

KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW WITH IRVIN DAVID (DAVE) HARRIS

CONDUCTED BY KURT ROENITZ

EDITED AND INDEXED BY THOMAS A. SCOTT

for the

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Interview with Irvin David (Dave) Harris
Conducted by Kurt Roenitz
Edited and indexed by Thomas A. Scott
Tuesday, 5 April 2011
Location: Dr. Harris's office, Marietta, Georgia

Dr. Harris was a charter faculty member of Kennesaw Junior College in 1966 and the first chairman of the Physical Education Department. In addition to his teaching duties, he coached Kennesaw College's first men's basketball team as a club sport in 1984-1985, the year before it was established as an official intercollegiate sport. After twenty years of full-time service and ten years of part-time, he retired as professor emeritus of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation. He also served for thirty-six years in the Georgia Army National Guard, retiring with the rank of Colonel. In 1987 he formed the company Dave Harris Commercial Realty, which he headed for the rest of his life. Dr. Harris died on September 16, 2014, at age 82. The following month he was inducted posthumously into the KSU Sports Hall of Fame, one of many awards he received in a long career. The interview was conducted by Kurt Roenitz as part of an oral history class project in the spring of 2011.

KR: Dr. Harris, I'm really glad you took the time for me. Let's start off with the earliest background of when and where you were born and elaborate on your hometown and the time you were born and your childhood.

DH: I was born [on January 17, 1932] in Frogtown, Georgia, in Forsyth County [near the Etowah River close to the intersection of Highway 369 and Old Federal Road]. I moved to Ball Ground when I was one month old. So I grew up in Ball Ground in north Cherokee County.

KR: What about your family and how they influenced you in those early years—your mother and father; what were their names and what did they do?

DH: My mother's name was [Ouida] Loy Bond Harris [1898-1967], and my dad was Truman Lester Harris [1898-1969]. There were nine of us children, so it was real tough following the Depression. My dad loved sports. He was never a participant during my life, but he supported me playing sports and Boy Scouts and everything else. Mother was a great Christian leader and very much involved in our lives all the way through. I had a very fortunate background even though we had very humble beginnings.

KR: I understand there was a lot of tribulation during that time in the 1930s and 1940s, but obviously it sounds like you had a really good rock under you with your family. You were talking about Boy Scouts. How did that come about? I was a Boy Scout myself, and it was a lot of fun.

DH: I think this troop was organized right during World War II, Troop 130. I joined, and I completed all the merit badges for Eagle Scout with about three or four months to go before I was fourteen. I had to wait about four months to get my badge. I was an Eagle

Scout and wound up having about forty-something merit badges. I also had three or four Palms—you know, the combination Palms after you're an Eagle.

KR: That's very impressive. I can't say that I got that far. Tell me about Ball Ground. What was that location like during that time in the 1940s? I'm sure it was extremely rural back in the day.

DH: Yes, the population was 711 in 1940, and it was still 711 in 1950, and then in 1960 it was 710. My story was I went off to school, so it brought it down to 710. It was a good community. Of course, if you got in trouble, your parents knew it before you got home. The history of Cherokee County would be a long story, but Ball Ground was considered [the site of] an Indian stickball game—the location there in the valley of Ball Ground. It was between the Creek and the Cherokee Indians, and the winner got like 600,000 acres of land or something. That's where it got the name Ball Ground, from the Indian stickball game that was played in the valley there.

KR: That's really interesting. So besides your parents, who were your earliest mentors back in the day?

DH: Well, my dad was real busy trying to make a living. They were supportive. I had a lot of chores at home, but one of the brothers or sisters would always cover for me. Of course, having eight brothers and sisters, you have a pretty good supporting cast, but we had a good family, good parents.

KR: Did you do a lot of sports when you were younger?

DH: Well, in Ball Ground they just started basketball right after the war [World War II], and we played on an outdoor court. I played both years. We won the county junior high championship two years in a row. Then when I went to [Canton] High School, I lettered in four sports.

KR: Wow, no kidding. What sports were those?

DH: Football, basketball, baseball, and track.

KR: Sounds like the jack of all trades.

DH: Well, it was a small school. Most of the time the athletes had to do more than one sport in order to be able to participate in the region. Actually, we were district champions there for a good while before they organized the regions. There were a lot of changes in basketball in my lifetime.

KR: Oh, yes. Was this Cherokee High School?

DH: Well, this was before Cherokee. Canton was the only high school in the county. Thirteen junior high schools fed Canton High School. Actually, I was the first basketball coach at Cherokee High. I didn't take baseball over till later, but I coached both boys and girls basketball, B-team football, did all the scouting for the varsity, spring practice in all the sports, plus taught six classes a day.

KR: Good Lord. That's quite a load.

DH: Well, it was. I figured I made about forty-five cents an hour back then.

KR: What did you do after high school?

DH: Well, I went to Mercer University on a scholarship. I wouldn't have gotten to go if I hadn't gotten a scholarship in sports. I didn't stay with baseball there, but I was the seventh player on the varsity [basketball team in the 1950-1951 season]. We won the Dixie conference [tournament] championship. But my coach [James Cowan] got drafted. I wasn't sure I was going to get my scholarship back. Coach had to go to the Korean War [from 1951-1953; he returned as the Mercer head coach for the 1953-1954 season]. I transferred to Brewton-Parker [Junior College in Mount Vernon, Georgia]. I got a scholarship down there, and I led the team in scoring in basketball in the state tournament. We won the state. Then I played baseball. I was a starter.

I went on from there to Georgia Southern. I had tryouts at several other big schools—the University of North Carolina and North Carolina State. But I got a scholarship to Georgia Teachers College [as Georgia Southern University was named between 1939 and 1959]. I played varsity basketball and baseball there for two years [1953-1955]. I was captain of the basketball [team] and made the Gator Bowl all-tournament team. We had a Gator Bowl [basketball tournament] back then. Our opponents were Georgia Tech, University of Florida, and [the University of] Georgia. Well, we set a Gator Bowl scoring record against the University of Florida and Georgia Tech. We beat Georgia Tech both years, but we split in those two years with Georgia. It was a round robin tournament. So we split with Georgia—beat Georgia one year, and we beat Florida one year. I didn't start every game as a baseball player, but I played a lot. After that I [graduated in 1955 and] actually came out and started teaching in Ball Ground the first year. I was offered the job at Cherokee High the year before the school ever opened, so I took the junior high job there for one year.

KR: From what I understand, Georgia Southern is where you got your master's right?

DH: Yes, it was Georgia Teachers when I was there. Later the name was changed to Georgia Southern. I got my master's degree there [in 1963], and I went on and did two summers at the University of Georgia. Then I decided I wasn't getting the degree I wanted. I wanted a doctorate in exercise physiology. So I transferred to [the University of] Southern Mississippi and stayed there two years and got my doctorate [in 1969]. Then I also have a master's in Military Science through the National Guard.

KR: That's really cool, military science. Southern Miss, I actually noticed that you're at Kennesaw State in 1967 and that you took your two-year hiatus to get your doctorate, so what compelled you to go ahead and get your doctorate?

DH: Well, actually I was there the first year. The school opened in [the fall of] 1966. It was the '66-'67 school year. The first semester we met at Southern Tech before the college was finished built. Of course, the campus was brand new. When I got the contract [at KJC], the year before I was at Middle Georgia College. Real quickly, I came back and coached at Ball Ground Junior High. Then I coached at Cherokee High for four years. That's some of all those different teams I had. Then I went to Lovett School in Atlanta. I was head of the PE department, and I coached boys' basketball and baseball and B-team

football. I stayed there five years, then I went to Middle Georgia College, I was head baseball coach down there and assistant basketball coach for one year.

When I was at Lovett the new president, President [Horace W.] Sturgis, offered me the job to come to Kennesaw. I came as an instructor at Kennesaw to coach basketball and teach PE. Well, after one quarter he decided we were not going to have basketball. In that summer [of 1966] I came early before school started because he wanted me to be the acting chairman of the Physical Education Department. In order for me to be the head of the Physical Education Department I had to go back and get my doctorate. So I taught one year as acting chairman. I went to Southern Miss for two years. When I came back I was named the chairman of the department, and it went from there.

KR: What really attracted you to Kennesaw Junior College at first when you got the job?

DH: Well, it was close to home. I was at a junior college. Middle Georgia College at that time was a junior college. I liked it down there, and in fact they offered me [the opportunity] to stay on as the academic dean. But I just wanted to get closer to home and felt like I had a good future at Kennesaw. Then I got the disappointment that we were not going to have athletics one quarter after. So I had to make a decision. Did I want to transfer somewhere else and be a college coach like I'd always dreamed of being, or stay there and get my doctorate? That's what led me into staying there for actually twenty years full time and ten more part-time at night.

KR: Right. I know the actual [NAIA and] NCAA athletics didn't come until 1982 from what I understand. Compare Middle Georgia and Kennesaw Junior College at this time. What was the student body like at each school, and was there much of a culture shock when you went to Kennesaw?

DH: Well, no, not necessarily. Middle Georgia at that time was considered the best feeder program to Georgia Tech. They had a very good department to get students ready. [They had an] associate degree in engineering and things like that. So they had a good academic standing. I taught in the PE department down there. But I felt like Kennesaw, with the growth of the area and with the emphasis on academics, was not a bad move for me.

KR: Definitely. Kennesaw has grown exponentially since I've been there, and even since the beginning it's grown. It's really crazy. It's really neat to be a part of it, definitely.

DH: Yes, well, we had 1,014 students that first [fall quarter].

KR: There's 23,000 now [22,655 in spring semester 2011]. It's amazing! What intramural sports did you all offer at first?

DH: Well, the concept I used—prior to that era it was mostly team sports in intramurals and team sports in PE classes. That's how things evolved. I decided that I wanted to [put] more emphasis on lifetime sports, not just something that you could play for four or five years and then were too old or you quit playing it. Such things as golf and tennis. Of course, we did all kinds of dance, swimming—we had a pool out there. What are some of the others? Of course we played softball, tumbling and gymnastics, and we did snow skiing and we did ice skating. Of course, most of those were taught off campus. That

was just in the PE department per se. But we did have a lot of team sports in intramurals. We had tennis. We didn't do a lot of swimming. That wasn't overly attractive as far as intramurals goes. But we had all kind of team sports, and then I guess that's pretty much it, other than I mentioned golf. We had a good many in the intramurals to try to have the PE program to complement intramurals—that type of thing.

KR: Was it really popular at first? Obviously, KSU at this time is extremely non-traditional student based, so you had a number of commuter students. No students lived on campus, so, obviously, the popularity for intramurals and PE probably wasn't as prevalent as it is today.

DH: You're absolutely right. We didn't have any dorms at all at that time. It was a few years before. I think when we started athletics was about the time, somewhere along in there was actually when they built some dorms up there or housing, you know, just north of the campus up there. I'm sure it was privately owned, but a good many students moved there including athletes. [Editor's note: During the 1990-1991 academic year, Kennesaw State first signed a lease with the privately owned College Quarters apartment complex to house student athletes. The complex is now owned by the KSU Foundation]. But, yes, you're right. We had very few probably that had jobs and commuted that played. That's true. We tried to have some variety and have some stuff at night for them to have an opportunity, but I'm sure it was difficult for them to take a full load and work a full time job and go to night school. They didn't really have much time to participate in intramural sports or anything else hardly.

KR: Definitely not like today. Describe the student body during this time. What was your perception of the students during this time?

DH: Well, they were very conscientious. They probably put school first more than [the students at] a lot of schools. Dr. Sturgis had come from Georgia Tech where he was the associate registrar, I believe, down there. He came from an academic setting, and he wanted Kennesaw to have a great reputation for academics. In fact, the nickname Owls, he was comparing Kennesaw with the Rice [University] Owls who have a real strong academic program. The funny part about the nickname, the owl he chose to be the mascot—somebody did a little research on it and said it was the dumbest owl in existence. So about two or three days later he put a new owl out. That's a true story.

KR: I've heard that. I've read Dr. Sturgis's interview. He mentioned that as well. I find that an extremely funny story. But he mentioned that the owl was supposed to represent wisdom.

DH: Yes, he just didn't know his owls really well! He quieted down in a hurry, but, anyway, he acknowledged, after he did a little research himself, that the one he picked wasn't a good choice—the one he picked—which was just a mascot.

KR: I think the owl is a great mascot. The community has definitely adopted it and KSU Owls is great. Let's talk about some of the people you worked with. I know, like [Dr. C.] Grady Palmer, you've worked with him a lot. Talk about your relationship with Dr. Palmer.

- DH: Dr. Palmer is a great guy. He's a strong family man, very dedicated to the department. He was actually the first person we hired after I came. In fact, he may have been hired during the summer when I was just coming there. But he was hired after me, and he stayed with it his entire career until he retired. I'll tell you one quick story on Dr. Palmer. He was so dedicated to the department and me that when I was off to school for two years, everything I found out or heard when I came back was how loyal he was to me. I think I told him a time or two, I said, "Dr. Palmer, according to what I hear, you tried harder to do things like I would try to do them than I did myself!" He was that dedicated to following what we had done up to that point. He was a great man. Loved by the students and everybody.
- KR: What was his responsibilities when he worked there as far as PE goes?
- DH: Well, he was just physical education. I'm trying to remember who the first intramural person was. Did you find out anything on that? I know the people as I go back.
- KR: I know Donna Templeton was the director of intramurals in the early 1980s, but I don't know if she was the first though.
- DH: I remember a few of the names. I may jumble up the order. There a boy named Blumenthal, Peter Blumenthal.
- KR: Yes.
- DH: He was one of the early ones. Then we had a lady named Susan Hudson who worked in intramurals for a while. A boy named Jerry Hogge—he was there for a good while. We had another boy, Bryant Keller I believe was his name. He was there for a couple of years. Intramural people change a little more often than some of the faculty members, but we had some good ones. A lot of them did a good job.
- KR: Did they all just go on to bigger and better things after the 1970s and 1980s, or how many of them just stuck around? How was it with you all working together?
- DH: Most of them moved to good jobs. We had a lady that I had hired from one of the provinces in Canada. She was number one world's trap shooting; she finished number one in the world in the World Games. She came with us. I met her at a southern district PE convention or the national one. So we hired her. She just stayed one year, but she did a good job. We've had some others that moved. Jerry Hogge, I think, became a department head in South Carolina. Some of the others I'm not a hundred percent sure where they moved to as far as their position goes. One of them moved to Washington, D.C. area and became a golf pro.
- KR: No kidding. Talk about an awesome job.
- DH: He may have started out as an assistant, but he later became a golf pro. Bryant Keller, I think, went to be head of a system or something in PE in Clayton County or somewhere like that.
- KR: It definitely sounds like you all had a lot of good chemistry. As you can see, the PE program just grew by leaps and bounds since 1966. Just looking through the yearbook

earlier, it just seems as though, as I said, there's just so much growth. It's very impressive to say the least.

DH: Yes. My goal, when I first took over the position of chairman was to have the requirement so every single student had to take physical education. You know, in fact, I had Larry [Gene] Nelson come in and teach golf for me one quarter. He's won five or six national tournaments. Have you heard that name, Larry Nelson?

KR: The name is somewhat familiar.

DH: He's from Kennesaw or Acworth [and attended KJC], but he won some big tournaments [10 PGA championships, including the U.S. Open in 1983 and the PGA Championship in 1981 and 1987]. He didn't start till he was twenty-three or twenty-four, playing golf [born in 1947; turned professional in 1971].

The ice skating and the snow skiing, we got the professionals. If I had the class assigned to me, I'd do all the paperwork and the written testing, but these people would be the resident pro to teach the skills. So they worked out real good. But that was my goal. The point I was going to make was that Dr. Sturgis wanted to bring, and he did bring, the requirements of Georgia Tech for physical education. It would be to exempt all veterans, exempt all over a certain age, so we wound up about two out of three didn't have to take it. I always wanted for everybody [to have to take PE classes]. Then we'd try to have the program to meet their needs and skills and talents and age and all that. But he never did change that. I think there have been some changes, like the Fitness for Living class that occurred while I was only teaching part-time at night.

KR: Right. Yes, that Fitness for Living, it's still going on now here in 2011, but I've got to tell you, the whole requirement, making everyone doing PE, I think everyone should do that even today. I mean, we look at the health problems and everything, it's pretty sad.

DH: Even back then, we did a statewide study—a professor from Georgia State and I—on elementary physical education. I went to every county in the state, 159 counties, and we did testing in a lot of these counties from select schools. When we put the study together we had about a dozen different variables, but it showed how much more where they were very active and how it would make a difference in academics and health. Of course, at that time we led the world in obese teenage girls. I was telling my wife the other day. My grandson wanted to go to Longhorn's for a steak for his birthday. If I saw ten adults in there, I'm talking about [age] forty or above, every one of them was almost grossly overweight, nine out of ten. Maybe one guy out of ten looked like he might have kept his weight under control. But it's just, you're not going to Longhorn's every night without putting on a lot of weight, you know.

KR: It's frustrating, not just eating, but living an active lifestyle, going running, playing sports. I just have such a tremendous respect for PE teachers who go out and get the population to living a healthy lifestyle. It's just unfortunate that America is such a sedentary place. We have a number of dubious distinctions, but that definitely tops them all in my opinion.

DH: Well, thank you. We tried to get at least a requirement in the entire State of Georgia schools that at least once a day for every kid, one through seventh grade—all the

elementary grades. Some counties adopted it, but there was a hold. Now we come back and I read in the last couple of weeks how somebody thinks that PE for all would be a great thing. Well, we've been promoting that for fifty or sixty years. But you know, sometimes things have to go around, come around.

KR: Definitely. We have video games and the internet now, so it's so much harder to get kids to go out and play.

DH: Oh, yes. They're just addicted to games, you know.

KR: I'm surely glad I had parents who made me go out and play.

DH: Well, that's a blessing for you.

KR: Definitely.

DH: My grandson, my stepdaughter's son, he just turned twelve. I told him on a birthday card that I expect him to be the next Eagle Scout in my family. He's tried several different sports. We've certainly encouraged him and his sister—she ran a half-marathon and finished 25 out of 149. She's just been running for about nine months.

KR: That's pretty impressive, 25th out of 149.

DH: Yes, for her age group, up to nineteen years old.

KR: Right. Is that the half marathon in Atlanta in November, because I ran that one back in 2009? I'm sure there are a couple of others.

DH: This one was about two or three weeks ago.

KR: I would have liked to have gotten the information.

DH: I don't remember what the name of it was, but she and her mother ran in it. I thought that was real good for as long as she's been running. She didn't look overweight; she was strong-looking. But she's lost about forty pounds and looks so much better. She's seventeen and a junior at Kennesaw Mountain [High School].

KR: That's no small feat right there, forty pounds.

DH: No, that's a lot. I mean, if she weighed 200 pounds you'd understand, but she didn't weight that much, but she's just trimmed down so much and looks great.

KR: Yes. Actually this coming Friday KSU is doing a Daffodil Run, which is a 5K. I think that is definitely inspired by the Turkey Trot, which started when you were there. How did that come about, the Turkey Trot?

DH: Yes, I started that. That was a good name for it [since it was held a little before Thanksgiving]. We had a running race, and we had a walking race for a certain age group. Most of the faculty, of course, entered the walking. One time me and the custodian from the PE department, we were going to finish first. So I slowed down a little bit, so I could hold his hand, and we walked across in a tie. So we both got a turkey! But you couldn't run. It was supposed to be one foot on the ground at all times.

KR: You're kidding.

DH: Yes, to be a little gentle walk, see. I mean, you can stride it on out, but we had a PhD in the accounting department. He wanted to semi-run. He won it one year. I told him we'll give him the turkey, but he didn't do it according to the rules!

KR: I tell you, if I did a walking race, I'd be way too compelled to run; no way I could do that.

DH: Well, it was a lot of fun. It went real well, and we had entrees from quite a few students.

KR: How was it at first? I'm sure it's grown tremendously since the first time. When did the Turkey Trot first start? It was the 1970s. I know that.

DH: I think it was after I came back from graduate school. It was probably early 1970s. So you still have it? [Editor's note: According to the KSU OwlLife website, the Turkey Trot on November 21, 2014, was the 40th annual race, thus dating the start of the Turkey Trot to 1975].

KR: The Turkey Trot? I believe so. Every November I want to say. I still see students wearing the Turkey Trot shirts. I don't know if they give out free turkeys still.

DH: We just gave it to the winners. First [place finishers] got a turkey; second got a baked chicken; and the third one got a Cornish hen.

KR: Cornish hen! I'm sure all three are delicious nonetheless.

DH: Well, it was more fun than anything.

KR: Definitely.

KR: What was it like that first year? Were there a lot of participants?

DH: Yes. We had in the intramural basketball, for instance, we had six or eight teams. Usually, they'd stay together all year, you know, a particular team, flag football and then basketball and then softball. So they pretty much stayed and played as a team for the entire year. So I'd say we had at least six in flag football as well and maybe eight real early.

KR: I was looking at the yearbook earlier, and, like I say, I noticed that starting in the early 1970s a number of the intramural teams had a bunch of really interesting names, like for football you had the Destroyers. I thought that was really cool.

DH: Yes. That was their names, you know. We let them choose as long as they weren't too risqué.

KR: Right. That's pretty neat. What would you say were the most successful teams?

DH: The most successful teams? I hate to say, but it was the faculty! The men's faculty team—I played on it until I think I was 52. We won the regular season and the tournament [almost] every year. [From 1971 to 1974] the Higher Education Achievement Program [HEAP] bussed [a number of] kids from south Atlanta out here to a program that lasted three years. They finally beat us in the regular season by one game, but we won the tournament. Now, we didn't participate in flag football, just basketball. Of course, [the HEAP team players] were predominately African American. It was

probably the best intramural basketball team that was out there during that time, other than us [the faculty team] winning all the games.

KR: Right. I also noticed in the early 1970s as well that the women's intramurals—some of them went from intramural to extramural, like volleyball and basketball. How was that transition? The extramural teams, they played other universities from what I understand.

DH: Yes, we didn't do a lot of extramurals. They'd go off as maybe the best team or All Stars. I think it was maybe team-oriented, but we had some of that for a few years toward the end of my time.

KR: Right. That's just a testament to how much that the PE and the intramurals had grown just from 1966 to the early 1970s. That's less than ten years. It's just baffling, the amount of growth, even today.

DH: I guess it's just a common thing with that much change in student body, going from 1,014 to 23,000 plus now. It brings you more and more people in there that are interested in doing these kinds of things, playing these different kinds of sports.

KR: Right. Talk about how after a couple of years you started doing like trophies and banquet ceremonies for intramural winners and what-have-you. How did that come about?

DH: I don't know what they're doing now, but I think to start with the only thing we gave was maybe a trophy to the winner and the runner-up of the league or the tournament. We didn't give out individual awards, I don't think, ever, at least not while I was there. The same thing was true in high school. I coached at Cherokee up until 1965, and we didn't give out a Most Valuable Player [award] or Top Free Throw Shooter or Best Defensive Player and Most Improved. Of course, we didn't have a three-point shot way back then. All that started probably in the 1970s and kind of spread out through the state. Yes, basketball, especially, has changed a lot.

KR: Definitely, there's no question.

DH: Can I throw in an aside?

DR: Definitely.

DH: At one time the rule was that when you shot a free throw, you could not step on the foul line or beyond it until the ball hit up there. Otherwise, it was a violation. If I shot and charged in to get the ball that was done. So they restricted that to you could not pass that plane until the ball hit. Well, the reason they changed it was because some guy in the Midwest was dunking his free throws. See, as long as it went down through there before he hit the floor, it counted. So they put that law in that you could not pass that plane until the ball either went in or hit somewhere up there. I didn't know if you knew that or not.

KR: Actually, I didn't. You know a heck of a lot more about basketball than I do, being a coach and everything. I was more of a football fan growing up. Let's talk about the facilities at Kennesaw during your time. What fields did you use, and what was the state of the facilities?

DH: As I mentioned, we didn't move to campus until the winter quarter [of 1967], and we did not have a gym until the next year. [Editor's note: The gymnasium officially opened on

June 10, 1967, too late to be used during the first academic year of 1966-1967]. We had to hold classes over in the Social Science Building. Tumbling and trampoline—we would get the mats out, and do tumbling down the hall. [In the fall of 1966] at Southern Tech, they had a brand new gym, and they allowed us to use it in PE and intramurals before they ever used it period. So that was a real blessing. They shared their new gym with us. Then, of course, their basketball practice didn't start until October or something like that, so we had about a month or six weeks to use that new gym. We had some dance classes at Banberry Elementary, and then, of course, old Marietta Place. Of course, later one, before we got the pool, we went off campus for the swimming classes and different things.

KR: Where were the swimming classes before the pool came in?

DH: Let's see, where did we go? I think it was the YWCA. We went there for the first year, I think.

KR: When the new gym came in, what did it consist of, like basketball courts or . . . ?

DH: Yes, does that still exist, the old gym?

KR: Yes.

DH: Okay. It went two cross courts, of course, two basketball goals crossways, and then the full length official college length—full length there and then the bleachers on the side. We had three volleyball courts and like six badminton courts—like three on each end, and they worked real well. Of course, we had a lot of lines out there. I remember some of the kids in basketball would be dribbling six feet out of bounds, thinking the other line [was in bounds]. It was different colors, but it was funny, going out of bounds thinking they were still on the court. We utilized the gym very well. Of course, we had a pool in the back, a separate weight room, and the locker rooms and all that are still back there.

KR: Yes, I'm sure it's really state of the art back in the day. Of course, there are plans in the works now to put in a new gym, a much nicer gym [the Dr. Betty L. Siegel Student Recreation and Activities Center, scheduled to open in 2015]--because, obviously, the gym now is over forty years old. Obviously, back then it was state of the art. As far as outdoor sports go, which fields did you all play on? I know for a while they only had one field for intramurals, which is pretty sad considering the size of our school. I don't know if that's been a problem the whole time or what.

DH: Well, in fact, I designed them. Of course, later some engineers stepped in. The pool was in the back. We had offices in the front [the west side of the building looking out on the parking lot]. The weight room was also in the front just down the hall to the right if you came in the main entrance. To the right [south of the building], we put the tennis courts in. For novice players, we put in a wall. A lot of times you'll see a wall to hit the balls against in a tennis facility about as high as this room.

KR: That still exists actually.

DH: Yes, well, the reason I made it either eighteen or twenty feet was so a beginner wouldn't be embarrassed all the time hitting it over that wall. So I designed it about eighteen feet high. Of course, you could play all the way down either side as far as stroking it and had

a line across to simulate the top of the net. We had actually a multipurpose court on either side of that wall. It could have been outdoor basketball on each side. We had a total of six tennis courts. I forget the name of the surface, but it was a good surface in those days. Beyond there [going south], we had a huge soccer field, and then I believe we put the softball field beyond that. When they started the varsity sports, then they set up the softball complex down there. Then beyond there is a new soccer field down next to Chastain Road.

KR: Yes, sir. Then, of course, I'm sure you heard of this. We [the KSU Foundation] made a purchase across from I-575 [the 88-acre Sports and Recreation Park, completed between 2010 and 2012]. So we're having new fields. We have a number of different intramural fields, and, of course, we have the new soccer stadium [Fifth Third Bank Stadium, opened in May 2010].

DH: The intramural fields are, I guess, separate from the soccer stadium aren't they?

KR: Yes.

DH: I haven't see those yet.

KR: It's extremely impressive. When you get a chance you'll have to go see it.

DH: Yes, I'd love to see it sometime. I follow it in the paper; I get the Marietta paper.

KR: Right, the *Marietta Daily Journal*? So the soccer field and the softball fields [south of the gymnasium]—those existed pretty much since KSU started.

DH: Yes. Now we played flag football down here beyond the tennis courts, but also when our program expanded we used what is called the quadrangle, I believe, on the left [north] of the gym [current location of the western half of the Campus Green]. There weren't any buildings there, so there's a big half a block there or more that was level. We used that. We got permission, so we had softball and flag football on one or two fields there.

KR: Yes, you definitely could get away with it then because there weren't as many buildings versus now, obviously . . .

DH: There's not much space available on the campus. We had 152 acres to start with it.

KR: Right. As far as funding goes for all the intramural things and all the facilities, how did you all get funding?

DH: Well, of course, the gym was paid for [through the 1964 bond issue of the City of Marietta and the Cobb County School District that was turned over to the Board of Regents to construct the original campus]. [Intramurals] were probably the low man on the totem pole, so to speak, as far as getting funds. It wasn't lavish spending on our part as well as for salaries. But things had to grow.

KR: Let's talk about the student culture, how the culture evolved between 1967 and when you retired in the mid-1980s? Was there a lot of change? I'm pretty sure in that time it was still mainly non-traditional, but I'm sure there's definitely a distinctness as far as the KSU culture went.

- DH: Yes. That's a good question. The [traditional-aged students], like from Sprayberry [High School] and all around—I found that they were pretty much the same—good quality people and had a good attitude and all that. I never felt a great change. Of course, there were more and more students who worked full time, but they were very respectful and appreciative of getting to take courses. So I had very little problems ever with students.
- KR: I wanted to ask about the growing student diversity as far as nationalities and races go. I was looking at where Kennesaw Junior College was predominately white, and you look today, and there's a lot more diversity.
- DH: I'm pretty sure Dr. Siegel was the main one that came in with international studies. They tried to reach out to other countries. I think [history professor and former Director of International Programs Dr. Thomas H.] Tom Keene [played a central role] as far as the Chinese and the exchange programs and the different ones with Europe. Tom was on our basketball team, as well as Tom Scott by the way; all three of us were on that [faculty intramural] team. [Another basketball player, Ronald H.] Ron TeBeest, I think, might have retired before you got out there. He was a political scientist.
- KR: The name doesn't ring a bell.
- DH: He's been retired since about the turn of the century [although he taught part time for a number of years after he retired]. But I don't think I sensed a great [change] because most students out there weren't there to party because it wasn't a party school. They would hang out to play intramurals and stuff like that, but most of the others had already gone home unless they had a night class or something like. So it was a different setting all together.
- KR: Definitely. Another couple of things that were added in the 1970s, actually a really funny thing I noticed was a donkey basketball. I thought that was pretty funny. Was that your brain child?
- DH: Yes, that was while I was there. I don't remember exactly how it evolved, but I think maybe we had it just one time. I don't know. But they had rubber soles on the donkeys for their horseshoes, so it was just a real clown time, fun time.
- KR: Definitely. I'm sure there'd be some really big ethical issues associated with that today, but back then I'm sure it was a lot of fun. Then Nature Bound started about that time as well. Did you have any part in that? I guess it was a student club. I know it's associated now with the Sports and Recreation and Intramurals. It was basically students going out into nature, like camping, backpacking, all sorts of outdoor activities.
- DH: We did some of that. By the way, camping was one of our classes. They'd go out on a weekend or just once or twice during the quarter to do that. It was just a great time. I was going to mention that we had a great FCA (Fellowship of Christian Athletes) group going. At one time we had about three hundred members in it. Of course, we've grown some. This was about after I'd been there about nineteen years or something like that. I was their sponsor or faculty representative. Of course, that's a pretty good increase in students in the first twenty years. I got a lot of satisfaction personally seeing the kids rallying for a different cause.

- KR: Definitely. In the 1980s I saw you all started a bike race as well, a six-mile bike race around campus.
- DH: Yes, it went real well. There were a few people into cycling. Of course, there was competition to have a good representation in the different clubs. They wanted somebody in the race type thing, so it went pretty good. It was all around the [Pinetree] Country Club. Then they'd wind back up Steve Frey Road there. I'd forgotten about that.
- KR: Yes, I tell you, those yearbooks—I'm really glad they saved them because there's just so much information going back in KSU's time. I found it extremely interesting myself, but it was really helpful for this project I'm doing.
- DH: That's great. I told Dr. Scott the other day when he talked to me about you that I donated all my annuals to the library. It's the kind of thing you just put on your bookshelf [and they need to be available for people who want to use them].
- KR: Right, they just collect dust if you don't use them.
- DH: That's true. It's still great memories, but at the same time I thought they might have more use for them than I would.
- KR: It was around 1982 that we started collegiate sports like actually competing in sports in the NCAA [National Collegiate Athletic Association]. You were the coach [of the basketball team] for that for a while, right?
- DH: I coached the first men's team. We already had women's basketball for a while. We already had women playing competitively for two or three years—I don't remember exactly how long prior to that. I think we wound up with a 12-12 record. We beat all the senior colleges we played. Now we had nine out of twelve freshmen. We beat all the senior colleges we played, and then we lost to the junior colleges [laughter]. That was our twelve losses. Of course, they were more experienced and everything.
- KR: This past year our basketball team beat Georgia Tech, and then in the subsequent games pretty candidly we looked like garbage. It was pretty sad.
- DH: Yes. I've been on the athletic committee out there since Tony Ingle came [in 2000]. I hate it for him and the whole school, you know [that he was fired after the 2010-2011 season], but some of those things you just can't control.
- KR: How receptive was the student body with the men's basketball. Was there a big turnout and a lot of support from the community?
- DH: We had a pretty good turnout for a commuter school. I'd say it wasn't great, but I'd say it was a good average for the first year. We had to build up a name and record to attract people. I'd say it wasn't a bad turnout, but not like it would be . . .
- KR: Right, it wouldn't be like UGA or Florida obviously.
- DH: Well, we wore Georgia Tech and Florida out. We scored 99 against the University of Florida at Georgia Teachers the first game we opened up with. Then the next night we scored 101 against Tech. They were Gator Bowl scoring records. I don't know if they

still [are the records]. They did away with the basketball [tournament as part of the Gator Bowl week] after a few years. They don't have it any more.

KR: What were KSU's best basketball teams over the years?

DH: Oh, it was definitely the one when they won the [NCAA Division II] national championship [in 2004]. I've seen quite a few of the games. It's naturally better than we had it. We had the making of a good team, but I couldn't afford to coach the men's team another year because they wanted me to be full time. I was about to take about a third pay cut, and I couldn't afford to do that.

KR: When was it that you retired from KSU and coaching?

DH: I believe it was 1986.

KR: 1986?

DH: That was the year I retired. I guess I may have taught one more year after I coached. I coached whatever year the men's team was first started [the 1984-1985 school year].

KR: What have you been doing in the subsequent years since your retirement? Are you doing really or any other jobs since then?

DH: Well, I've had three careers. I spent thirty-six and a half years in the National Guard. Whenever I retired from Kennesaw, I taught there at night. So I took a job in real estate. I've had a license for a long time. In Atlanta, it's such a hassle, the traffic and everything. So I opened up my own company in Cherokee County [Dave Harris Commercial Realty]. We've been in business about twenty-five years now [since 1987]. I still work six days a week. [The real estate market] has been very tough the last three years [since the start of the recession in 2008].

KR: Definitely. Are you still pretty much associate with KSU and in what capacity?

DH: Well, I was on the athletics committee up until when Tony was fired. I was a member of his committee for just the basketball thing. We served as an advisor. There were about a half dozen people or so. I've been pretty close to Tony most all the time. I hate it for him. I'm sure there are some reasons behind some of it, but he tried as hard as anybody could try as a coach.

KR: Well, in 2004 they had that really good year. Since then they've kind of fallen off the mat [8 wins, 23 losses in the 2010-2011 season]. I have one last question for you, and then we can wrap this up. During your time at Kennesaw State what was your biggest accomplishment would you say?

DH: Well, I always felt good about the lifetime sports approach. I became the state director of the HP&R [the Georgia chapter of the Association for Health, Physical Education, and Recreation, now named the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance]. I was the president during that time. I was a candidate for southern district president. Do you remember those?

KR: I can't say I do.

DH: Okay, anyway, you have state, southern district, and national. Without sounding boastful, I could probably have wound up being president of the national organization, but Dr. Sturgis felt like I was away from campus too much. So he wouldn't let me be a candidate for the southern district president, which was [elected]. We did a national study on physical fitness and health, and we did a series of six films, TV commercials. I did one with President Carter on the value of tennis. I got the state honor award there. So I was pretty active as long as I was in it and got a lot of satisfaction. I run into students, and some of them will say I was the best teacher they ever had. You can't buy that kind of an attitude from somebody. I enjoyed going to work out there every day. It was just fun. Someone wanted to know how I could get a doctor's degree in play!

KR: I would like to know how to do that!

DH: They didn't sit in some of those classes I had to sit in. My doctorate is in exercise physiology. It has some tough courses. But anyway I guess that's probably some of the main things that I accomplished.

KR: Do you have anything else you would like to add?

DH: No, I just think you did a great job with the interview. I mean that sincerely, and I hope I've answered most of the things that will be of help to you in your paper.

KR: You definitely have. You've been a great help, and I really appreciate your time.

DH: You're welcome; my pleasure.

KR: Thank you.

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