I got my sister to do the female in our family and they started seeing Africa and they get into Iraq or the middle east and they cross Asia and they make a B-line for Alaska and they come across the Bering Straight and right down into the

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Americas so that's how they determine, DNA wise. For the Spanish part it came out instead of going across to Asia they made kind of a... took a left and came into the Southern Europe, going into Spain drop right into the Pyrenees that's one branch, the other branch went up north and settled into the Celts. There are Celts in Spain, the same branches that settled into Ireland. So and they have... historically they were called in the northern Spain they were called Celte-barians because they were Iberians that had mixed and the Iberians had come out to northern Africa. Yeah to answer your question the Valdes part of my family has no Indian blood, my mom's side of the family does. We've traced it back and we spell our name with "s" which is very Spanish way of doing it. But most of my people came up, and I think they came up because they were Indian fighters that they gave them huge tracks of land in [REDACTED] There's a guy... let me ask you let me get off of this thing and then we'll still talking. Coach is there anything you want to mention in here that I didn't ask you about that you would want to put in there?

TT: Oh yes you can ask me... no oh... no I think.

EV: If you think of it...

TT: There's one thing. One of the highlights of my career has been to receive a National Hispanic Heritage Award. The first time, I can't remember the year either I'll have to get you that information, which I told you I would and I got it but I forgot it. They did it for physical education and I was the first recipient.

EV: Wow!

TT: We got to go back to Washington D.C. and you meet the president and all of that and they give you this... it's huge and the year I got it Rita Moreno got it, she got it.

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EV: You got to meet wonderful Rita hu?

TT: Yeah she's really nice.

EV: Oh she's gorgeous!

TT: I mean she's older now, she was old when I met her and she looks great and a Cuban doctor got it. There were several Mexican that... you know you can't believe these people how smart they are... I mean how talented they are. How Hispanics what they have contributed to this country is unbelievable and what they could contribute and what they will contribute, how they... I don't know it is pretty amazing, the artistic. Well anyhow I did receive that and that was a highlight to get that. I mean I thought that was a great highlight.

EV: Well I'm sure you earned it coach, I know you...

TT: I don't know if I deserved it but it was sure a definitely a highlight of my career.

EV: Well I've had... I've had people ask me over the years because, from out of Houston, if this Coach Tellez was really Tellez and I said I think so. You have to pronounce things different in East Texas.

TT: It's the same. I mean my dad was Tellez.

EV: That really killed us in El Paso. I had a friend that moved to... she says from El Paso she moved to Montebello and we said, "What do you mean Montebello?" Coach thank you very much for this interview. That's it?

TT: No I don't have anything else.

End of the interview.