

INTERVIEW WITH COACH CHARLES H. (CHUCK) ROHE

**CONDUCTED BY TOM SCOTT AND COPPLEY VICKERS
THURSDAY, JUNE 13, AND FRIDAY, JUNE 14, 2013
HIGHLANDS, NORTH CAROLINA**



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June 13-14, 2013
Highlands, North Carolina**

Start of Tape 1, side A, June 13, 2013

Background; Experiences at Mississippi Southern College; Successes as a High School Coach; Coaching at Furman University

TS: This is the afternoon of June 13, 2013. We're in Highlands, North Carolina, interviewing Coach Chuck Rohe. I'm Tom Scott and Copley Vickers is also here and will participate some too.

CR: Our camera man.

TS: Our camera man. We're going to do this interview from the beginning of your life on to the present. Why don't you start talking about your background, who your parents were and the schools that you went to, and then we'll move on from there into your coaching career. Tell us about what kind of family you grew up in and where you grew up and when you were born and such as that.

CR: I was born August 8, 1931, in Swedish Covenant Hospital in Chicago, Illinois. I was the first child of Naomi and Walter Rohe. My father was at that time a junior accountant who later became the senior partner in the accounting firm of Walter, Joplin and Langer. My mother was a school teacher. She kind of bounced around schools. She went to Northwestern; she went to St. Louis, Missouri; she finally went to Illinois and graduated from [the University of] Illinois with my father. That's where she met him. He went to Illinois all four years and then went into the service—he was in the Army ROTC at the time and went in service during World War I. They moved to suburban Chicago, and then finally I grew up in Park Ridge, Illinois, which is just across the city line from Chicago. I went to Roosevelt grade school and Lincoln Junior High School and then later Maine Township High School.

Maine Township High School is one of the biggest schools in the state, had a great athletic program, a lot of state championship teams and so forth. I got involved in track and field particularly and football and a little basketball when I was growing up. In junior high I guess I grew early because I was one of the taller guys in junior high. I never got any taller than 5'11," but 5'11" was pretty tall in the junior high schools, so I was a center on the junior high basketball team. But later I wasn't big enough to be a center, and I was never much of a basketball player. I went through high school at Maine Township, a very good school. About 95 percent of our graduates went on to college from Maine Township. It was a combination of the two towns of Des Plaines and Park Ridge that go to Maine Township High School, and they together were very affluent neighborhoods.

So, everybody went to college, and I had the opportunity to go to college several different places when I graduated from high school. I graduated with high honors, and I was accepted at several of the Ivy League schools, Dartmouth and Princeton. I also was accepted at Denison University in Ohio, and the head coach at the time there was Woody Hayes who later became the head coach at Ohio State. Of course, they were a Division III school at that time, and they never

had scholarships, but he recruited me out of high school. But I ended up going to Lawrence University in Appleton, Wisconsin, because I wanted to become a paper chemist, and they had the only and greatest institute of paper chemistry in the world.

All the big paper companies subsidized the paper chemistry institute there where all the paper research in the country is done and new forms of paper are produced and so forth. I was very good in chemistry in high school, and I thought I wanted to be a paper chemist. As I got through my freshman and sophomore years, I realized that I didn't really want to be a paper chemist. I didn't want to be a businessman. I didn't want to go to a business college. Athletics were to be my life because they were my interest, and I loved doing them. So I thought I would pursue a career in athletics. Because of that I decided I wanted to transfer from Lawrence. I was running track and playing a little football in Lawrence, but I had visions of going somewhere and playing in a bigger program, although when I finally did go to the University of Southern Mississippi, I found out that the program was much bigger and better than Chuck Rohe. Even though it was a good move for me and for my career, it was not necessarily the best place for me for my playing ability because I wasn't as good as I thought I was.

TS: What did you play in football, what position?

CR: In high school I was actually a single wing quarterback and defensive back. In college I was a defensive back and wide receiver. I ran track. In high school I ran the 100 and 220 and the high jump, but wasn't fast enough to run the 100 in college, so I moved to the quarter, and then eventually to the half, and then eventually started running some distance races when I ran cross country my last year of eligibility at Southern Miss. But, anyway, there were four of us that decided that we wanted to go south to school. The other guys were not students at Lawrence. They were two junior college graduates who were friends of mine in high school. The other guy was a basketball player and a golfer. The fourth guy of the four of us that went down was a friend of one of the other fellows. I didn't know him before we took this trip. But we took a trip, got in the car during spring break my sophomore year, and we drove down and stopped at Memphis State, stopped at Delta State in Cleveland, Mississippi, stopped at University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg, which at that time was Mississippi Southern College. Then we went on over to Southeastern Louisiana and Southwestern Louisiana in Hammond and Lafayette.

In those days you could try out. You'd go down, and the coaches would time you on a forty yard dash and put you in a little gear and let you run and hit a few times and see if you were a football player. The basketball coach would throw you in and let you scrimmage with some of his players. All of us got some little kind of scholarship help at Southern Miss. We liked it much better than we did the other schools. The golfer was good enough that he eventually got a full golf scholarship at Southern—very good golfer. He was a six foot, six inch golfer and basketball player. One of the other guys, my high school classmate, was a good little point guard in basketball. He played a little on the basketball team, and we all got some kind of help. We got out of state tuition right away, and we got books and some other kind of scholarship help on the training table for the quarter. So, anyway, we all went to Southern Miss. That was a great move for me because I became very much involved in the athletic program at Southern Miss.

Although I wasn't a great football player, I sat on the bench, and I was on some great football teams. Some of the teams beat Alabama and Georgia in the Southeastern Conference. In fact, the year I was a graduate student, Alabama won the SEC, and the only game they lost was when we beat them in the season's opener. But there were very good football teams in those days, played in three bowl games in a row [including] the Sun Bowl. The situation at Southern was it was not a very difficult school. I had been to a very good high school and one of the top colleges in the country. When I went to Lawrence, it was just as tough to get into Lawrence as it was to Dartmouth and Princeton. The president of Lawrence when I went there was Nathan M. Pusey. When I left Lawrence, he left and went to become the president at Harvard. The next president at Lawrence was Douglas Knight, and he left Lawrence to become the president at Duke. Lawrence gained a reputation as the Harvard of the Midwest, the Ivy League, and it was a very good school.

TS: This is a private school, who sponsored it?

CR: It's a private school. It used to be a denominational Methodist school at one time, but it was a private liberal arts college with the only graduate program in paper chemistry and a great music program by the way too. They had a very good football program at that time, good athletic program in the Midwest Conference. They competed with Carleton, Beloit, Ripon, Coe, and Grinnell. When I went to Southern Miss, the academic standing at Southern Miss was so much below the academic standing at Lawrence. My parents were very concerned about me going south to this crazy school down in Mississippi that they'd never heard of. They questioned

whether I should go. Well, with my dad being the head of an accounting firm, every year they would go to these accountants' conventions. He had some good friends from Jackson, Mississippi. So they asked this friend of theirs, what is it about this school, Mississippi Southern College? The accountant that they knew from Jackson said, "Well, it's an up and coming school. The president, Dr. [Robert Cecil] Cook, is just an outstanding president, and that school is going to go somewhere and become something."

TS: How big was it at that time?

CR: Well, it had gone from a state teacher's college to Southern Miss. Today, the University of Southern Mississippi is the largest school in the state [16,471 in fall 2012]. It's bigger than Mississippi State; it's bigger than Ole Miss; it has all kinds of graduate programs. It's got campuses in three or four places across the state. It has become, like my parents' accounting friend said, it was a sleeping giant. Well, anyway I went down there, but the classes were very easy. For a guy who had been at a top high school and one of the top college, I was bored to the standpoint that I would take thirty-two, thirty-four hours a quarter. I just went to class to have something to do. I graduated with about twice as many hours as you needed to graduate with majors in biology and geography and health and physical education. I took a lot of chemistry although I didn't major in chemistry.

But it was a great school because I got involved with the athletic program and the administration of it. The track coach became a good role model for me. I did some amazing things there. I was always pretty good in testing measurements and kinesiology and physical education and so forth. By the time I was in graduate school working on my master's degree, Dr. McCarver was our track coach and he was the head of the Department of Health and Physical Education. He actually would turn the tests and measurements class over to me because I knew more about tests and measurements than he did. I was a graduate student taking the course and teaching the course on tests and measurements to the rest of the students. I graduated magna cum laude. The only reason I didn't have a perfect straight A average was because I had some chapel cuts. You would lose a quality point every time you have a chapel cut. But it was a very easy school. I can't recall the name of the fraternity, but it was the equivalent of Phi Beta Kappa. Southern didn't have a Phi Beta Kappa chapter, but it was a scholarship chapter. It was a very easy school for me to be a top student.

TS: Phi Kappa Phi, probably.

CR: I think that's it.

TS: What was McCarver's first name?

CR: Dr. C.E. McCarver.

TS: I don't know that you really explained why you wanted to come south. I mean, this is 1951 or somewhere in there, so what is there...?

CR: Right. Well, the reason for coming south was, first of all, I wanted to go someplace that had a physical education department which Lawrence didn't have. Myself and the other three guys—we thought that maybe at those southern schools, those athletes weren't quite as good. But we found out that they were a lot better than we thought they were. Being from a northern climate, we wanted to go down where we could have a better climate. We thought that it was going to be easier for us Yankees to go down there and dominate the sports program in the south, but that wasn't the case. It was a great place for me to go and get an education. I became well known on the campus.

A lot of the other students would ask for my help, particularly the PE department or among the athletes and everything because I had this reputation of being a brain of some kind. Even though I wasn't much of an athlete I was a better scholar. I literally would take ten or twelve courses a quarter just to have something to do. I'd go to class eight, nine, ten, eleven o'clock, then I'd go in the afternoon before we went to practice, [taking] as many courses as I could take. That helped me a lot because I got a lot of interest in a lot of fields that I might not have known much about. I had almost the equivalent of a double degree in my undergraduate degree.

TS: What was your best time in the quarter mile and the half mile?

CR: In the quarter I was lucky to break 50—48 or 49. I may have had a tornado behind me or something, but I think I ran a 10.3 or 10.4 hundred, which was not bad in those days on a cinder track. Then I high jumped. I was a six foot high jumper, which was very good in those days. I was the West Suburban Conference champion in that.

TS: So, are those high school times you're talking about or college?

CR: Those were my best times ever, college and high school. But those were mostly high school times because in college I wasn't fast enough, so I started running the quarter and half and cross country.

That was another experience. In New Orleans, turkey day is a 5K on Canal Street on the pavement. I broke my arch about three miles out in the race, and I finished the race limping around, but I finished the race. There were a couple thousand people in the race, and I was somewhere in the middle of the pack. My wife's roommate was from Foley, Alabama, and I was going to see her for Thanksgiving. That was Thursday morning. The game plan was to hitchhike to Foley, Alabama after [the race]. In those days we did a lot of hitchhiking. I did a lot of hitchhiking from Hattiesburg, Mississippi, to Chicago, Illinois, back and forth. Anyway, I was hitchhiking to Foley, Alabama, and I had this broken foot. I was having to walk half the way, I believe, but when I got back to school, of course, they x-rayed it and put me in a cast. That probably kept me from getting drafted too because of a broken foot and a broken metatarsal arch. I didn't pass the physical to go into service, so I never did get to go in service. But that was a very painful trip to Foley, Alabama, a long way to hitch hike, 150 miles from New Orleans, I guess.

TS: What did you learn from McCarver?

CR: I learned to deal with athletes. I helped him do a lot of recruiting. I went north to Chicago and brought some Illinois athletes down. I became a graduate assistant in the athletic program in both track and with Reed Green who was the athletic director. That first fall I was assistant freshman football coach. Freshmen weren't eligible [to compete on the varsity], so I was assistant freshman football coach, and I worked in the athletic department for Coach Green for ticket sales and marketing. Then Dr. McCarver would send me out recruiting. I was a graduate assistant. I went north to Illinois, and the kid that won the state high school championship in both the 100 and the 220, James Franzen, from Highland Park High School, sure enough we recruited him and got him to come all the way to Southern Mississippi, even though he was the state champion in Illinois, and [the University of] Michigan and everybody up there wanted him. That was my first big recruiting deal.

TS: What did you say to get him to come to Southern Mississippi?

CR: Come down! Don't stay up in those cold climates up north. Of course, he had some problems getting in a school up there too. Highland Park was a very good high school, and he didn't have real good grades, but at Southern we could get anybody. If they had a heartbeat and they were warm, we could get them in school. James Franzen came down, and he was very good. He didn't stay long because he was not a good student. I think he only ran one year, but he was very good and very fast. Big, tall kid, he was about 6' 1" and

had a lot of potential. But we never did keep him in school after his freshman year. I recruited some other kids from up there. Our best distance runner at Southern was from the same high school that I went to, from Maine Township High school. I recruited him. Anyway, Dr. McCarver let me learn a lot by working and doing. A lot of whatever learning and whatever expertise I had in a lot of ways is just practical experience. From reading, the books by [Percy] Cerutti and others.

TS: You started reading those in college?

CR: Oh, yes. I was reading those when I was running, not so much at Lawrence, but when I was at Southern. Those were about the only things I read. To this day I don't read books for just recreation. The only thing I read is newspapers and articles in magazines. Those were training magazines that I read in those days. That's probably the influence that Dr. McCarver had and Southern had. I came from a great educational background, and I really had an edge on everybody educationally—maybe from the standpoint of thinking things out and creating and so forth. I'd always been a hard worker. My basic philosophy was, well, if I can't get it done on brains and skill, I'll get it done on hard work.

TS: So you got a master's degree from Southern?

CR: I got an undergraduate degree in 1953 and a master's degree [in school administration] at Southern Miss [in 1954], right.

TS: Is that when you went into high school coaching?

CR: Right, then I was offered a job at Hattiesburg High School as a junior high basketball coach and an assistant football coach and track coach. I got married, and our first home was right above the track at Hattiesburg High School, just a few hundred yards away. We had this little apartment upstairs, and I remember that first year I made \$3,600 a year coaching and teaching, \$400 a month for nine months. But this is, I guess, another example of entrepreneurship. When I was in graduate school, I started selling sandwiches and picking up dry cleaning to make some extra money. I didn't have any trouble with school. I didn't have to worry about it. If I went to class I could make A's. So I was in college doing dry cleaning and sandwiches. My wife would make spiced ham and pickles on whole wheat bread and peanut butter and jelly on white bread. I'd take a bushel of sandwiches and my dry cleaning, and I'd go to all the fraternity houses and dormitories every night.

Of course, I was always a great conversationalist. Some nights I'd stay talking to guys till twelve, one o'clock in the morning. I never needed much sleep. I stayed until they bought all the sandwiches. I never had to take sandwiches home and eat peanut butter and jelly every night, but pretty soon they would expect me to be coming in about eight or nine o'clock. They were getting hungry. I would deliver their dry cleaning and sell sandwiches. I was so successful in graduate school I even did that my first year of coaching at Hattiesburg High. I continued to sell sandwiches and pick up dry cleaning at night for a couple of years, and that was very successful. I guess it was an example of entrepreneurship and marketing myself. Again, this is an example of hard work. Some people don't need much sleep, and I never needed very much sleep. When I was coaching at Tennessee, and you guys know, I'd be up working till one or two o'clock in the morning and then I be at track practice at six o'clock in the morning.

CV: At 5:30.

CR: At 5:30. Anyway, I never needed much sleep. Even today, I get only six hours sleep. I always felt like I was wasting time in bed, so if I was able to be active and do whatever I was going to do eighteen hours a day, I would be ahead of the guy who was sleeping and who was only working sixteen hours a day. That was a little bit of my philosophy.

TS: Tell the story about the basketball team in the junior high.

CR: Well, the coach resigned or retired, and I picked up basketball because I was just hired to do track coaching and assistant football coaching. I didn't know that much about basketball. I played a little basketball in high school and played in a city league and a church league and things like that at Lawrence University and at Southern, but the only way I knew to coach the basketball team was to outwork the other guys. So we went to work on a full court press. I mean, we pressed the whole game from the start to the finish. I ran my kids in practice like my track team. They were the best conditioned team. Nobody else in the state could stay with us. If they stayed with us for a quarter or two, they were dead by the second half. We won the state championship. I think we lost two games, and we won two years in a row in the state championship. And we won the state track championship that spring and the next spring too.

TS: In high school track?

CR: In high school track and junior high basketball. Junior high basketball was big back in those days. It was what was called the Big 8 conference but it was the eighteen largest schools in the state—the Big 8 conference. That was the state championship that we won.

TS: Okay, you did that for two years [1954-56] and then you must have replaced Dr. McCarver as the track coach at Southern Miss?

CR: Well, actually, I almost took the job at William Carey College which is a Baptist school there in Hattiesburg. Dr. [I.E.] Rouse was the president there. He had started a football program. This little school didn't have but about 800 students, and they were playing college football. They'd pick up a lot of junior college players who played college football. He thought it'd be great to start a track program. Well, we had become famous for the track program we had at Hattiesburg High because when I got to Hattiesburg High they had never done anything in track. All of a sudden we won the state big time. At that time, the biggest relay meet in the South was the Mid-South Relays in Memphis. We went up and I think there were seven relays on the program, and we won six of the seven events. We had gained a reputation as a great track school. So, he was trying to hire me as a track coach.

Dr. McCarver said, "You don't want to go over there. I'm going to retire here. You come on out here and work with me, and we'll build a track program at Southern." So I didn't become the head coach that year, but I was really the head coach. I did most of the coaching. Dr. McCarver let me do most of the coaching and all of the recruiting. By the end of that year Dr.[W.L.] Ikey Carr who had been in Physical Education Department at Southern and was an outstanding professor had taken the job as head of the physical education department at Furman University. Furman was building this new campus and new athletic facilities out there. He knew that they were building and they wanted to have somebody to come in and start a track program. They had a track program, but it wasn't a very good one. It was still on the old campus. So, I had this opportunity [in 1958] to go as a track coach and assistant coach in football at Furman. I thought it was a good opportunity, and Dr. McCarver thought it was a good chance to go and get started on my own.

They were going to give some scholarships in track—didn't have many—so, I went to Furman University. It was still on the old campus. I can remember my wife and I and two young kids—both Connie and Kevin were born at Forrest General Hospital in Hattiesburg—the first home we stayed in was a Quonset hut for the

first year at Furman on the old campus. They were moving everything to the new campus. Furman was very fortunate. They got this big grant of land, and they were building this beautiful campus out on the northwest side of town. In fact, they built a golf course before they built the campus. We'd go out and play golf while they were building the campus out there. But it was a good situation except for in the Quonset hut we had the old oil burning thing in the center of the room to keep the whole Quonset hut going there, with two young kids. Of course, my wife never had to work while I was coaching, but it was quite an experience.

I don't know whether [Copley Vickers] remembers, but the only track they had at Furman was a little track around the stadium, and there was a little path around the practice football field. It was worse than the one we had at Tennessee. The only [indoor] track they had was around the old gym up there, and you could run, I don't know, twenty-two laps to the mile or something like that. But then they built the track, so we had the track, and we could go out and work on the track although the school was downtown Greenville. That was kind of a challenge. So, it was a good situation, and I coached defensive backs in football and the track team, and we got our track program started at Furman, and the next year we moved to the new campus, and then things really began to open up.

TS: When did the track open up, during your first year there?

CR: The track was built, so that first spring [1959], we were still on the old campus, but we were able to run track meets and go out there and practice on the track, which was kind of a chore. That was before Vick came over there.

TS: So how many scholarships did you have to hand out?

CR: The most I ever had there was about eight scholarships, divided up among about fifteen or twenty guys. Of course, that was one of the reasons why I was looking for somewhere else to go. As Vick tells the story, he says I'll be looking for some place that could afford me. But not too many people are given [full] scholarships. I've recruited a lot of walk-ons, and the walk-ons were pretty good. Year after year our track program got better. I coached track and football there for [four] years, and the first year, other schools dominated the Southern Conference. We got better and better, and the last two years, we just cleaned everybody's clocks in the conference. We won everything—cross country, indoor and outdoor track, and won pretty handily.

CV: At the Florida Relays....

CR: Yes, we went to the Florida Relays and beat all the Southeastern Conference schools in all the relay events. I'd say that last year and probably even the next year after I left, but maybe that last year I was there, we had the best track team in the South. I think we could have beaten anybody in the South.

TS: What did you most enjoy coaching—the distance runners, the sprinters, the field event people—what did you enjoy the most?

CR: Well, you obviously enjoy what you're successful in. First of all, my old philosophy of hard work paid off, so I enjoyed coaching the distance runners. I never wanted to give up coaching the distance runners. But the sprints and the hurdles and the middle distances were [enjoyable]. I wasn't as technically proficient on the field events. I had to get a lot of help and do a lot reading and get some people who knew something about those events to help me with coaching those events. But I would say that the distance running first, and then we ended up with a lot of hurdlers. We had the best group of hurdlers in the country and maybe in the world [at Tennessee] when we broke the world record in the shuttle hurdle relay at the Penn Relays. And then I always liked the relay events.

The field events, I had to get help in because I wasn't proficient in coaching the field events. I could recruit the good field event people, and then I'd try to get a good graduate assistant or a George Wade to help with the pole vaulters or Russ Polhemus to help with the shot putters or discus throwers. Since I was a high jumper—they weren't doing the flop then—I was still a pretty good high jump coach. We had some good high jumpers—Lonnie Hance and Karl Kremser were two seven-foot high jumpers. I think I helped them be better high jumpers because they weren't seven footers when they came. They were like six foot six jumpers. They probably improved six inches a piece while there at Tennessee.

TS: So your seven foot high jumpers were at Tennessee, not Furman.

CR: No, we didn't have any seven foot high jumpers at Furman. Well, we didn't have the athletes. Even though we had the best track team in the South, we didn't have the athletes that we had at Tennessee later on.

TS: So you couldn't recruit as well at Furman?

CR: Didn't have as much to recruit with, and actually we were just getting started. Had we stayed and been given some scholarship at Furman, we could have probably produced the same kinds of success we had at Tennessee. We were producing that kind of success in the Southern Conference.

CV: You were recruiting the Florida state champions and Tennessee state champions.

CR: Oh, yes, well, two things about recruiting: one, I think in track we could go most anywhere and recruit in the southeast after a couple of years at Tennessee and even after a couple of years of Furman. We had the reputation among track people that, hey, this is a great track program at Furman and a great track program at Tennessee. So, we right away were in the mix for the best athletes and the best track people in the southeast, and it spread across the country. We got the same kind of reputation up east and so forth as well. The other thing about that though is the same thing happened in football at Tennessee—that wasn't the case at Furman—but at Tennessee in football, if a guy was a great trackman and football player, anywhere in the eastern half of the country, we were in the picture for them. If we wanted them, there was a good chance we could get them, and we would go get them wherever they were.

TS: So the track program was a great asset to the football program because you could recruit dual athletes?

CR: No question about it. We could go get guys like Stanley Morgan and Willie Gault and then later on after I had left [Anthony] Hancock and Sam Graddy and those kinds of people. Of course, we had Richmond Flowers and then we had Chick McGeehan in New Orleans and Chip Kell who set the national high school shot put record as well as became an all-America football player and a [Jacobs Memorial Award winner as the SEC's best blocker and a Birmingham Quarterback Club's SEC most outstanding lineman award winner]. Yes, that set the pace for the recruiting, and that success followed after I left and after we did that Winning Edge video and everything. That success followed at Tennessee for years to come afterwards.

TS: Did you enjoy recruiting?

CR: I enjoyed recruiting because it was a challenge. It was competitive. I like to compete. If I lost a prospect, I didn't take it very well. That was competition, and a lot of coaches didn't like recruiting that much. They didn't look at it as a competitive adventure as I did. So, I guess that's why I was a good recruiter because I was very

competitive. If we wanted a guy, and we didn't get him, I was crestfallen.

TS: Let's stay on Furman before we get to Tennessee. You were already requiring incredibly difficult workouts of the distance runners by this time, I gather.

CR: That's what you get when you read [Percy] Cerutti and [Mihaly] Igloi and Arthur Lydiard and those kinds of guys. They were doing workouts that Americans weren't even thinking about doing. [Emil] Zatopek [Czech distance runner who won three gold medals at the 1952 Olympics] was probably one of the first guys with Igloi.

TS: So Zatopek is Czech isn't he, and Cerutti would be Australian.

CR: And Lydiard is New Zealand and Igloi was Hungarian.

TS: So Herb Elliot would be coached by Cerutti, and then Peter Snell by Lydiard?

CR: And John Landy was Australian and coached by Cerutti.

TS: Yes, Landy was a champion miler before Herb Elliot because he was running against Roger Bannister for the four minute mile. Okay, so that would be early 1950s. But Zatopek, let's see, he was a champion right after World War II, like '52.

CR: Yes, and he ran an incredible work out.

TS: So it's really the eastern Europeans that start these incredibly hard workouts?

CR: Absolutely. He was the worst looking runner ever. He probably couldn't run a 12 second hundred, but he would just keep running forever and ever, and he won all three distance races [at the Helsinki 1952 Summer Olympics, setting new Olympic records in the 5,000 meters, 10,000 meters, and the the marathon]. He was probably the first really great one to do great things with unbelievable workouts.

TS: I guess he was one of the first that really made it a full time job, didn't he? I mean, he may have had a job but he was really basically running all day, wasn't he?

CR: Yes. I think he was the first guy that showed that human endurance could be pushed beyond what was normal, recognizable limits. One of the things I always compare with some of my friends in Isleworth,

where I live in Orlando, who are into horse racing: they have stables and lots of good thoroughbreds and have a lot of money invested. I think distance runners were trained like they train horses today. You know, Man o' War, 100 years ago was running as fast as the Kentucky Derby Champion today. They have not improved a second or two in a mile and quarter race. Maybe a second or two over a hundred years despite better nutrition, better surfaces to run on, and better breeding. It's amazing. There's no improvement. Do you know why? Because they don't train them for endurance! They're afraid if they'll work them too hard, they'll break a leg, and you'll pay \$1.5 million to buy this horse at the breeders classic. They won't work them. They do not work these horses, and the horses don't get any better. All they do is breed them for speed. I liken it to distance running before Zatopek; nobody wanted to train too hard because you would get shin splints, and they were training distance runners in those days like they are training horses today.

TS: Isn't this also a break from, I guess the English tradition that this is just something you do on the side, and you are an amateur, and it's really going more from amateurism to professionalism by doing it all day long, working out several times a day.

CR: That's right. Working out twice a day, you just never think about working out twice a day before Zatopek and before World War II.

TS: I always thought it was incredible that Roger Bannister was in medical school and only had about thirty minutes a day to work out.

CR: And he ran a four minute mile without any real background and training.

TS: He was running like ten quarters at sixty seconds with jogging a two minute quarter in-between, so he'd do about five miles in thirty minutes, and that was it.

CR: But he never went through those types of workouts.

TS: No, no.

End of Tape 1, side A; start of Tape 1, side B, June 13, 2013.

Successes at Furman; Decision to Become the Track Coach at the University of Tennessee; the First Season (1962-63)

TS: I wanted to spend just a few more minutes talking about Furman because you had some really good athletes there and you recruited some guy out of Fulton High School in Knoxville, Tennessee, about 1960. You might want to tell that story of how you got [Copley] Vickers to Furman.

CR: Well, Vick had come over to run in our Piedmont Relays in the summer program with a young, just created, Knoxville Track Club. I knew he was a state champion. He was a big, tall, lanky guy that I thought could become a good runner because he had a lot of physical abilities. He wasn't necessarily the fastest guy in the world, but there are a lot of great distance runners that aren't the fastest guys in the world. He had several scholarship offers, and I had to come up with just about a full scholarship to get him. I think he was impressed by what we were doing with the track program there. Most of the Southeastern Conference schools just put in some time in the track program.

There was not a lot of enthusiasm for track everywhere. I think Vick felt the enthusiasm for track at Furman. So we had to come up with almost a full scholarship. I didn't give very many of those, but I had a couple that year. In fact, his roommate was another one I gave almost a full scholarship to—David Tyler, Toby Tyler, who was the Florida high school half-mile champion and became a great, really outstanding, half-miler. He had a little speed. Vick didn't have as much speed as Toby did, but they roomed together that first year. They were part of a freshman class that included Rocky Soderberg and Jimmy Webster, and those guys were almost all full scholarships.

TS: So all these are coming in in 1960. Well, there's half your scholarships already, isn't it?

CR: Well, yes, but by that time I may have wrangled another scholarship or two out of Dean [Francis W.] Bonner and President [John Laney] Plyler at Furman because they saw what we were doing with the track program. Now those four guys right there, a sprinter, a half-miler, and two distance runners—those were the best runners in the whole South at the time—the North Carolina state champion [Soderberg], the Florida state half-mile champion [Tyler], the Tennessee state champion [Vickers], and then the best sprinter in the South was Jimmy Webster.

TS: You had a sprinter from England about that time, didn't you?

CR: Well, by then I had already recruited David Segal.

TS: Yes, that's who I was thinking of.

CR: David Segal was a sophomore when you were a freshman, wasn't he, Vick?

CV: Yes.

CR: That's another story. We got started at Furman and obviously had to get started from scratch. I saw a lot of foreign talent, and I said, "I need to find some great foreign trackmen. We ended up with two or three, remember Peter Hickey and Barry Shaw, besides Segal?"

TS: How did you get them to come?

CR: Well, they came after I got Segal [in 1959]. First of all, I didn't have that many connections overseas at that time. Later on, I got a lot of connections, but the sports editor for one of the British papers, *The London Daily Mirror*, Peter Wilson—I saw where he was writing a lot of track columns. So I wrote to him and told him that we had scholarships available, we were building a nice track program at Furman, it's a great school academically, and it was a good opportunity for a good British trackman to come and get a full education and graduate. Did he have somebody he would recommend? So he recommended to me a guy a little older than I thought I would get because I think David was already about 22 then. He [competed in the 1956 Olympics in Melbourne] and [in 1960] won an Olympic [bronze] medal with the British 400 meter relay in Rome. He had [won two silver medals at the 1958 European championships] and [a gold medal] in the [1958] Commonwealth Games [in the 440 yard relay], and he was an outstanding sprinter. He didn't come until the summer of [1959]. In fact, there was a big controversy over whether the AAU would let him run. He had to run that first year in Carolina's AAU meet as an unattached athlete because we hadn't cleared his eligibility yet.

TS: So you have a really great group of athletes for the 1960-'61 school year.

CR: Oh, yes, we two great sprinters in Webster and Segal, we had Soderberg and Vickers in the distance, Toby Tyler in the middle distances, and I think [Don] Armstrong was already there [graduated in 1963, track team captain in 1962 and 1963]. He was a pretty good quarter miler, but that was a great recruiting class, and that was what really [helped] Furman become the best track program in the southeast.

TS: You mentioned Vick going over there in the summer time running for the Knoxville Track Club. So the Knoxville Track Club was already in existence before you got to Knoxville?

CR: Yes, they had Charlie Durham and Al Rovere, and Jerry Wrinkle, who formed the Knoxville Track Club to run some local high school athletes in some summer meets. When I came over there, I don't know that they had even formalized it much. I don't know whether they even had a charter or not, but they had started the Knoxville Track Club. Then, of course, I endorsed it totally, and we got started on it, and we put those guys to work at midnight with me.

CV: What started it was you wanted me to come down there and a couple of other Fulton guys to run in the Olympic Development Meet. We couldn't run unless we belonged to an AAU team, and that's how that formed. The *Knoxville News Sentinel* helped, and Charlie and....

TS: So that summer of 1960 it's an official AAU, American Amateur Athletic....

CV: Olympic Development.

TS: So [Vick] went over there and ran in that for the Knoxville Track Club. Okay, so we know that the track club then starts in the summer of '60.

CV: Tom, an interesting aside, talking about Coach's recruiting, he got me a General Excellence Scholarship in addition to my track scholarship to make it up.

TS: That's an academic scholarship?

CV: It took into consideration all of your activities. I wasn't quite smart enough to get an academic scholarship, but it was just general excellence was what it was. You had to keep a "B" average, and I didn't do anything my freshman year but study and run, and I lost my scholarship by a hundredth of a point. But going on to recruiting, Coach Rohe had gone in and invaded Florida and gotten the Florida State half mile champion. Percy Beard, who was the track coach at Florida [from 1937 to 1964], was an Olympic hurdler, I think, in the 1930s [won a silver medal in the 110-meter high hurdles in the 1932 Olympic Games in Los Angeles]. He was so mad at Coach Rohe going into Florida and taking Toby away from him, he found out I was going to Furman, and he called me up and says, "I want you to come down to Florida."

- CR:** He was going to steal one from me!
- CV:** He was going to steal me. I said, “Well, I’ve already told Coach Rohe that I’m going to come to Furman.” He says, “Well, it won’t hurt anything; people do this all the time.” I said, “Well, I haven’t been to Florida. I guess I will, but I’m not going to change my mind, Coach.” He sent me tickets to Florida, and I think he had me accepted in [the University of] Florida....
- CR:** Even though you hadn’t applied?
- CV:** Even though I hadn’t applied. I sent him my transcripts and everything, and I think he had me accepted down there, and he took me and showed me everything, and it was all because he was bitter about [Rohe] stealing Toby out of Florida.
- TS:** I don’t remember Florida being that great in track. LSU was the dominant power.
- CR:** LSU was the best team, but Florida was probably after LSU in the Southeastern Conference. I don’t think anybody else was in the league with them. Well, it was LSU for sure and then Florida. They were next.
- TS:** Okay, so you’ve got this great team in 1960-61. Was that the first year that you won the Southern Conference championship or had you already won it before then?
- CR:** No, no, that was first year we won everything—cross country, indoor and outdoor track. We won it that year and the next year.
- TS:** Okay, so your last two years you won everything.
- CR:** Right.
- TS:** You had a great cross country course. I guess it was around a golf course, wasn’t it?
- CR:** Oh, yes. Well, they built our cross country course before they built the campus. The groundskeeper, Jessie Wilson, loved the track team, and he rolled and mowed that course and seeded it. To this day, they run some of the big regional cross country meets at Furman because of that course, around that golf course.

- TS:** Furman, I guess, certainly had higher academic standards than Southern Mississippi.
- CR:** Oh very definitely! Different type of recruiting!
- TS:** Well, I guess, that's got its pluses and minuses in recruiting to have higher academic standards.
- CR:** Yes, they had to be good students, which I didn't have to have when I was recruiting at Southern Miss. Just a warm body was all we needed at Southern Miss.
- TS:** Let me ask, you came from Chicago down to Southern Miss in the 1950s when race relationships had to be pretty shocking going south of the Mason-Dixon line, and we're still talking about an all-white track team, I guess, at Furman when you were there. Did you have any thoughts or impressions or feelings at all about segregation in the South while you were there?
- CR:** I have several thoughts about that. I knew about segregation in the South, and the tragedy of Emmett Till [murdered in Mississippi at age 14 in 1955], for example, happened while I was at Southern Miss. It happened up in north Mississippi. But, the North in many ways was just as segregated as the South. For example, [at] Maine Township High School, my graduating class had almost a thousand students and not a black student in the school. Not a black student in the entire educational system for two cities, Park Ridge and Des Plaines. Today those two cities have over a hundred thousand people. Now they have a few blacks there.
- TS:** Even today there's only a few?
- CR:** Only a few. In many ways the North was as segregated as the South. It just was de facto. I didn't grow up [around many African Americans]. I ran against black athletes, and we played against some black athletes. For example, most of the Maine Township—we played in the West Suburban League, and I remember the best player in the league was a black linebacker from LaGrange High School. They beat us for the state championship. We played some of the city schools that had black athletes on them, but they weren't very good at the time, the teams weren't. So, back in the 1940s, I'm going to high school right after World War II, and segregation is a fact in the South, and it's really a fact but not a known fact in the North in many ways. As a lot of northerners, I sympathized with the plight of the blacks in the South, but I found that in many ways the blacks were

treated just as harshly in the North as they were in the South. It was something that needed to be remedied in both areas of the country.

TS: So you lived in, I guess, an almost stereotypically “lily white suburb”?

CR: I grew up in a “lily white suburb” of Park Ridge, Illinois, yes, very definitely.

TS: Right. Okay, you win a lot of championships. Furman, obviously, is happy with you. You’re coaching the defensive backs in football and, I guess, having a good time at Furman. Why don’t you tell us the story now of how you ended up at the University of Tennessee. First of all, just for the record, the University of Tennessee once had some pretty good distance runners, but by the early 1960s, they were the pits.

CR: They had a little history when [Carlton] Crowell was the track coach [1948-50] and, I think, an assistant basketball coach too, but he [and Louis Schneider, 1951] had a pretty good cross country team and some distance runners and he brought Alf Holmberg [1951-52] over from Sweden. He had some good distance runners then. [John Sines, head coach, 1952-59] had Ed Murphey [1954-57], who was a good distance runner, but that was about all they had. They did have Herb Neff who had been a good conference championship high jumper just a few years before I got there [1948-52]. But when I got there they had hardly anybody who was capable of placing in the SEC meet, although Winston Russell came along and did pretty well that first year. But, remember, freshmen were not eligible at Tennessee, so the first two or three recruiting classes had to wait a whole year before they hit the track running. But, going back to [how I got to Tennessee]....

TS: Yes, how did you get there?

CR: Well, first of all, [Athletic Director and legendary former football coach] General [Robert R.] Neyland had ruled with an iron hand, and he passed away [on March 28, 1962]. When he passed away, there was a general thought among the academic people and the faculty and administration at Tennessee that they needed to be more than a football program, and that’s all Tennessee was. They had a pretty good basketball program, but nothing with any of the other sports. So, when the general passed away, the logical choice to succeed him, the top man in the athletic department, was Bowden Wyatt, who was the head football coach [1955-62]. So Bowden was named interim athletic director and continued as head football coach.

Well, the athletic board of trustees was headed by Dean [L.R.] Hessler. He was the head of the Botany Department [and also served as dean of the College of Arts & Sciences], and he was head of the athletic board. He told Coach Wyatt before the athletic board, “Look, you want to become the athletic director. You’re going to need to do something with these other sports programs.” So Bowden Wyatt decided he wanted to do that. Well, Dean Hessler also had heard from Ben Plotnicki and Sam Venable who had taken that first team over to the AAU meet. I think they were in Physical Education. Do you remember them?

TS: Yes, now, Ben Plotnicki taught Phys. Ed. at Tennessee, didn’t he?

CR: And so did Sam Venable; they both did. And they with Charlie Durham helped drive the team from Knoxville over to Furman. They saw enthusiasm for track at Furman, and so they came back and told Dean Hessler and said, “Hey, this guy over there at Furman is doing a great job. We need a track program. Let’s see if we can get him over here.” So Dean Hessler went to Bowden Wyatt and said, “Hey, Coach, here’s the kind of guy you ought to bring in.” I don’t know how he decided to contact Ray Mears, but, Ray Mears had just won the national small college championship [in 1961] at Wittenberg, Ohio, [University], and he was a hot number in the basketball coaching circles. So, he had Ray Mears and myself come over to visit at Knoxville the same week—a day or two apart.

Ray had just been there and was just leaving when I came in, and he hired us both in the same week. Of course, Ray went on to do some great things with the basketball program and win the SEC championship, and didn’t have quite the success we had in track, but that’s how Bowden Wyatt hired me and hired Ray Mears, and that’s how Tennessee got those two guys. Unfortunately, Bowden Wyatt got in trouble the next spring—had a little too much to drink and threw a sports writer [Birmingham sportswriter Alf Van Hoose] in the pool [on May 23, 1963] at the [annual spring] SEC meeting [of football coaches and athletic directors in Ocala, Florida], and was fired because of that. Then there was a bidding war between Jim McDonald and Bob Woodruff to see who would become the athletic director.

TS: Jim McDonald was the football coach?

CR: McDonald was an assistant football coach who was the player’s choice. Woodruff had the experience because he had been the athletic director and the head football coach at the University of

- Florida. So actually Jim McDonald won the battle because the players liked him, but Woodruff won the war because McDonald got the job as head football coach for a year [1963]. Woodruff got the job as athletic director for one year and fired McDonald the next year, and then he hired Doug Dickey [1964-69], and that's when I got involved with the football program.
- TS:** So McDonald was head coach of football for one year with Woodruff as athletic director.
- CR:** Right.
- TS:** It seems like they were five and five at best [5-5 overall, 3-5 in SEC games].
- CR:** They were both kind of interim. They had been hired not with any long term contracts or anything, and so McDonald coached one year, and Woodruff secured his job as athletic director [1963-85] and hired Doug Dickey; so that's the story.
- TS:** I vaguely remember Dean Hessler as someone who had knowledge of track from way back maybe, at least that was my impression. Do you remember much about him?
- CR:** I know that he was a big track fan. He had been to several Olympic Games, and he was a mushroom man. He was a world expert on mushrooms. He was always a good confidant for me when I first came there. He took me under his wing and introduced me to a lot of faculty members. He was a big reason why and how I came to Tennessee.
- V:** Wasn't President Andy Holt involved in that?
- CR:** Oh, yes, well President Holt was the president, and he promoted the same ideas that the athletic board had—"Look, we need to have more than a football program." He was a strong supporter of the whole thing. It just so happened that Dean Hessler was on the athletic board, and he led the charge, but Andy Holt backed him up. Andy was a great asset to our recruiting because, time after time, I took them up to the president's office, and Andy sold a lot of those football players and trackmen into coming to Tennessee. What a great guy he was!
- CV:** I think, after one of the Southeastern Conferences, he invited us up to his office to congratulate us.

CR: Oh, yes, to congratulate us. He was a great president and a great sympathizer of the track program and of all the athletic programs. I [can't remember] who the athlete was, but the athlete was coming to Tennessee on a plane, and Dr. Holt was on the plane with him, and they sat next to each other. By the time he got to Knoxville, he was ready to sign.

TS: You mentioned the athletic board. Was the athletic department separate from the university at the time that you got there? Was it totally self-funded, and is the athletic board a governing body or a fund-raising body or just exactly how did it work?

CR: Well, I think it's changed through the years. It's now the Athletic Department of the University of Tennessee. At the time, the athletic association was a separate entity. It was governed by a board appointed by the president and the trustees of the university. It was not a university function. It was not controlled by the university. The board of directors who ran it—I don't remember all the details about it, but since then it's become an athletic department of the university.

TS: Did the athletic department get any state money or was it entirely what they raised?

CR: Certainly the football program didn't need any support. It was self-supporting. But during the years I was there, when we went from 45,000 attending to 90,000 attending, it became big enough to give money to the university in later years when I was there.

TS: Oh, even that far back, in the 1960s? The athletic department is giving money to the university?

CR: Oh, yes, the athletic department gave gifts to the library and other things. It gave even more, I'm sure, in the 1970s and 80s and 90s, until they've gone through this problem here recently; but when they were putting 107,000 people in the stadium every game, they were totally self-sufficient and funded special projects for the university.

TS: I was reading where I think last year was the first year where they hadn't given money to the university, but I didn't realize it went all the way back to the 1960s that they were doing that.

CR: Oh, yes, oh, yes. They were smaller gifts, but yes.

TS: Tell me a little bit about your relationship with Bowden Wyatt? Was he supportive of the track program?

CR: Oh, yes, Bowden Wyatt was a fine guy, a big, good-looking guy, a charismatic guy. He was very supportive. In fact, I was very concerned when he was fired. I didn't know whether I could continue to get the support that I had had. Woodruff was a tough guy to deal with, and he pinched the pennies and watched the money. He was a gruff old guy. I have to say this; in the long run, he always helped us out. It was sometimes like pulling teeth to get him to do things. I remember the story about Woodruff and the track. Do you know the story about that?

TS: No.

CR: The story about where the track program had come along after a couple of years, and we didn't have a track. We were running at Evans Collins Field, and I was looking for somebody to give some money for a track. Well, first of all, we tried to locate where the track was going to be. They had this big Rose Avenue development project going on over there where they ended up with the track and the swimming complex and everything, but that had not all been planned and laid out. The athletic department had Upper Hudson and Lower Hudson. Woodruff was all for putting the track on Upper Hudson field. I said, "Bob, it's not long enough to put the track in there." He said, "Well, what do you mean it's not long enough?" I said, "It's only barely a hundred yards long. You can't put a track in there. You can't even run the 120 yard high hurdles. There's not enough room in Upper Hudson." He said, "Well, we'll run the high hurdles on the curve." (laughs) That's the truth; that's exactly what his mentality was. "We'll run the high hurdles on the curve. We'll be the first school in the country to run the high hurdles on the curve." Can't you imagine when Willie Davenport showed up at Tennessee to run against Richmond Flowers in a match race, and all the sudden the high hurdles were out on the curve! That was his attitude, but Woodruff, bless his heart—he always described himself as the oratorical equivalent of a blocked punt!

TS: (laughter)

CR: He was that. He was the worst at getting up and standing at an alumni meeting or a football banquet or something. He'd cough a little bit between every other sentence, and he didn't say very much, but I think the oratorical equivalent of a blocked punt was pretty good. But he said that about himself all the time. Anyway, he was a tough guy to deal with, but in the long run we pretty much got what we wanted, although it was like pulling teeth, hard to get.

- TS:** What was your relationship with the other coaches? Were you competing with them to get money out of Woodruff?
- CR:** Not too much because, until I helped bring Ray Buzzard in as the swimming coach, nobody else was pushing very much. They had a couple of tennis scholarship, a couple of golf scholarships. Basketball was always set, and Ray Mears got whatever he wanted. No problem there. He got whatever he wanted. Football would bring in a lot of people. Back in those days you could have a hundred guys on scholarship. You could have 120. Now you can only have 80. First of all, obviously, I became very good friends with all the football coaches. They were my best buddies. I was their best buddy. They were relying on me to get talent for them, and they were amazed at the kind of football players we were getting all of a sudden. You know, the Richmond Flowers case and getting him out of Alabama—that was mind boggling for anybody in Tennessee because nobody could get somebody away from Bear Bryant in those days. When the football coaches were killed in that car wreck, that was one of the saddest days of my life.
- TS:** I guess so. What was that, '63?
- CR:** October 18, 1965.
- TS:** That was Bill Majors?
- CR:** Bill Majors, Charlie Rash, Bobby Jones, and we were playing the University of Houston [on October 23, 1965], and Warren McVey was the big running back for Houston. We had a big game coming up that weekend. That was on Monday morning. We didn't practice all week. We went out and played the game. I think they ran through a few plays on Friday and beat Houston [17-8] who was ranked number 5 or 6 in the country, something like that. But they did it on emotion. I came in from cross country practice, and I came into the training table. We were sitting down to eat, and the news came that the coaches—we didn't know they were all killed at the time—were in a terrible car wreck. A train had hit their car coming into work that morning. They all lived out there near Deane Hill Country Club. Those guys were all good friends of mine and families—the biggest tragedy I remember when I was coaching to have those three guys killed.
- TS:** The [assistant] basketball coach, [Bill] Gibbs, was killed also.
- CR:** He was killed in a plane crash [February 3, 1964].

- TS:** You didn't immediately become a football recruiter. That was the second year I guess. When you came in your first year, we didn't have a track except for that 300 yard track inside the football stadium.
- CR:** And we only had that after the football season was over.
- TS:** Okay, I'd forgotten that. You didn't have a track. You didn't have an indoor track. Before Gibbs Hall [built in 1962] the dormitories were in the stadium, and they were really old by the 1960s. Also you came in late in the year. It must have been May by the time you got here.
- CR:** Yes, it was May, after the Southern Conference track championships.
- TS:** So how on earth did you bring in such a great group of freshmen athletes? Had you already recruited them for Furman and just took them to Tennessee or what?
- CR:** Well, I tried not to recruit guys who had committed to Furman. I was working on some of them, but anybody who had committed to Furman I did not recruit at all. I did not have a lot of scholarships available at Furman because I had that great freshman class [recruited in 1960] that had just come in, and they were all becoming eligible that year, Webster and Soderberg and Vickers and Tyler and Segal, so I didn't have many scholarships, but I had been working on a lot of guys who might be coming as walk-ons. Some of those guys were the guys I jumped in on pretty quick. But anybody that committed to Furman, I didn't work on at all whether we had signed them to a scholarship or not. But that wasn't too many guys because we didn't have too many scholarships to give that year. I tell you, the things that helped me with recruiting at that time, I think, were, eventually, in a short time, the warehouse because of what it did for our track team.
- TS:** So we had that the second year.
- CR:** Yes. Did you run in the warehouse?
- TS:** Yes, I did.
- CR:** We didn't get it till after that first track season. The first track season I was there with you [we didn't have an indoor track].
- TS:** Then, my last year [1963-64] is when we were in the warehouse. I know we were there at least one year.

CR: Yes. We went down on the river bank, and we laid out a quarter-mile straightaway. Remember, I had a flag every 110 yards, and we'd run quarters and intervals. We'd run back and forth on the quarters, besides the cross country workouts and so forth. Then, the sprinters and hurdlers had to work behind the bleachers over at the stadium with the field events, and then go to Evans Collins every once in a while and work out, but that first year was pretty tough. I had a bunch of freshman in there that never knew they were going to run on a grass river bank instead of a track. We never ran a track meet on that track in the stadium. Now, the year before [1962], they ran track meets on that track. You ran track meets on that track.

TS: Well, I did. I have only vague memories of that freshman year because I was a freshman, so I wasn't eligible [to run on the varsity]. But I do remember at least one meet inside on that track.

CR: Well, they ran meets on there. I don't know if you remember, but after the football season was over, the grounds crew, Peanut and those guys, would come in, and they'd cinder the corners of the end zone in a diagonal, the last two or three yards of the end zone and corners. It was a 340 yard track, it wasn't even an odd number like 330 or 360, it was 342 or something.

TS: Right, whatever fit inside the stadium.

CR: Anyway, so we worked out in there a little bit, but we never ran a track meet in there and never wanted to run one. But we had a good response from some of the old guys over there like yourself, Winston Russell, and Hershel Bailey who really saw that, hey, all of a sudden we're going to do something with track. Now, there were only about three or four of you that really did anything and stayed with it. Hugh Faust didn't stay long, and Bill Lawkins was a pretty talented athlete, but he didn't work too hard, but he had some talent, Tom. He had more talent that you had. He could run a lot faster than you could, but you beat his butt because he wouldn't work like you would work. Then who else did we have?

TS: I was wondering about Ron Hart who was there that first year for the cross country season.

CR: Yes, he didn't make it for the track season.

TS: He didn't, and I don't know why. I remember that he had a hairline fracture in one of our cross country meets, and maybe that ended his career. I don't know.

- CR:** Well, and as I remember, he was like Faust, although Faust never took to the workouts, and Ron Hart tried to work at it for a while.
- TS:** Bill Beall was a nice guy. I remember his father had been killed in World War II, and that's one of the few things I remember. He was from Maryland or the north somewhere.
- CR:** He was from Maryland, but I don't think he made it through the first year either.
- TS:** He ran in the 1962 SEC cross country meet [finished 13th], but I don't remember him running in the spring in outdoor track.
- CR:** No I don't think he made it. For the conference meet we only had about five or six guys. I don't know how we put together a 400 meter relay team.
- CV:** I think Dick Evey ran the anchor leg.
- CR:** I don't think he anchored it.
- CV:** Well, I think he ran because he was the slowest, and the anchor leg is the shortest distance.
- CR:** He'd run the shortest distance on the anchor, that's true, but I think that we had Winston [Russell] and Hershel [Bailey] and Evey, and I don't know who the fourth guy was—Joe Spann, maybe.
- TS:** He ran cross country I know.
- CR:** He was a quarter-miler.
- TS:** It could have been [Bill] Lawkins, I guess. I ran on the mile relay, and that's an indication of just how challenged we were! Back to my original question, you must have sold the future instead of the present to these athletes.
- CR:** Well, I think I sold what I had done with Furman. I said, "Look what we did at Furman. We're going to do greater things at Tennessee than we did at Furman. By the time I left Furman, the track people in the southeast, at least, all knew that the Furman track team was the best track program in the southeast, and why would this guy want to leave Furman and come to Tennessee unless he could do it better than they did there. So that was a lot of the selling point—whatever we did at Furman, and now we're going to the SEC, and we're going to be the best."

TS: What did they do at Tennessee to recruit you to Tennessee when you already had the best program in the southeast?

CR: Well, they gave me more scholarships. Bowden Wyatt said, "What will it take to win a national championship?" I said, "Oh, 20 or 25 scholarships and a new track." He said, "Whatever you need you've got." That's what Bowden said.

TS: Really? So we had 25 scholarships?

CR: Well, I didn't use all 25, and I don't know if the number was ever that much. I never did give over about 20 or 21 scholarships.

TS: Those are full scholarships or partial?

CR: Those are full.

TS: We had 21 full scholarships?

CR: Well, the first two years, each year we brought in about 20 guys, mostly on halves and quarters and just a few full scholarships.

TS: Right. So that's more scholarships than they've got now by far, isn't it?

CR: Oh yes. I think they've got 12 or 14 now.

CV: I think 12, but it may be only 8.

CR: Tennessee may go to 8, but I think the NCAA rule is [12.6 for men and 18 for women].

TS: Oh, nobody can have more than 12.6?

CR: That's not going to change.

CV: They're talking about the woman's program adding scholarships to it and maybe taking them away from the men.

CR: I don't think they're going to do that, [but] a lot of people find ways to beat that with foreign students and foreign scholarships and grant needs and everything else.

End of Tape 1, side B; start of Tape 2, side A, June 13, 2013

Recruiting; Coaching Philosophy, Tough Workouts, and Successes; Indoor Track in the Dean-Planter's Warehouse; the Tom Black Track

TS: You were talking about recruiting and what you did to get so many good athletes, and we mentioned the number of scholarships and such as that. But you were basically selling what you had done at Furman and what the future holds at Tennessee, and I guess the last thing we were talking about is the number of scholarships. You said you had about 21 scholarships that you gave out.

CR: Well, I think 21 was the maximum number I could have at any one time. I don't know that we every reached that number because we'd have some people drop out, but I would say that we probably were consistently around 18 to 20 at the end of the program. But those were given to 40 guys, as you can see by the size of our roster. And we had another 20 or 30 guys who came and walked on without scholarships because people wanted to be associated with the program.

TS: How many do you think were on full scholarship?

CR: Not many—at one time, no more than six or seven.

TS: So practically everybody is on partial scholarship?

CR: Oh, yes, I would consistently have, I'd say, 35 to 40 guys on scholarships on a total of 18 scholarships, and only seven or eight [were full scholarships]. Those other ten scholarships were divided up among the other 30 guys.

TS: So, I guess, just about everybody got books, and those were on loan, so we turned them back in.

CR: Yes, books and out of state tuition, and that didn't get charged against my budget, and the room and board and the regular in-state tuition were the big expenses.

TS: In-state tuition was like \$75.00 when I started at Tennessee; it was really minor compared to today.

CR: Yes.

- TS:** So you had a lot of people on partial scholarships, and a lot of people who were walk-ons that are just attracted to the program, so how many people typically were on the track team at any one time?
- CR:** I guess 60 or 65. We'd have 15 or 18 guys who were distance runners on the cross country team.
- TS:** Okay, so you say you didn't take any of the recruits that had committed to Furman. What about people like Vick and Rocky Soderberg?
- CR:** I discouraged anybody from transferring. In fact, Segel wanted to transfer, Vick wanted to transfer in a way, and Toby might have, I don't remember that, but Rocky and Webster, I said, "You guys are going to stay here; you're going to do well here." They said, "No, we're going with you." I said, "No, you can't go with me." Well, I said, "I won't give you a scholarship. You're going to have to pay your own way for a year." I discouraged them from coming.
- TS:** Okay, so those two actually came the first year.
- CR:** They came, and Vick came after a semester.
- TS:** After a semester, right.
- CV:** I just missed him chewing on my back end all the time!
- TS:** Okay, so actually three altogether came from Furman.
- CR:** That's right. Well, Charlie Ennis came as a coach.
- TS:** And he was a hurdler, right?
- CR:** Yes, and he never ran for Tennessee. He came and tried to continue hurdling at Tennessee as a student coach.
- CV:** He had a hamstring pull.
- CR:** Yes, but he came over there from Furman to run, and we had Gary, a good half-miler from Oklahoma Baptist. We had a pretty good track club with Ennis and Gary—blond haired guy, half-miler.
- TS:** But he didn't run for Tennessee.
- CR:** No, he didn't run for Tennessee.

- CV:** A guy from Kentucky came down and ran the mile and helped train Terry Crawford.
- TS:** Oh, yes, first of the women track athletes [first women's coach, 1974-83].
- CR:** Oh, that was a little distance runner, yes,
- CV:** Black headed fellow, Roger Gum.
- TS:** Okay, your first year there, you've got a lot of really great freshmen and a bunch of ne'er-do-wells from the old regime.
- CR:** Right, and our freshmen had better times and distances and would have won the conference themselves if they had been able to run, but they couldn't.
- TS:** But we somehow or other put together a [cross country] team. We had five people to place at any rate [in the SEC meet] that year [1962], and I guess we were fifth overall. Georgia Tech was still in the SEC, and that's why we were running down in Atlanta. By the way, how did you find out about Pine Forest in Marietta as a place to stay because I know each year we went down to Georgia to the SEC meet we would stay in Marietta overnight and then go down from there to the meet. You know, they were old duplexes [World War II era], but there were duplex apartments right along U.S. 41, and that's where we stayed.
- CR:** I don't remember how that happened, but I guess it was inexpensive. Maybe I knew the guy or something, I don't know. I do not remember, but I do remember we stayed there for several years. I don't know how that happened.
- TS:** Tell me a little bit about your coaching philosophy that first year at Tennessee. You obviously ran some people off with your coaching philosophy.
- CR:** I never really intentionally ran somebody off, but I said, "Here's the workload. If you want to be great, this is what you have to do." Obviously, the workload wasn't as tough on sprinters and hurdlers, although we'd have some of those sprinters and hurdlers get up and run cross country every once in a while too when they didn't want to. They'd miss workouts. I never intentionally ran guys off. I always felt like if somehow I could get them to change their work attitude, they could help the program. So I never really looked at anybody

and said, “Hey, he’ll never be able to do it.” I don’t think I ever felt that way about a scholarship athlete. Now we had some walk-ons who, I liked to have around, and we never cut anybody from the track team. You know, guys like Gerry Eddlemon [18th in the SEC cross country meet in 1966,] was never going to be able to help us [a lot], but he worked hard, and I loved to have him around.

I never ran anybody off. First of all, the attrition happened a lot because all of a sudden, these guys were not the top dog. All of a sudden it’s all these other guys who could run as fast as they could run or faster. Some of them gave up because they weren’t willing to work and see if they could make it. The guy I most remember about that kind of thing was David Mann. David Mann won the 100, 220, and quarter in the Florida State meet, all three. I think he ran a quarter in high school in 47.5 or 48, something like that, really good times. He came to Tennessee and we had a lot of good quarter milers; we had a lot of good sprinters. He should have been as good or better. He was probably the best combination runner I ever recruited. But he never fit in. First of all he was not a good student, and I had to scramble to get him in school, but he probably had more talent coming in than almost anybody that I ever had, and he just couldn’t adjust to the competition on his own team. He stayed for a year and a half and dropped out and was killed in Vietnam.

TS: Did you tone your workouts down any that first year at Tennessee compared to what you were doing at Furman?

CR: No, I don’t think so. Through the years they got harder at Tennessee. We never did forty quarters at Furman. But the reason we would do a forty-quarter workout at Tennessee was because we had that warehouse, and we could do that kind of work in there. I go back to say, the warehouse was one of the greatest things that ever happened to our track program because I could coach ten events right there together at one time. We could have the hurdles set up with four hurdle lanes there; we could have four sprint lanes there; these guys could be working at the same time. We couldn’t do that outside. We didn’t have a track anywhere to do that with, and nobody had that much room on their track. We could run that oval, and then the boards were pretty bouncy. I don’t think we got many shin splints.

TS: It was a great place to run.

CV: It was great running—just lean into the curves.

TS: How did we get the warehouse, how did that come about?

CR: Well, I was looking for a place to work out. We didn't have anything but the grassy bank along the riverside. The football stadium, field wasn't available, and it was hard to go all the way to Evans Collins. So, I kept looking. I looked at a lot of different places. Of course, the first time I went over to Dean-Planter's tobacco warehouse, they had stacks of tobacco, about twelve feet high in there. It smelled like tobacco, but the two Dean brothers were big Tennessee alumni, and when I found out that the tobacco season ended in October—they harvested all that stuff in the summertime and September, and they sold it all in October, and that place became empty. They were so good. It was a perfect time of year because they weren't going to use that warehouse from October until next summer, and that's when we wanted to be in there.

Do you remember that we got that big rope and stapled that rope to the floor, and that was our curb, do you remember that, all the way around? And it just worked out to put a full quarter-mile track in there and not run into a post. Then the sprint lanes and the hurdle lanes were perfect in the middle. You could get four hurdlers hurdling in rhythm together over in those hurdle lanes, and they could be working while the sprinters were working. If I was coaching there today, I might say that I would rather have that warehouse than an eight lap to the mile unbanked, indoor track. I'd just as soon have a quarter-mile warehouse to train in. We got more done there. When you get into an eight-lap track, it's so crowded. First of all, it's flat. Now our curves were pretty tough because that track was long and narrow, but you didn't run as many curves. When you run on a quarter-mile track, you run half as many curbs as you do on an eight-lap track. And now a lot of these coaches have indoor ten-lap tracks.

TS: I could really open up on those long straightaways.

CR: Oh yes, that was great.

TS: Did we pay rent on that or was that a contribution that the Dean brothers made?

CR: They not only said, "You can use it. What can we do to help you use it?" I think they may have even bought that rope somewhere. It was big, about one-inch in diameter, yellow rope.

TS: So, that was a big step forward when we had the warehouse. I'm trying to remember, did we run any meets inside?

CR: We ran a couple of meets, I know we ran East Tennessee State, and Cumberland College came down and maybe Middle Tennessee came over too. Maybe South Carolina came over; I don't know, or maybe Kentucky came down.

TS: I was trying to think, that would have been indoor in '64 I guess, wouldn't it? Right, we had a meet where we had Tennessee Tech, Eastern Kentucky, and East Tennessee State. I was looking back at what Bud Ford put together. Our cross country team in '62 was Bill Beall, Rick Fowler, Ronnie Hart, Bill Lawkins, and Winston Russell, and then I ran on it, and then Joe Spann, which would have been the quarter miler. So that was our seven members. In the SEC meet in 1962, I finished 9th, Beall was 13th, Lawkins 17th, Spann 39th, and Fowler 42nd, for our fifth place finish.

CR: One guy's name I didn't remember, who was the third guy you said?

TS: Rick Fowler. Do you remember him? I don't either, but he's on our list. Hart was injured, and I don't know whether Russell ran in the SEC meet.

CV: I was "coach" for the 1963 cross country team at the SEC. Coach Rohe had an operation. You had appendicitis.

CR: I had my appendix taken out in Chicago.

CV: Yes, so you sent me down for the cross country team.

CR: I think I got down there though.

TS: You did.

CR: I got out of the hospital, and just 48 hours later I was in Atlanta for the meet.

TS: That's right and it may be even less than that because it took you no time at all before you were walking up and down the hall with your IV pack, carrying it with you. Yes, you were there for the meet, I remember that.

CR: You've got to be tough. When the going gets tough, the tough get going.

TS: That was our first championship in cross country in fall of 1963 where we took the first five places and then seventh and tenth after that. So we had a perfect score. By that time the squad that year

would have been John Ellington, who finished 7th and took some points away from some other teams; Andy Heiskell who came in 2nd; and then Melvin Maxwell and Rocky Soderberg were 4th and 5th. I think they came across together for our sweep. Don Pinkston was on the squad, but I think he got sick and wasn't at the SEC meet. I don't know what the story was with Bob Redington because he wasn't one of our people that placed in the meet at the SEC. And then Dave Storey won it and Mickey Shelton was 10th. So the seven would have been, Dave Storey 1st, Andy Heiskell 2nd, I was 3rd, and then Maxwell and Soderberg were 4th and 5th, and then Ellington and Shelton were in the top ten.

CR: Seven of the top ten.

TS: Yes.

CR: The next couple of years [we were even better]. [The 1964 team probably would have swept the SEC, but the NCAA championship was held on the same day, so the team went to the NCAA. In 1965 the order of finish in the SEC cross country meet was Bob Redington 1st, Don Pinkston 2nd, Melvin Maxwell 3rd, David Storey 4th, Bob Barber 5th, Rocky Soderberg 6th, Mickey Shelton 8th, and Mike Tomasello 13th—seven in the first eight and eight in the first thirteen. The team also included Steve Allison, Steve Deaton, Gerry Eddlemon, John Ellington, Roy Hall, Tim Henderlight, Paul Ladniak, Jim Ray, Henry Rose, Andy Russell, and Norm Witek. So there is good reason to believe that the second team could also have won the SEC championship].

TS: This is incredibly fast. It's only your second year that you're winning everything, and you couldn't have done it faster than that because freshman weren't eligible until that second year. So, how did you do it so fast?

CR: Well, because we were outworking everybody. We were running twice as far and twice as much and twice as often, and we had enthusiasm and hard work. I mean, nobody else in the conference was working like that. It took them, I think, several years of getting their fannies beat to finally say, "Hey, we've got to start doing something in track." We had it our own way. I remember, the first [outdoor] conference championship we won was in [Lexington] Kentucky, and then the next year we went to [Baton Rouge and then 1966 to Athens,] Georgia.

I think in the mile and two mile runs [in Athens] we got one, two, three, four, five or something like that—something unbelievable.

That was where Redington won the mile in 4:05.0. [In 1964 Tennessee took the first four places in the mile and first two in the two mile: Redington, Vickers, Pinkston, and Soderberg in the mile; Vickers and Pinkston in the two mile. In 1965 Tennessee took the first three places in the mile (Redington, Storey, and Roy Hall); and the first two places, fourth and fifth in the two mile (Storey, Pinkston, Redington, and Shelton). In 1966 Tennessee took first, third, fourth, and fifth in the mile (Redington, Storey, Soderberg, and Hall); the first three places in the 880 (John Nichols, Henry Rose, and Mike Tomasello); and the first five places in the two mile (Redington, Pinkston, Barber, Storey, and Soderberg.)]

TS: So working hard, but you had all these slogans that you used to put up too. Why don't you talk about some of those?

CR: That was for motivation.

TS: Okay, well, that's what I wanted to ask you about is how did you manage to motivate people, particularly with the lack of facilities for a long time and what-have-you? There were different personalities that came in too; how did you manage to keep people motivated?

CR: Well, for one thing, the slogans were important because pretty soon they heard so much of them they either despised them so much that they would repeat them or they really believed them. But, you know, "What a day! What a beautiful day! You ought to have to pay to run on a day like today!" Well, you know, that might be at six o'clock in the morning; it's sleeting or raining or six inches of snow on the ground. You know, "This guy's nuts!"

TS: That's where Copley said he was "paying to run".

CR: Pretty soon everybody was saying, "What a day!" No matter what time of day it was. It was catchy; it was absolutely catchy. I took this from Alcoholics Anonymous, "God give me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change"—like the weather—"the courage to change the things I can"—like running ten miles this morning—"and the wisdom to know the difference." That was a catchy little saying. "No pain, no gain!" You know, if you're not hurting, you're not doing any good. You've got to start hurting to do some good. People believed that. I used to wear that shirt with PAIN written across it.

CV: Do you remember you pasted the posters inside the toilet stalls? You closed the stall cover and it says, PAIN! (laughter)

- TS:** Well, I remember “Look on pain with disdain!”
- CR:** Well, see, but, really, you went through a lot of pain because of what we were promoting. That’s the truth. [Otherwise], you’re not doing any good as a distance runner. Even a pole vaulter had to have some pain in the weight room to lift more weight. The good sprinters and quarter milers had to run a little extra to get themselves in shape, so they can take the workout, so that they don’t end up pulling muscles and cramping like the unconditioned athletes do when they try to run. So pain is an essential part of being a successful athlete. I’m trying to think of what sport you don’t have to work hard and the pain, but there’s hardly any one.
- TS:** Maybe golf.
- CR:** Maybe badminton!
- TS:** Okay.
- CR:** Badmitnton and golf or something like that.
- TS:** But basketball, football, track....
- CR:** Oh sure. And lacrosse and even the tennis players—they have to play five sets of tennis on a hot day. They have to be in excellent condition to do that.
- TS:** Absolutely.
- CR:** Golfers a little less. They don’t suffer too much, although, again, you may end up with a playoff and play 24 holes on a hot day, and you have to be in some kind of shape to hold your form and everything.
- TS:** My focus, obviously, is on middle distance running, but the only time I remember us lifting weights was, it seems like in section “X” in the stadium. Compared to what they’ve got today for at least the football team and I guess all the sports, we didn’t have much of anything did we?
- CR:** No, but we were the first to start it. Nobody else was doing it. We had a little bit of dumbbell work, and our weight men were doing it and our football players were doing it. I don’t know that we were the very first, but we were among the leaders in the whole country to start weight training. It used to be, especially the swimmers felt that way, that you didn’t want to lift because it was going to get you muscle-bound and you wouldn’t be supple or loose and you couldn’t

run or you couldn't swim, until Mark Spitz [seven gold medals in the 1972 Summer Olympics] started lifting weights like crazy, and now everybody starts lifting weights like crazy to become stronger like Mark Spitz.

But back in the 1940s and 1950s and the early 1960s, there wasn't much weight training going on. I remember that was also the start of the steroid era. A prominent Knoxville physician did a lot of running and jogging on the track. He started talking to all the guys, particularly our weight men. He was prescribing Dianabol. Do you remember Dianabol? It was really an anabolic steroid.

TS: No, my goodness.

CR: But in those days nobody said it was illegal. It was just supposed to help you gain strength and weight, but Dianabol was the first time I ever heard of any kind of a steroid. And he was getting it for our weight men. Those guys worked with the local physician, and I let them work with him. I knew about it, and the physician talked to me about it and, at that time, said it was merely a good dietary supplement.

TS: The anabolic steroid was a dietary supplement?

CR: Yes, at that time, that's what it was. That's what they called it.

TS: I do remember the weight men, when we would go on a trip, and they'd open their bags, there'd be 500 bottles of pills that would come out it would seem like.

CR: I suppose those were Dianabol.

TS: Okay, so we were doing something that they didn't even know was illegal yet.

CR: That's exactly right. It was not illegal then.

TS: Wow. Was it always in section "X" while you were there, or did they build a weight room somewhere else in the 1960s?

CR: Yes, we put a weight room in Stokely [Athletic Center] later on. We had a weight room in Stokely down there. Section "X" when I first got there. We had the weight room in Stokely probably in my second or third year, something like that.

- TS:** I was trying to remember when Stokely opened up. [Originally built in 1958; greatly enlarged in 1966].
- CR:** Well, Stokely was there. It was a basketball court when I first came there, and then they built the other half [of the building]. Stokely was half the size it was when they first built it for basketball, and then they doubled the size of it. When they doubled the size, we went into Tartan. We were the first school in the country to Tartan everything. We Tartaned our hallways. That was a great thing for us, too, because I could run the sprinters and hurdlers in that Tartan hallway down there outside the equipment cage. We only had two lanes of hurdles and two sprint lanes down that hallway, but it was all Tartan. It was soft, and you could train on it. We only had about 40 or 50 yards with three hurdles maybe. Then we Tartaned the whole basketball floor because when Stokely was half that size, it was a regular wooden basketball floor. Then we were the first ones to be playing basketball on a totally Tartan basketball court.
- TS:** Yes, and I remember Ray Mears didn't want us to step out on the track with our spikes.
- CR:** That's right. Well, the whole floor of the arena was Tartan. The track was Tartan, and the basketball floor was Tartan.
- TS:** But we could run pretty fast in flats on that track.
- CR:** Oh, yes, you could. Probably didn't need spikes.
- TS:** Let's talk about the story of the Tom Black track and how that came about. How did you get to know Tom Black?
- CR:** Well, I'm not sure how I first got introduced. I believe, though, it was at some kind of a dinner I was invited to speak at down at Hiwassee College. Tom Black went to Hiwassee College and was the only trackman on their track team at Hiwassee College. They invited me because I was the track coach at Tennessee, so I went down there and spoke at the athletic awards dinner. I met this guy who had been the only trackman, and he told me about being the only trackman and he ran for Hiwassee College in a couple of track meets here and there and so forth. We became friends, and I got him interested in coming to our track meets. Pretty soon we used his yacht on the river to recruit football players, and that's another story.

We need to get into what the SEC did [to stop Tennessee's football and track recruiting tactics] because we were beating everybody's fanny recruiting—what we were doing. And they passed rules to

- keep us from recruiting. But Tom Black used to help me. We'd have the Vol hostesses in their bathing suits, and we've got these prospects coming in the summertime and going on the yacht on the lake [Lake Loudon], and we would swim and have nice meals and everything on the yacht. That was one of the things they made illegal for us (laughter).
- TS:** Okay.
- CR:** We were flying to the Penn Relays. Remember when George Wallace was flying that DC-3, twin engine DC. Did you go in the DC-3 to the Penn Relays?
- TS:** I went on a plane when we went down to Baton Rouge [in 1964]; was that the DC-3?
- CR:** Well, one year we went down in a DC-3 and came back on the train.
- TS:** No, in '64 we flew down out of Nashville. We had to drive over to Nashville and fly down there and then fly back [to Nashville].
- CR:** Right. Well, then the next time we came back on the train, and that's when Gus [Manning, UT Sports Information Director, 1951-60] and Haywood [Harris, Sports Information Director, 1961-2000] had to chaperone those guys after we won [the SEC outdoor] meet. I went to Memphis to recruit at the high school state meet. They [the trackmen] raised hell and were drinking on the train and had a wild trip home on the train—Baton Rouge to Knoxville.
- TS:** Are you talking about the athletic department guys were drinking on the train?
- CR:** No, no. Not Gus or Haywood, but some of our athletes.
- CV:** (laughter)
- CR:** Well, I don't know. Gus and Haywood might have been, but some of those guys were drinking, and it was a wild ride back. But, anyway, what were we talking about?
- TS:** Well, Tom Black.
- CR:** Tom Black. So we took Mr. and Mrs. Black on our plane to the Penn Relays. That was where we first began to make inroads, and he saw his first big time track meet. He got really excited about everything. We were trying to find somebody to help fund the Rose Avenue

project. We had the spot for it now that Woodruff had finally admitted that we couldn't run a high hurdle race on the curve. So I started talking to him about it, and I remember the day. He used to come over to the warehouse and watch us run every once in a while. I don't know if you remember that or not. He came over maybe three or four times.

But this was maybe the second or third time he came over there because he knew we were working out there, and he came over. I remember standing outside the warehouse, and he said, "You guys really need that track. I'm going to help you get that track. What will it take to get that track?" That's when we started talking about the money it would take to get the track. Then I put him together with Charlie Brakebill [the first full-time fundraiser and future vice president of development] with the UT Foundation. [Charles F. Brakebill told him] how he could count it as a contribution and a deduction. But that's when he told me that we were going to have a track. So that's how Tom Black came into it.

TS: What was it, \$50,000?

CR: I think it was \$50,000, which was pretty good money in those days.

TS: And that was enough to build the track and the stadium?

CR: No, I think it was not enough to build everything, but I think it was enough to put the Tartan track in. And then the athletic department came through with some [funds]. Of course, [the University of Tennessee] built that Health and Physical Education Building and built those bleachers [attached to the southeast] side [of the PE] building as part of that project. The new physical education building was right above the track—the one they built when they built the whole Rose Avenue Project. [The name Rose Avenue would later be changed to Pat Head Summitt Street]. They built the Natatorium on the southwest side of the track. They built those bleachers in there as part of the PE building. [The stadium] came right from the building down to the [track]. That building paid for all that. Tom Black's gift paid for a Tartan track, when Tartan was state of the art.

TS: What was that, 3M Company?

CR: 3M—Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing Company.

TS: And then the football field was a Tartan field for a while.

- CR:** Well, at the time, see, we had already put Tartan on the basketball floor and the hallways, everything at Stokely Center was Tartan everywhere you went, Tartan football field. We were the first all Tartan, all composition school in the country, and so it's natural that we went with 3M and Tartan on the track.
- TS:** As best as I can recall, the alumni association didn't raise much money before this time. Presumably, the athletic department was raising lots of money. How much of your time would you say was spent in, I guess, schmoozing with possible donors and trying to raise money?
- CR:** Oh, not a lot, but everywhere I went, I would make a speech, and I got where I was probably making a civic club or two a week. Every day at noon I would be going somewhere and making a talk, and I would probably make fifty or sixty of those a year. Every civic club—Kiwaniis and Civitan—every club in Knoxville would have me once, and I would always pitch [that] “we need to have a track with the great track team we have, so come on out to see the track meet.” Of course, at the same time, I was also selling people to come and watch our track team, which people did come and watch our track team. One of the biggest problems I have with the current Tennessee program, and you know this, do you know how many track meets they had in Knoxville last year?
- TS:** Not many, I don't believe.
- CR:** The Dogwood relays; now it's called the Sea Ray Relays. One time a year for the last several years did they run a track meet on Tom Black Track—one of the finest track facilities in the country used for a track meet one time a year.
- TS:** My goodness.
- CR:** No wonder you don't have any interest in track on your campus. We'd get 10,000 people to come out there and watch Willie Davenport run Richmond Flowers or Marty Liquori come and run, and Larry James against Hardee McAlhaney, because we promoted it. It's a shame, it's a crying shame. Why do you have a track program? Why would you have a track program for one meet a year? All those scholarships and all those people training and working for one meet a year at home.
- CV:** Tom, did we skip over the innovative procedures Coach Rohe implemented as far as his recruiting and how he reached out and found all these people?

TS: Well, I guess we did. Why don't you talk about that?

CR: Are you talking about with the cards and the letters and stuff? Well, fortunately, Woodruff gave me a secretary. I went through three or four of them, Kathy Rose and Janie Behan, and others. I had a full time track secretary, so I used that secretary to the greatest advantage. I would sign 25 letters every morning going out across the country to people to tell them about the Tennessee track program, tell them we were interested in them and wanted them to come. We had a post card file, double file drawer with all these prospects by event, categories, and so forth. We would keep up with them. We'd send one letter, and then we'd send another one in two weeks. I don't know that baseball had a full time secretary or anybody else had a full time secretary except football and me and basketball.

So Kathy Rose and Janie and whoever else I had—I had three secretaries I think—but anyway, I don't know how many stamps we bought, but we bought a lot of stamps because there was no such thing as e-mail or cell phones or anything like that. So we deluged the country with mail, and whether we got the guys or not, everybody knew about us. I'm satisfied that every decent trackman east of the Mississippi got a letter from us—and many of those in the West. But we concentrated most of our letters on the east of the Mississippi and east of the Rocky Mountains, because we did recruit Texas some and we recruited Chicago and St. Louis and so forth. I'm confident that everybody got that word, not once but twice or three or four or five times. Even the guys we would lose—they'd say, "Hey, I almost went to Tennessee." There was never a guy that we went after that wasn't seriously considering coming to Tennessee.

End of Tape 2, side A; start of Tape 2, side B, June 13, 2013

Innovative Recruiting Techniques

TS: You were talking about you sent cards to all the coaches around the southeast.

CR: Well, around the country, but particularly—I'm confident that everybody east of the Rocky Mountains probably got one, two, three, four letters from me, coaches and then their top athletes. We had big black boards [with names of prospects].

TS: And so you're asking, "Who are your good sophomores and juniors?"

CR: I'm asking, "Who are potentially your top trackmen? We've got a great track program at Tennessee. We'd be interested in following his career. Keep us posted on how he is doing. Let me know what his best times are and distances." We never recruited the sophomores or juniors. I said, "When he finishes his junior year, let me know because we may want him to come visit our campus."

TS: About how many did you bring into campus each year?

CR: Fifty, sixty, seventy, something like that. But we didn't pay all their way. A lot of guys just drove in because they were close enough to drive. We let them come in. A lot of times, during the football season—and that's another story probably that will be a lot of fun to tell about—during the football season, a lot of the trackmen were available. They weren't running track meets. If I knew them, they had good junior times. Now it's the fall of their senior year. We were way ahead of everybody else because I'm inviting the top trackmen in the country to come see a Tennessee football game. Come down and see us. All those recruits on the sidelines—you know, track guys never got that kind of stuff. They would go out there before 80,000 people and get introduced or something. So we were way ahead of everybody else. We would do that in the fall, and then we would mix them in with the football prospects. This is a side story on football and track recruiting in the fall—Jeff Clark [assistant coach], of course, came out of the Marine Corps—a big, blustering guy with a vocabulary like....

TS: Somebody out of the Marine Corps!

CR: Marine Corps vocabulary, and actually, most of our track guys were afraid of him. He was 6'5", weighed 280 pounds, but the weight men loved him. I got him into law school. He was in law school, and to help him make money—he had tuition, fees, and maybe \$100 a month fellowship or something—every home football game, I would get 150 or 200 tickets, prime seats in the stadium, to give to my football prospects coming in. Well, I could never end up with some kid and his parents coming from Morristown, and all of a sudden he came all the way down, and I didn't have tickets for him. So, I got more tickets than I ever used. I could never run out of tickets.

So what I told Jeff every Saturday morning when everybody had checked in before the game, was, "Here are fifty prime seats. Sell them for whatever you can get for them and you keep the difference,

I just want the price of the tickets back.” So all of a sudden Jeff Clark became the ticket manager of tickets at Tennessee. He would be selling these tickets to high rollers coming in from Kingsport and Nashville and Chattanooga, making big money for himself. Pretty soon all the football players found out what he was doing. They all got four tickets to a game, and if their parents were only using two, they said, “Jeff, will you sell my tickets for me?” So now he had my fifty tickets and a hundred football tickets. Now he’s selling 150 or 200 football tickets every football game. He said he was making more money than he ever made his first year as a lawyer down in Orlando.

TS: I thought that was called scalping!

CR: Oh, it’s called scalping, okay! But he was just doing really well with it. Then, of course, we would have these trackmen come in for football games. Well the track coaches in the country weren’t recruiting those trackmen until they started track the next spring or next winter or whatever it was. I had these guys come in. You don’t think they weren’t sold on Tennessee? They came in and saw a football game and went on the sidelines and everything. It was just unbelievable as to how excited they would be. I had most of those guys sold before their senior track season because I recruited them along with the football players. Then there’s the Richmond Flowers story. You’ve heard the story about Richmond and the Gatlinburg trips?

TS: Yes.

CR: We’re getting a little far afield right now, but as far as the football recruiting, I started the Vol hostesses. Well, today, most of these schools use college girls for hostesses. I think they’re nuts because those college girls don’t really get excited about dating a high school senior on a weekend. The same would hold true for us back then. So, what do we do? Okay, “let’s find the best looking high school junior and senior girls in Knoxville and make them our Vol hostesses. Jeff Clark was my honorary director of the Vol hostesses, and he loved the job. So, we went to about ten high schools, Powell High School, Fulton High School, Bearden High School, Central High School, East High School, and we got these applications for girls who would like to be a Vol hostess.

Well, don’t you think every girl in the school would like to be a Vol hostess? So, Jeff would interview them, and he would pick them. I think we picked 36 girls, and those 36 girls would host these prospects. We had seminars for them. First of all, we interviewed

them and saw whether they were going to be nice to the prospects and so forth. Then we selected them, and when we selected them, we would hold a meeting with them every week or two and remind what they needed to do. Part of their deal was that they would be assigned to a prospect every weekend. Then their obligation was to write that prospect a letter after he went home and to stay in touch with him. We got them competitive to recruit to see if they could get those kids committed. So that was the Vol hostesses program. It was very successful.

Richmond would be the first to tell you that Phil Smith and [Jim] Webster took him and whomever else and got their dates from the Vol hostesses, and they went on the hay ride. We'd always have a nice function for the night before the game or the night after the game if it was an afternoon game, or both. One of the most popular items was we'd take them all on a bus to Gatlinburg with their dates, get on the hay ride at the bottom of the mountain, ride up to the ski lodge, have dinner at the ski lodge and schmooze around, and ride the hay ride back down and take the bus home with their dates, the Vol hostesses. These guys were sold! If truth were said, that's what sold it.

TS: That's what got Lane Kiffin in trouble, one of the things, wasn't it?

CR: You couldn't do that today. So, pretty soon the SEC saw we were beating their fannies. All of a sudden they passed a rule—you could not recruit outside of twenty miles radius of Knoxville, which excluded us from going to the ski lodge, going to Gatlinburg. That's when we started the summer recruiting. We were the first to start summer recruiting. Most of those schools didn't have their prospects come to the campus until football season started. So, we said, "Why wait till then; let's get these guys to come in the summertime and use our Vol hostesses in their bathing suits on Tom Black's yacht." So, pretty soon, the SEC said you cannot recruit in the summertime, and that's strictly because of what we were doing.

TS: When did football camps start in the summertime?

CR: The high school camps?

TS: Yes.

CR: Oh, those didn't start until the 1970s or early 1980s, much later. There were no summer football camps. Actually, we had the summer camps, but they weren't football camps. We had these kids come in in the summer, but they weren't necessarily football players. They

were alumni's children who could major in football, basketball, track or golf—we had eight or ten sports in the summertime, and I ran those camps on the campus. But those weren't sports camps. They were mainly alumni's children. That was from my days of running my camps over in Brevard [North Carolina]. I got a lot of our trackmen jobs at those summer camps.

TS: Was that Camp Carolina?

CV: Tom's brother . . .

CR: Oh, yes, you never worked there, but Paul did.

TS: Yes, he worked there several years.

CR: Yes, that was great. Webster almost married the daughter of the guy that owned Camp Carolina who was chairman and CEO of Reynolds Metals, you know, Reynolds Aluminum, Reynolds Metals.

TS: Oh, I thought it was R.J. Reynolds—Reynolds Metals, okay.

CR: Oh no. Cathy McConnell was her name—beautiful blond-haired girl, in love with Webster. He passed up a great deal for the rest of his life right there!

TS: Well, maybe this is a good place to stop for tonight.

Continuation of Tape 2, side B, June 14, 2013

First Football Recruiting Coordinator in the SEC; Dual Sports Athletes; Bear Bryant's Attempt to Hire Rohe for the University of Alabama

TS: We're picking up again on Friday morning, June 14, 2013. I want to start today by asking you how it came about that you were going to be the football recruiter. You came in to be the track coach. I guess after about a year, they must have asked you if you would be the head recruiter for the football team. Could you talk about that situation and how you came into that job?

CR: That situation occurred when Doug Dickey was hired as the head football coach at Tennessee [in 1964]. I had some very successful football recruiting ventures both at Southern Mississippi, where I was associate in the athletic department, and at Furman. In fact, I'll go back and relate a little story that you might want to record of my football recruiting at Furman. It was the football recruiting at Furman

that Doug Dickey was familiar with. I had developed a little reputation as a great recruiter, and he wanted to add a recruiting coordinator that, really, most of the schools didn't have at that time. Individual coaches did recruiting, but they didn't have a recruiting coordinator designated specifically to help with recruiting.

Anyway, one of the interesting things I did when I was at Furman, having a Chicago area background, I took a recruiting trip to Chicago and lined up a bunch of prospects. As a matter of fact, I put fourteen of them on a bus. Of course, today you can't recruit on a bus. You've got to fly people in private planes. I put fourteen good football prospects—who were probably not going to get offers from Michigan and Wisconsin and Illinois, but were good enough to help Furman play in the Southern Conference—on a bus, and it was a long drive from Chicago to Greenville, South Carolina.

So, we stopped at Cove Lake [State Park, Campbell County, Tennessee, just across the Kentucky border]—low budget—we stayed in the state park condominium type thing they had there. Cove Lake, was very nice. Then we drove on in. It was on either Easter weekend or another long weekend because we were able to spend two full days in Greenville and then drive the bus all the way back non-stop to Chicago. Today, you couldn't do that because none of those guys would even consider going to Furman University after that bus trip! We signed about nine of those guys that year. So, anyway, that was kind of an unusual recruiting trip. But, yes, I had gained a reputation with both my track recruiting and my football recruiting as the defensive backfield coach at Furman. So Doug asked me would I be interested in becoming the football recruiting coordinator, working together to try to get the dual sport athletes and add some speed to his football team.

At the same time, we also did a lot of things with trying to develop speed and strength among the football players. We were the first school to really have any kind of education with the football player on how to start, how to use his arms, how to increase his speed, how to improve the forty yard dash time. We were way ahead of everybody there, and we were one of the early ones to really get started on weight training for the football players and trackmen. So, that worked hand in hand. Doug said, "If you'll do this, I'll talk to Woodruff, and we'll get you some assistant track coaches—get a couple of graduate assistants and an assistant coach." So we added Thad Talley to my staff. So, that's how I got started in the football recruiting.

TS: If I remember correctly, Doug Dickey was shocked when he got to Tennessee about how slow all the football players were. It seemed like there wasn't anybody who could run the 100 faster than a 10.4 or something like that.

CR: Well, of course, they had been running single wing football. It was more of a power football formation. It didn't require the speed, and they weren't throwing the ball a lot, and they didn't open up the field or anything like that. In today's terminology, they would have been considered a plodding offense, I guess. Yes, that was true, and he was interested in getting some speed. Of course, that's how we started the tradition.

TS: Talk about the role of recruiting athletes for both football and track, and maybe talk about some of those that you were able to recruit.

CR: Well, Richmond Flowers is the most famous of those. That was a story where I was going head to head with Bear Bryant, which was quite a task in those days. We met at the Flowers house [in 1964-65] at least once when we were both there in the kitchen talking to Mr. and Mrs. Flowers.

TS: Bear Bryant and you were both in the same house at the same time?

CR: Yes. And we won the battle because of a number of reasons—first of all, because we had already started a good track program. We were already generally acknowledged as the track power in the southeast. Our football program was good—may not have been quite as good as Coach Bryant's was, but it was good enough that he [Richmond] wanted to be an Olympic trackman and be a good football player at the same time. Then there were a lot of problems that went along with the racial problem in Alabama and his father and Governor [George] Wallace....

TS: The father was the attorney general wasn't he?

CR: The father was the attorney general [of Alabama from 1963 to 1967], and he was indicted on extortion charges and convicted. It was all a set up by the Wallace people because he had the affront to run against [Lurleen Burns] Wallace [who ran in her husband's place because he was constitutionally barred from succeeding himself] on a more liberal, civil rights platform. So, they went after him and they trumped up some extortion charges, and actually he spent some time at Keesler Field in some kind of detention center or something. [Richmond M. Flowers Sr., was sentenced in 1969 to eight years in federal prison, but was paroled in 1973 after serving 16 months, and

- was pardoned by President Jimmy Carter in 1978]. I have great admiration for his father and his family and his mother, but it was a very tough time for Richmond to go through. The conviction and everything happened after he actually had come to Tennessee.
- TS: But he might have wanted to get away from Alabama for that reason?
- CR: Well, he wanted to get away from it because of the contentiousness of his father going to be running against Wallace at the time. In the long run it proved to be a very wise decision because he wasn't in the middle of it there in Alabama. At least he was able to pursue his own track and football ambitions without living right there in the heart of that trial and everything with his dad.
- CV: They went on to make a movie about that.
- CR: Well, ESPN has made a movie of Richmond ["Richmond Flowers Sr. and Jr.," *ESPN Sports Century: Greatest Athletes (TV Series)*, February 27, 2002]. I've seen it several times on ESPN—the network that runs the old videos and movies. It was a movie on Richmond. It wasn't on the trial although that was part of the movie.
- TS: So he comes to Tennessee and....
- CR: He comes to Tennessee, and did very well in the games against Alabama. He had to play freshman ball his first year. I think we tied them once, and then the last year or two we beat the heck out of them. [1965 Tennessee 7, Alabama 7; 1966 Alabama 11, Tennessee 10; 1967 Tennessee 24, Alabama 13; 1968 Tennessee 10, Alabama 9] That led to Bear Bryant trying to recruit me as a football recruiter.
- TS: Well, maybe we could do that story now, and then come back to some of the other dual athletes. Why don't you talk about Bear Bryant trying to recruit you?
- CR: Well, I try to get my years mixed up, but I think it was probably 1969. We had been dominating the conference and had a great track program, and I got a call from Coach Bryant.
- TS: I guess as far as Richmond was concerned, when did he [graduate]?
- CR: His last year [of football] he was just leaving the Olympic trials in '68 where he didn't quite make it [finishing 5th in the trials (just behind Pat Pomphrey in 4th); Richmond suffered a severe hamstringing injury on June 2, 1968, and had not fully recovered by the time of the trials in September].

TS: Okay so we're in 1969 now when Bear Bryant calls you.

CR: In '69 and Bear Bryant calls and says, "I'm getting ready to hire a track coach; who would you suggest? You got the best track program in the southeast. I need some names of some good coaches that you would recommend." I talked to him a lot, about different coaches from Kansas and California and so forth, and he finally said, "Well, how about you; would you be interested in the job?" That floored me because I really thought he was making the call to get some recommendations from me, and maybe he was, But then when he threw that out, it started to dialogue over the next week or so, back and forth, about, "What would it take for you to come to Alabama?" The end result is we both flew into Atlanta, and we met at the Atlanta airport. We had an hour and a half meeting.

He wanted me to not only be the track coach, but also be a director of football recruiting—do the same thing I was doing at Tennessee. In return, he was willing to do almost anything to accomplish that. He said, "You make a list of what you want." So I made a list of what it would take for me to come to Alabama. It included a new track, a couple of full time assistant track coaches, unlimited scholarship assistance—whatever we needed. I said that to him, and he responded, "Well, that's quite a list. I've got to go talk to my people about this. It's going to cost a lot of money." Salary was never a big issue although it was considerably more than I was making at Tennessee. So, a day or two later he called back and said, "You got it all. I want to go and announce this at the SEC meeting." They were meeting in Hilton Head at that time. The SEC meeting was coming up [that] weekend. I said, "I've got to talk to the Tennessee folks, yet. Don't announce it. I've got to cleared it with them." But my intention was to go and accept the job at that time.

TS: Were you operating on one year contracts?

CR: Oh, I never had a contract. So, I went to Woodruff and Dickey. Their response was, "Ohhh, you can go to California or UCLA or Michigan, Oregon, wherever, but you ain't going to Alabama!" As a result, I got some additional help. That's when I brought [Russ] Polhemus in and Connie Smith [as assistant coaches], and I got some more help with my track program, a little bit of a raise. The hardest thing I ever had to do in my professional life was to call Coach Bryant on Sunday night in Hilton Head because he was going to have his press conference the next day and tell him that I wasn't going to come to Alabama.

He was mad! He had been drinking. I got him on a Sunday night, and he said, “Oh, you just used me! I tell you what we’re going to do. We’re going to go ahead and have that press conference anyway; we’re going to announce that we’re going to hire a great track coach; and we’re going to beat Tennessee’s fanny in track.” And that’s how we left that conversation. I said, “Well, good luck to you, Coach. I hope you can do that.” He was really mad, but he recognized the situation. So, that was the end of that. But he called the press conference about what Alabama was going to do with the track program.

CV: Did you ever have any other conversations with Bear?

CR: Well, I had no more conversation with him until we were playing Alabama down at Legion Field [Birmingham] the next fall. I had no other conversations. I was down on the field, and he was down there. He saw me. I made a point that I could be seen because I hadn’t had any conversation with him since that time. He had hired a track coach, [who had been] an assistant at UCLA or somewhere—he didn’t stay but a year or two there—but anyway, [Bryant] came over and said, “I want to apologize for myself. I was kind of in my cups that night.” That’s exactly what he said, “I was kind of in my cups that night.” But he said, “We went ahead and hired a track coach. We’ll probably have a good track program, but we’ll never be able to beat you, but I’m sorry things didn’t work out, but I want to apologize. I was in my cups that night.” That’s exactly the language he used.

TS: How frequently did you get offers to go to other places to coach track or to recruit for football?

CR: Not too many because there weren’t too many people that were willing to spend money on track. I had a couple of Big Ten schools that were interested in me and talked to me. They knew we had a good program in Tennessee, and nobody was going to call me and offer me something unless they could offer me something better than what I had at Tennessee. But certainly that was the highlight and the most difficult phone call I ever made in my life.

TS: To what degree do you think the success of the Tennessee program upgraded track in general in the South?

CR: In the SEC, particularly, it made all the difference in the world. Nobody was out there trying to be great in track except us. All of a sudden we were embarrassing them. LSU had won a national championship [1933]—the only national championship that an SEC

school had ever won. They won one back when they had [Jack] Torrance, the shot putter. He won the shot put [52'10"], and [Glenn] Slats Hardin, Billy Hardin's father, won the [220-yard low] hurdles [in 22.9 seconds and the 440-yard dash in 47.1]. They won the championship one year, but otherwise it was almost always dominated by California schools or West Coast schools. Then there were a couple of eastern schools; Villanova won a national championship [1957].

Anyway, I think it made all the difference in the world because year after year, it got more and more embarrassing. We were scoring as many points almost as the rest of the conference put together. When we would go to [the SEC] cross country meet, we [could have sent] out second team and swept the [meet]. It was getting embarrassing. So, people began to put money into track programs, hire guys who were interested in track. Just like at Tennessee [before 1962], a lot of those programs had assistant basketball and football coaches as track coaches. That's the way it was at Tennessee. John Sines was the track coach before me [1952-59], and he was an assistant basketball coach.

TS: And then Ralph Patterson that last year before you came here.

CR: Right. Johnny Sines was the head basketball coach at Lawrence [University] when I was in school there.

TS: Was anybody challenging Tennessee—like Florida or somebody—by the time you left?

CR: Well, they hired Jimmy Carnes, of course. I got Jimmy Carnes the job there. I encouraged them to hire him at Florida.

TS; And he replaced you at Furman too?

CR: Well, when I told them I was going to Tennessee, they said, "What do we do with our track program now that you are [leaving]?" I said, "Here's the guy you need to hire. Jimmy was already coming in as a graduate assistant. So, I said, "He's planning on being here. He's a great high school track coach. He'll do a great job with all the guys.' So, they hired him immediately. Then, after two years, I think it was [1964], the athletic director, football coach at Florida [Ray Graves] called me about a recommendation for track coach. I recommended Jimmy and endorsed him hardily for the job.

TS: Why don't we talk about the dual sport athletes? Richmond Flowers is the most prominent. [He won an NCAA indoor championship in

1968 in the 60-yard hurdles (7.0 seconds) and was second in the NCAA outdoor championships in the 120-yard high hurdles in 1967 and third in 1969 (13.5 seconds in each year). In 1967 he was also on a second-place sprint relay team, and in 1967 he was named first team All-America in football by *Football News*.] Who were some others that played football and track?

CR: Chip Kell was an outstanding example. He was the outstanding high school shot putter in the country. I don't know if he set the high school record, but he was right up in the national records [and was the SEC indoor shot put champion in 1968 and 1969 and the outdoor champion in 1969 and 1970]. He was the prototype shot putter/football player because he was already into weight training, himself, and he was ahead of the time. That was at that time when the weight people—Parry O'Brien and the shot putters and discus throwers were getting into the weights, heavily. He was already into that, and, of course, became an all-America [in football in 1969 and 1970]. He [twice] won the Jacobs [Memorial Award] blocking trophy [as the best blocker in the SEC]. He was the outstanding offensive lineman in the country.

Then Chick McGeehan was another one. He was a sprinter and a football player. Karl Kremser wasn't recruited by the football team. He came to us as a high jumper. He had soccer experience. That was when soccer style kickers were just coming into the forefront. So, Karl asked me if he could try out for football. He came as a transfer student, and he had to sit out, I think, a year. Anyway, he asked me if he could try out for football as a kicker because our kickers weren't too good. So Doug gave him a try out, and sure enough, he became the regular kicker for two years. He was not only a good kicker but a great kicker. I guess one of his claims to fame is that we lost the national championship when he missed a long field goal in the Orange Bowl [January 1, 1968]. We would have been the national champions that year. Oklahoma beat us. It was like a 50 yard field goal or something. It was no chip shot. But, he missed that in the Orange Bowl—and just barely missed it.

TS: Okay, you've got a whole list of guys.

CR: Yes, Andy Bennett, for example, was an outstanding sprinter in high school from over in Tampa, and we brought him in as a trackman and a football player, and he lettered in track two years, but he was never able to be a star sprinter, not because he wasn't good, but because we had better guys than he was as sprinters. He played football—didn't play a whole lot, but he was a letterman. Richard Callaway never lettered in track for us, but he was an outstanding

backup tailback, and he was a high jumper who could have been a real help in the track team, but he was hurt a lot, so he never did perform like he could have. I think he came as a 6'7" high jumper, which was very good at that time. Whit Canale and Dick Evey were already on the football team as lineman and as shot putters on the track team. Of course, Richmond Flowers was our most famous recruit.

We had Tommy Jernigan who was a defensive back and lettered in track too. He was a long jumper and triple jumper. Of course, Chip Kell we talked about. He was the outstanding offensive lineman in the country and SEC shot put champion. He never spent quite as much time on track as he could have because he was having a great career as a football player and was going to be a top draft pick and everything, although he lettered in '68, '69 and '70. I think he won the SEC title two years in a row in the shot put. He never became a national contender in the shot because he was such a good football player.

Gene Killian was another shot putter and discus thrower for us who was also an offensive lineman. I recruited him out of St. Petersburg, Florida. Karl Kremser came to us as just a high jumper—a transfer from a small school up in Pennsylvania. He went out for the football team and became the number one kicker on the team that almost won the national championship with his fifty yard field goal in the Orange Bowl in the last minute of play that would have won the national championship for us. But he just missed it. Kenny Lambert was a hurdler from Jacksonville. Ray Moore helped to recruit him. We had a lot of good hurdlers at that time. He was a good hurdler, but he was looking behind Richmond Flowers; and Pat Murphy and Roger Neiswender and Bill High came on. He was a football player in '71, '72, so he was behind probably four or five world class hurdlers.

Chick McGeehan was a good trackman and a good football player, but maybe even a better trackman for us when he was recruited to school. Stan Trott was very good in the triple jump and the long jump on the track team, lettered three times in track and three times in football and was outstanding. We ought to get him more involved. He and Richmond were roommates and very, very close. Those are the guys.

TS: Okay, this was obviously beneficial to both football and track to bring in the dual athletes.

CR: Oh, yes, and it got better. We started it, and it didn't take off right away. Once we got Richmond Flowers, it began to grow and grow.

What happened was Coach [Bill] Battle [UT head football coach, 1970-76] continued the same philosophy and brought in more guys because I recruited guys like Stanley Morgan. The last year I recruited Stanley Morgan. He didn't run during my time [as UT track coach], but I recruited him the year I left. He was a great football player and a trackman at Tennessee. I think he was SEC sprint champion.

Those that played for Johnny Majors [UT head football coach, 1977-1992] and Bill Battle included Willie Gault, an all-time hurdling great legend in both track and football. Anthony Hancock, Roland James—all those guys were Olympians. Pike Jones was a guy that should be on our list. Pike Jones is from Charlotte, North Carolina. He was a sprinter and trackman. I think he came in my last year, because he ran track for us one year. This should be 1971-74. Mike Miller, another Olympian, NCAA champion, Stanley Morgan, [Bruno] Pauletto was a shot putter and football player. Stan Trott continued to play football on after I left. Darryal Wilson was another good one.

TS: I think there's another recruiting story that we need to talk about too, and that's how integration came about in the Tennessee athletic program and the SEC in general.

CR: Yes, well, of course, I was always interested in recruiting the best track athlete, whether he was black or white or what color he was, and nobody in the conference had recruited a black athlete. Kentucky was trying to recruit the first black athlete, and Vanderbilt recruited a basketball player [Perry Wallace]. He did very well for them. Doug Dickey wanted to recruit a black athlete too. But the year before that I wanted to recruit a great sprinter, Bill Hurd over in Memphis. He won the state in the 100 and the 220. He later signed with Notre Dame and was NCAA, sixty yard indoor dash champ. I don't think he ever won an outdoor title.

I wanted to recruit him, and I talked to Woodruff about bringing the first black athletes at Tennessee. He would have been the first black athlete in the Southeastern Conference. Coach Woodruff didn't think we were quite ready for that yet. He did talk to some people about it. Anyway, my request was turned down to try to recruit Hurd. I wanted him because I saw him run in the state championships over in Memphis. But the next year I was determined that we needed to recruit a black athlete. Doug was ready to recruit a black football player, so I went after two great middle distance runners.

End of Tape 2, side B; start of Tape 3, side A, Friday, June 14, 2013

Integration of the Track and Football Programs; Bill Skinner and the Moustache Controversy; Associate Director of Athletics at Virginia Tech; Involvement in the World Football League; Administrative Vice President of Pace Management Corporation

TS: You were talking about the integration of the athletic program, and you couldn't get Bill Hurd in 1966, I believe it was. So, 1967 comes around, and you persuade Tennessee to recruit Audry Hardy.

CR: They said, "Okay, you can recruit a couple of trackmen. So, Woodruff gave me permission to do that. So, I saw Audry run in the Tennessee state high school championships in Memphis. I was impressed by the potential he had—long stride, big tall guy, about 6'1" or 6'2". When I looked into the matter more, he was an outstanding student, just the kind of guy that we wanted to recruit. As he has written several times, he almost went home when he first got to [the University of] Tennessee because there weren't many blacks in school there. It was a difficult decision whether to stay, and his mother talked him into staying. But after two or three months, he got to feeling more at home, and he felt like he was treated very well. He never felt a lot of discrimination, I don't think, but he just felt isolated a lot when he first came there. But he proved to be a very successful student and trackman. I think he was one of the greatest 600 [meter] runners I ever saw. His race was probably better between the quarter and the half. Indoors, he was second in the NCAA 600 [yards in 1969].

James [Craig] was an outstanding trackman in Alabama. I was impressed with what a relaxed, long stride he had. He looked like those Kenyan distance runners—half milers, and milers. Kip Keino and those kind of guys. So we recruited James, and James came from a very, very poor family. It's great to know that those two guys—the first black athletes—not only graduated but went on to good careers and jobs. Audry is retired and is giving back to society. He does a lot of volunteer work and charitable contributions and has his own charitable cause that he works at.

We lost track of James for a long time, but he is now back in the fold. I've had good conversations with him. They were both outstanding trackmen, and both ended up graduating. Audry was a good student. James struggled a little bit, not because he wasn't a good student, but because he didn't pay much attention to school work for a long time. So, those were our first black athletes, and they were the first in the SEC. James Green, a great sprinter that Kentucky

recruited at the same time, was another outstanding athlete we had in the conference.

TS: So, is track the first sport to integrate [in the SEC] in 1967?

CR: [Football wide receiver] Lester [McClain] came that same year. We recruited Lester and Audry and James. That same year Vanderbilt recruited a basketball player [Perry Wallace] from Pearl High School [in Nashville]. And James Green at Kentucky. I think those were the first black athletes in the conference.

TS: So, the border states [Tennessee and Kentucky] were the first.

CR: Set the pace, right.

TS: And then, I think, places like the University of Georgia took another four years or so.

CR: Oh, yes, Alabama too. Bear Bryant decided to recruit black athletes when he [played] Southern Cal and [Sam] Cunningham ran over his team [for 150 rushing yards and three touchdowns in a 42-21 USC victory in the 1970 season opener in Birmingham], and he decided he wanted to recruit some black athletes.

TS: It's hard to explain this to anybody nowadays, but the University of Tennessee was integrated when I got there in 1961. There were a few black students when I got there, but they couldn't compete in athletics. I presume they couldn't do any of the extracurricular activities.

CR: I'm not sure they couldn't do any of the extracurricular activities, Tom, but I think the publicity attached to the athletic program—I remember the time that the Mississippi State basketball team went up and played Loyola of Chicago [in the 1963 Mideast Regional of the NCAA tournament at East Lansing, Michigan, where the Mississippi State team had to sneak out of Mississippi under cover of darkness to avoid being served an injunction prohibiting them from participating in a game against black players] . They didn't have any blacks, but they were playing against blacks. At the time, the SEC wasn't playing against blacks. That was a big controversy when they went up and played against blacks.

TS: I've always thought that the great thing about athletics is that it is whoever gets to the finish line first.

CR: No matter what the color is.

TS: Right, and fans in the stands don't care what color they are either, as long as they have the orange [of the University of Tennessee] on.

CR: That's right.

TS: Maybe I should ask you, do you think that athletics played an important role in the integration of the South in general?

CR: Two things: One, they got help once it got going, but I think because of the great publicity [surrounding] athletics, it took longer to get going than it did some other facets of society. Because of the publicity that athletics received in the South, it was done cautiously. Once it was done, though, it helped the whole integration process because now that the news was out, it's almost like this with the gay situation now. Now it was out, it was going to snowball. I think that's what happened. Once it got going, it really took off in the South. The black athletes now dominate football, basketball, and track in the Southeastern Conference.

TS: I guess back in the 1960s, if we had any gay athletes, we weren't even aware of it, were we?

CR: No. I think we had a gay manager. Do you remember him, Copley?

CV: Yes. He kept it to himself.

TS: I want to ask you too about the 1960s. Did athletes change with the times in the sixties? Did they get harder to coach as time went on?

CR: Well, I don't think I experienced it. When I did some of the things that I did and look back on it, I guess the change in athlete occurred more as I left coaching [in 1971] in the early 1970s. I go back, and there are several stories that we can record. For instance the [Mickey] Shelton, [Don] Pinkston sunburn. Do you know about that?

TS: Yes, I know their side [of the story].

CR: Oh, you've heard their side? My side of it was that we were down in Tallahassee to run Florida State, and I warned all of them about being in the sun—not to get sunburned. We had a track meet to run. The night before the track meet, Shelton and Pinkston came in red as lobsters. I was just furious. I said, "Well, you guys, get yourself out on the highway, and hitchhike back to Knoxville, and I'll see you at practice Monday morning."

- TS:** You would be on the national news nowadays [for abusing student athletes].
- CR:** I know, I know. Can you imagine doing that today? And you know what, though? They went back to the highway. They hitchhiked home, did exactly what I told them to do, and they were at practice Monday morning. You couldn't do that in today's day and time.
- TS:** Okay, so these were the old school guys.
- CR:** Well, what about the old school guys that we would take out to the [McGhee Tyson] airport [Alcoa Highway], and they would run back in—fourteen miles—and don't you dare take a drink of water. I would see those guys over at the Ag farm drinking water, and when they got back to the locker room, I had a sign on their lockers, saying, "You damn water drinkers can get here an extra hour early for practice tomorrow morning, so that you can run an extra ten miles.
- TS:** Why did we do that? Was it just a sign of weakness that you had to drink water?
- CR:** Oh, yes, the whole idea was that you really didn't have to have water, and that tough guys didn't.
- TS:** We never did. I know that.
- CV:** Yes, you were a sissy if you had to drink water.
- CR:** Yes, but, amazingly enough, we never lost anybody to heat prostration.
- TS:** So, you are saying that as long as you were coaching, everybody put up with the routine?
- CR:** I think the athlete was more accustomed to listening to the coach, and taking the coach's orders, and we were not yet into that free spirit of athletics that later came where the athlete challenged the coach. I didn't have many challenging me. There were little things, like Larry Kelly [half-miler, 1966-69] coming down to catch the team bus in a pair of bell bottom trousers. Well, that wasn't so bad. But I didn't think that was the kind of attire we should be wearing. That was more of a hippie mode. So he almost missed the bus because he had to go back up and change his pants before he could get on the bus.
- TS:** Would you have left without him because he didn't get back on time?

CR: Oh, yes.

TS: I know from the pictures that some of the guys [by the late 1960s] had pretty long hair by the end of your time.

CR: Oh, not really long hair. We didn't have any moustaches, you know. That was the issue with Bill Skinner [javelin, 1969-70]. He shaved his moustache off because I asked him to. I didn't ask him to at first. He came back from Russia where he had beaten....

TS: He was about 29 years old, wasn't he?

CR: Yes. As a matter, he was the same age as Bill Battle, the head football coach. He came back from Russia. I think he was on the cover of *Sports Illustrated* or maybe *Track & Field News* with his red, handlebar moustache that he had grown while he was on the U.S. team. He had just beaten Janis Lusic, the [1968] Olympic champion. He performed for the American team in the U.S.-Russia meet at Dynamo stadium in Russia [in 1970] and beat Janis Lusic. He came back with a handlebar moustache, and Battle said, "You can't have an athlete with a moustache. So, Skinner was going to leave, and, basically, I talked Skinner into, "Let's put up with this another year, and we'll see if we can get it changed." So, Skinner for me shaved off the moustache. He'll remind me that he did that for me. The sad part about it was the next spring [1971] was when he got cut, you know, and couldn't compete. One of those places out on Chapman Highway. I left and went to Virginia Tech by then.

TS: Are you saying somebody attacked him?

CR: Oh, yes, he got into an altercation with somebody [when he came to the defense of an individual who was being attacked by a gang in the parking lot]. A broken coke bottle was jammed in his stomach. It tore his intestines. He got some kind of infection in there and could not perform that spring at all. He went ahead and graduated but never got back to where he was as a javelin thrower. But that's the moustache story.

CV: Wasn't there also a t-shirt or two that you had them take off?

TS: I think after the Kent State incident [May 1970] Denis Flood had a t-shirt that seemed to support the protest.

CR: Oh, yes, wearing a t-shirt that had political issues.

- TS:** He was just running in the shirt in practice?
- CR:** Right. I didn't want us to get involved in that.
- TS:** Did you tell him to take it off?
- CR:** Yes. And he did. I didn't think it was a good idea for....
- TS:** So, you didn't want anybody to do anything political that reflected on the track program?
- CR:** That's right. A lot of people really loved our track program. That's why they would come out and sit and watch a track meet. Today the problem is they only have one track meet [in Knoxville]. They don't have any interest in track on the campus. But we were very popular on the campus. The trackmen were the guys that were the best in the Southeastern Conference, and we had a great reputation. I didn't want to get involved in any kind of controversy. They can have their own private opinions, but when they are on the track, representing the track team, they didn't need to express their political opinions. They were there to run track. What they did off campus or on their own in the dormitory was their own private affair.
- TS:** You probably weren't too happy with the black fist salute at the 1968 Olympics [of Tommie Smith and John Carlos]?
- CR:** I guess I wasn't happy with them, but I recognized what they were trying to do. I thought there were better ways for them to do it than that on the podium.
- TS:** Okay. So, why did you stop coaching track?
- CR:** Well, I got to the point where I wanted to....it was kind of a hassle with [Athletic Director Bob] Woodruff on the number of scholarships and so forth, and the budget. I wanted to get into administration. I didn't want to stop coaching track, but I had an opportunity to get involved in administration at what I thought was going to be a growing program. Quite frankly, they offered me a lot more money to come up there at Virginia Tech. I've often wondered whether I made the right decision. In the long run it proved very much to be the right decision because I began to use my talents and expertise in marketing and administration.

I proved I could do as well in those areas as in the track coaching area. I wanted the challenge of administration and getting involved at the top level of athletics. That was the pull to become an athletic

director and run a college sports program and particularly track and all other sports. Charlie [Coffey, Virginia Tech football coach, 1971-73] was a good salesman. Charlie Coffey at Tennessee was our defensive line coach. He took the job at Virginia Tech. [Thomas] Marshall Hahn, [Jr.], the president there [1962-74], was a very dynamic guy. He [resigned in 1974 to] become the president of Georgia-Pacific. He had all kinds of visions. They built a beautiful indoor facility—the first indoor practice facility in the South. It had a full size football field and track around it.

TS: So, Coffey was the athletic director?

CR: No, Coffey had just taken the job as head football coach. So, Marshall Hahn talked me into coming out there and be the administrator. The athletic director there [Frank O. Moseley] had announced his retirement. I was to become the athletic director. I was at the time the acting athletic director. Frank had already retired, but he was officially the athletic director.

TS: But you didn't ever become the permanent athletic director?

CR: No, because I left. I was going to become the permanent athletic director the next fall. That is when Richmond [Flowers] talked me into getting into the World Football League. That's another story.

TS: So you left Virginia Tech to work with the World Football League?

CR: Right.

CV: Things weren't going the way that they promised you.

CR: No, no. Charlie Coffey resigned. He had a big falling out. We had a high priced staff. Charlie hired some great people. Five of the guys on our staff went on to coach in the NFL: Dan Henning was a head coach for many years; Steve Walters; Fred von Appen; Bill Muir; and George McKinney. He took George McKinney up there with him up there too. All those guys became head coaches or top assistants in the NFL. That was the kind of staff we had. But there was a lot of dissension, and when we weren't doing as well in football as we thought we were going to do—Charlie thought that Dan Henning was trying to get his job.

Charlie had taken some money and invested it in a trucking company in [Shelbyville] Tennessee. The trucking company was doing pretty well, and he just all of a sudden one day said, "To hell with this. I resign. I'll go run my trucking company." Goggin Trucking [and

later Nationwide Express]. He and his sons run it. He has become a multi-millionaire. He had bought this small truck line. He just got out of coaching. There was a controversy there whether they were going to hire a new football coach, and Richmond was trying to get me involved in this thing. I did get involved with it, but I was only going to do it part time. The football controversy [gave me] the opportunity to go full time to Houston and run the team—so I took that, and they gave me some money up front.

TS: So you were general manager of the team?

CR: The Houston Texans in the World Football League. That goes on from Virginia Tech. You asked me, why did I go to Virginia Tech? Because I wanted to get into athletic administration; I wanted to try to get to the top level of athletic administration. Track coach was not necessarily at the top level.

TS: If you had stayed another year at Tennessee, you might have won a national championship.

CR: Oh, yes. I had recruited Willie Thomas. Willie Thomas came as a transfer student and ran with our team my last year. The next year [1972] he won the NCAA outdoor 800 meter race [in 1:47.1]. He was part of the national championship team [in 1974].

TS: What are you proudest of about your, almost, decade at the University of Tennessee?

CR: I'm proudest, I guess, of the fact that we were able to dominate the Southeastern Conference with a lot of good athletes and a lot of good people. We hardly had a bad actor. We had some guys that failed as a trackman. David Mann was my biggest disappointment. He was a great high school athlete, but he couldn't adjust in the college environment. But we had good students. We had a lot of guys who became doctors and lawyers and accountants. I can remember hardly anyone who flunked out. Some of them quit because they weren't quite good enough to compete with some of the other guys on the track team. But I think the 21 championships with quality people—not just quality trackmen—were my proudest accomplishments.

CV: You know, when Coach Rohe was inducted into the United States Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches Association Hall of Fame [2009], he was introduced as the father of track and field in the South.

CR: Well, we were the first ones to really emphasize track and field. From that day on, the SEC has dominated NCAA competition—this year, the year before, and for the last 25 years.

TS: SEC schools were one, two, three this year [Florida and Texas A&M tied for first, with Arkansas third]. I guess we should mention that you have won numerous awards and have been inducted into the Tennessee Sports Hall of Fame (1995), the Greater Knoxville Sports Hall of Fame (2002), the Southern Miss Hall of Fame (2002), the Knoxville Track Club Hall of Fame (2009), the Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches Hall of Fame (2009), and the Furman Athletic Hall of Fame (2011). You were the United States Track & Field Coach of the Year in 1967. So, you've won about all the awards you can win in track, I guess.

CR: I've had a lot of people fooled.

TS: Why don't we wind up for today by asking you what you've done since the World Football League?

CR: There are some interesting stories in the World Football League you might want to include. I got involved in the World Football League while I was athletic administrator at Virginia Tech. Richmond had decided to jump his contract with the New York Giants. He had won a Super Bowl ring with the Dallas Cowboys, and he was playing defensive back for the New York Giants. He got in with Don Regan and Gary Davidson and the guys that formed the league. They were a bunch of lawyers in Newport Beach, California. He got involved with them, and they convinced him to jump his contract and be a pace-setter. Later that year, [Jim] Kiick, [Larry] Csonka, and [Paul] Warfield all jumped their contracts with the Miami Dolphins to play with the Memphis Southmen in that league.

Anyway, Richmond called me to introduce Gary Davidson and Don Regan, these lawyers from California who were forming the new league, to some prospective investors and club owners in the southeast. Richmond thought I could introduce them to guys in Florida, and I did. I got an optometrist from DeLand, Florida to buy that franchise. Anyway, I started working with the league a little bit part-time while I was at Virginia Tech. Pretty soon I got more and more involved in it kind of on a voluntary basis [although] they paid me for what I did.

Before we sold the Jacksonville franchise to the optometrist, [I was involved] in representing the Jacksonville franchise at the league meeting at the Balboa Bay Club out in California. I go into this room,

and here are all these owners of these clubs that are going to be formed in this new league, sitting around the table. They introduced every one of them, and, of course, it's all smoke and mirrors because I know that I don't have the money to buy a franchise and own a franchise, but I'm sitting there representing the Jacksonville, Florida, franchise in this league. And I wonder how many more guys in this room are just like me—they are figure-heads sitting in those seats. Here was a name—Chuck Rohe was a name—athletic administrator at Virginia Tech, successful track coach and everything. They had some other guys [that] were this and that—NFL and so forth. So, I knew it was smoke and mirrors, so I hesitated to get involved.

Richmond wanted me to get more and more involved. After I recommended the optometrist, he decided to hire his friend who was a high school coach at New Smyrna Beach as the new coach of the team. Then we went to New York to the league meeting, and they offered me the job as general manager of the Jacksonville franchise. I didn't want to get involved in it. I still thought it was smoke and mirrors, which it ended up being. Then they had the league meeting for the draft. Gary Davidson, who I had gotten to know—who was the commissioner of the league now—over the course of these few months, calls me and says, "We don't have any ownership in Portland. We need someone to draft for the team in Portland. Would you do that?" Well, I said, "How much will you pay me?" (laughs) So, he agreed to pay me, I don't know, a couple thousand dollars.

I ended up spending a week or two boning up on all the draft prospects. I went to New York, and in the first league draft, I drafted the Portland franchise players. I got a pretty good draft for them too. Later on, when they got an ownership guy there, he offered me the job of general manager of the Portland franchise. I still didn't want to go. The league started in June. This was in March or maybe early April. Gary Davidson calls me and says, "We just lost our ownership in the Houston franchise. The league office has taken over the ownership of the franchise. We need you to come and be president and general manager of the Houston franchise." I said, "I hope you've got a lot of money because I'll come for a lot of money, but it has got to be up front." They sent me a check for, I think it was, \$25,000, and they let me pay myself \$5,000 a month out of the receipts that were coming in. That was a pretty good job in those days—\$60,000 [a year]. I think I was making \$40,000 or \$50,000 at Virginia Tech—and with the \$25,000.

So, anyway, I went to Houston, Texas, and we drafted Richmond to play on our team, so Richmond went to Houston with me. Then, I think we had five to six weeks to start practice. I signed Jim Garrett

as the coach. I signed over ninety players to contracts. I was interviewing players every hour. We didn't have a place to play. We didn't have a place to practice. We didn't have an office. I went to the Astrodome people, and this is how I ended up meeting the Pace Management people, because Sidney Shlenker—the Astrodome was started by Judge [Roy] Hofheinz, but he had become ill and had a stroke. Sidney Shlenker, a local banker and very prominent Jewish businessman and his partner, Allen Becker, had started Pace Management Corporation. Sidney was the acting director and president of the Astrodome and of the Houston Astros baseball team. They had the Oilers playing in there on a contract basis, but they had nothing going on except baseball in the summertime.

So, I made a proposal to them since we didn't have any money; we couldn't rent the stadium; but if he got the concessions and the parking and provided us a place to practice and a locker room, that he had a good deal and we had a good deal, because we would pay on the nights when baseball was out of town. So, we played in the Astrodome for no money; we played in the Astrodome for no rent; we were able to use the Oilers locker room because they weren't practicing. This was a summer league. We didn't have any money. I went ahead and sold \$950,000 worth of season tickets and did some, I think, ingenious things.

Do either of you know the name John Matuszak. He was a giant [defensive] lineman from [the University of Tampa] who [would become] all-NFL, -six-foot, [eight], an Adonis body. He had a crazy agent. He wanted to get out of his contract. This was a renegade league, so we signed John Matuszak to a contract. He had a contract with the [Houston Oilers who traded him to the Kansas City Chiefs after becoming displeased by his attempt to play for two teams]. But he came down and practiced with us that week. This was a big star NFL player [who was the Houston Oilers' first draft pick of 1973], coming to play with the Houston Texans. He played the first half of a game, and at halftime, the NFL had the sheriff's department issue an injunction to prevent him from playing the second half. They came out on the field and handed Matuszak the injunction. So, that was a promotion that sold a lot of tickets.

I also gave a \$100,000 check to Craig Morton. He was a star for the Dallas Cowboys before Roger Staubach. He was in the last year of his existing contract. He wasn't willing to jump a contract, but he was willing to sign a contract with us to play for us starting the next year for \$100,000. That was a big-time deal, just like Kiick, Csonka, and Warfield who had jumped a contract with the Dolphins and signed a contract to play with the Memphis Southmen, we

announced that Craig Morton, the Dallas Cowboys quarterback, was coming to Houston to play for the Houston Texans the next year. That was big time and sold us a lot of tickets. I spent some of that \$950,000 to give him that \$100,000 cashier's check. He never played a down for the Texas team. Anyway, that was the kind of thing that went on. We ended up playing in the Astrodome free of charge.

TS: Did you have a TV contract?

CR: The league had a TV contract. But, half way through the season—I think we played three or four home games—about the middle of July, Gary Davidson called up and said, “Hey, we’ve got ownership. Some guys in Shreveport want to move the team to Shreveport.” I said, “What? When?” “Next week!” That’s the truth. And I said, “What about the season ticket holders that I sold tickets to—\$950,000 worth of season tickets here in Houston. “Oh, they can drive to Shreveport—220 miles.”

TS: Sure.

CR: That was the attitude. Of course, I had hired my coaches and everything. I felt bad about them. But they were going to take all of them to Shreveport. I said, “Well, I’m not going to Shreveport. You take the whole franchise and go to Shreveport. I’m not going to Shreveport.” That was enough. I couldn’t stomach that anymore. This was all smoke and mirrors. So they moved the team to Shreveport, and they struggled through that year. They tried to go into Shreveport again the next year, and that league never made it. But I had made all those arrangements with the people in the Astrodome.

Sidney Shlenker and Allen Becker had started a company called Pace Management Corporation, which turned into becoming the biggest promoter of sports and entertainment events in the entire country over the next six or seven years. They knew that I had refused to go, and they were upset because the league was moving the team to Shreveport. They said, “We need an administrator. Why don’t you come to work with us?” So, I went to work for Pace Management Corporation as an administrative director of sports and activities. Over the next few years we did big things. I made a lot of money in Houston for a long time. We started off by doing things like destruction derbies and thrill shows.

We had Dar Robinson, the stunt man who set a world record for free fall off the roof of the Astrodome into an airbag. That was an interesting program. He came into town, and we announced this.

We sold 50,000 tickets in the Astrodome. We had destruction derbies. We had some famous race drivers and so forth. We announced that Dar Robinson was going to attempt this world record free fall from the gondola at the top of the Astrodome. That sold a lot of tickets. Well, he was placing these percussion capsules into a dummy to see what he could do with the airbag to make it so he could survive. He didn't know whether he was going to make it. And those percussion capsules were breaking every time. It was not until a day or two before he was to jump. He would have been dead with the airbag the way it was. But he finally got it right, and he made the jump and lived. It was a big promotion and sold a lot of tickets.

Anyway, we did things like that. The Russian-American track meet in Fort Worth, and the Brooks Invitational in the Astrodome, and a lot of events like that. The Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo. We started the Top Ticket Company. We sold the tickets all over the southwest for concerts and everything else. We got into closed circuit boxing, and rock and roll and concerts. We bought the Tower Theater, and we sold out "The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas" for a whole year. With Pace there are a lot of interesting stories. We started off getting into rock and roll because we were the only people familiar with domed stadiums because we had been running the events in the Astrodome. When they built the Superdome in New Orleans, they hired us to put on the two weeks of grand opening events. To do that, we decided we wanted to do a concert—a rhythm and blues concert and a country and western concert and a gala spectacular—Frank Sinatra and Raquel Welch and the Winchester man and all these people coming in for the gala.

And the Allman Brothers concert. They were very popular. These were all new jobs for me. These two Jewish guys who owned the company—Sidney Shlenker and Allen Becker—greatest guys I ever worked for. But they were all new in this business too. They had been in baseball, and Allen was a successful insurance man. But we were in rock and roll now. We had to negotiate rock and roll contracts. So, I go to Macon, Georgia.

TS: Where the Allman Brothers are from.

CR: Phil Walden is the owner of the ABC television station there. He was the owner of Capricorn Records. Bunky Oldham and Alex Hodges and these guys—they represented Otis Redding, and the Allman Brothers, and Wet Willie, and Charlie Daniels—all of whom we put on our program. And we signed a valid contract with them.

End of Tape 3, side A; start of Tape 3, side B, June 14, 2013

Achievements with the Pace Management Corporation; Creation of Rohe and Associates; Executive Director of the Capital One Bowl; National Director of Nike Coach of the Year Football Clinics

CR: They [Walden, Oldham, and Hodges] came into town the night before the event, demanding an extra two or three hundred thousand dollars. I've forgotten what it was. "Oh, they're not going to play." Sidney and Allen Becker were very staid entrepreneurs. "What's going on? This is the first time we have ever been involved in something like this. People are going to tear the Super Bowl down. All of these people have bought tickets, and these guys are not going to play. We'll have to cancel the concert!" We were just getting into the rock and roll business, which we got into big time. They had hired two young concert promoters from New Orleans who worked with us on this. Later, we hired one of them as president of Pace Concerts, Louie Messina. "What do we do now? These guys say they are not going to play if we don't meet their demands."

So, we talked to Louie Messina, and his partner, Bill Johnson, and they said, "Don't worry. This is New Orleans, Louisiana. This is our town. We'll talk to our lawyer." Well, their lawyer is a little short fellow named Eddie Sapir. If you know the Sapir family name in New Orleans, his grandfather was governor, his father was mayor. He was connected like nobody else. Sapir says, "You have those guys meet in [the Pace Management] hotel suite tomorrow morning." The concert was going to be that night. There was a big party going on with these guys. They came in the next morning, and they had been high and they were drunk and everything. Well, Eddie Sapir shows up with the two biggest Louisiana Highway Patrolmen—I'm sure they were both about 6'6", both had two guns on their hips.

Walden and the guys from Capricorn Records are late by about an hour and a half, and everybody is mad by the time they get there. They had been drinking, and they come in and say, "We want our money! We want our money or we aren't going to play!" They say, "Who are these two guys?" Sapir goes up to Walden and taps him on his chest—and Sapir is about 5'5" or 5'6"—and says, "I'll tell you who these guys are. I'm Eddie Sapir, and you are in our town. These guys are my highway patrolmen. You are either going to play in that concert tonight or we'll lock your ass up in the Angola State Penitentiary, and you'll never see the light of day again." (laughs) That's exactly what he told them! And he said, "Further, we have confiscated all your sound and light equipment. That's ours if you don't play. You get your ass out of town if you don't play. But I'm

thinking you're going to play. And we'll go to court afterwards about this whole thing." He said, "Further, these two highway patrolmen are going to stay with you until you play and get your ass out of town. If you go to the crapper, they're going to the crapper with you. Now, you decide whether you're going to play or whether we are going to ship you off to Angola tonight."

They played, and we went to court with them. Gregg Allman came to his deposition. Sapir scheduled it for the [day] after Mardi Gras, when they knew he would be out of it. He was two hours late for his deposition, and all he did was put his head on his table and [grunted]. He never answered anything more than "yes" or "no" in the hour given him—a very poor deposition for him. They lost the case. They had no case. We had a legitimate contract and everything. But that was our introduction to the rock and roll business. Can you believe that?

TS: All right. So, you stayed with Pace from 1974 to 1980 [as administrative vice president], and you are doing more concerts, I guess.

CR: Well, when we bought the Tower Theater and brought "The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas" from New York, I had to go up and negotiate that contract. We ran that thing for a whole year—sold out the Tower Theater every night for a whole year. Then we took it to New Orleans, and we renovated the old Saenger Theatre in New Orleans [between 1978 and 1980, along with co-investors E.B. Brezeale, Zev Bufman, and Barry Mendelson]. I was in charge of that project. We went to the Majestic [Theatre] in Dallas with the same show. Then we did the big concerts like with Willie Nelson and Waylon Jennings and Johnny Paycheck and those guys. We put 70,000 people in the Cotton Bowl two nights in a row for the country and western one night and rock and roll with the Blue Oyster Cult and Ted Nugent and those kind of guys the next night.

We started doing all the shows in the Summit, the new building they had [in Houston]. We did all the concerts. Pace Concerts became one of the biggest concert producers in the country. Then we got into closed-circuit boxing. We did a lot of the big fights—the "Thrilla in Manila" [Muhammad Ali v. Joe Frazier (1975)] and all the ones with Ali. I ended up going to New York and working out of [boxing promoter] Don King's office. I was assigned the job of keeping Don King honest on the "No mas" fight between Sugar Ray Leonard and [Roberto] Duran [November 25, 1980, so called because Duran quit after the eighth round, telling the referee, "No mas" ("no more")]. I

ran that stuff for Pace before I came to Orlando to run what was then the Tangerine Bowl.

TS: Yes, what became Citrus.

CR: I changed the name of it to the Florida Citrus Bowl and then the Capital One Bowl.

TS: When did it stop being the Tangerine Bowl?

CR: After my first year.

TS: Actually, you had your own company in Houston and Orlando, Rohe and Associates [1980-83].

CR: Yes, when I got the job going to New York to deal with the Don King thing, I formed Rohe and Associates to do that, specifically—rather than as a Pace Management project. I represented the Pritzker family. I think that [Penny] Pritzker is President Obama's candidate to be [Secretary of Commerce]. She is one of the sisters. The Pritzker family owns all the Hyatt hotels worldwide, and, anyway, I went to work for them as Rohe and Associates to keep Don King honest and not steal them blind in the closed-circuit fight we were about to have. I spent six months doing that. That's why I created Rohe and Associates.

TS: Okay, we'll get the Don King story in August. So, in 1982, how did you get to the Tangerine Bowl?

CR: Jeff Clark. Did you know Jeff Clark? Jeff had graduated from law school at Tennessee and went to Orlando and began his law practice with a big law firm there. He got active in civic activities and became president of the Tangerine Bowl. He had just retired as president of the Tangerine Bowl—his one year of service—and they had hired Charlie McClendon as director of the Tangerine Bowl [1980-81], who had been fired as coach at LSU. He had done a great job for a year or two at the Tangerine Bowl, and they were looking for a new director because Charlie had taken the job as executive director of the American Football Coaches Association [1982-94] and chose to keep the office right there in Orlando.

So, I had a great relationship with him for about fifteen years. But Jeff recommended me for the job, and I thought I could do both jobs—Rohe and Associates, doing things like I was doing with closed-circuit fights, Hyatt Management Corporation, Texas World Music Festival, the Oklahoma State Fair, [and] the Texas State Fair. I

was still working for Pace, doing some of their special events and so forth. I kind of liked that, and I thought I could come to Orlando and put on a little ol' bowl game part time when it came bowl game time of the year.

TS: But it didn't stay little.

CR: It became a full-time job. I commuted back and forth between Houston and Orlando every week almost for a while, and then the bottom line is it was too much of a job. I had negotiated a good contract with the Tangerine Bowl—a little ol' biddy bowl. I gave them some ideas on what we might become. I accepted a minimal contract with a commission based on a percentage of the income I brought in. All of a sudden, I was making a lot of money. Eventually, they had to change my contract because I was making way too much money. And I was.

CV: You might tell the Rhino Rohe story.

CR: Well, that happened in Orlando. The Rhino Rohe story started with Larry Guest, a sports writer [for the *Orlando Sentinel*] and a confrontation we had over a Florida and Kentucky football game that I was trying to secure. He preempted the story. I was so mad I went on TV.

CV: He knocked it out, didn't he?

CR: Oh, yes. I lost a great football game. Kentucky was going to come play Florida in our bowl stadium. I had done the same thing with Florida State and Notre Dame [November 12, 1994]. I was so mad that Larry Guest preempted it that I went on television with the local TV guys and just ripped Larry Guest and the newspaper for false advertising. But you can never beat the media. He came right back in the paper and said, "Chuck Rohe, overreacting like a hard-charging rhino...." He wrote this story, and since that time, people have brought me rhinos from around the world. He went to Africa right afterward and brought me a rhino [figurine]. We made up and became friends again. But I've been known as Rhino Rohe ever since.

TS: Okay, so, you did the Citrus Bowl, which becomes Capital One, for twenty years, 1982-2002. And then in 2002 you think it's about time to retire from that at least.

CR: Well, what had happened, I had started with Nike and the Coach of the Year Clinics about ten years before that, doing both jobs. I started with four clinics, and now I had twenty.

TS: So you had two full-time jobs.

CR: I had two full-time jobs. I didn't need two full-time jobs.

TS: By 2002, you must have been 70 years old.

CR: Or 71 years old.

TS: So, it was about time to give up one of two full-time jobs.

CR: That's exactly right.

TS: Okay, so, you've been doing the Nike coaching clinics ever since.

CR: That's right. We are going to do 18 clinics this year.

TS: Which is a lot of clinics.

CR: Yes, too many.

CV: What are the clinics?

CR: The clinics are for high school coaches primarily. We have about 12,000 high school coaches attend the clinics. They are three-day clinics—Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. A few of them are Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. [They consist of] about 24 hours of lecture. Nike has—this year we have 74 of the top 85 schools in the country under contract as Nike schools. Part of their contract with Nike is that they have to speak at the clinics at least once. About half of them have to speak twice. I assign them where I want them to speak. They don't go where they want to go. They go where I want them to go. That's a big part of my job. That's what I'm doing right now. I'm just in the process all this summer of assigning these guys to the various clinics and getting them committed. I make them sign a contract that they will be in Stamford, Connecticut, at such and such a time in February, to make a clinic presentation to high school coaches.

TS: You can't do the clinics in the fall, obviously, because everybody is coaching. So, once football season is over, is that when you start the clinics?

CR: After the bowl season is over, after the playoffs are over, our clinics start in late January, all of February, and early March. I have to get them done before they start spring practice. I have to schedule them around some spring practices that start as early as the end of February and first of March.

TS: But Nike is paying all these coaches a ton of money, and so they are obligated.

CR: They are obligated. Many of them are making millions on their Nike contracts.

TS: So, all they've got to do is wear their Nike....

CR: Shirts....

TS: Out on the field at the football games and go to the clinics.

CR: Well, there's a little more to it than that. What happens is that every university that signs that contract—every product that's sold in that stadium, every product that's sold to the alumni, every product sold in the book store—every shirt, cap, is a Nike product. So, you can imagine, the Ohio State contract is worth about six or eight million dollars. Ohio State is a big school. They have something like a million and a half active alumni or something like that. They all wear Nike. Nike gets their money back in all that.

TS: Okay, well we've done a quick summary of your last forty years, I guess.

CV: One last question. Coach [Johnny] Majors has been working with you for how long?

CR: This is 20 years now—20 years I've been working the clinics. Johnny Majors [University of Tennessee All-America football player, 1956; head coach, 1977-92] and George Perles [Michigan State University head football coach, 1983-1994] bought the clinics from Frances Daugherty who had inherited the clinics from her husband, who was Duffy Daugherty, the famous Michigan State [University football] coach [1954-72, died 1987], who had partnered with Bud Wilkinson [University of Oklahoma head football coach, 1947-63] to start these clinics 51 years ago now. They've gone through Toyota Coach of the Year Clinics, Champion Coach of the Year Clinics, Kodak Coach of the Year Clinics, and finally Nike Coach of the Year Clinics. John and I brought Nike in 20 years ago. They bought the clinics first and then brought me in as a partner.

TS: I think we have enough for one day, and it gives us some ideas of things to do for the future.

CV: Fantastic!

CR: It's been an interesting life....

TS: Thank you.