



2-22-1983

Hall, Helen Athletics Oral History

Cindy Spiro

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Athletics Oral History

Helen Hall **Alumni '47** **National Champion Swimmer**

February 22, 1983
Interviewed by Cindy Spiro

Spiro: The date is February 22, 1983. I'm about to interview Helen Graham Hall, graduate of the College of the Pacific in 1947, National Champion Swimmer for the Crystal Plunge swimming club of San Francisco, and All-American swimmer.

Hall: Was Collier's All-American?

Spiro: Was Collier's like choosing yearly All-American team? Was that it?

Hall: I think so. That was my understanding, and I could be wrong on that. Now, All-American Junior College, All-American College Teams, and All-American AAU. And they didn't have all of those classes in All-Americans way back then.

Spiro: Now would all these women... Like you were a member of an AAU team?

Hall: Mhm.

Spiro: So, you'd be involved in the Amateur Athletic Union.

Hall: Mhm.

Spiro: So that's where they got the people for the teams, huh?

Hall: Yeah.

Spiro: Yeah, and who was I talking to? Margaret Hayes said to say hello to you.

Hall: Well, for goodness sakes.

Spiro: I called the swimming coach who's a good friend of mine at UOP, Dennis Nugent, and I said is there any swimmers in Stockton that have been around, you know, in the '40s that – this is before I called you – might know Helen [Graham]. And he gave me Helena Hayes' name and Fred Van Dyke. Do you remember Fred Van Dyke?

Hall: Sure, and Freddie [Tioli]?

Spiro: Freddie [Tioli]? Now I haven't heard that name.

Hall: Oh yeah.

Spiro: But Fred Van Dyke, I went to school with his daughter, Sally. She was a backstroker.

Hall: For goodness sakes.

Spiro: Yeah. But, they said to say hello to you. I said well, I'm going to be [call] talking to her.

Hall: How nice. Well, if you talk to them again, why geez give them my regard, too.

Spiro: I will, I will. And they were saying that Mark was talking about the Crystal Plunge, and your coach Charlie Savi?

Hall: Sava.

Spiro: Sava.

Hall: Uh huh.

Spiro: He sound like they had quite a...

Hall: Theirs was one of the big teams. Now this, this was just the other day.

Spiro: Uh huh.

Hall: Uh huh. And here is this little note here. It's about Ann Curtis being introduced into the Hall of Fame.

Spiro: Uh huh.

Hall: And Charlie just died.

Spiro: Oh, he just died.

Hall: Uh huh.

Spiro: Yeah, because Margaret, she said I think he's still alive, but he's in his eighties and she had suggested I go contact...

Hall: They're not sure how old he is. They say here eighty-two going on a hundred. He would never really tell his age. And my mother is eighty-six, and she was up here yesterday, and she said I know he was quite a bit older than I was.

Spiro: Uh huh.

Hall: And so...

Spiro: What's the date on this []. [unintelligible].

Hall: And he was still working.

Spiro: Oh, you're kidding.

Hall: No, he's still teaching swimming for the City of San Francisco.

Spiro: Isn't he []?

Hall: Oldest city employee.

Spiro: Oh, for crying out loud. What was the Crystal Plunge then? Was it...

Hall: Okay, Crystal Plunge is no longer up there. The plunge has been torn down years ago. And Charlie was the coach, and I swam here in Santa Cruz. I was raised here in Scotts Valley.

Spiro: Oh, you were raised right here? Oh, for crying out loud.

Hall: Uh huh.

Spiro: No wonder you're here.

Hall: And they had a water carnival down here every Saturday night during the Summer – being a big resort thing – and they had trapeze artists and high diving and fire dives and all that sort of thing.

Spiro: Oh gosh.

Hall: Water ballets, and they had an underwater swimming was a big thing down here. That was quite a novel, you know, type thing.

Spiro: Would that be like synchronized swimming?

Hall: No, no. Swimming for distance underwater.

Spiro: Oh really. Holding your breath, how long you can do that?

Hall: Uh huh. And Ruth [Cail] was a Santa Cruz girl and she held the world's record for that, and as far as I know, she may still because who does it?

Spiro: Yeah, that's right.

Hall: And the fellow that had the men's world record also was in the carnival.

Spiro: Oh, for crying out loud.

Hall: And I'll show you a little thing in here that is Ripley's Believe It or Not, the Water Carnival.

Spiro: Oh, for crying out loud.

Hall: For more people seeing it than, I guess, any other type of production, and it was a production. So, my coach... Actually, they had one other girl that was racing, and all the rest of the carnival was something else. It was trapeze work, or ballet work or diving.

Spiro: Little exhibition type things.

Hall: Uh huh. And they wanted to bring some PAA and AAU meets to the carnival, so I took Red Cross life-saving and trained with this other girl, and I said sure and I didn't know people even raced. I

didn't know other than a backyard pool or something like that, but to train, you know, was completely foreign to me. I just didn't know anything about that.

Spiro: How old were you at the time?

Hall: Fifteen.

Spiro: Wow, that's really something.

Hall: Starting late in today's standards.

Spiro: Right. You'd be an old lady at fifteen it seems like.

Hall: Yeah, sure.

Spiro: We're starting them twelve.

Hall: So anyway, we trained and my first race I broke a record and won, and so that was a sort of the beginning of things. Well, we called it a team, but as it turned out this other girl dropped out, so I was the team. And so, in order for me to do anything on a team basis, and Crystal Plunge wanted me to participate with them because I could help them in a relay and so my coach said okay and he would dissolve the so-called team, and then that would make me free to go right away.

Spiro: Make you a free agent, more or less.

Hall: Yeah, to another team. So that's how I started with Crystal Plunge. Then we went. I trained with them. I actually trained here, and at the time I would go with the team. We went down to L.A. to the coliseum for the outdoor nationals and our team, relay team, four hundred meter relay team won the, or eight-hundred-meter relay team won and so that's how I happened to make the All-American team was on the relay.

Spiro: Yeah, because as national champions you're an automatic All-American or that's what...

Hall: No.

Spiro: No?

Hall: No. No.

Spiro: Not. That's you know, I asked my sports information director. I go what does it constitute an All-American? Nowadays in collegiate swimming, if you're in like the first six finishers, you're automatically an All-American. That's how they do it today's standards. I was just, that's why I was wondering how they did it, you know how they decided.

Hall: Well, it, here is, well this is his team selection...

Spiro: Mhm.

Hall: ...and it tells what club they, you know they are with.

Spiro: Oh, my gosh. You guys were quite the leaders.

Hall: Yeah, Crystal Plunge was it. Now, here's the selecting committee from Iowa, Massachusetts, Ohio, and Indiana. Now, I can't really tell you what the standard...

Spiro: What the standard was? Well, obviously outstanding... they you know what it looks like? It looks like when they have a pick in All-American football team by positions. The outstanding people in each position because you have your relay...

Hall: Yeah.

Spiro: [and] you did the long-distance [].

Hall: These were all winners, of course. Well, it has to be the winners then.

Spiro: Yeah, in the nationals.

Hall: In the nationals in each event.

Spiro: Now, what year did you win that four-hundred and eight-hundred meter? [When you were young]?

Hall: 1945.

Spiro: Was that before you went to UOP?

Hall: No, I started in 1943.

Spiro: At UOP?

Hall: At UOP.

Spiro: Or COP, I should say.

Hall: COP, right. Yeah, COP. And Chris Kjeldsen was the swim coach then. And he was so good to me because we didn't have a women's team at that time, and so just out of the goodness of his heart, he would take me to the far westerns and different meets in the San Francisco area while I was at school and otherwise, I would not have been able to go. I didn't swim for UOP. I swam as part of Crystal Plunge, but that was the only way that I could go.

Spiro: So, they did have women competition along with the men? I mean they had like a, would they have men's meets with women's events also in them?

Hall: At the AAU?

Spiro: Yeah.

Hall: Oh, yeah.

Spiro: Oh, they would have those?

Hall: Uh huh, on some. Some of them. No, the AAU in. No, uh uh. The far westerns, there were men and there were women, but the AAU indoor and outdoor, it was strictly women.

Spiro: Mhm.

Hall: So, some meets were [men's events?].

Spiro: Yeah, I guess just like it is now.

Hall: Uh huh.

Spiro: Yeah, it's really the same as it is now. When you started swimming when you were fifteen, what was the reaction of everybody. I mean, that wasn't really common was it? That girls would start doing athletics.

Hall: Well, when I graduated from high school, they, I had had a great deal of publicity at that time. So that was as far as any honors in P.E. as the women's athletic department, those were points against me because at that time women just didn't do that. And so as far as the city and organizations and things like that, there was a great deal of recognition and approval and everything else, but as far as women's athletics, and I had just a grand grand teacher both in junior high and high school as far as women's teaching sports, and she was just super, but at that time that just didn't go along with the program.

Spiro: Yeah, yeah, in fact, with my research, I'm researching not only UOP's history, but also women's athletics as a whole, and at that time they had said that women's physical educators looked down upon outside competition because they couldn't control it.

Hall: Mhm.

Spiro: Did you have that [].

Hall: Well, that's exactly what I'm talking about.

Spiro: That's exactly that, huh?

Hall: Uh, huh.

Spiro: That's something.

Hall: And as I look back, it seems to me that right in those years, 1943-1944, were the turning years where... Now they didn't have a team at COP, so Chris allowed me to train with the boy on the boys teams, so that I could keep up and go with Crystal Plunge whenever there was a meet.

Spiro: Yeah.

Hall: And then we finally did get some other girls, you know, going on it. I have some pictures someplace of...

Spiro: Oh, that would swim with you with the boys or practice with...

Hall: Well, I don't think any of the others practiced with the boys, and then they finally got a girl's group going. So it was a [] [].

Spiro: What was the reaction of the men when you were in there?

Hall: Oh, they were so good to me. Then I traveled with them and would swim and compete against them, but unattached, you know, it didn't count, but they allowed me to swim. There's, those were girls that were originals at UOP. Maureen Foster, did they give you her name?

Spiro: Yeah, I've got her name. Yeah, she was quite a swimmer.

Hall: I don't know where Maureen is now.

Spiro: I don't either.

Hall: Last we heard, she was in southern California, and that was the last time I saw her.

Spiro: Yeah, I have an alumni directory, and I don't believe, I don't if I have, if she was in there.

Hall: I don't think so because I've had contact with UOP wanting her address. Unless they did eventually get it.

Spiro: Yeah.

Hall: But she was a Stockton girl, and her parents you know could be...

Spiro: Yeah, let see. All my little notes here. She was another, yeah. Maureen Foster, swimming champ.

Hall: Mhm.

Spiro: That's right.

Hall: She was good. Here's pictures of [Ann Curtis] and myself, and a fellow that also swam in some of the meets, and I don't know who that other one is? I'm not sure. Might be [Sugar] [Sona]. These are the same people.

Spiro: What, are you on the way to a swim meet or?

Hall: Yeah or... Yeah.

Spiro: At [one].

Hall: Mhm. I don't really... These are all the same.

Spiro: Same trip, it looks like.

Hall: Yeah, certainly. Had to be. That was a creepy guy, but he was always there.

Spiro: Oh, gosh.

Hall: So and this I think this was a UOP ballet because I think that this person is this one.

Spiro: Looks like it. It really does.

Hall: Pretty sure that's her.

Spiro: Well, there's quite a bit of publicity on the [aquacates] that they used to give.

Hall: Yeah.

Spiro: Was that when you were there? Did they have those?

Hall: Yeah. Let's see. Freddie [Chinchilo]...

Spiro: That name rings a bell.

Hall: Yeah. Was one of the boys that was big in that and we used to do a duet and Bill Antilla.

Spiro: Oh yeah, he's still there.

Hall: Well, Bill and I used to do duets.

Spiro: Oh, for crying out loud. Isn't that great.

Hall: In fact, I still have my silver suit in the cedar chest that I used for that.

Spiro: The water ballets.

Hall: Yeah, uh huh. And Freddie [Chinchilo] had the silver lame shorts.

Spiro: Was that part of the Aquatics Club presentation?

Hall: Mhm.

Spiro: Yeah, because I read that there was an aquatics club. It was [been] men and women.

Hall: Uh huh.

Spiro: Were they interested in competition or just overall swimming enthusiasts?

Hall: Ahh huh...it yeah, it was overall because they weren't all competing in speed swimming.

Spiro: That's something. That is something. How did it feel, you know, like a female jock on the campus?

Hall: Well, that's what I always sort of fought against was being masculine. I loved that outdoor wholesome look, but so many P.E. majors and they had that stamp of...

Spiro: I know what you mean.

Hall: Yea, masculine, and I just hated that. I just hated it. And I really don't feel like they, the school or anyone really classed me as a jock.

Spiro: Mhm.

Hall: So, I liked that.

Spiro: But you didn't feel like you were a separate...

Hall: No.

Spiro: ... kind of a person. You could maintain your femininity and still compete and everything.

Hall: Yeah.

Spiro: That's great.

Hall: No, I didn't feel isolated at all.

Spiro: That's great. I know, I can empathize.

Hall: Yeah.

Spiro: When I was a P.E. major, I've had the same feeling. You know, the typical stereotype and I remember I had my hair really long for a long time because I thought well, I'm not going to lose my femininity. I don't want them to think I'm a bullish P.E. major.

Hall: Yeah!

Spiro: [unintelligible]

Hall: My hair is short, and when I get it cut, which I'm going to do tomorrow, Don always says well you look like a real P.E. teacher.

Spiro: How cruel.

Hall: He does that just to get my goat, and I could crown him. But these, I think they are such pretty girls and so...

Spiro: They're beautiful women, really.

Hall: That sort of was a caliber none of these... Unless [] was a P.E. major, I'm not sure. But we sort of got away from that, and I don't remember any of the P.E. majors of that time being masculine.

Spiro: Mhm...that's great.

Hall: And so, it was a good time.

Spiro: Yeah.

Hall: It was a good era.

Spiro: I noticed you were president of the WAA and vice president of the Pacific Student Association. Boy, that's fantastic.

Hall: Yes.

Spiro: You were really interested in administration?

Hall: Well no, I think when you're in the limelight you tend to be pushed into areas like, what is it, Peter's principle?

Spiro: Yeah.

Hall: I think that was just a little out of my expertise really. You know, you'd do the job, but I couldn't... it just wasn't my forte.

Spiro: Well, you had to find out.

Hall: But I did it, and I'm glad I did it. So, it all worked out real well.

Spiro: How was, was Stockton Junior College affiliated then at that time or?

Hall: We had a very unique situation. Stockton College which is public, and COP which was private, were on the same campus, and to give you an idea when I went up there to school, I thought I was going to COP and they said oh no, you register down the other end of the hall. You're going to Stockton College.

Spiro: Oh wow.

Hall: And you lived in the same dorms and you had, you used all the same facilities, and you had the same teachers.

Spiro: Hmm. How interesting.

Hall: Some of them were more combination teachers. Others were just Pacific and just junior college.

Spiro: But so like, the first two years of COP were actually Stockton College.

Hall: Stockton College.

Spiro: And then you just automatically go into COP, for your junior year.

Hall: Uh huh.

Spiro: That is really something. That is a unique situation. I never heard of that.

Hall: Yeah, and so that's the way it was until Delta got their own college, own campus.

Spiro: And now you know that we bought Delta, the old Delta College campus, UOP did.

Hall: Oh, really?

Spiro: Yeah, the one right next to the campus?

Hall: Yeah?

Spiro: And a lot of offices are being used and they're renovating it too. They're gonna eventually put like brick on the outside to make it look like, you know, the Ivy League.

Hall: Oh, really?

Spiro: That was a good purchase because they were cramped for space.

Hall: What's the enrollment now?

Spiro: It's around forty-five hundred. Almost five thousand. That's a good enrollment.

Hall: Yeah.

Spiro: Like the old Delta College, they have a big library there, and they turned that into School of Education, and that also holds the archives where I've been spending the last five months looking at these old dusty books, but it's really good.

Hall: Yeah.

Spiro: But now the track that they had at the old college, that's gone. I know, have you been back?

Hall: Not to look around on the campus, no.

Spiro: Yeah, they built the big event center, now. It's a big basketball and volleyball...

Hall: Spanos you mean?

Spiro: Yeah, Spanos.

Hall: Yes, I've been there.

Spiro: You been there. You've seen the new pool?

Hall: No.

Spiro: Kjeldsen pool?

Hall: No.

Spiro: Oh, you haven't?

Hall: No, I was supposed to go to the dedication for that, but we were southern California, and I couldn't get up to it.

Spiro: It's a beautiful pool. It's our present swim, our Aquatics Director, Dennis Nugent, he was a water polo swim starter in the 60's. He's currently trying to raise some money to get like locker rooms because when they built the pool, they thought well should we build a small pool with a complete locker room facility or get the big Olympic pool. So, they figured well the hole in the ground can't change.

Hall: Yeah, that's right.

Spiro: So, it's got an underwater observation deck.

Hall: Oh, how super.

Spiro: Yeah, it's really nice. And they're really doing good, the Aquatics Program, especially the women. We've had, gosh, we've had a number of All-Americans there that have gone on to the national championships and stuff.

Hall: Marvelous! Yeah!

Spiro: So, it's pretty neat! But anyway, I get off track here. I want to know about the WAA, and how did it function? What kind of organization was it? Was it a recreational oriented or social oriented?

Hall: Gee, as I recall it was like afterschool sports type thing. That's so long ago I can't remember those. What was? But and we had some play days where other schools would come.

Spiro: Yeah.

Hall: But I think primarily it was afterschool sports like...

Spiro: Intermural type, among the groups and stuff?

Hall: Yes. Well, I don't remember that so much as like you'd take sixth period gym because those were the students that really were interested in sports and interested in competing.

Spiro: Mhm.

Hall: Yeah, so that's what sticks in my mind as what it was.

Spiro: Did, was there a Block P society?

Hall: Mhm.

Spiro: The Chaucer P? Was that still alive...

Hall: The Block P was the men, aha.

Spiro: Aha. Did they have something similar for women at the time?

Hall: No, not that I remember.

Spiro: Because in 1924, they started what they call a Chaucer P Society, and they ordered block letters for the women athletes. In the early 20's they had quite a schedule...

Hall: Program.

Spiro: Yeah, quite a program of women's athletics. They had a basketball schedule. They played, they went down to southern California and played Whittier.

Hall: Oh, for goodness sake.

Spiro: Yeah, it was great. They really had a big program. And then in the latter 20's, the national organization they belonged to, the ACACW which was like American Conference of Athletics for College Women or something like that, they came out with a policy statement saying that we do not believe in interschool athletics, no intermural athletics are sufficient and... What they're basically scared of was that women's athletics would become this corrupt as the men's, and I wanna to see it happen.

Hall: Oh dear!

Spiro: But they had a Chaucer P Society. And so, I was curious if they used to have that.

Hall: So that really is almost to the place where they are now back to.

Spiro: Yeah, isn't it something? It just kinda comes back to that.

Hall: Yeah, maybe it'll take off much more than that now because...

Spiro: Yeah, I think there, if they has to whether the encouragement of the little kids.

Hall: Uh huh.

Spiro: See those little girls playing soccer, you know, it's great!

Hall: Yeah.

Spiro: But one of my notes said that you had, you were known to instigate a move towards blocks and stars for the women in the WAA. Do you remember that?

Hall: Nope.

Spiro: Well, you were president for it. As WAA president. Oh gosh.

Hall: Oh dear.

Spiro: [unintelligible]

Hall: It just amazes me. Some of the girls or well I think of one girl in high school and one girl in college that when I get together with them, they remember more details and people's names and I don't remember that. You have to remember doing that. And I just don't. Once it's gone, it's gone, and onto new and other things.

Spiro: That's right. That's right. Oh gosh.

Hall: Oh dear.

Spiro: Do you remember your workouts at all?

Hall: Oh boy do I ever. Yeah, I remember those.

Spiro: They must have really worked you pretty good if Coach [Kjeldsen] had you in his reigns.

Hall: Yeah, well Charlie Sava would send me my schedules, and Chris would see that I did them. So that was the way that was, and I know that every other day was a different schedule. On the alternate day, it would be swim a mile. Then on the other alternate days it would be, you know, like kick forty laps and pull forty laps and sprint twenty laps, and you know that type of thing. It was a real, your're up.

Spiro: Your standard swim workout.

Hall: Yes.

Spiro: I must admit I've never enjoyed swimming. I'm a track person. I like to run. Maybe it's because I wear contacts and when I don't wear them, I can't see.

Hall: Oh well, that has a lot to do with it I'm sure.

Spiro: Also, I'm a rock in water. I just sink.

Hall: You wouldn't now.

Spiro: I know, really. That's what my doctor says. He goes you should go in there and start swimming. It's good for you. But I've been kind of jogging, more like walking-jogging until I sprained my ankle last week.

Hall: Oh gosh. Do you distance or sprinting as your...?

Spiro: Well, I used to compete as a sprinter. I had a hundred two-twenty sprints and I competed for AAU team and everything. When I as back at UOP as a graduate student, I was teaching a running

class, running for health class, and I really got into sprinting, running, enjoying for distance running. I ran the beta breakers last year.

Hall: Oh, did you?

Spiro: Yeah, it was great and so, I've really gotten into it. But when I was competing, running sprints, you couldn't catch me going more than a mile at one time. I'd rather sprint like twelve hundreds.

Hall: Well, that's what it takes.

Spiro: Yeah, you have to do those, but it was fun. It's funny because when I was in high school, that was before Title IX and before girl's athletics really got to be big, and so I would be the only girl training with the boy track teams. Same thing.

Hall: Same here. Forty years later, we're getting into track.

Spiro: Oh gosh.

Hall: Yeah.

Spiro: Did you think the war, because you started like at the tail end of the war when you started swimming, do you think the war had anything to do with women getting more into sports or maybe having less resistance or?

Hall: No, I can't see that it did. It just happened to be, you know, at that time.

Spiro: Yeah.

Hall: And of course, there were no Olympics at that time. Those were cut out.

Spiro: That's right, that's right, no Olympics. Did you ever think about competing for the Olympics?

Hall: Well, as I said, they didn't have them when I was doing most of my swimming, and I was married afterward, and I didn't feel I could put in that much time and effort toward it. And I not, I don't know that I was Olympic material either because [Miss Sugar Sauner].

Spiro: In here?

Hall: That's in here, uh huh. Where is Sugar? Right here. She always beat me out on all the time, and she missed going to the Olympics just by a hair.

Spiro: Oh really?

Hall: And so, the people of San Francisco took up a collective and sent her because, you know, she was right up there, and had hoped that she would make the team, but she didn't. So, I feel maybe even if I gave it my best shot, I might not have made it anyway.

Spiro: But, you must have gotten married pretty quick after you graduated then?

Hall: The day. The last day of school.

Spiro: Oh really?

Hall: At high noon.

Spiro: Oh my god.

Hall: My last final was over at ten o'clock. Don's was over at noon and we were married at noon.

Spiro: Oh for crying [out]. Now, that's calling it quick.

Hall: Yeah. High noon wedding and Libby was also at my wedding and at the chapel on campus.

Spiro: Oh neat. That sounds like us, except Steve was older than me, so he was out of school by then.

Hall: Well, Don was in the service and so when he came back, why he was a year behind me then instead of a year ahead.

Spiro: Oh, that's why. Yeah, I noticed in the alumni directory, he graduated in '48. So, he was in the...
Yeah that's right because most of the men there, their college careers were interrupted by the service. That's interesting. And then after you got married, did you teach or anything or?

Hall: Mhm. I taught my first year in a vocational school in Stockton, and then the second year, does Eleanor [Cole] ring a bell?

Spiro: Oh yes, I know her. Delta College.

Hall: Okay. She took time out to get her doctor's degree, so I took her place for a year.

Spiro: At the Stockton College?

Hall: Uh huh.

Spiro: Oh, for crying out loud.

Hall: So, most of her classes were, you know, primarily tennis, and I didn't know too much about tennis, but I had a lot of beginning classes. But anyway, that was fun. And then we decided we were not gonna get used to two salaries and we'd start a family and that was it. So other than that, I didn't teach school, but I taught swimming. Our family doctor, which was also COP's football team doctor, was Doctor [Colace], and they had a pool in their backyard and they wanted me teach their children to swim and that thing just sort of snowballed, and that [was] their friends, and their friends' friends, and so she just kept a schedule and all I'd did was show up at the pool and teach from nine to twelve or nine to twelve-thirty or something like that and did that for ten summers.

Spiro: For crying out loud. Nice little part-time income there.

Hall: Yeah, it was super. Then their youngest who was five years old when I first taught him, he took over my clientele when we moved and left. He was on the swim team then in high school, and so he took over all the lessons and went on from there.

Spiro: So, did you move right from Stockton down south?

Hall: Uh huh.

Spiro: Oh my gosh. You've been there all these years and finally come back up here.

Hall: We would been down there twenty years.

Spiro: And finally got back to Scotts Valley, I don't blame you for coming back here.

Hall: See, we lived in Stockton for thirteen years.

Spiro: Oh really?

Hall: Yeah. Don was the football coach at Stockton College.

Spiro: Oh, I'm going to have to look that up. I gotta go check that out.

Hall: Yeah, he was the assistant coach to Earl [Clapstein].

Spiro: I know that name.

Hall: Okay, we're going up to see Earl a week from this weekend.

Spiro: Oh, for crying out loud.

Hall: And go to the basketball game on a Thursday night which is the third or something of March.

Spiro: Yeah, that's right.

Hall: And the, so anyway, he was his assistant and that was his first teaching job. And the, then Earl left, and Don became head coach and the, for how long, [I don't know] a few years. And then we moved, then Earl went a number of places, into Pro ball, and Green Bay Packers, and I don't know what all. Then he got the job at this brand-new community college, junior college – called at that time. Now they call it, you know they called it, community colleges – at Cerritos, so he's the one then that instigated Don coming down and taking over for him and he wanted to go into administration.

Spiro: Oh, for crying out loud.

Hall: So, that's how we happened to get down there, yeah.

Spiro: Isn't that something?

Hall: Uh huh.

Spiro: It's interesting how little thing, you know makes your life... There goes your whole life is almost by who you know or the contacts you make.

Hall: Uha ha, little jigsaws, yeah.

Spiro: [unintelligible]

Hall: And we kept in touch with Earl and Viola all these years, and he went up then to Mount Hood which was a brand-new [no campus] – same as Cerritos was at that time – and pioneered it.

Spiro: Oh my gosh.

Hall: Then he left there and went to Sacramento and was the chancellor for the Sacramento Community Colleges and then he retired there two years ago, I guess. Now, lives in Lodi. [unintelligible]

Spiro: [unintelligible]

Hall: You'll probably hear his name more and more. He'll be on this committee or that committee or something else.

Spiro: I've heard his name various, you know. When I was in administration at UOP, I got to really know the surrounding area. All the people that have been involved in athletics, you know, for years and years because they're always staunches for boosters or our biggest critics. One or the other.

Hall: And not much in-between.

Spiro: Right. There was a question I wanted to ask you. Let's see, where was that? There was in, let's see, here it was, in one of the Pacific Weekly's, it said that the men's and women's swim teams combined – this was in '45 – to defeat Lodi High, and it said that was the first time in the history of the school that a women's meet was held along with the men's. That was in '45, and I'm wondering if you can recall that or anything?

Hall: And we swam against the high school?

Spiro: Yeah, Lodi High. Well, the writing in the Weekly had said that it was the first time in the history of the school that a women's meet was held along with the men's against the high school. I don't know. That's all that I have on that.

Hall: Can't help you.

Spiro: Can't remember that one, huh?

Hall: No.

Spiro: Here's another one, Grant's Pacers. Do you remember a school called Grant by any chance? I have no idea what the heck Grant's Pacers... We defeated them twenty-four to eight. Marine Foster won the forty-three in thirty-two point two, and the forty back in twenty-nine. Rosemary Hill, Marshall Graham, and Foster won the one sixty-yard relay. It said this meet was swam with the men's team. The men won fifty to seven. You guys [] killed them. I wonder if that was a high school. Do you remember any meets against high schools?

Hall: No, I don't.

Spiro: I wonder if that was a name for a junior college that has since changed its name? Grant.

Hall: I wonder if... that's not in the Lodi area?

Spiro: I've never heard. It might have been an old school.

Hall: Or maybe Sacramento.

Spiro: This was in '46. Might have been Sacramento. This was in May of '46. What I do, I scour the Pacific Weekly and...

Hall: Boy, you certainly have done some research.

Spiro: Well, you know once I started it was really interesting.

Hall: Gosh.

Spiro: I noticed you were called the BSOC, the big splash on campus. You remember that?

Hall: No.

Spiro: Where did I read that one?

Hall: My nickname was the fish.

Spiro: The fish?

Hall: Mhm.

Spiro: Let's see there's a picture of you in the National Threat Headlines. Says you also enjoyed skiing and basketball. Father was a wrestling and speed skating champ in Idaho. You were born on an Indian reservation.

Hall: Mhm.

Spiro: Your mother wrote poetry. Your oldest brother took third in a world ski competition.

Hall: Mhm.

Spiro: Quite an athletic family.

Hall: My mother is the one that's something else.

Spiro: She's still going huh?

Hall: Oh! She's eighty-six years old. She's a nature photographer.

Spiro: Oh my gosh.

Hall: And has international claim now. Also, a poet and writer.

Spiro: Oh my gosh.

Hall: And, I'll have to show you.

Spiro: Yes.

Hall: [unintelligible]. Going through this, here's...

Spiro: Oh, my goodness.

Hall: And somewhere in this magazine I have a picture... [].

Spiro: Anne Curtis was probably one of the famous Crystal Plunge, huh?

Hall: Yes, she was the star.

Spiro: Oh, yes, [] [Dedrickson]. Isn't this something? Oh, the body!

Hall: Time changes a few things.

Spiro: Oh, "Twinkling Star of Santa Cruz." Oh, this was when you were still living in Santa Cruz. Or no, I see. "[Won] at the College of the Pacific."

Hall: [unintelligible], mhm.

Spiro: Who's who in the U.S.? And this is the Californian? And this is like California news. Who's who in the California news.

Hall: Mhm.

Spiro: That's interesting. That's great. Californian.

Hall: And they used to just...

Spiro: All your...

Hall: [unintelligible]. Let's see, here, she was the underwater star.

Spiro: Oh, she was the underwater swim champ. I saw that picture. In fact, I saw that article.

Hall: Oh?

Spiro: Yeah, Pacific Weekly, that's right.

Hall: This was Sugar [Sauner]. This is all going backward here.

Spiro: Oh, my goodness.

Hall: Anne Curtis, and again.

Spiro: [Chronical Green].

Hall: This is my sister. This is all part of the water carnival.

Spiro: Oh, isn't that something? ...[], you really [] about everything.

Hall: Here's Don.

Spiro: Oh, that's great.

Hall: [unintelligible].

Spiro: Oh, he's very good-looking.

Hall: Cerritos.

Spiro: Oh, that's great. Who did this, all the personnel there? A, yeh, uh huh, all the people in the department?

Hall: Yeah. Throw the band-aid on him.

Spiro: I love that, that is cute.

Hall: I thought that was really cute. I haven't looked in these things for years and years.

Spiro: See, isn't it fun. Someone out of the blue calls you up, and you gotta get it out of the attic and clean them up.

Hall: Yeah.

Spiro: This is fantastic. Let's see, the Naranjado.

Hall: These are all [], [unintelligible].

Spiro: Yeah, this page in the Naranjado a friend of mine is going photograph. He has a process where, you know, you can photograph it and make a photograph so that I can include it in my report because I think it's great. Here you are with Eddie LeBaron, John [Rodie], and Bruce Orvis, and all these people.

Hall: Yeah.

Spiro: I know Eddie LeBaron and John [Rodie].

Hall: Oh, do you? You haven't met Bruce Orvis?

Spiro: No. No. I knew his son, actually, because they lived in Oakdale and I was from a small town called Hughson, which is right near Oakdale, so and my boyfriend...

Hall: Something just happened in Hughson, didn't it? That was on something?

Spiro: Really, just recently?

Hall: Yeah, it was on the news and television.

Spiro: Hmm, I don't know. Maybe my mom has it. I haven't talked to my mom in a couple days. Maybe something happened.

Hall: I think that was the name because I was wondering where in the world that was because I had not heard of Hughson before. [unintelligible]

Spiro: I guess an accident? I'll have to call my mom.

Hall: I don't know whether it was good or bad or what it was.

Spiro: Well, it's a small farm community. About two-thousand people. My dad's a rancher. [So you know all], everything is either farm oriented or ... The only time we get into the news is if it's something related to the farming industry or if there's some big thing like I remember one time we had a murder, once.

Hall: Well, I'm wondering if that wasn't it.

Spiro: Yeah, and one time we had a big fire. There're a few things that have happened in the area.

Hall: Yeah.

Spiro: I don't know. Now you got my curiosity. Now I might have to call my mom. Oh gosh. Oh, my husband thought of a question to ask you.

Hall: Alright.

Spiro: He goes what was your husband's reaction to you being involved in sports. I mean you were going with him right, when you were in college? What did he think of all that?

Hall: Well, I don't know. Maybe you should ask him. I, he didn't have any... Well, gosh, I don't know what to say. He was always very encouraging, so he backed it.

Spiro: Positive.

Hall: Yeah.

Spiro: Well, that's basically the kind of answer I was looking for. So, he wasn't discouraging or anything like that.

Hall: No. No. He seemed to be very proud, really.

Spiro: That's great because a number of women, I mean their boyfriends or husbands really don't like that. They used to when I was like in high school. You know, they're [unintelligible].

Hall: Well, it's the same as the girls. They don't want to share their husbands with being gone with all these other people and the notoriety and you know, so it works both ways.

Spiro: Well, that's true.

Hall: So, it just depends on individuals, I think.

Spiro: Yeah, because my husband and I were talking before I came and he goes, well maybe because she was going with the football player... I went with my husband when he was in college and so I was kinda accepted by all of the guy athletes, you know, and that circle.

Hall: Yes.

Spiro: They didn't start, really, sport until my junior year, and I would always be playing basketball with the guys or something like that, but I had no problems as far as feeling like an outcast. My husband thought it was because I was going with him, and so I was accepted in that fraternity of athletes, I guess. So, he was curious if that was the same way with you.

Hall: Yeah. Well actually, looking back, they were all very protective of me. Of course, there was always drinking at parties, and "nope, Helen doesn't want any." It was before I could even answer one way or another. They just did not allow me to drink and so they were, they were just very protective. My experience all the way through, and particularly in college, was just super.

Spiro: That's great.

Hall: It was just great.

Spiro: That's neat. That is really neat.

Hall: Yeah.

Spiro: Now, like in your teacher-training program, you know P.E., what did they ever talk about the conducting of girl's athletics or how they should be conducted with a philosophy behind it or anything like that?

Hall: No, it not as athletics. It was as P.E. classes. And I don't remember anything as athletics at that time.

Spiro: Even when you were ready to leave school, they still just...

Hall: It was P.E.

Spiro: ... you know, team sports or P.E.

Hall: Mhm.

Spiro: That's interesting. Yeah, because in my research from like '50s and '60s that just went way down, and it was not that much publicity. I could hardly find anything because it was mainly interclass competition. Very few extramural or competition against other schools until about the latter '60s, early '70s, and then you know took off with a bang.

Hall: Yes. Yeah, uh huh.

Spiro: Well, now you know that UOP, the volleyball team. Have you heard about the volleyball team there?

Hall: Yes, somewhat, I have.

Spiro: Yeah, they hosted the national championships this last year at the Spanos Center. The NCAA and they finished...

Hall: They had quite a boy's team, men's team.

Spiro: That's what I heard or read.

Hall: In fact, there was another Don Hall who happens to live here in Santa Cruz who was on that team.

Spiro: Oh, for crying out loud.

Hall: And as Larry [Simmering], does that ring a bell?

Spiro: Yeah, yes.

Hall: Okay. We see Larry every day. He's retired here. We had a boat in Moss Landing, and Larry and Don went down to check out the boat, and they were walking by this big fishing boat and this fellow hollers out "Larry [Simmering]!" And Larry didn't, you know, you could tell, didn't ring a bell, so this fellow said "I'm Don Hall. Not the football player, but the volleyball player." And my husband spoke up and said, "Well, I'm Don Hall the football player."

Spiro: Oh, that's great!

Hall: Yeah.

Spiro: How funny. Yea, in fact, that volleyball team, a lot of the guys are the biggest supporters of the women's volleyball program.

Hall: Oh, okay. Now there's another one. Oh shoot, what the dickens is his name because I dated him and we saw him just leaving the golf course when we were up there for the football Hall of Fame thing. Bob...hmm...

Spiro: I was thinking, "Not Bill [Chapman]."

Hall: No, it's Bob something. Anyway, he was another one with that same group of Don Hall and...

Spiro: It's been so tough to do this research because I get sidetracked. I start reading everything else, you know, because it's so interesting. Like the men's athletics and all that because I know a lot of the people that have been there because well my girlfriend... I don't know. Do you know Bob Eberhardt? I don't know, he was, I don't know if he was in school when you were in school. Anyway, he's big, president of the Board of Regents now, and his daughter is my best friend.

Hall: Oh.

Spiro: Yeah, so through him, there Stockton, old Stockton family, and through them I've met all these people that have been involved with UOP and played sports, so I'd read and I'd go "Oh, I know that person." Then I start reading [for a sec], and I go well I need to get back to my research. It's so much fun.

Hall: Well, that's wonderful that you're so enthusiastic over it.

Spiro: It's really been good.

Hall: You'll know about the school more than anybody else by the time you finish.

Spiro: Well, I'll tell you I'm trying to finish up my notes this week. I gotta start writing it next week. I've got until May 10th.

Hall: Oh, that's your due date huh?

Spiro: That's my due date. I want to get it done before that.

Hall: Sure.

Spiro: While I enjoy... I want this part of my career to be over. I want to start a new career.

Hall: Oh gosh, and then are you going to continue teaching or administration or whatever?

Spiro: Maybe, I don't know. At this point, I might, like I've been teaching adult fitness classes on the side at our church's gymnasium a couple hours a week for fun. That's and [do that], [good now].

Hall: Yeah, that's Mormon?

Spiro: Yeah, men and women. I have ages twenty to sixty-seven in my class.

Hall: Oh, that's good. Is that the Mormon church?

Spiro: No, the Catholic church.

Hall: Oh, because I was thinking the Mormons are the ones that usually have the big gymnasium.

Spiro: Yeah, well this is just down the street from us and it's a Catholic school.