



## Terry Baker Oral History Interview, June 25, 2014

### Title

“A Legend of Oregon State Athletics”

### Date

June 25, 2014

### Location

Baker residence, Portland, Oregon.

### Summary

In the interview, Baker discusses his upbringing in Portland and his athletic achievements at Jefferson High School. From there he recounts his motivation for attending Oregon State College, his residence at Phi Delta Theta fraternity, professors that made an impact on him, and his early involvement with the baseball team.

An in-depth discussion of his football and basketball careers follows, with special attention paid to memorable teammates and coaches, the 1962 Liberty Bowl, and other signature wins. Baker next recalls his experience of winning the Heisman Trophy and travelling to New York to appear on the *Ed Sullivan Show* and the *Tonight Show* with Johnny Carson, as well as meeting President John F. Kennedy. Baker also touches upon the Beavers' appearance in the 1963 basketball Final Four.

The interview then shifts focus to Baker's careers in professional football and in law. The session rounds out with additional thoughts on Baker's recruitment out of high school, his recollections of Tommy Prothro and Slat Gill as men, the means by which he managed his days as a busy student athlete, his memories of night school at USC, and his continuing connection to OSU and the Oregon State athletic department.

### Interviewee

Terry Baker

### Interviewers

Mike Dicianna, Chris Petersen

### Website

<http://scarc.library.oregonstate.edu/oh150/baker/>

## Transcript

**Mike Dicianna:** Today is Wednesday, June 25th, 2014. We're in Portland, Oregon to interview Terry Wayne Baker, class of 1962 of Oregon State University. We're in Terry's home. I'm accompanied by Chris Petersen from OSU Special Collections and Archives Research Center, and my name is Mike Dicianna: OSU Special Collections and Archive Research Center student worker and oral historian.

Terry, to begin with, basically, what we're trying to do is just kind of share you with the rest of Oregon State University for the 150th anniversary, and our OH 150 project. Kind of to start with, what I always like to do is get a little bit of background, biographical information: where you were born, your childhood, grade school, that type of thing, some memories.

**Terry Baker:** Sure. One thing I should say, I'm class of '63.

**MD:** That's true, my mistake. I've got you listed wrong.

**TB:** Okay. Well, I was born in Minnesota, and I was the youngest of three boys my mother had; my mother and father. [Door creaks] That's my wife coming home. We ended up in Oregon when I was very young and lived in north Portland, and I went to Jefferson High School and graduated from there in 1959, and then ended up, obviously, in Oregon State in that following fall. I graduated from there and moved to southern California after college for a few years and went to USC law school, and played for the Rams. Then, after finishing law school, I ended up coming back to Oregon and practicing law here until, basically retired this year.

**MD:** Well, one of the great sports legends of OSU is that you throw a football southpaw, you shoot your basketball left handed, but somehow you pitch the baseball with your right hand. Is this still a legend, or is there a story behind that?

**TB:** Well, it's true, number one, a lot of the things you hear are not necessarily factual. And I think the simple explanation for the baseball is that my older brothers were all right handed, and, I imagine, I used their baseball glove, which only went on your left hand, so I ended up throwing right handed. And I—that kind of explains that, but it doesn't explain everything else because while I do a lot of things left handed, I do a lot of things right handed. I mean, I would bowl right handed, I kicked right footed, I shoot a rifle right handed, although I could do that left and at some point I think I switched on that. So, you know, I bat right handed, so a little bit, people might say it's ambidextrous—I can't do any one thing with both hands worth a darn, so I can't throw a football with my right hand, and I can't throw a baseball with my left hand, so that's the way it is.

**MD:** Well, you bring us up a little bit when your career at Jefferson High School. We understand that Jefferson high school was just a huge powerhouse in the high school scene for all three sports that you were involved with during those seasons when you were a junior, senior: state football champ both your junior and senior football seasons, 23 and 0 record. What are some your fondest memories of your football days in high school?

[0:04:22]

**TB:** Well, you've kind of touched on it there, I mean; I don't know if we've ever lost a game that I played. It was kind of ironic that I—football was never my first love, for one thing, and the football coach there, who was Tom DeSylvia, and he played at Oregon State himself after the war, and he coaxed me in, I should say, which was kind of a pattern in my life here, into playing football, and it was successful for me. And of course I played with Mel Renfro, was on the team a year behind me, and there's several players that I can think of on our—that were my class or behind me that ended up going and playing major college football, several of them at Oregon State even. Herb Washburn, I think John Theiss played down there, Dennis Prozinski went and played for University of Oregon, and Mel Renfro, of course went to Oregon. And there were others that played, one went to Stanford, I know. So we had a lot of talent, it was kind of like Camelot there for a little while. Not only did we win a lot of championships in a lot of sports besides those major ones; track and we had the Rose Festival princess—or queen, I should say. Everything.

**MD:** Well yeah. Now, do you still contact with Mel Renfro at all?

**TB:** Well, not on a very regular basis; I saw Mel a couple of years ago because he came out here; he's living in Dallas, Texas now, but Oregon honored him and made him an honorary captain for a game, and they had a little get together for him that I went to, and his health is—he's got his aches and pains too, I should say.

**MD:** Yeah, NFL Hall of Famer.

**TB:** Yep.

**MD:** So, you were scouted by a number of colleges while you were in high school, and I know that you chose Oregon State College. Why Corvallis?

**TB:** Well, that's as I've alluded to earlier, you know, football wasn't my first love. Slat Gill had a long record of kind of dominating basketball in this state, and I wanted to play basketball, number one, so I went to Oregon State on a basketball scholarship. I didn't play football my first year there. And I also had a brother two years down there on a baseball scholarship, and we were very, very close, and it's just a process of being recruited, and I wanted to take engineering, which kind of ruled out the University of Oregon even though I was recruited there, and knew a lot of people there, a lot of kids from Jefferson ahead of me, friends I knew were at Oregon. And I'd say another factor was that a good friend of mine named Steve Pauly, who played basketball at Oregon, same year I am; we'd developed a friendship and kind of, in a way, wanted to go to the same school, and Oregon State was the common denominator there for us I think.

**MD:** Well, before we get into your sports careers, a little bit about your campus life at Oregon State College, I mean, you have the distinction of enrolling at Oregon State College, yet graduating from Oregon State University. You were there during that transitional time when the college became a university. What was your major? You said that your major was engineering, and, basically, why did you choose that path?

**TB:** Well, I would say I was influenced quite a bit by my oldest brother, who's 7 years older than I am, and he was kind of a math and physics major, he was, and in high school, when Sputnik went up, all the sudden there was a tremendous emphases on the sciences, and I was in my junior, senior year, I forget which—and if you were a good student, which I was a fairly good student, you were put in these accelerated classes we worked out of new texts that weren't even in a book form, they were loose leaf paper, because they were changing how they were teaching physics, and things like that, so rapidly. And my older brother, being this math and physics type, you know, it's just kind of a natural thing to kind of follow along; and Oregon State, you know, was, that was a logical thing to take there, I thought.

**MD:** They've always had a huge, huge reputation for the engineering program. You remember the Phi Delta Theta fraternity, was that from the very beginning?

**TB:** That's correct. Back in those days you go through rush and so my—and brother was a Phi Delt, so that was a logical choice, and through being recruited for several years at Oregon State, I stayed in the Phi Delt house numerous times with new people and so it was a natural transition.

**MD:** Well yes, and the Phi Delta's always had a huge, huge history with the student athletes. So, what are some of your good memories of the frat house, and the frat days?

[0:10:00]

**TB:** Well, like you said, it had a good reputation with athletes. I'll tell you one thing Mike, as you get older, the things you remember there is no rhyme or reason for. Which I'll explain now, is because in the course of registering as a freshman, you had to go to the infirmary for some reason, or wherever I was going, and I was giving them some information on me, and I don't know what I said to the woman, or the, I think she was a student, maybe, taking this information down, but maybe it was as simple as saying "I'm here and I'm on an athletic scholarship." And she says, "Well, where are you staying?" I said, "Phi Delt house." She says, "Well that figures."

**MD:** Now, during your senior year, you were actually president of the house—

**TB:** Well actually it was actually my junior year.

**MD:** Oh, was it your junior year? Yeah, 'cause I show it— but I mean, with all of your academics, and your sports and everything, it must have been challenging to balance —

**TB:** Well it's, you know there are other people, officers and them too, and it was a well-run organization; I think that's, you know—I know fraternities don't exist on all campuses, and not everybody's in them, and there has been issues with them everywhere, but I think it is a great opportunity to, you know, when your first, for most people, first living outside from underneath your parents, to be in a somewhat structured environment and yet have to do all the things that you're going to have to do eventually in life, you know: pay bills, food, maintain the house, and form a government that you're willing to operate under, and I think there's a lot to be learned from that, it's a good experience.

**MD:** Now you, being a major of engineering, favorite classes, favorite professors from that era?

**TB:** Oh boy. The—There was a physics professor that was very good, a couple of them, actually, I can't remember their names offhand right now, but I can remember one telling me once, because I sat in the back of the room, and I would fall asleep in class, and he told me once I was going to wear a hole in the wall behind me, where my head was against. And, see, who else...It was pretty much a grind, you know, of not— I didn't have a lot of time to socialize with the teachers or anything, to get to know them. Some of the ROTC people I became close to, and I did go advanced ROTC, but then I ended up not staying with it after my junior year. If I thought about this longer, some more teachers would come up. But by far, I should say, you spend so much time with the coaches, and Slats Gill, I mean, the hours I would spend with him, you know, a lot of it one-on-one and same with Tommy Prothro; I'd be at Prothro's house and things like that, and so you spend so much more time with them, and so when they say, when coaches say "we're interested in building character and helping people," they do care about it. Slats was a fanatic about how you behaved on campus. If he heard something, that you were acting up or doing something, boy, you'd be in his office so fast it'd make your hair spin. And Prothro too; he cared about everything I did aside from football, which was good too in the sense that a lot of practices I had engineering classes that would run late in the afternoon, I believe there were days I didn't even practice with the team, and I'd show up late frequently, and he never once suggested that I take that class at some other time, or differ it or something like that, because he thought that his priority was for me to get the education.

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**MD:** Well, that's one of the things that I noticed when I was doing research on you is that you've been coached by the icons of OSU sports history, and you spoke a little bit about Slats and Tommy Prothro, but your baseball at the time, Ralph Coleman...

**TB:** Well, we've got to back up on this a little; again, I told you earlier that Tom DeSylvia kind of talked me into playing football. I went to Oregon State on a basketball scholarship, I did not play football my first year, and in those days freshman could not play varsity at any rate, but I played freshman basketball and we had a great team, I think we went like twenty-five and 1 or something like that and Jimmy Anderson was the coach of it. I started out playing baseball, which would've been freshman baseball. Valenti, I believe was the coach of it, and Coleman had the varsity. And half way through, I don't know if it was that far, through the season—and most of our games were rained out, it was miserable. Prothro came to me, and he had recruited me, and continued to test the water frequently and have people in the Phi Delt house talk to me about 'why don't you think about playing football' and blah blah blah, but he came to me and said "would you attend a meeting before spring practice starts, it's just a meeting, in Gil Coliseum with the football team one afternoon?" And I said "well, I don't see any harm in attending a meeting." So, I went to the meeting and it was in a room, all the players were in the chairs and everything, sitting there, and on the blackboard he had the depth chart of the football team, and he had me chalked in as second string tailback behind Don Kasso. And I thought "well this is pretty good; here I'm already second string tailback, and I haven't even gone out for football." So to make a long story short, I dropped out of baseball immediately and went into spring football with the football team, and then the rest is kind of history.

**MD:** Well, yeah, let's talk a little bit; we can kind of get into a sports career, because many of the people are going to be watching this are definitely going to be interested in the sports history. Let's talk a little bit about the basketball, you know, as far as the team goes and everything. You played with Mel Counts.

**TB:** Yes.

**MD:** And, but some of the other—during the early 60's when you were playing; other colleges, other notable names that you played either against, or had contact with?

**TB:** Well of course, I mean you can kind of tick 'em off, I guess, a little bit. But University of Oregon, Charlie Warn was probably the most outstanding player at that time at Oregon. Charlie passed away here recently, I guess about a year ago or whatever. We played UCLA in the regionals and they had, I think at that time, Gail Goodrich and Walt Hazzard, and some others. May have some of these wrong, I might be confusing — I know Hazard was there. And then we played, I think it was, Arizona State; they had Jumping Joe Caldwell, who played NBA, then we played Seattle U a lot, and they had a couple guys who played in the NBA off of that team. Names escape me right now. Well, and then when we got in the NCAA Final Four, some of those people played in the NBA too. And they all sold on some other deals, but again, you don't get to know any of these people you play against, other than briefly for an hour on the court, and in football you certainly don't get to know anyone at all. Ironically, I did play golf this winter with a guy I played against at the University of Washington in football. And I've never forgotten, again in this realm of things you don't forget; it was a play that probably cost us the game against Washington. The snap between the center and me got fumbled, and I won't say whose fault it was, if anyone's, but Rick Redman for University of Washington recovered it, and that was the game, really, for us and we were about ready to score. And Redman was interesting, meeting him face-to-face; quite a successful guy in the construction business up in Seattle.

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**MD:** That's great. How about Mel Counts? What are your memories?

**TB:** Well, again, in kind of the format, you know, of college athletics at that time was the players themselves on the team were at an integral part of the recruiting process. And they would bring, whenever they would bring a recruit, a potential person there, they may very well stay in a fraternity house, or something. And you would frequently—the coaches would have you take them out to dinner, or something. So, Mel was there several times so I got to know him even before he came there and very much wanted him to play, and I remember playing basketball with him on the backcourt of the Phi Delt house; and Jim Jarvis, the same type of thing. And we had good teams, and for in state here, in fact it seems like virtually all of them were in state; Slats got the cream of the crop for the most part, and we had, obviously as you know, good teams.

**MD:** Yes. So let's move into football. Everybody wants to know. I mean, no conversation would be complete without discussing this career. Now, Coach Prothro changed the focus into the T formation to capitalize on your skills during the '61 season. Okay, what was this process, your involvement in this, and maybe a little explanation about that T formation, in relation to the way college football is played.

**TB:** Okay, well you know you need to know a little something about football to understand this, but Prothro had a history going back to his days at UCLA when he was an assistant coach there of running an offense that was called a single wing. And in the single wing, while they yet had a person designated as quarterback, the quarterback never touched the ball, essentially. What you really had was a tailback who was, in today's systems, would be akin to a quarterback in the shotgun formation, but the tailback wasn't standing up, waiting to receive the ball to pass the ball like they currently do. The tailback kind of kneeled down, half squatted and received the ball in that squatting position with a snap from the center that went five or six yards to him. And just half a step in front of the tailback to the right was a person, another player called a fullback, who could also receive the ball. So the defense didn't know who it was going to be snapped to. And then the quarterback was literally up there, one step behind a guard, an offensive guard, and he was no more than a blocker, was what he was. At any rate, through high school, I was a T formation quarterback, and actually, had I wanted to just play football out of high school, I would have probably ended up at Stanford or Oregon, that'd be my guess. But I think Prothro probably faced this a million times, that very few high schools probably in America, I think; UCLA, Oregon State, and maybe one or two others in America were using the single wing at that time. It'd been phased out, it was obsolete, and so Prothro, I'm sure, had that problem all along of "how do I find a tailback who can pass the ball?" And, so you'd have to use probably a quarterback, who had some athletic ability besides just throwing the ball, and convert him and make a tailback out of him. And he had recruited me out of high school, I guess with that idea. So, at any rate, now when he, that first season we ran single wing. Prothro, I believe he will say, would say if he were still here, that it wasn't because of me that he converted to the T formation, where the quarterback is up under the center, it was primarily, in his, I believe, and his motivation was it was becoming next to impossible to schedule teams that would

play Oregon State and that's caused by two things: one is we were independent; what is now the Pacific-12, and it was the Pac-8 at one time, had broken up just before I went to—while I was in high school. And so Oregon State was out of any conference. The California schools reformed a conference with the two Washington schools, but Oregon and Oregon State were out in the cold for a few years, so we weren't eligible for the Rose Bowl and things like that.

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And teams don't want to have to gear up a defense to play a type of offense they will only see once in a blue moon, so he thought it would be better for scheduling if we were T. Now, I assume also, I figured into it the fact that I was—he probably thought that I'd be a better T quarterback than a tailback. And at any rate, he made the transition during spring football of my sophomore year. And, actually the next year was kind of a trial run of it, you know. It was getting the bugs out of it, so to speak, and there were some bugs to get out of it. And then I think we did much better my senior season, when we went to the Liberty Bowl, obviously.

**MD:** Yeah. So all the statistics aside, you know, we find these all over the place about you, but can you kind of sum up your experiences and the feeling of a team and what football at OSC, at the time, was to you? It's a big topic, but—

**TB:** Yeah, I think it's, and I think this applies to basketball just as well, and probably all the sports at that time; number one, I think truly, well the basketball team is a classic example. Off of the basketball team my senior year, two of us became lawyers. One is a Ph.D in chemical engineering. Another one is a dentist. You will not find that off of any basketball team in major college athletics today. And in football I'd say almost all the players were there to get an education, and they may be on an athletic scholarship but it was not their sole purpose in life, and I don't think anybody thought they were going to be professional football players. They didn't go with that as a goal in life. It was to graduate and get a job. And for most of us, you're somehow going to have a better life than your parents did. And if I'm really going to sum up the feeling of the football team, you know, we had great coaching. Unbelievably great coaching, not only Tommy Prothro, but the assistants right down the line, and when I look back on it, you know we were a bunch of overachievers and I would say it was—if you asked me what it was like, I'd say we played with a bunch of great guys, you know? Just good human beings, had a lot of fun, liked each other and had a common purpose, and it was to try and win a game. And it was, you could not hope for any more. It made it fun.

**MD:** So then, every athlete is in there for the fun but maybe it has changed a little bit over the years, as far as the focus.

**TB:** I can't say enough about team sports, too because you know playing on a team, unless you're one of the few in the world that goes undefeated, I mean you have your ups and your downs. And you're all in this boat together, pulling together and it brings you closer together. And you develop friendships that are just closer than you would ever have with a kid sitting across the desk from you or the next aisle in a classroom, because you spend so much time with them and it's kind of—I guess, although I've never experienced this—it'd be like the military people, you know, they go in the service, and especially those that were in the wars together, they still remember all their comrades.

**MD:** Mhmm. It's a bond. Well you were—you were kind of known as scramble and you broke all kinds of school records, which we've got all that kind of thing, we can add later, but your three years playing for the Beavers, the team went 20, 10 and 1 and in your senior year you led us to a 9 and 2 record with the famous Liberty Bowl win in the postseason, and I mean all the die-hard Beaver fans that's going to be watching this will be—they want to hear that recount of that huge 99-yard touchdown play that won December 15th, 1962 Liberty Bowl against Villanova. I—we just gotta hear it.

[0:29:50]

**TB:** Well, the interesting part of that, two things: is last year was the fiftieth anniversary of that senior year and they had a reunion in essence, and maybe it was an induction into the Oregon State Hall of Fame, Athletic Hall of Fame, but of our team. And I had mentioned to the Oregon State people, I said I think it'd be nice to know and bring out, when we're all together there for dinner, who the players were that were on the field for that play, because the play is memorable for a lot of reasons, but one reason is it will never—no—it cannot be broken. Statistically you cannot run more than 99 yards, because if you're on the one-inch line, they put—and the ball basically was on the one-foot line, they'll say, you know, it's on the 1-yard line, so that's the most you can go, is 99 yards in one play from scrimmage. But ironically, they couldn't

identify who all was in the game, and so several players had claimed they were in the game, so we've got more on the field they could have had.

**MD:** Fifteen yards, on that end.

**TB:** And some who we thought were in there weren't in there, so that's a mystery. The other part of the mystery that comes out of that play, and Prothro and I went around this several times, and this was after I graduated from college, because our friendship continued and actually grew and I even had the opportunity to represent Tommy in some legal matters after I became a lawyer, but he claims he called the play and I said well it was a terrible play to call, and because actually I lost ground in the end zone and a Villanova player had his hands on me in the end zone, so we, you know, general on the one-foot line you don't—you try not to run a play where you're going to lose yardage on it. Again, other players that showed up at this fifty year reunion said—well he was sent in with the play and another guy said no, no, it was my idea, and then one of the assistant coaches said he called it, so there's a mystery. Whoever called it, and I think we all might agree that it was a poor—not the best play to call. But it ended up being the difference in the game and winning it six to nothing and so it has its own little lore attached to it now.

**MD:** That's a great story about that. Now, your success in the field is a combination of leadership on your part, and the teamwork that you've already spoke about. What is your most significant memory of your OSU football career? And maybe not this 99-yard run?

**TB:** Well, no, it—that certainly does, and the Liberty Bowl game for a lot of reasons. It has a memory because we played in tennis shoes, it was on a frozen field, I've never been so cold in my life, and every time you get tackled it was like sliding across a wood rasp and I had sores on me after the game that didn't heal for ages, just from the frozen ground. But also the Oregon game from that year, we were behind at halftime quite a bit and then caught up in the second half and then finally we had one last play with an opportunity to score a touchdown, because it was fourth down and we were behind and the first three plays we had run in that series didn't do anything for us and we were kind of out of spit, so to speak, and Danny Espalin, and generally the rule was—nobody said anything in the huddle except me, but Espalin mentioned "why don't we try this?" And it was a play that we had run the year before against Oregon a couple times, but was not in the playbook this year because we figured we had success with it before, but they clearly would be ready for it. So I said "yep, let's try it." So we called that, the pass to Espalin clicked. Obviously he would suggest a play that he was part of, and he caught the pass for a touchdown and we won the game. So, that one there is no argument about what happened.

**MD:** And it's always best, it's always good to beat the Ducks.

**TB:** Yeah.

**MD:** Well—

[0:34:44]

**TB:** Well interesting too, another more interesting thing on that, Mel Renfro, who was the safety for Oregon. And the play called for me to roll out to the right and you hope that the safety will roll with you, and he did, and Espalin slipped out from the left. So then I turned around and threw left and Mel, the second he saw that, what was happening, it was almost like he dropped his arms and said I've been had, and that's exactly what had happened.

**MD:** Great, you know, great football memories, great football career, I mean it's, it's hard to condense all of your accomplishments as a Beaver athlete, but the culmination of your senior year was this whirlwind of accolades, awards and recognition on a national level. For the purposes of this interview, and our audience that's going to be watching this, please indulge me for just a moment. On November 27th, 1962, Terry Baker won the Heisman trophy for his achievements during the 1962 season. He was the first player to win that award west of Texas and the only one to ever win from the Pacific Northwest. In addition to winning the Heisman, he also won the Maxwell award, which is college player of the year, the W. J. Voit Memorial Trophy, which is Pacific college player of the year, was Consensus First Team All-American, was named as a *Sports Illustrated* Sportsman of the Year, was a Helms Foundation Award recipient and won fourteen other player of the year awards, including from the AP, UPI and *Sporting News*. And he also played in the

1963 college all-star game the last time that the college all-stars would ever beat the NFL reigning champions that they played against. And additionally you're the only player ever to win the Heisman trophy and play in the Final Four of the NCAA basketball tournament in the same school year. And this was '62, '63.

Okay, now we've got all this out of the way, I know that you don't really—you're a little humble about these type of things, but I'd like to get a little bit into some of these awards. You know, the process of campaigning and selecting a Heisman winner is different in today's climate than it was when you were your—your selection was kind of a little bit different. How about a little bit about how John Eggers, the OSU sports information director, kind of put together a campaign to get you noticed by the eastern writers?

**TB:** Yeah, that's true, and this all came to light to me after, maybe even after I graduated from college. But, and I'm sure Tommy Prothro was instrumental in this too, because Tommy Prothro believed in, that it enhanced a school's reputation, athletic, and in this particular case, the football program, if you had, quote, an All-American on the team. And one way you have an All-American is to publicize that person's abilities, and so he had, my understanding, and I think this came from Tommy, was that if there was ever a tackle where two people were involved in it, he instructed the public announcer to give credit to the person they were pushing to be an All-American, to give them more recognition and publicity. And I've—I don't think going into that senior year anybody—it certainly had never crossed my mind. Never, during even in the season, up until the day that they told me that I'd won the Heisman trophy, that I was in contention to win the Heisman trophy.

Now, I'd been on the cover of *Sports Illustrated* at an earlier time as the best athlete in college or something, but still that didn't mean anything. That's as much basketball as football to me. But what Eggers did was he basically mimeographed on the old mimeograph machine, which doesn't exist anymore, the statistics and the highlight of my statistics of every game, and then mailed those out, and I think just in an envelope, would send them out to the people who could—sports writers who were voters for the Heisman trophy, and I think that was the extent of it, and back in those days, the postage might have been a nickel. So he—this was a hundred dollar budget at most, for the campaign that he put together for me, to help me win the Heisman trophy, but you know for the eastern writers who never had seen Oregon State or—and games were not on TV then like they are now. They would have known very little about what was going out here, but for what information he spoon-fed to them. So that was very creative at that time. Maybe other schools did it also. I don't know, but Johnny was—Eggers was in his own right a real promoter. There were very few like him, so he was—and he was a beauty.

[0:40:37]

**MD:** Yeah, 'cause it's—I'm sure that it's a whole different process today.

**TB:** A lot of things are different today.

**MD:** Yeah.

**TB:** No question about that.

**MD:** Well, I found this just mind-boggling, in the space of just a few days on your trip back east; you had the opportunity to meet President John F. Kennedy, Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, who actually presented you the Heisman, TV hosts Ed Sullivan and Johnny Carson. I mean, this experience alone must have left you with some significant memories. I mean, what are your reflections about this singular experience?

**TB:** Well, each one of those has an interesting sideline. The Ed Sullivan Show they had—in those days they wouldn't invite back, there were a lot of different All-American teams. *Look Magazine* called All-American team blah blah blah, and different ones, and you're all congregated in New York, and they took us to The Ed Sullivan Show and we were on the stage there and then unbeknownst to us they had these dancers come out and we were doing the twist with them, so that was crazy. But, the Johnny Carson show, and he was a young Johnny Carson then, with black hair, he—it might have been his first or second year with the show, even. Out of the blue, because there was no rehearsal for this or anything, he calls me out to help do an advertisement. He says if you're a pro player you're going to have to do ads, you know? And so he had me trying to do—read off the ad for a bar of soup, you know. And it was kind of humorous and funny.



The interesting thing in meeting President Kennedy, which they'd taken one of these All-Star teams over on a private train, we went over to the Army-Navy game, in Philadelphia and at halftime, we went down on the field and the president came down the line shaking hands with the eleven of us, and when he got to me he said, and this was before the Heisman trophy presentation in New York, and he said you're going to be seeing my brother in a couple days. I said "I am?" He says "yeah, he's going to be giving you the Heisman trophy." Well, I never knew that until he told me, and I was just blown away that here's the President of the United States knowing more about my schedule than I know myself. And so then at the Heisman trophy dinner, Bobby Kennedy was sitting next to me on my right, and so we during the course of two or three hours that this thing prolongs, we had an interesting time to talk and everything, and it just so happened then, in 1968 when he ran for president, he got a hold of me when I was in Los Angeles and I flew up to Oregon with him a couple times and campaigned with him and on the charter plane and all, and spent some time with him. And then I actually would have been at the hotel the night he was shot except we were leaving the next morning to come back to Oregon, because I was going to, I had to get up here and I was just going to take the Oregon bar exam and go up to Canada and play another season, and that evening, rather than be at the hotel, we wanted to be with my wife's parents, because that was the last they're going to see of her for a long time. So, I wasn't at the hotel, which is just fate. Again.

**MD:** I mean it's just chilling to be in the presence of a person that has...

**TB:** They were pretty heady days, actually.

**MD:** I can imagine so. I mean, you've spoken often in interviews that I've read about winning the trophy and the whole idea of that celebrity and everything like that, but still, you know, that—which of all those awards is the most gratifying, I suppose?

[0:44:59]

**TB:** That whirlwind time in New York was really interesting and probably more was happening than I could even absorb at the time. The writer for *Sports Illustrated*, who wrote the two articles on me, was a fellow named Al Wright, who was really a good writer and he was a Yale guy I think, and when I was back there, they knew I was in New York, and I guess they had made the decision that I would be Sportsman of the Year, and in fact, well Al told me, he says "they have five or six candidates that the editorial board or whatever put up and everything, and they're mulling over who it should be, and frequently it's a last-second change." And he said, "But when you did the 99-yard run," he says, "that cinched it." So, he—but Al Wright would take me around with him, and mind you this is a long time ago, and he would take me to like Toots Shor's, which is a famous restaurant, and he would introduce me to all kinds of people there. And there would be the Toni twins, these were the people that used to be on commercials and stuff, and I just met actresses and actors and all kinds of people, and he knew everybody. It was just quite a life, there for a week or two.

**MD:** For a week or two. Well, you were—you returned to Corvallis a football hero, what was the reception at home? What all happened back here at OSU?

**TB:** Well you know, the time sequence of this is fuzzy, to say the least, but it seems like I went back to New York for some of these things and then came back and we had to play in the Liberty Bowl, so I had to—I might have missed some practices back there and everything, and then I came back and we got ready for the Liberty Bowl and flew back across there, and some of this I've got vivid memories of, and I've already touched on the Liberty Bowl and the weather and everything. After that game was over, the team went on to New York to have, as a reward, so to speak, for the season and everything, and none of them, none of the players, I'm sure if any of them ever had been to New York and Prothro thought that would be wonderful treat for them. But I didn't get to go. After the game was over, I went to the airport, somebody got me to the airport, I got a plane back to Portland, Oregon, got up the next morning and somehow got to Corvallis, which I don't remember how, had one practice with the basketball team, came back to Portland, got on a plane again with the basketball team and flew to Kentucky to play in the Kentucky Invitational basketball tournament. And I was kind of bunged up and bruised up and all, but, so that's how my life went. There were some events in Corvallis. We, at one time we had, in Gill Coliseum, there was—maybe it was after NCAA tournament, that being my recollection, that they had a big turnout for us there and the whole team was presented and introduced to the students and all, they packed it. Of course, in those days, when we played basketball in Gill Coliseum, it was full, it was packed. There was standing room only, they had fans sitting on the floor; they didn't even have seats. It was a good atmosphere to play basketball games in.

**MD:** You know, the Final Four in March, how did that all turn out for Oregon State?

**TB:** It turned out poorly, but you know, that's the case for all but one team every year. Although, I guess, the first game we lost to Cincinnati, and in those days you played—the losers of the first game played again, which is totally, nobody wanted to play it, it was all over and it was—but in the first game we were down one at halftime, which we were in the game but then they pulled ahead in the second half. I had played terribly, myself, and well you know, we just got outplayed and it's a simple—it was a disappointment, you know, I still remember it. When I got to the Rams, Dick Batts was a running-back, he'd say to me, "How can you be on national TV and held to one point?"

[0:50:05]

**MD:** Well, let's spend a little bit of time about the—about your career in the NFL. Now, you had kind of an abbreviated career in professional football, but I was reading a 1970—'87 article that said that you were drafted by teams in professional baseball, basketball and you were picked in the first round of the football draft. So, who else was after—who all was after you at that time?

**TB:** That other—well I don't even know that there, where the fact and fiction is on this one, because I don't even know if there was a baseball draft in those days. I don't think.

**MD:** There wasn't, no.

**TB:** I don't think there was. And in basketball, I don't know if I were drafted or not. It never was a serious consideration. Nobody in the team came to me. There were two leagues at the time, the AFL and the NFL and I don't know about the—several of the AFL teams had talked to me, but I think I was quite candid with them that I wasn't interested in playing in the AFL, you know. It was a fledgling league and their checks were bouncing and stuff like that from some teams at that time. So, then I was drafted then by the Los Angeles Rams and played quarterback my first year and then they moved me to halfback, the next couple years, and then George Allen came out and became the new coach and he didn't see me as a halfback and so he released me after exhibition season and I didn't do anything that year and then eventually a Canadian team that was interested in me got ahold of me and I went up there and played one year in Edmonton, and I was actually intending to play another year and I'd come up to Oregon to take the bar exam, which was given in, I believe, July, and their season starts early because their winter up there and I missed the first exhibition game up there and then they—we couldn't come to agreement on my contract and I thought I kind of had them over the barrel since I wasn't there, and they lost that first exhibition game, and so they said well if you don't come up here for the next exhibition game and then fly back down and take the bar exam, we're going to find another quarterback, and I said well not unless you agree to pay me what I want. Well, they didn't agree to that, so they got themselves another quarterback, I guess, and I stayed. And then I took the bar exam and I needed a job, so I ended up working here in Oregon.

**MD:** Oh yeah, 'cause I read a quote that you said that you basically used your legal skills to negotiate yourself right out of football.

**TB:** That's right, yeah. That says something for my legal ability.

**MD:** So, you know, the different—it was another, like again it was college ball, pro ball was probably a different climate during the early sixties as opposed to the show that it is today, and also probably the compensation was hugely different.

**TB:** Oh yeah. It's, yeah there's no comparison, I mean our training facilities, when I was—those years with the Rams, Oregon State's training facilities back then were better. We practiced out in the San Fernando Valley in the smog in some municipal park, and one of these traveling vans that go to construction sites, with food; I think we bought our food off of that. It was quite different. But...

**MD:** You weren't pampered like the players of today.

**TB:** No, not quite, not quite.

**MD:** Yeah, 'cause you also had mentioned that the Rams organization at that time was rather disorganized and was that pretty much universal?

**TB:** Well, I would say that, well I don't know if it was universal, but you know, to the extent that organization and management helped things, the reason I was the first pick in the draft was because LA had the worst season. They were dead last; I think they'd won one game. I think we won one game my first year. But there were a lot of good players on the team and George Allen basically inherited these players from—that they had, and turned it around and made it a very, very competitive, successful team out of it.

**MD:** So yeah, you negotiated yourself right into another job, which basically is where we are at today. Your career as a litigator in—now is it just Northwest or just Portland here?

[0:55:06]

**TB:** Oh, well primarily just Portland and now and then you have a thing that takes you out of state, you know, and I've had cases out of state some, but predominately just here, sure.

**MD:** With the firm of?

**TB:** Well, it's Tonkon Torp, is the name of the firm, and it's—it basically was formed, I think it was in 1974 and I've been there—actually this year, at the beginning of this year, I kind of went inactive; while I still have an office at the firm and the secretarial help and like that, I'm not actively practicing any law there. Because I'm gone for three or four months in the winter now.

**MD:** Snowbird?

**TB:** Pardon?

**MD:** Snowbird?

**TB:** Yeah, yeah.

**MD:** I understand that you had a number of Portland Trail Blazers at the—during the years as clients, any good stories there?

**TB:** Oh, not really but yeah, we did represent the Trail Blazers up until the time Paul Allen bought them. And I was active in some of that. It was an interesting, obviously interesting client to have at that time. In fact, my son was the ball boy the year they won the championship.

**MD:** Oh wow, that's great. Okay, now after your sports career you became a family man and a little bit about your family; your grandchildren, children?

**TB:** Yeah, the—I married my first wife, Marilyn, who I met in college and we were married, I don't know, almost sixteen, seventeen years, something like that, had two children, a boy and a girl. My son is here in Portland and he has his own business with another fellow, they're investment advisors, and my daughter lives in Venice, California. She has two children, too, and my son has two children. I ended up marrying my current wife, Barbara, who I had gone together with in high school, and her husband had died and then I'd been single for ten or fifteen years and we met, hooked up again, so we've been married now fifteen, sixteen years or so ourselves. And she has got the same situation as me; two children, a boy and a girl, and one's here in town and one's on the east coast. So, that's—we're spread all over now.

**MD:** So, you get to be grandpa?

**TB:** Yeah, it's a lot, and just the same thing, she—each of her two children have two kids, so it goes on just the same. A lot of symmetry there.

**MD:** Yeah, yeah. So, this has been an interesting life. An interesting life and you know, one of the, you're one of the treasures of Oregon State University and a lot of—my colleague Chris, he might have been taking some notes and some ideas that he has that he'd like to hear from you.

**Chris Petersen:** Yeah, just a few questions, kind of drilling in a little bit more into some of the things we've talked about already. I wonder if you could tell us a bit about your memories of your actual recruitment process coming out of high school?

**TB:** Yeah, things have changed a great deal and I would say on the regulatory side, the NCAA is much more tuned in with what you can and cannot do. Like only so many visits or anything like that. Starting when I was maybe a sophomore in high school, but certainly as a junior in high school, colleges were recruiting, I mean Stanford had me down there as a junior, flew me down. There was a friend of Slats Gill's, an old retired guy—or not, he was semi, or basically retired—whose hobby it was, would be to take on one person for Slats' and help recruit him to Oregon State for basketball, and he would pick me up after practice at Jeff and we would drive to Corvallis and I think, if I was free, for every Oregon State basketball game.

[1:00:13]

And he'd take me out to dinner down there. And at Christmas time he'd even maybe take my mother and me out to dinner. And a lot of things happened in recruiting. I mentioned earlier that Steve Pauly and I met and became friends in the Shrine football game and we talked about going to the same school, so Stanford had us down there and they had a Stanford alum here that furnished us a car and a credit card and we drove down and visited Stanford after the Shrine game. And I had a scholarship at Stanford that was more on the—call it an academic type scholarship rather than an athletic scholarship. And because Stanford was in the PAC-6 that they had reformed in Oregon State, that wasn't in any conference, they were bound by the rules of the PAC-6 on what their scholarship could give and it wasn't as good as the NCAA rules, which Oregon State was bound by. So, to make a long story short, with scholarships there, Pauly, who would have gotten an athletic scholarship there, would have had to work some and I wouldn't have, and I don't think that was appealing to him. And anyways, so when we were through there we borrowed their car and went over to visit Cal, and went through the same thing in Cal. And I don't know that the Stanford people ever knew about that, but they would have certainly been upset with us. But we ended up, then, at Oregon State, obviously. But I was just, you know, they were after you all the time.

One of the great things, too, was when we got to Oregon State we were going through rush and I was living in the Phi Delt house and the football season had started, but school hadn't really started. The first football games were just, similar as today, they occur before the actual academic year starts. And I'd committed to Oregon State. I told Slats I would come there. But while Pauly was down there looking at it during Rush Week, he wasn't nearly as committed as I and I told them, I said you know, the football team was going to play the season opener against Texas Tech in Lubbock, Texas, and I said "if I can't—I'm not going to guarantee you that Pauly is going to be here when you get back, because Washington is trying to get us both to come up there and visit this weekend and I think Steve is inclined to go." And they asked me what I suggested and I said "well, you better make sure something's keeping him busy, somehow," and they said "well," they're—we had this meeting at the Phi Delt house in a private room there and the athletic director was there, and Prothro and the basketball coach and a bunch of them, there's a whole slug of them, and they said "we'll, we've arranged for you and Steve to go salmon fishing this weekend, on a charter." A great idea, they thought, because how are they going to get ahold of us with Pauly on that charter, and this I guess was the birth of my legal stuff. I was acting like Steve's agent, and I said "well, Steve doesn't like to fish." And they just got a blank look on their face and they said, "Well, what would Steve like to do?" And I said "well, neither one of us has been to Texas before." And they looked at me like I am—what kind of shyster is this guy going to be? And so they took us to Texas with the football team the next day, which technically was probably was part of the recruiting process still. I don't think that would happen today. But most of the characters involved in that, except for Steve and myself, are dead, so can't do much harm. But Steve then ended up at Oregon State, obviously, and had a great career there and afterwards, and I don't think Steve would mind me telling this story.

[1:04:59]

**CP:** That's funny. I wonder if you could give us a little bit of insight into Slats Gill and Tommy Prothro as men, men that you got to know well, their personalities and what made them successful as coaches.

**TB:** Well, that's an interesting one. I'm sure Slats and Coach Prothro themselves were friends within the athletic department. I have no way of knowing one way or another. I don't know if they ever socialized or anything other than worked together. They were different as night and day. Slats we called by Slats, we never called him Mr. Gill or Coach

Gill or anything. Nobody called Tommy "Tommy" until after I was practicing law much later. It was yes sir, no sir. Tommy had a real military-bearing tone and a very, everybody agrees, a very bright, brilliant guy. He took up chess later on and beat one of the Russian masters. I played Bridge once with him and he, I mean he's a master Bridge player, he just—you could sit with him, and ironically on that trip back from Texas Tech he sat next to me the whole flight back and talked about stories also. In the back of his mind, I think he thought I was going to play football someday there, because he continued to—I mean he could have sat with anybody else, but he sat with me.

Slats was very personable with you, you know, I mean you'd go in there and have long talks with him and all kinds of things, and Slats ran a tight ship in basketball and he liked to bait the sophomore players, the rookie players, and we learned how to adjust to him as you got older, and I was captain my senior year and had been around him a lot by then and we played down at, well two stories, we played Stanford and we won, I think, maybe sixteen games in a row or something, we were really on a roll, we had a good team, and we lost to Stanford down there the first game and won the second game. You usually played two games back to back. And he gets me in the airport or wherever we were and just starts talking to me and he says, "You know I think," he says, "I think maybe we should change the lineup." And Slats had a reputation that if you went to Oregon State you would get to play sometime. You may not be a starter, you may not play all the time, but you'd get to play some, you'd get a chance, which is a good reputation to have. And so he said "what do you think?" And of course I'd been around him enough to know that he was baiting, because if I'd say "this is what I think you should do," he'd would say "who's the coach, you or me?" And then I'd be chewed out for a half an hour. But I said "well, you're the coach," everything, I said, "but you know, we've been playing all season and gotten to know each other pretty well and we function pretty well together and we seem to know what each other's doing and what they're going to do, and I know what this guy can—if I go to him he knows when to brake and things like that, and you introduce somebody else into that mix and we're going to have to start all over." And he says "yeah, maybe," he says "okay, we'll just keep the same lineup." So he does and we went on and had a good season.

Which takes us up to the Final Four or the regionals leading up to it, and then the regionals in Provo, Utah, where this would be. What are we down to, sixteen teams or whatever at this point, or eight. We had played in the regionals the year before and UCLA beat us and in the regionals my senior year, UCLA was there, USF, Arizona State, and us. And the first game we had was against USF and we beat them and the second game would have been UCLA and Arizona State, and after our game was over, in the locker rooms, Slats says "well, we're all going back to the hotel." And I said "well, is there any chance we could see some of this other game?" And Slats said "well, I never have my players watch the team we're going to play next."

[1:10:04]

He says, "they will get in their mind how they're going to play this guy," and he says "I'm going to watch it and then I will have the meeting with the team tomorrow morning and give out how they should be playing and what we're going to do and how we're going to do it," and he says "I don't want the players"—and this is in Slat's minds—"getting preconceived ideas on how they're going to do it." And so again I said, "well Slats, how about if you tell the players 'don't get any preconceived ideas about how you're going play these guys,' that we will just wait until you tell us the next morning how, but we'll just see how they play?" He says, "Well that might be okay. He says we can watch—I'll let you watch a half of it." So, we go up there and watch the half of it, and mind you we'd lost to UCLA the year before and they had basically the same team back and they had probably some others, and they're getting killed by Arizona State. They might have been down 20 points at halftime, and I'm thinking number one: I wish I hadn't seen this, and number two: I don't even want to play this other team. And so we go out there the next night and we couldn't miss and Steve Pauly did a fantastic defense job on this Joe Caldwell, held him down, and we won the game going away ourselves, so those things happen, but that's a—I'll never forget that whole scenario.

But, you know, the other thing about Tommy is he was a very strict disciplinarian, he—and very organized and everything, and it was just a different deal. But my relationship with Tommy Prothro I'd have to say was probably a little different than most of the players, because of being the quarterback and he needing to get inside my head, so to speak, and try to get me to understand his thinking of how the game should progress; what place should be called in what situations and his approach to the offense, and so I spent a lot more time with him one on one than any other players would have. In fact, when he put in that T formation that spring break, while most of the time I would have normally been home, he had me stay in Corvallis and meet with him and the coaches as they installed the offense, which was somewhat controversial

because some of the coaches didn't like the idea of a player being there, but Prothro overruled them on that and there I was.

**CP:** You mentioned the environment, the atmosphere in Gill Coliseum as a place to play. I'm wondering about your memories of Parker Stadium as a place to play.

**TB:** Well, it was good, you know. It wasn't huge but it—we had, it was good crowds, vocal it seemed like it was packed when we'd play, and enthusiastic. I'm, you know Washington was bigger, I mean we, I think this may be another first, I'm not sure, you're going to have to check this; the very first varsity game in football I played, and I hadn't, mind you, played a football game since high school and so the opening game as we go down to the Coliseum in Los Angeles, I'd play USC and the way you get to the field from the locker room is you come down this long tunnel and the USC players were on one side of the tunnel and we were on the other, and you're separated by ten or fifteen feet, and I looked over and I looked up and I said "we're playing these guys?" I had never seen anything like it. Of course, we beat them and I don't know if any Oregon State team has beat them in the Coliseum since. And I got to play some in the game. But that was an eye-opener for me, I'll tell you that. And SC had been picked number one in the country going into that game.

**CP:** How did you accommodate the overlap between football season and basketball season?

[1:14:25]

**TB:** Well, that's probably a credit to Slats and Prothro, and I don't know why, but Tommy was very accommodating, and the main one I remember, and I think this was probably my senior year, I mean I remember Prothro telling me, if you want to go in and start shooting around, you know, shooting baskets and stuff, go right ahead. And the year we played the Liberty Bowl, which was the same year, or not calendar year, but same school year that we were in the Final Four; I know Oregon State had already played a basketball game. They had played up in Montana or somewhere and had a field trip before I ever got back, and I'll tell you another story while we're at this, because I'll never forget this either. When we played in the regionals my junior year and we lost to UCLA, you know, I mean heartbroken is an overstatement, but disappointed and everything. You don't like having your season to end abruptly, but—and we're coming back on the plane the next morning and I'm sleeping and Pauly is sitting next to me on the plane and Steve and I roomed together on the road and stuff like that, but all the sudden we're awakened by—and here's Slats in the seat in front of us, looking at us, and he says "I want to talk to you two." Okay. And he says, and he starts in on me first and he says "Baker, I'm not going to spend the rest of my life coaching with the problem that I have with you, of trying to find out who on the other team we're playing can you check," he says. And I says "okay," and he says, "now we've got two kids from the freshmen team coming up next year: Jim Jarvis and Frank Peters," and he says "I'm not so sure there's a spot on the team for you." And I'd started every game. And then he starts in on Pauly for whatever. That's, okay. What do you say?

So, football season in my senior year, fast forward, all the sudden I'd won the Heisman, going to New York, banquets all over the place, awards to go to, you know, accept this award, accept that, and finally Slats comes to me and I'm still—and I don't know that we've played the Liberty Bowl game yet, comes to me and he says "well, when are you going to be coming out for basketball?" I said "basketball? I thought you said there wasn't—might not be a spot on the team for me?" And he says "oh yeah, yeah, yeah" he says "well, we're waiting for you." He says "when are you going to be out?" "Well, I got the Liberty Bowl game to play or whatever," and he says, "well," he says, "then will you promise me that you'll come out and not be involved anymore in football?" Because, like the Maxwell award was later and it ended up I didn't go back for it and they were very upset that I wouldn't come back there to accept the award and I said "fine, once this is over, the football, I will concentrate solely on basketball and I will not go off on any of these junkets and that stuff anymore." And of course, I've told you the story, we came back from the Liberty Bowl and went to Kentucky and I played, started both games, and I started every game all season, played, except for when he took me out when I'm tired. But that was Slats, you know.

But generally the transition was good, I mean other than that I don't even remember anything else about it, because in other times if you didn't go to a bowl game, there was a gap there and it was, it would be my guess that you had a gap and I can't—the tougher thing was my transition between class and athletics, because when in basketball, if we went to postseason, I'm missing finals frequently and I'd have to arrange with the professors that I could take the final maybe at the end of the next quarter, and by that time it's rusty in your brain, whatever it was you were being tested on. And so that

was always being danced around or somehow to do it, but they were accommodating and somehow we worked it all out, got through it.

**CP:** Well, a big part of being a sports fan in Oregon, or being an Oregonian, is the rivalry between OSU and the U of O, and I wonder if you could share any memories of the Civil War as a basketball and football player, while you were there and afterwards?

[1:20:00]

**TB:** You know, everybody seems to want to focus on the rivalry of Oregon and Oregon State. To me, it was another game. I don't hate the Ducks, I can't, I mean a lot of my closest friends went there, you know, right off my own high school team. You just play against them and play the best you can. I respect them and I hope they respect me. They were good games we had with them, but I can honestly say, you know, in football we never lost to them while I was there, and in basketball we pretty well dominated and I think they might have beat us once, but they were good games.

**CP:** Well, you probably didn't have a whole lot of time between class and athletics, but I'm wondering about your experience of Corvallis as a place. Was there any particular hangout that you had or your memories of the town itself at the time?

**TB:** Well, my life revolved around pretty much getting up in the morning at Thirteenth and Monroe, which is the Phi Delt house, walking across lower campus to where most of the engineering stuff was and going to the classroom and as soon as the classroom was out, walking over to Gill Coliseum, and throw in there during basketball season a meal after every game at Wagner's and for the most part it was, you know, a routine that I had settled into, and it wasn't—it didn't deviate from it a whole lot. There wasn't a lot of time left over, unfortunately. I mean, in the fraternity, the people in the fraternity house you get to know very well. They're—you're thrown together, sleeping with them, eating with them, doing all that. I can't say that about the people that were in classes with me, that I had much time to ever socialize with any of them, so it was a pretty much isolated thing, going to classes unless—and I don't think there was anybody in the Phi Delt house that was taking mechanical engineering, what I was taking. So, that was kind of a lonely thing and then, obviously the players on the team you get to know very well, so it was kind of a, well it was a different type of college experience. I think it was exacerbated a little bit by playing two sports, too, because that kind of, that was just you missed out on some of that free time that you could have had.

And then another thing, a lot of things have changed, mind you, but the summers; you didn't—today the football team is expected to stay around. They're not official practices, but they stay around and work out and do things together. That didn't occur in my time. First thing I tried to do as soon as school was out, what I usually did was find a job in Portland and my brother and I frequently worked at the same job, and then he's two years older than I am and he graduated and then he went off and played baseball for a few years, and then one summer, as would always be the case, it seems, that's when they'd go and strike construction in Oregon in the summer, so I went down to Los Angeles and stayed with a friend's family there and worked in LA for that summer. But it was a busy time, you know, in some respects for me, but that's good. That's probably the way it should be. Get in less trouble.

**CP:** Yeah. As your profile rose as an athlete while you were in school, did you feel that people started to treat you differently?

**TB:** I would say that's probably true to a degree. I mean the professors were certainly accommodating of my finals schedule or whatever that I think, I kind of ran out of gas, you know, at the end there, and I think people kind of saw that a little bit and they were nice to me. Slats, at the end of basketball season that senior year, made a—he arranged for me that I could play. I hadn't played golf before but I could go up to Corvallis Country Club and play. He certainly didn't have to do that, I wasn't even interested in golf but I was just kind of burned out. I was started to have some stomach problems even, a little bit.

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But you know, that's the nature of a small town, a small school, relatively small, but people were nice. You know, everything from the registrar on down. I think because I dropped out of ROTC and didn't take it in my senior year. It

might have been one hour credit or something, so I ended up one hour maybe even short of graduating, and I think they maybe brushed that aside or something like that. I can't remember. Of course the registrar had been an old football coach there, too.

**CP:** I want to ask you, you mentioned when you were with the Rams you were also in law school at the same time.

**TB:** Yeah.

**CP:** Certainly not something we would expect to hear from a contemporary athlete. How did you manage that? What was that like?

**TB:** Well, what happened was, through my good fortune, is after I won the Heisman trophy and the Rams wanted to sign me, some people here in Portland, actually another Oregon State grad, who is a city commissioner by the name of Buck Grayson, Bobby Grayson was his brother who played at Stanford and was football All-American several years, but Buck Grayson thought, given my situation, that I needed someone to give me some advice business-wise or look after me, because my mother was a single parent, raised us. And he went to an attorney in town here named Mo Tonkon, which is the Tonkon Torp, and who is just very, very highly respected, and Mo never had any children of his own, and asked him if he would talk to me and kind of counsel me and help me out. And after my first year with the Rams I came back to Portland and it just happened that I took a job with Pacific Power and Light and it was in the same building that Mo Tonkon was in, and he would take me to lunch now and then and things like that and he got to know me as a person a little better and he said why don't you go law school? And he, and I said "well, okay, I never thought about it, it never occurred to me," I said "well, what do I have to do?" he says "well the first thing you have to do is take this law school aptitude test."

So, I signed up, imagine like the SAT, you know, it's the deal for law school. And I took that and got my results and everything and did well on it and so I got down to Las Angeles and went over to USC and I found out that USC had a night law school that they did simultaneously but they, they've since eliminated it. And I went over there and I talked to somebody at a desk there and I said "I'd like to inquire about going to law school." She says "well, it was going to start the next day, Monday or something." She said "well, have you applied?" I said "no, I didn't know you had to," and she says "well, have you taken the law school aptitude test?" and I said "yeah, I did that." She said "well, do you have your results?" and I said "yeah." She says "well, can I see them?" and I handed her the slip. She goes into some back room and comes back in a minute or two and says "okay, you're admitted." And so I went to night school and then during the season I would go to night school and then in off-season I'd switch to the day school program. So, and with that, rather than three years it took me three and a half years to get out. And so, Mo—and then I came back to Portland and I, it was accidental that I ended up in Portland practicing law, because I had interviewed with Los Angeles firms. My plan was to simply take the Oregon bar, go up to Canada, play another term, come back to California; bar wasn't given at that time. I'd take the California bar and probably go to work for one of the big Los Angeles firms, and my wife was from down there and we'd been living in Los Angeles four or five years, had children born down there and...So, when I needed to get a—go to work as a lawyer, Mo Tonkon, who was very close to me by then, who I'd gotten to know more and more, said "well, the best firm in town is a firm called Davies, Biggs" at that time. He said "if you can go to work there, go to work there."

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And so I interviewed with them and they offered me a job and I stayed there for maybe two or three years and Mo was just a cagey, smart guy and he had gotten the feedback from Davies, Biggs of how I was doing and he got good reports about how I was advancing there and finally he came to me and he said "I'd like you to come to work with me," and I'd never thought about it, you know, and so the more I thought about it, thought about it, mulled it over, mulled it over, finally made the decision, because I was very happy and Davies, Biggs was a wonderful firm. But I went over and joined Mo and probably the best thing that I ever did. And there were just three of us at one time and in a matter of a couple years I was making much more than I ever made playing pro football and that little firm has grown to probably seventy-five or eighty lawyers now and—through various deals.

But going back to this story with Steve Pauly and me, down in California with that car we had when we visited Stanford and Cal, we were driving back and I was driving and I got a ticket for speeding up around Crescent City. I got the ticket, came back to Oregon. I said well, I'm not too worried about that, I'm in Oregon, that's in California, and I just ignored it.



So, when I go down to play for the Rams, I go in to get a driver license eventually and they say "there's a warrant out for your arrest," so I send the ticket up to Mo Tonkon quickly, I say "could you pay this before they arrest me?" Of course I reimbursed him. So, I got that cleared up so I could get a driver's license, but crime does not pay is the lesson that we learned there, see.

**CP:** Very good. Well, the last question I have for you is about continuing connection with OSU and particularly with the football program. As an icon of OSU football, looking from afar, OSU was pretty down for quite a long time, and then it gradually got a little bit better and finally broke through with Erickson's Fiesta Bowl team and now Mike Riley has established the program on solid footing. What's that been like for you to follow from afar and what's has been your connection there?

**TB:** Well, the connection has ebbed and flowed, I would say, in some respects. I've gotten to know them on one basis or another, you know, all the coaches that have been there during that interval, more or less. And I can say that—and I agree with you 100%, that's a good way to describe it—and I assume I've been a season ticket holder all the time since I've been back here. Same seats, and I know there was a time before they had the roof over on the west side that if we made a contribution, we could sit under the roof, so I know I've had them since then. But, with Dennis Erickson I—became more involved and became friends with Dennis and he was a fun guy to be around and I thought he did a great job, and he jumpstarted the program. And Mike Riley I've gotten to know fairly well and everybody is of the same mind, you know. He's a very good coach, wonderful guy and I think he has the toughest job in—other than Washington State—in the conference. I have my own views on what type of offense they should run, vis-à-vis what his is, but he's the coach and he's done reasonably well with it. I just continue to question can you survive today with a quarterback, especially Oregon State, that isn't a real mobile threat, you know? More like the Mariota, the Russell Wilsons, Kane Barnicks and on and on and on.

**CP:** The Terry Bakers.

[1:35:04]

**TB:** Yeah. Well it, it gives you some options that you don't have with the other and it opens up some possibilities. I mean how many times do you see us get hurt by the quarterback running for our first down? And we've given up that pretty much, and our teams know it. But, Mike is, you know, he does a good job and it may be that he can't get a Mariota, he can't get a Johnny Manziel and so he can get someone who he offers to him a pro style or Tom Brady type role and maybe that's the answer to that.

Mike and I frequently talk about books whenever I'm around him, and I've given him suggestions and books to read and one in particular he thinks is the greatest book, I think, he's ever read. He tells it to everybody he sees, but he's—I enjoy being around him. He's a great guy to be around. And the new basketball coach, I don't go down for basketball games, and the problem with the football games, and I'm not by myself, even though I have the season tickets, I've got to be the first to say I don't go to every single game because I do not want to be driving back at midnight. But hopefully some of that's going to get cured here. And the same thing for basketball, you know, it's just I don't enjoy the driving very much, but—and I've been gone in the winter so much that I've basically missed the basketball season, but I hope that the new Coach Tinkle can turn that around, not only because I was part of it, I mean you've got the Ralph Miller era and all that. I mean there's a great tradition of good basketball at Oregon State that has really slipped through the cracks here and I'd love to see it get revitalized, and when I said it was standing room only for basketball games, I mean that was mostly students and it's, it will be great for them, great for the whole environment down there if they can get it off the Launchpad again. It's tough though. And you know, don't get me started on this, but I mean you know, Pat Casey obviously is, you don't have to say anything about the job he's done there, because everybody knows, and—but he explained to me why the rules for college athletics; that football, basketball and baseball all have different rules of what you have to do to be eligible. Now, who came up with that scheme? I guess only the NCAA could, huh? And that's, and no wonder people are upset with it.

**CP:** Yep. Well, Mr. Baker, thank you very much, this has been great fun for us—

**TB:** Well, thank you.

**CP:** And we appreciate you lending so much of your time for this project.

**TB:** You're welcome.

[1:38:23]