

Allan Trimble

Beloved high school coaching legend who won championships, battled ALS, and left an incredible legacy of leadership.

Chapter 01 - 1:27

Introduction

Announcer: Allan Trimble won more state high school football championships in 22 seasons at Jenks than any head coach in Oklahoma history. However, his first state title as a head coach was with the Jenks girls track team in 1995.

Allan was born August 14, 1963 and was a graduate of Cleveland High School and Northeastern State. After starting his career as Owasso's linebackers' coach in 1987, Trimble moved to Jenks as an assistant in 1990 and was named offensive coordinator in 1993, helping the Trojans win a state title that season. He led the Trojans to Class 6A state titles in his first six seasons as head coach.

Trimble had a 242-41 overall record and his Jenks teams made 17 state finals appearances. The Trojans only missed reaching the semifinals of the state's largest classification twice under him, losing earlier in the playoffs on each occasion.

Since 2016, Coach Trimble battled ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's Disease, which caused his death December 1, 2019. He was 56. In August 2017, the home of the Trojans was officially re-named Allan Trimble Stadium.

Be sure to visit our bookstore to order the Allan Trimble book "The Golden Years"

Don King, Jenks Trojans football play-by-play broadcaster, conducted this interview with Coach Allan Trimble in April 2018 for Cox Communications. The recording was never released until now on the oral history website VoicesofOklahoma.com.

Chapter 02 - 4:24

High School and College

Don King: Well, first of all, let's talk about your career at Cleveland High School. Your senior year, you get derailed because of an injury.

Allan Trimble: Yeah, I tell you, I, I enjoyed my, uh, Ron Wolf came to town, uh, my junior year and probably one of those coaches that, uh, influenced me to be. Uh, just loved him, he's a great motivator. I had a good junior year, worked out really hard this summer, and we go to Bristow to face Bill Scott's Purple Pirates. They were great back in those days and we had finished scrimmaging. We had done very, very well.

The Tigers had represented and, uh, we were on our way back to the bus. The scrimmage was over, and Bill Scott said, "You know, Coach, we just can't end like that. Will y'all come back and go one more round?"

DK: [laughing]

AT: So we get our gear back on, we go back out on the field. The first play, uh, I get hit. We're, we're on defense, I got hit in the back of the knee and tear three ligaments and, and miss, uh, miss my senior football season, miss wrestling season. Make it back for, uh, the regional baseball tournament. So it was, uh, it was a rough senior on me and my father.

DK: Three-sport athlete, as you just mentioned. Baseball might have been your favorite sport back as a kid.

AT: Yeah, it might have been my best. I, I, I loved baseball, of course, I started playing it in Cleveland. I remember—I still have a baseball, the four-, five-, and six-year-old M, K & O league. So, uh, but, I loved baseball all, you know, being in a small town, all your friends played in the summer. We played as well on the high school team, so I love baseball, played all the way through my eighteenth birthday in American Legion.

DK: I'll be darned. Ron Wolf, you mentioned him as your head coach, interestingly enough, a Jenks alum.

AT: Jenks alumni and, uh, great friends with the Harper brothers who, of course, are famous Jenks guys. And, uh, Coach Wolf went on and coached high school at Owasso, uh, for a number of years before he went to Cleveland and became the head coach there.

DK: You go to NSU, and that's really where you got the love of, of coaching, because you couldn't play your first year rehabbing your knee. Right?

AT: Yeah, and, you know, I, uh, not having very many people in my family that went to college, you know, it really wasn't emphasized that much. I mean, the oilfield was doing really well. Everyone that I knew, you know, made good money, and that's just what they did.

So, uh, and no one told me that I probably wasn't good enough to go play in the Big 8. I wasn't very big, but at least I wasn't very aggressive. And, uh, so, anyway, I really hadn't, I hadn't had any plans, especially getting hurt. My defensive line coach that I ended up laying for, uh, Ronnie Jones, called me late in the summer and asked me what I was doing.

And I said, "Well, Coach, you know, I got hurt."

He said, "Well, why don't you come to Tahlequah and, you know, walk on and we'll see what happens."

That was it. That was the only recruiting call I ever got. When my dad and mom dropped me off in Tahlequah in August, uh, that's the first time I'd ever been to the town. Never been to college, never visited and couldn't pass a physical. So I had to rehab and go to, you know, go work out all fall long. And then finally walked on in the spring. And, and, uh, ending up earning a spot on the roster.

DK: But while you were hurt, you would go in and help the coaches, or at least sit in with them while they broke down film?

AT: Oh yeah, and I did it all through my career. I, I, I, you know, I was a defensive player, um, and ended up, uh, you know, when you're average, you know, in ability, you have to make up for that in other ways. So I always was one that loved to know what my—I watch a lot of film. I, I, I studied my game plan. I really want to know about the other opponent. And I would go in on Saturdays and Sundays, excuse me, Sundays, with the college staff and just watch how they did it, watch how they broke down film and, you know, cuss and discuss your opponents, and, I don't know, I fell in love with the strategy of it.

DK: That's where you and I met was in the oil patch. You were working for an oilfield supply store in Cleveland. I sold oilfield supplies. And I remember asking you, going into your senior year at NSU, "What do you want to do when you graduate?"

And you told me, "I think I want to be a math teacher and coach."

AT: I know, can you believe that? I, I, I kind of remember that, it had to be, like, in '85, or '86. And I think I asked you, "What are you going to do?"

And you said, "Well, you know, I like, I like communications, radio, and I think I'd like to go do that." So, uh—

DK: I said, "Maybe I'll be doing your i—with you, I'll be doing your games someday." And here we are.

AT: Yeah, so tell me that's an accident, right? So, uh—

DK: [laughing] Right.

AT: They say words are very powerful. But I do remember that and, go look, thirty-some years later, here we are.

DK: Yeah, exactly.

Chapter 03 - 5:11

Owasso and Jenks Assistant

Don King: So you end up in Owasso as an assistant coach for a few years.

Allan Trimble: Um-hmm (affirmative).

DK: And then you come to Jenks. How did you end up at Jenks?

AT: Well, eh, eh, my mathematics degree. Uh, one of the best words of advice I ever got in college, uh, was from my defensive coordinator, Tom Eckert, who said, “You know, if you’re going to get into high school coaching, get your teaching degree. That will get you every job.”

And he called me Alzado, he goes, “Alzado,” he goes, “go get you a real degree and you’ll always have a job.”

So, uh, I have a mathematics/computer science degree and, and, uh, in 1990, Joe Holliday, the athletic director here, along with Perry Beaver, had a couple of math openings. I applied and was fortunate enough to get on Coach Beaver’s staff here as a math teacher.

DK: Now you had some great players, uh, here when you were an assistant. One of them comes to mind that, oddly enough, here you are many years later in Louisiana, and you think, *I think I’ll call Sean Wells*, who ended up going to LSU, and I think played in the pros for—

AT: Oh, yeah, fabulous player. And, you know, Sean, when I was an assistant coach, uh, I couldn’t figure out why Coach Lancaster, um, uh, allowed me to—I don’t want to say made me—allowed me to coach the offensive line. Because I’d never, I’d never, you know, coached it and, uh, it’s one of the most technical and difficult, I mean, you really have to know what you’re doing.

But, but Sean Wells was a, one of many great, great players and, of course, recruited and offered by everybody in the country. Chose to go back home. He was originally from Ruston, Louisiana, but he went, uh, started three or four years at LL—LSU, and then I think with the Falcons for a while.

But long story short, just a couple of years ago, we’re down in New Orleans on a mission trip and I saw a Facebook post; he’s having a house party. He built a new house.

So I had my daughter, I don’t know how to do it, I had my daughter message him and we ended up crossing the Pontchartrain Lake there and helping him christen his new house. We spent two or three hours together. It was wonderful getting caught up with him.

DK: [laughing] What did, what did Tori say when she saw the house, or saw him?

AT: Well, you have to realize he’s almost six foot six. And, uh, she goes, “Dad, he has huge furniture and huge doors.”

DK: [laughing]

AT: But, uh, so in that living room, uh, there were several hundred million dollars’ worth of NFL offensive linemen that were there celebrating. And they’re all massive men and Tori was young, and she was walking around this group of, you know, Goliaths, and she just couldn’t get over it.

DK: [laughing] Sure. So you end up here at Jenks as an assistant. Oddly enough, 1995 is a great year for Jenks. They go to the semifinals; they play Midwest City at OSU. You lose in overtime. You're offensive coordinator. You and I both agree it's one of the greatest games we've ever seen or been involved with at Jenks. And yet you weren't really working here fulltime. Tell us that story.

AT: Well, it's a, it's a tough story but you mentioned that, literally, that semifinal game, would have to go into my, easily my top three most exciting, hard-fought, walk off the field after the game even though you lose in overtime, and say, "You know what? I don't know if I'd of done anything different." Midwest City was loaded, but, yeah, midway through that '95 season I became, I mean, a little frustrated and just philosophically felt like the environment was just being a little bit too tough for high school age kids. Just some of the demands that we were putting on them and things like that. And I just always said, you know, "If you're not going to do it right, you probably need to go and do something else."

And, uh, my, my, uh, college roommate, Brian, had been pressuring me forever to actually go work, uh, in my degree field, which, you know, is, is, uh, pre-engineering.

So long story short, I took, I accepted a job at Koch Oil and Gas in Wichita, Kansas, in, like, October. So, um, but I was always taught not to let your kids down. So I ended up commuting. Got out of the classroom teaching, but still kept my coaching job. Commuting from Wichita three, sometimes four days a week.

DK: Wow.

AT: To finish out that season and just loved that group of kids. They were just, it was a wonderful season and we were one play away, you know.

DK: So you're driving back and forth, just to coach, uh, so '95, after the season, you're back in Wichita.

AT: Yeah.

DK: You interview for the Owasso job; you don't get it. You tell Courtney, your wife, and you're getting ready to have a baby, "Hey, it looks like, uh, it looks like we're just going to stay in Wichita." And then you get the call from Jenks.

AT: Yeah, uh, just a ridiculous set of circumstances. Yeah, you, we, we sold the house, we moved to Wichita, we're fixing to have a baby. I took a promotion; I'm working at El Dorado. Interview for the Owasso job. Thought it went really, really well. Got a call back, um, thought it was going to happen.

During that time, got an offer to move to Pine Bend, Minnesota, with Koch Oil and Gas. So, needless to say, my wife being nine months pregnant, there was a lot going on.

Didn't get the Owasso job; was a little bit disappointed. And then you mentioned, uh, Gary Jackson, uh, the booster club president at Jenks that time, contacted me. There was an opening. And I had to go in and ask Courtney, "Do you mind if I go try that again?"

And she just shook her head, at nine months pregnant, and, you know, “Whatever you want to do.” So the rest is history.

DK: Yeah.

AT: Three interviews later, they offer me the job.

Chapter 04 - 3:05

Head Coach and 1996 Season

Don King: Start in '96, a great team, but yet, oddly enough, you get a chance to meet Midwest City again.

Allan Trimble: Yeah.

DK: Uh, in the championship.

AT: Yeah, and if I remember right, they were going for their third—

DK: Right.

AT: ...championship in a row. Yeah, you know, Don, uh, eh, the '96, uh, I remember, uh, Tyler, my oldest daughter, was born in February. If I remember right, I signed my contract in March, uh, and inherited a ridiculously talented group of kids, especially the junior class. Senior class pretty good too, Corey Callens, Jerry Wisne, don't get me wrong. But I also inherited kind of a divided community and kind of a divided school when, when Jenks decided to part ways with Ron Lancaster, um, there was definitely some division.

Some people really were loyal to Coach and he had done a fabulous job. Other people were okay with seeing him go. And there was quite a bit of, you know, torment and, and just different things to fix.

So we buckled down. Hired Tag Gross as my offensive coordinator. Matt Hennesy is my defensive coordinator. Tried to just bring them in and take care of what was really important, and that was bringing the kids together and made a pretty good run at it.

DK: You're down seventeen to seven to Midwest City, and this Rocky Calmus is one of the stars on that team, had a quad bruise—

AT: Yeah.

DK: ...and yet, he, your conversation with him going into the halftime locker room is priceless.

AT: Yeah, let me just go back because he was, he was severely injured the week before, I mean, no one that I know of would have even tried. And, uh, so right before halftime we, we were getting outplayed. We'd outsmarted ourselves; we weren't doing a very good job on defense. But right before half, we got a turnover and Tag Gross wanted to call the halfback pass.

DK: [laughing]

AT: [laughs] So, so the only people we had worked with is Rocky throwing the pass. Well, Rocky hadn't been playing running back because he couldn't run. So I just remember Rocky standing in the back of the huddle, warming his arm up. Because, you know, Rocky was a great pitcher and, and, uh, his dad had always told him, "Now don't throw a ball unless you're good and warm." So I, I commented on the headset, "You know, Tag, we're going to get fired because everyone in the stadium knows it's a halfback pass."

DK: [laughing]

AT: Because this is Rocky's first play. Anyway, Brett Butler executes it perfect, throws a crack flag, we get a little bit of momentum going. In the halftime, we're still behind.

Walking up the ramp, uh, um, Rocky's a little frustrated because he's hurt and he's not getting to play. And he looked me and Tag right in the eye and he goes, "If you'll give me the damn ball we'll win the game."

And, uh, Tag looks at me and I said, "Okay, give him the ball, let's see how it goes." Because he, you know, he was hurt, but, uh, and we won, just like he said.

DK: Yeah, yeah. Three touchdowns, I think, in the second half and—

AT: Yeah, it, it was ridiculous.

DK: Oh, yeah, it was, it was crazy. Rocky Calmus went on to play at OU where he was an All-American and, his senior season, won the Butkus Award, which goes to the nation's outstanding collegiate linebacker. Rocky Calmus also played a few seasons with the Tennessee Titans, and still lives in Nashville.

[recording] You're listening to an interview with Allan Trimble and myself, Don King, after he announced his retirement. And it's a presentation from Cox Communications, who has never aired this particular interview, from April of 2018.

Chapter 05 - 6:03

1997 Season

Don King: So then that leads you into '97, and I don't want to necessarily go year by year. But '97 is a special team because that, a lot of experts say, that might be the best high school football team the state's ever had. The Legion of Doom to Rocky Calmus and, and many others, we'll run down some of the names, but you didn't give up a hundred yards rushing, not just in the game but for the whole season.

Allan Trimble: Yeah, it, it, you know, the, the neat thing about that besides having fabulous players, and we could list a lot of great ones, Ronnie Jones, the guy I played for, was

working for Buddy Ryan at the time. He, he had made it all the way to the NFL. And I had called and bothered him and bothered him, “Hey, can you send me Coach Ryan’s bear defense? I’ve got a couple of great linebackers, I’ve got a great defensive end, and I would love to, you know, just no, just give me anything.”

And he said, “Coach Ryan’s having none of that. They don’t give away any secrets.”

But about two weeks later, in the mail, comes this FedEx package. And it’s Buddy Ryan’s defense, except it’s got all the words cut off. It’s just X’s and O’s. You don’t know who they are, but we got it. And Matt Hennesy, we put in the bear defense and, uh, we had a niche. Not only did we have a niche, but we had some guys that could really make it go. And we gave people fits that year defensively.

DK: Yeah. You had twelve players on the roster that went on to play D-1 and mostly in football but some in some other sports.

AT: Yeah, uh, you know, two great baseball players, you’ve got Buddy Blair, who was a fabulous, uh, safety. That was Buddy’s sophomore year.

Uh, and then you also have, uh, Beau Davis, who was a college baseball player, uh, up at Missouri. Both of those kids were tenth graders and saw limited playing time, just because the guys in front of them were so good. Guys like Jason Beckstrom and Brett Butler and John Johnson, some of those guys that were college DBs, uh, yeah, it, it was a pretty, pretty tough to get on the field that year as a defensive player.

And I would have to say, at least in my tenure, uh, that’s, that’s, that’s as good a defensive crew as I’ve ever seen.

DK: Yeah, of that ’96 or that ’97 era, sophomores, juniors, sophomores who became All-Staters, juniors who became All-Staters, and seniors that year that were All-Staters, a total of fourteen players. That’s how good you guys were at that time.

AT: Well, I remember sitting down at the end of the ’97 season with, with, and I’ll leave someone off, but with Rocky, with Sean Mahan, with Jason Moore, with Brad Hawkins, with Justin Dixon, with Brett Butler, and I know there are more. But you, you know, back then there were only three All-State categories. You could only, if you nominated every one of them you could only get six. And we had, we had eight guys go to major, I mean, universities—

DK: Yeah.

AT: ...that could start, you know, Moore started at Nebraska as a freshman. So—

DK: Mahan, uh, went on to great things.

AT: Yeah, ridiculous college career at Notre Dame and the NFL. So, but they all, just like they always did throughout their high school career. “We really don’t care, Coach. Nominate us if you want to. It’s okay, it’ll be fine.”

So we had a lot of All-Staters and some more that could have been.

DK: A team that defensively gave up one yard, if that, per carry, the entire season. That’s how dominant they were.

AT: Yeah, and you know, that occurred in the second half of the Moore semifinal game, um. We got way ahead of Moore, uh, forty-something to nothing at halftime, if I remember, and they were a great team. Uh, and we put our younger guys in.

And, well, Moore had a great division one tailback. He was a fabulous player and our younger guys had a tough time.

DK: Hmm (thoughtful sound).

AT: And he ran for over a hundred yards, uh, in the second half of that game. And that was the first time all season, statistically, that our defense had given a positive rushing yard, so they were a little disappointed.

DK: [laughing] Zero point two yards per rush, six touchdowns, all season, giving up ba—uh, value of the run. And then you had, you had Rocky Calmus back and Jason Moore leading the defense, as you mentioned, along with, uh, Buddy Blair and, and Hawkins and so many others. But you had a linebacker too that led the team, Hill?

AT: Yeah, Michael Hill.

DK: Yeah, Michael Hill.

AT: Well, yeah, Michael Hill was probably, uh, and I've, I've known Michael his whole life. We went to the same church together. Michael was really the onl—and this is no disrespect—he's the only one that didn't really look like he belonged out there. He was undersized, he was about five nine, but the beauty of Michael's career is he played right behind Sean Mahan, Jason Moore, uh, Brad Hawkins, and Justin Dixon. He never got blocked one time, ever, in his life. And his senior year, he made 132 tackles, uh, and went on to play at Central Arkansas.

DK: Um-hmm (affirmative).

AT: So Michael was a fabulous player and, again, just that typical Jenks Trojan guy. Been there his whole life and had a great year his senior year.

DK: And the Hill family tree continued at Jenks for years. Right?

AT: Oh, there's, yeah, they've been around forever, you bet.

DK: Yep. You never had to worry about that team, did you?

AT: Well, they were rowdy, you know, they were a rowdy bunch. But no, um, and honestly, probably the quietest guy on the team was Sean. But he also, when he opened his mouth, they knew it was important enough to listen. Sean was the one that kind of set that tempo.

Obviously, Rocky was the spark plug, but you also had some, some really mature leaders that decided they really, that group really wanted to be special. And we, you know, Coach Hennesy did a great job of challenging them. Because when you're really good you got to come up with some ways to make them want to get better. And they did. One of them was the stats.

DK: Yeah.

AT: Yeah.

DK: Yeah, absolutely. You bring up Sean Mahan who is an interesting example of what you were as a coach and a mentor, because Sean had lost his parents, uh, at a young age. Right?

AT: Yeah, Sean lost his, uh, lost his father, um, right before the senior season to just, uh, you know, uh, uh, a sudden death. And then when he went to Notre Dame, he lost his mother, I believe, his freshman year, when he was red-shirted. So that kid went through a lot, a lot of heartache, um, at a young age. And, and, you know, I think he would let you know that, you know, football and Jenks, the Jenks community is one of the things that kind of helped rally him through that, through a really difficult part of his life.

DK: And went on to a great career in NFL, as you mentioned, and has given back to the school—

AT: Oh, yeah.

DK: ...and to the program, since he's retired.

Chapter 06 - 7:32

1998 Season

Don King: 'Ninety-eight's an interesting season. Here you go in, looking for your third straight.

Matt McCoy, Ben Bowling, are both quarterbacks and yet you have to make a decision there.

Allan Trimble: Yeah, and not only both quarterbacks but had been, you know, rival quarterbacks all the way through the youth program, back, you know, back in the day. Um, and, uh, the good news is, they're both fabulous players.

Uh, but, you know, here's the thing, and I don't know how it worked out, but probably credit Tag Gross for being able to paint that picture, putting the team first. You know, Matt was a very capable quarterback but he ended up going to OU to play safety. So, I mean, he's a ridiculously good athlete.

Ben Bowling probably geared more to be an offensive player. That's kind of our decision. And when Matt and Ben decided that Ben would play quarterback and Matt would go play receiver and safety, we got really, really good. And, and they really came together and, and, you know, we, we suffered a couple of really tough losses early.

DK: Um-hmm (affirmative).

AT: Uh, we got beat by Booker T. in the season opener. You have to remember, we were several games in a row, so people had forgot how, you know, how to lose. So we lost a couple of games and everybody thought the boat was sinking. But, honestly, when Ben and Matt kind of took that team over, we got really good again, with a bunch of young guys.

DK: Yeah, you lost to Booker T. in the season opener by one. Lost here, the last time Union played here, fifty-five, forty-five.

AT: Yes. Walking into the old locker room over on the west stadium, after Union had beat us fifty-five, forty-five. We had given up eleven miles of offense to their team. Our defense was very young. Brand new defensive coordinator, Darren Melton, in town. So we had lost a defensive coordinator. We had graduated about ten, you know, division one starters on defense. So, a bunch of new guys.

And I remember telling the boys, "Hey, I want to, you know, y'all played great, you played hard, fifty-five, forty-five against what's easily the best team in Oklahoma. But I want to remind you that, that Rocky Calmus, Sean Mahan, and all those really, really good guys, they don't play here anymore. They play, you know, for in the Big A Conference. We're going to have to grow up and get better."

And they really kind of took that to heart. They really clicked, "We're going to have to go play and get better." And they started chipping away.

We were not a great team early, but, man, we finished the season very, very strong.

DK: And then you face Union, and I know that had to feel good, to have another crack at them.

AT: Well, it felt good with exception of Danny Morris and Josh Blankenship and Michael Johnson and Jerome Janet. All big-time division one players. They had broken, I think, every offensive record. They averaged almost forty-nine points a game. Uh, and their defense was just devastating too.

But, uh, I was really happy the way our team had come along. We were not a flashy team, by any means, but we were a very, very good team.

I remember Ben Bowling had some broken, a broken bone in his back, or broken ribs, and I know that he couldn't practice very much the last two or three weeks of the season. And, uh, we had some challenges. But our kids were ready to go and, uh, we went behind early to Union and a great crowd, like twenty-some thousand. Uh, but we hung in there.

And I told them, you know, "The longer we can stay in the game, the longer we can push them and make it, you know, make them have to execute to try to beat us, the better off we'd be."

And, you know, Ben Bowling just, he went crazy. He made some of the greatest runs in the second half. Matt McCoy, Curtis Brumble, all those guys really did a fabulous job in that game.

DK: Comes back and wins at forty-one, twenty-eight.

AT: Yeah, you know, Don, uh, and I've said this more than once, uh, that particular championship game stands out to me as probably my most proud moment as a coach. And the fact that I believe that team overcame more obstacles and grew further and improved more than any that we had, be able to keep enough pressure on a very seasoned Union team and hold out and win, that was a big, big deal. That was a, that was a big season right there.

DK: Yeah. One of the tenth graders was Bobby Klinck, who would go on and have a great career. Along in 2000, when Kejuan Jones made a name for himself because, here you guys, now that Union and Jenks have established themselves as great rivals, obviously, through the '90s, now you play each other at TU in a regular season game. And that's the Kejuan last play, forty-one, thirty-seven game.

AT: Yeah, it's just, and honestly, I've said this before, one of the more frustrating games of my career, we just, we turned the ball over, we got, we got a kick block, we, we just—

DK: You were behind sixteen points.

AT: Yeah, twice. Right? And, uh, so I spent most of the second half drawing up my postgame speech on, "Hey, we've got to do better, you know. You didn't deserve to win." And, and the long—I learned that night, that no matter what, while there's still time on the clock, go ahead and coach, go ahead and believe in your kids, and, uh, you know, just, and trust your coaches. Because Wes McCalip was the offensive coordinator.

We had one timeout left. We had, uh, a fabulous field goal kicker in Tyler Wilkey, he could really bomb it.

So my, you know, the textbook tells you, "Throw the ball outside, conserve the clock, try to kick the field goal, and tie the game."

Well, Wes said no. "Coach," he goes, "I think we can, you know, the, the way they're lining up, we should run, you know, our option route. And I think if they do what they do we'll be able to get a big one down the middle."

I said, "Wes, we can't do it. They tackle us, we got to burn a time out, we're done, there's only twenty seconds to go."

He goes, "Coach, I really think it'll work."

"Okay, run it." That's all I said, I just remember saying that and taking my headset off, because if it didn't work we were done.

DK: Um-hmm (affirmative).

AT: And, uh, you know, McCoy, uh, coaches Kejuan up a little bit because that's not Kejuan's regular position, and—

DK: Right.

AT: ...and, you know, there's a lot of moving parts. Based on what they do, is what Kejuan had to do. He did it correctly and Blaine Cooper got a great block down field, I'll never forget it. And I'll never forget the deafening roar of the crowd, just, it was, uh, definitely a top, top two or three moment in my life there.

DK: Hmm (thoughtful sound), no question.

[recording] They want to at least get to midfield in the next couple of plays. They had, they had a chance, and with that guy you always have a chance. [cheering]

Oh-oh, oh-oh! Goes to the fifty. Somebody better catch him. I don't believe what I've just seen! I do not believe what has just happened. [still cheering] I do not believe what has just happened at Skelly Stadium, with eight seconds remaining on the clock. [more cheering]

Well, there's eight seconds left. What's Union going to do? [laughing] I, uh, Ripley wouldn't believe what we've seen here tonight in Skelly Stadium. You can believe anything could happen in the last eight seconds.

Tyler Wilkey now puts it to a four-point game and so Union to win has got to score six. [still cheering] Take a look at how Kejuan Jones sets this up. Great work, guys, on the ground.

You see him come out, he's going to make a little curl right back into the middle. And Matt McCoy finds him, then he picks up the great blocks coming from the near side and, once again, no arm tackling on Kejuan Jones. And he's got the speed.

DK: Certainly some other great moments at the end of the Jenks-Union regular season games that go on as well. That 2000 team is, goes undefeated. You beat, uh, Union again pretty handily in the, in the championship game in 2000.

Chapter 07 - 4:00

9/11 Decision with Union

Don King: In 2001, you were to face Union again and then you and Coach Blankenship have to make a very uncomfortable call to each other and make the decision on 9/11.

Allan Trimble: Yeah, just, uh, I'll never forget, I was in my old office over at the football stadium, talking to a friend on the phone. And I remember him saying, "Oh my gosh." He was watching the news, I mean, he watched it.

So I'll never forget where I was and, um, you know, it just, uh, it shocks you so bad you don't know how to respond. You know, Coach Blankenship and I talked numerous times, along with the administration, just saying, "You know, do we let a terrorist attack take us out of what we do? You know, we're not going to let these guys, you know, we're going to go do what we do.

But then on the other side, and I think maybe the better decision we made was to honor everybody that suffered such a devastating loss and to, to join the country in, you know, just meditation and silence, we decided to call it off.

DK: Um-hmm (affirmative).

AT: And, uh, looking back, I'm glad we did.

DK: Um-hmm (affirmative). I remember my younger son, I think, might have been involved in the program at that time. What, when practice comes around that afternoon, what do you talk to the kids about, after something like that has happened?

AT: You know, I, I don't recall directly what we said but I would bet you money, uh, we mentioned the same thing. You know, "This is an amazing tragedy. It's a time where we, as a country, have to rally behind each other." I'm sure, uh, you know, as most football coaches would say, "You never want to waste a tragedy. You want to make sure it's a teaching moment." And we probably talked about patriotism and, you know how, you know how kids are, we want to go play. If it's a game, we want to go play. Same way with coaches.

But, hopefully, they learned a good lesson there in, you know, putting other ahead of yourself.

DK: [recording] You're listening to an interview with Allan Trimble and myself, Don King, after he announced his retirement. And it's a presentation from Cox Communications, who has never aired this particular interview, from April of 2018.

Two thousand one, later in the season, your quarterback Jeff Hirshburg gets hurt. You bring in Keith Jones. Great example, many examples of kids getting hurt as you go into the playoffs. You're searching for a replacement and another kid steps in, Keith Jones did. You went on and won the 2001 State Championship at OSU over Putnam North.

But the team that, uh, I mean, when you look at that team, a, a linebacking trio that maybe was the best ever. Garrett Mills, uh, Jay Henry, and Lawrence Pinson.

AT: Yeah, three, as we would say in football, three cat daddies. And, uh, you know, Lawrence went on to Oklahoma State, had a great career, spent some time in the NFL.

Jay Henry, an All-American at West Virginia.

DK: Academic All-American as well.

AT: Yeah, and, and Garrett Mills, of course, went to University of Tulsa, broke all kinds of records as a tight end, and then in the NFL for five or six years.

Jay and Garrett, both salutatorians at Jenks High School. So there were brilliant, they were athletic. And don't forget, you know, uh, Bryan Pickryl rushing the passer. That defense was ridiculous too.

But I would just tell you, I remember Hirshburg tearing his ACL here at home against Stillwater, if I remember right. We took him over to the sideline; Coach Ray looked him over, taped him up, he went back in. We knew. And he made it one play.

So we called time out. I remember the offensive huddle coming over. We put Keith Jones in the game. His eyes were as big as silver dollars.

And I remember Kurt Seifried, one of our great lineman that played at, uh—

DK: OSU.

AT: ...Oklahoma State, saying, "We got this." And, uh, like you mentioned, that rallying cry from the seniors was ju—that's just how we did it.

We had a guy that hadn't played a meaningful down all year, go in and play like Fran Tarkington, so it was fun.

DK: Yeah, and so that's, uh, that's the '01. You're in the middle of the thirty-six straight wins.
[recording] You're listening to an interview with Allan Trimble and myself, Don King, after he announced his retirement. And it's a presentation from Cox Communications, who has never aired this particular interview, from April of 2018.

Chapter 08 - 3:20

2003 & 2005 Seasons

Don King: '02 doesn't quite end up as you would have liked. People think the sky is falling after '02. You start in '03, and people still think it's falling because I think you lose two of your first three games—

Allan Trimble: Oh, yeah.

DK: ...in '03. And yet, uh, you know, you had a good junior class, Andrew Brewer—

AT: Oh, yeah.

DK: ... quarterback, went on and played Northwestern. Jesse Meyer, a wide receiver, went on to play at TU. Chad Morris of TU. But you had a senior class that really didn't have much experience and a spacy class, if you don't mind me saying so. I mean, you just had a group of guys that you never knew if they were engaged or not, and yet, they'd show up on Friday night and win. And went on and won a state title.

AT: Yeah, and, you know, really rallied together because, as you mentioned, that group of seniors, Willie Bull and, if I remember right, Collin Batson and some of those kids—

DK: Matt Felty.

AT: ...they really jelled up at the end. The, the last, you know, four or five games, they really came together. And as I recall, we beat, I believe, two or three district champions in the playoffs to go, to go win it. So they pulled it together at the right time and really played well at the end.

DK: And '03, you won the State Championship at OU. They had Reggie Smith, a great player—

AT: Aww (sound of respect or awe).

DK: ...on that, on that particular team. You're down, I think it's ten to nothing—

AT: Yes.

DK: ...you go in, try to punch it in before halftime instead of kicking the field goal. So you're down, and you get denied, so you're down ten to nothing. And then you come back in the second half, rally, and win the final score.

AT: Yeah.

DK: So—

AT: And you know another valuable coaching lesson learned, you've got Chase Beeler at left tackle. He was a youngster but a fabulous player, played at OU and Stanford. You have Freddie Carolina, arguably one of the more physical guys we've ever had. No timeouts left, we've got the ball on the one-yard line. "Well, hey, what do you guys want to do?"

"Run the ball! Let's go."

"Well, that, that sounds great if you make it but if you don't make it, you know, if the time runs out you don't get another play." So credit Coach Trimble for making a bad decision there.

But I told them at halftime, I said, "You know, you guys, the, the great news is we will play better in the second half. There is no way we cannot play better. And if you guys will just do what we're supposed to do, we'll win the game." We, we pitched a defensive jewel because they were, Santa Fe was loaded—the Smith kid was a first round draft pick. Our defense, considering our talent level, played at a ridiculous level. And we hung in there, made a couple of big plays on offense and ended up maybe stealing one right there.

DK: Hmm (thoughtful sound).

AT: We did good in 2003.

DK: Speaking of OU, you played a couple of games at OU, a semifinal win over Lawton, that was hard fought.

AT: Um-hmm (affirmative).

DK: And then this championship game in '03. What was it like to play at OU? Because you grew up a Sooner fan.

AT: Oh man, you know, it, it was, it was surreal, I mean, I, I, I had, uh, got to watch, you know, I was, uh, I went to Coach Switzer's, uh, you know, high school camp in 1981, so, I mean, I was a huge fan. But to actually go out there on that field and, uh, you know, it's a little, uh, it's a little nerve-wracking. I mean, you know, there, you just, uh, you think about the excitement and everything, you got to be careful and pull yourself back in a little bit.

But some great, great memories of that. That, that, uh, uh, game against Lawton was just, you know, we had to hit a great fake punt. I think it was Ben Barber hit, uh, Holmes, you know, it, it was just one, it was a great, great football game.

DK: Um-hmm (affirmative). Now I remember you saying Kejuan was frustrating in that game. Finally, you wore Lawton down a little bit to—

AT: Yeah.

DK: ...where he took control.

Chapter 09 - 10:11**Isaac Norman**

Allan Trimble: Isaac Norman was one of my favorite players because he was, uh, it's an understatement to say he was undersized. Little bitty guy.

Don King: Drummer.

AT: Yeah.

DK: He played the drums.

AT: It still is, still a fabulous musician. But, uh, he mentioned, uh, in a press conference before that game that he would love to make a Kejuan type play. And that, and, uh, go figure, in the biggest stage of his life, in the biggest game, and as I recall against Dominique, uh—

DK: Dominique Franks.

AT: Dominique Franks, who played in the NFL, uh, with Jake Strain at quarterback. Uh, Isaac goes out and runs a double move late in the game and scores the game-winning touchdown. I, I will never forget it. Uh, especially because it was five foot six versus six foot two and, uh, he went out and ran a great route and made a great play. I was so proud of him.

[recording] Strain will roll out to the right side. He's got good protection. He will unload it and the ball is caught! [cheering whole time] Jake's will score! It's Isaac Norman with eighteen seconds remaining.

Well, I think we've talked about maybe scoring too quick in there. This is incredible, this is unbelievable. Ripley wouldn't believe this game.

There you see the replay, Strain going back and just picking out Norman. And then Norman just outruns the secondary all the way down for the go-ahead touchdown.

Isaac Norman is the kid I talked about a moment ago who once dreamed about playing in this game as a little guy. And now, he's still a little guy, a five six senior, into the end zone, with an amazing touchdown. And there trying to make it a four-point game, Union would have to get a touchdown to win. And, by golly, there's enough time to do it, eighteen seconds to go. It's now forty-seven, forty-four.

Is that not Isaac Norman's first catch of the night?

I believe so.

And it's down now to the last nine seconds. There's that quick pass to the sideline. Forks Miller, he did not get out of bounds! And this game is over! Jenks, what an incredible comeback, forty-eight, forty-four.

DK: 'O6, week two, it's Union, it's nine to six. Kevin Wright's the new head coach, that was kind of different.

AT: Oh, man, it, it was just a crazy ballgame. Uh, and again, uh, late in the game, two crazy things happened. Uh, Union scored to take the, take the lead, but the play got called back on illegal motion.

And then I will never forget, during the TV time out, the, uh, the streaker appeared from the south end zone—

DK: [laughing]

AT: ...and ran proudly the entire length of the field, right in front of our huddle, and we could never get our kids' attention back again. Thank goodness we ran out of time so we could hold on for the victory. Nu—nine to six over Union.

DK: And one of the, one of the classics, even though it's a loss, a triple overtime loss, to Booker T. Washington, forty-three, thirty-seven.

AT: Yes, and, you know, all I can think of is, uh, that was the christening night of the Sharp Center, uh, it wasn't quite ready yet but we were encouraged to run out of the new building anyway because we'd been waiting two years. And we ran out, and, uh, in a district opener to Booker T. we lose in triple overtime.

So I don't know if it was my vote or the seniors' vote, but we chose to not come out of the building again.

DK: [laughing]

AT: So we went back to the old locker room, and, uh, certainly it paid off. Because we went on a pretty good streak after that.

DK: You guys beat Enid in the State Championship. That's remarkable because that game at TU is delayed a couple of times because of cold weather. The pipes burst in the locker room. What a, what a mess that was.

AT: Aww (sound of disgust).

DK: You guys had to come out and scrape, right?

AT: Sure.

DK: The snow and the ice off the turf to practice.

AT: Sure. If you remember, Mr. Laptad had our booster club president, went and bought every snow shovel in Tulsa County. And our whole booster club and team went out and we shoveled and shoveled and shoveled eight inches of snow off our field so we could have a place to practice.

And then, you know, when you delay high school kids a week, you got to figure out what to do with them because they're chomping at the bit. And we think we're going to play. And then TU calls, we have to extend it another week.

I didn't know if I was going to survive. And then the night of the game, it's twelve degrees, it's, it's still big snow banks on the field but, uh, our kids, uh, Tanner Shuck, Jake Laptad, that crew, they went out and put on a show against Enid that night.

DK: Now I don't want to dismiss the '06 season or that, that era with those kids that you just mentioned. Because in '06, before the season, and you'll remember the date well, was the—

AT: Ohh.

DK: ...death of, uh, your starting center, Garrett Bennett.

AT: Yeah, July the 12th, my anniversary, we had been out, uh, I'm glad you brought that up, we had been out, uh, we had closed out summer workouts with a paintball festival where the kids get to go out, the seniors, and get to shoot the coaches about five thousand times with paintballs. It was, it was worth it but it was rough.

But, uh, Coach Calabrese and myself had stayed late to pay the bill, clean up, and everything. And the kids had taken off to go back home. And, you know, uh, we're driving down the turnpike, I'll never forget it. I saw all the fire trucks and the emergency vehicles and from way off. And I remember telling Greg, "You know, Greg, this is not good." I mean, we were half a mile away and, sure enough, I broke the law and jumped the median and went over and got to visit with the, the Highway Patrol. And it was a rough day in Trojan, you know, Trojan history.

And, uh, probably the, easily the most challenging thing was going with the Highway Patrol to tell his mother. It was rough. Um.

And then maybe if there is a silver lining, it's just, um, the way the team rallied around his honor and, you know, won it. So it was a, it was a tough, tough year. But a, but a fulfilling year.

DK: And seventy-six was his number and I think you guys scored a total, something like seventy-six points in the playoffs.

AT: Yeah.

DK: How crazy is that?

AT: Not an accident.

DK: No. Not at all. And it, and this shows you about the Bennett family because they would come back—

AT: Sure.

DK: ...after that group, at reunion, at our golf reunions—

AT: Oh, yeah.

DK: Uh, Keith Bennett and his family would come back.

AT: Sure, and we still give out the Garrett Bennett Memorial Award every year at our banquet to the, to the, uh, you know, the most team-oriented offensive lineman that we have. So we still honor Garrett's name with an award.

DK: Then in '07, uh, one of the games that's interesting is Jenks-Union at TU and the NFL Films has heard—

AT: Um-hmm (affirmative).

DK: ...so much about this rivalry that they come to document it.

AT: Yeah, and you know, um, that production, I love it. I still watch it to this day.

DK: Um-hmm (affirmative).

AT: They did a wonderful job. You know, three guys showed up with little handheld cameras. And they miked a few people up. We never knew they were there. And then a few weeks later they put together this production that I thought did a great job of explaining to the nation what the Jenks-Union rivalry was about. They went there to tell a story, and, you know, some of those don't work out that well. But this one, it was well done.

The only, you know, the only catch is, we didn't win. We, uh, we had, we were going in, if you remember, uh, we're going in to take a three-score lead, and if I remember right, the Rupleheimer—

DK: Steven Rupleheimer.

AT: Yeah, he knocks the ball loose from Ginther and they run it in from fifty yards out. So we go in from a potential three-score lead to one. And we really never got the momentum back. Had a chance to tie it, and, you know, bobbled the snap, we had a bad snap on the extra point.

DK: Um-hmm (affirmative). And in overtime, and so I remember Dallas Beeler, who was the holder coming back, great teaching moment. And this is so typical, uh, and a great example of you, not disappointed, I mean, disappointed, but not upset. You just said, "Dallas, the next time that should happen, just take it and run with it, you know?"

AT: Yeah, you know.

DK: It's just, uh, another great example of you in a teaching moment.

AT: Well, you just never can waste a crisis. You know, you, you, uh, from the stands it looks so easy to, to take a ball that's going sixty miles an hour and stick it on a tee and kick it at 1.3 seconds, but it's not that easy.

But, you know, that's just what you do. You have to teach them, they have to be able to perform under pressure. And, you know, never waste a crisis.

DK: Yeah.

AT: Just go and teach them what to do.

DK: Speaking of Mark Ginther that '06, '07 back to back State Championships, Dallas Beeler and Ginther in the same situation. Dallas is a quarterback, yet you move him to receiver. You guys take off, and Mark Ginther, uh, you know, Gatorade player of the year, what can you say about him?

AT: He's ridiculous, that's all you can say about him. I've never, you know, here's what I tell everybody about Mark, you know, baseball was his passion, that's what he worked at. Football was his hobby. And, uh, I've never seen anything like it. I mean, uh, literally, for his career, he's nearly 75 percent completions. He doesn't throw the ball to the other team very often.

When you insert Dallas Beeler, who can play inside, outside, and tight end, and doesn't care because, uh, we were really, really hard to stop.

But Mark was on a different level than most high school kids as quarterback.

DK: I can remember going into his senior year, he played baseball all summer, he comes in the day before the Trojan preview, hadn't even practiced, and I think Cox actually carried it.

AT: Yeah.

DK: And he goes like eleven out of twelve, or something, two, I mean, it's just like he's, he's been practicing for months.

AT: Yeah, so, you know, our big decision is because he got selected for that area code, or, I mean, he, he's playing on all these pro baseball parks. He hasn't picked up an oblong ball in four months. And so the coach is going, "Well, you know, should we play him?"

And I said, "You know the deal that we made with this guy is if he will share his talent with us, he's going to be our quarterback. Put him in there." I mean, he didn't know what we, what the snap count was, we'd changed it, right?

And like you said, he only threw one incompleting and threw for three hundred yards in a half. Like he had never left. So, I don't care what you say, he's pretty good.

DK: Yeah. He was great.

Chapter 10 - 1:20

Great Opposing Players

Don King: In 2008, '09, '10, '11, Kirk Fridrich really got going with Union. They beat you four times in a row. You didn't enjoy it, but you enjoyed watching the opposing players. And, and I can think of Tyler Gooch and, and many others at Union and other teams N—at Arkansas in the NFL. Brandon Weeden, I mean, the list, Sam Bradford, the list goes on.

Allan Trimble: I know [laughing].

DK: The guys that you guys were able to beat. You appreciated watching great talent on the other side.

AT: Well, I did, and you know, the Jeremy Smith and just, there are a couple of teams that Coach Fred had that were just ridiculous. I mean, you could compare them to our '97s, or our 2001s. And you always respect and, and you appreciate that because there are all kinds of different challenges in coaching.

But what I thought during that run for Union, there were a couple of years where they were pretty normal too. Like we were. But I thought Coach Fred took a group of seniors, especially Ataya, some of those kids—

DK: Right.

AT: And, and really jelled up a good team that you had to go out there and beat, and we couldn't do it. You know, there was a couple of years I thought we had the ability to beat them, but we didn't get it done.

So, two things, he had a couple of great talented teams and he had a couple of great teams.

DK: Yeah.

Chapter 11 - 2:23

2009 Suspension

Don King: A situation and you end up suspending yourself, basically. Because of the Jarrett Lake incident and, and some other things. Can you go through that and kind of give us your account. Because you, in my opinion, were the sacrificial lamb for that whole situation. You knew that it was best for the program. Something had to be done and you kind of got blindsided by that whole thing.

Allan Trimble: Well, you, a lot of valuable learning experiences happened in that year. Um, you know, uh, blindsided, yes, um, but, you know, obviously there were a number of things that I could have handled better and should have. But, you know, looking back, I'd never been in a situation anywhere, anything like that, so I really didn't know what to do. I just, in a meeting with our administration, just kind of let them lead me through the process. And at times, that was good advice. And other times, it was not good advice. And it took a few weeks for me to figure that out.

And, uh, so, ultimately, what do you learn? You know, you learn that you definitely, you definitely need to, you know, make, make proper decisions and make sure you document things and all that.

Probably, you know, for my life lesson is, you know, you learn to forgive. It's the first time I think I've, uh, in, in, in such a grand way, I've had people that were just like out to get me, you know. And in my opinion and in my attorney's opinion, at times created things to try to get me.

So I became very bitter, uh, you know, uh, we mentioned a long time ago on this show my Cleveland upbringing. Well, there's a few ways in the oilfield you settle things, and usually it's just man-to-man behind the barn. And I kind of got that mad. So I learned in that if you, if you stay bitter and you, you don't have the ability to forgive and face people's differences and make amends, it, it, you're the one that gets gobbled up. It's the one that tears you up.

So I was in a very bad spot. And I always wanted to cast blame and things like that, so I learned to take responsibility. I learned to be proactive. I learned that forgiveness has a lot to do with how you approach things and, and how you recover.

As we've said a couple of times, never waste a crisis, right? It only makes you better. But, uh, I thought Coach Montgomery did a great job. I thought that, you know, the kids, the kids did what the kids do, they rallied and were very coachable and made a great run. Had a good chance to beat Union that year.

DK: Um-hmm (affirmative).

Chapter 12 - 2:32

Program Changes

Don King: Out of that and then we mentioned the 2010 late loss to Union.

Allan Trimble: Uh-huh (affirmative).

DK: So you've lost four years in a row to Union. Kyle Alexander gets hurt in 2011; he comes back as a quarterback in 2012, and kind of leads you back into the—but you lost two of their first three games that year, and yet somehow you were able to rally the troops, come back, and win 2012, beat Norman North in the championship.

AT: Yeah. And you know, uh, another example of, of really just, uh, a great group of kids who decided they wanted to be special. Uh, uh, just, again, a couple of setback losses, your, you know, a long dry spell, four years of, of not being to, to jump that hurdle. We really emphasize the importance of having to be better and, you know, credit Kyle and a great group of seniors for really jelling that team up and, and just—that was a team that was just hard to beat. We weren't completely glamorous, but you definitely had to earn it if you were going to beat us.

DK: Yeah. Now you, Jordan Smallwood, Trey'Vonne Barré, who had ended up as the best running back of all time, stat-wise. Trey Michalczewski, Braden Calip. But Brandon Waggoner was on that team.

AT: Uh-huh (affirmative).

DK: And he was an offensive lineman that sometimes you'd play a tight end that was fun, but, again, another rallying situation.

AT: Hmm (just a hmm).

DK: Don't waste a crisis as your tragedy. Brandon Waggoner's mom passes away that season with cancer.

AT: Yeah, so, um, you know, we knew, we knew that she was in hospice and we knew the time was going to come. But as head coach, you never look forward to that cell phone call

in the middle of practice where you've got to go grab the kid, put him in your car, and drive over there. It, uh, it was tough and, uh, we get over there and, um, you can, you can prepare and you can brace yourself and, but you're never ready, and, uh, the, you know, the craziest thing or not crazy, the, the eternal thing about that is she waited for Brandon to get there. It was just, I'll never forget it.

And, uh, and then, for Brandon to just, uh, dedicate the rest of that season to his mom, and then the team rallied behind that. So, uh—

DK: Very special year.

AT: Well, not a lot of people get to experience that.

DK: Right.

AT: So what a blessing.

DK: Yeah. And of course, Brandon went on and had a great career to UCO.

AT: Yes.

DK: [recording] You're listening to an interview with Allan Trimble and myself, Don King, after he announced his retirement. And it's a presentation from Cox Communications, who has never aired this particular interview, from April of 2018.

Chapter 13 - 6:02

2013-14-15 Run

Don King: Twenty thirteen rolls around, Cameron Booty moves in from Dallas.

Allan Trimble: Yeah.

DK: Becomes your running back. And a quarterback by the name of Cooper Nunley, who we all had seen grow up through this program with Dillon Stoner.

AT: Yeah, and, you know, uh, I, I watched Cooper and Dillon all the way, you know, from the time they were itty bitty and they made plays their whole life. And that, that's something that, that never stopped. Uh, it did take a little, uh, you know, with Coach Maddox working with Cooper, you know, to, to, uh, inject your offensive system into Cooper, rather than "I'm throwing the ball to Dillon because I like him," which is pretty good strategy.

DK: [laughs]

AT: But, uh, so I thought Coach Maddox did an amazing job of developing Cooper. Uh, he's super talented, uh, one of the better natural throwers that we have. He's a lot like Mark Ginther, um, and, uh, of course, with the talent of Dillon Stoner and some of those other kids, we were, we went through a pretty ridiculous few years offensively.

Cameron Booty came in, uh, and, again, uh, had to learn our system. But more importantly, had to, um, he had to learn, you know, our, our environment, our trusting

team. There were a lot of things that Cameron had to adapt to and it took him a while and it was a struggle.

I credit Coach Greenwood for most of that. He's the one that took Cameron under his arm and taught him the ways and, and encouraged him. And when Cameron Booty, when he, when he figured that out, he was a really good player.

DK: Yeah.

AT: I mean, he helped us win.

DK: And, and he had to play some defense, which he hadn't really done all year in the playoffs. Again, having to play a position that he wasn't really familiar with and yet he excels.

And then Cooper Nunley with his past to Dillon Harding with seconds left.

AT: I know, just, ah, you can't make it up. That's what I tell everybody. If you look back over some of these plays and some of these players, I mean, you couldn't even in your wildest imagination draw it up, but that Cooper Nunley would drop back late in the game, seventy yards away, against a safety blitz that we didn't block, and hit, uh, and hit Dillon Harding, in stride, for the game-winning score. It's just ridiculous, but so many and countless memories like that that you, you know, just never forget.

DK: [recording] Nunley gets them grouped up out of the shotgun, looks, fires over the middle... Steve Harding has it at the fifty! To the forty! To the thirty! To the twenty! To the ten! Touchdown Trojans! Here we go again!

Nunley had time, he rifled the pass and Harding beat the defender and Nunley hung in there. Had a little bit of pressure, stepped up. Odandre got to him and knocked him on his rump, but Nunley gets up and is running down the field. He loves the pass play to Dillon Harding.

The Trojans, twenty to sixteen, Dillon Harding, the Oklahoma State University commit. And he just put himself into Jenks' lure with that TD pass.

That was Cooper Nunley's best pass of the night. [cheerleaders cheering and yelling]

Here's the quarterback under pressure, gets away, steps up, he throws deep. There's a man there, so it's Jenks, they pick it off at the thirty-yard line.

Dillon, Dillon Stoner. And the sophomore Stoner with the interception and the cake is baked!

DK: You've had several players, some that have become really good players, to move in, into the system, that move in from out of state. Tanner Shuck comes from Alaska, I mean, we can run down the list. But how, how is it that these kids feel comfortable in such a large school? In such a large setting? In such a huge setting like Jenks?

AT: Well, I mean, that's a good question and, and I, I just, you know, I don't know how it evolved but I, I, I go all the way back to my high school coach, um, how he made our football locker room and our football environment a family. I mean, we, we met together

as a team, we ate together as a team, we had parent involvement. And some of the same things that we still try to do here today. I mean, I've always told, you know, every set of coaches that we have for all twenty-two seasons, "How would you want your football program to be if your son played here?" You know, "What would you want to offer? How, what would you want to teach your kid if your kid played here?"

And I've always said, "I would want my kid to play here," you know. And I think that's, I mean, it's, it's hard. There are, because, you know, you hear the stories of the Bootys and the Shucks and all those people. But I would say there are twice as many that don't make it because it, it's, uh, the commitment level here is, is not normal, it's, it's hard.

If you want to go through the things that, you know, from the stands it looks so fun, it looks, all you see is Dillon Stoner jogging out there and catching passes. But it's the other nine months that make it pretty touch.

So, but in the same breath, if we're developing young men and developing character, I think that football is still the best classroom for that. I think we do a good job of that.

DK: [recording] Fake handoff, Nunley back, throws it deep. Man's there back of the end zone! It's caught! Touchdown Trojans and the catch by Stoner. Nunley stood in there, got rocked, through it up for grabs at the back of the end zone. I thought he was throwing it away, and there was number twenty-one at the back of the end zone with a go-ahead touchdown. With 2:55 remaining. [cheering in background]

The threeppeat is complete. For the first time, a senior class has won three straight State Championships for the first time since 2001. The Trojans win this one, twenty-one to fourteen.

Chapter 14 - 6:10

Program, Players & Demands

Don King: You mentioned because of Lancaster leaving, and yet his demands on the program were kind of leaning that way. And yet here you are through the years to where it is a twelve-month program. Is that something that you feel you kind of set? Or did the program itself because of its success really demand that of the kids? Because that's what the kids wanted.

Allan Trimble: Yeah, that's a great question. I, one thing I can say is watching Coach Lancaster come here and establishing his program and his protocol, I learned more from that guy in the first two years than anyone I've ever worked for. He gets more out of his time, he gets more out of his players, he gets more out of his coaches than anybody I've ever seen.

Um, and I found out really early that if you were going to beat Coach Lancaster you were going to have to work really hard. You know, I mean, that's just the bottom line. When you, that, uh, that sweat equity that the kids put in, it's hard to overcome.

So Coach Lancaster came in and he raised the bar big, you know. "Wow, we couldn't beat Midwest City in '92—"

DK: Right.

AT: "...but '93 we did." And, uh, and I thought that, you know, that singlehandedly raised the level of football for everyone. And I would credit him, you know, we still use some of the same practice schedules, some of the same practice formats, all those things. So he was, he was a little bit before his time.

Um, I think we carried that over, you know, when, when, when I took over in '96, um, and I think we, we not, we not only used everything we learned from Coach Lancaster, but we also implemented, I thought, more team development, leadership development, spiritual development. We, we, uh, as we would say in, in coaching speak, we worked on that, um, uh, emotional conduit. We, we, we, well, we all want them to know their plays and their mind, but we want to win their heart over. We want it to be their home.

And I think maybe that's what we did to take it to another level.

DK: Um-hmm (affirmative). One of the improvements after you had that four-year run where you lost to Union in the finals, I know you would go back and, and try to learn or at least look at things differently on how you could get back on top. And one was probably Jordan Johnson, the hiring of Jordan Johnson as your strength and conditioning coach.

AT: Yeah.

DK: Fulltime coach.

AT: Aa, aah, and you know, um, for not just obvious reasons, I mean, obviously he's nationally certified, he's got, he, he coached in the Big 12, he coached in the SEC. I mean, just a ridiculous amount of experience and cutting-edge technology and stuff. But that's not really, that's not really what made the biggest difference.

Um, having a guy that can look at the athletes, um, separate and apart from their playing time on the field, and relate to those kids. And when Coach Trimble has to coach them hard on the field and then walk in the weight room and do the same thing again, they get tired of that. I mean, and they should.

So having another, another, you know, card in your deck, um, that can help you develop that spiritual nature, that can you develop that emotional nature of the kids, it's changed our, it's changed everything.

DK: Yeah. Because he really, after the season and during the off months, he really becomes, in essence, the head coach of the program, doesn't he?

AT: Yeah, well, he is because, you know, there are many times in the summer when we can't visit with them and things like that. But, you know, Jordan is so good because he's so

experienced. If he sees a young lineman that's just getting demolished by his coach in practice, or he's having a bad day and, you know, he's not winning many battles and he's ready to throw his helmet down and go home and tell Mom how hard it is.

Jordan is smart enough to go over and approach the kid before he goes home, and say, "Hey, listen, we'll have better days. This is what we need to do to improve what happened." And, you know, he's a good teacher. So it, it really helps to have that guy in your corner.

DK: Speaking of him and certainly other coaches, if you talk to the coaches over the years, they'll say that the best attribute that Allan Trimble has, one of the best, is that he lets us coach our players. Um, and certainly, that goes hand in hand with this program and how good this program has been. Plus, the program players. We've mentioned a lot of great players in the last, uh, several minutes.

AT: Oh, yeah.

DK: But what got you or what helped you earn thirteen State Championships, I think, are also the program players. The kids—

AT: Aww (impressed sound).

DK: ...that grew up in this program that didn't get the notoriety, but yet it meant as much to them as probably anybody.

AT: Yeah, and I wish, you know, we could take the time to list those guys, I mean, just to pop off a few of them. Kerwin Vanfield, the greatest running back that no one remembers, right? Uh, Scotty McCoy, you could just go down the list of so many kids, uh, that it, that it, you know, uh, Austin Casillas.

DK: Um-hmm (affirmative).

AT: You know, those guys that give their life to the program? Um, and when they go out there it just means so blooming much to them you can't beat 'em, you know?

But, uh, having, you know, as a younger coach working for, um, let's see, I think I've had three different coaching bosses in football. Um, you learn so much, uh, what you would want to do and then you learn so much what you would not want to do. And I always just felt like there were certain situations where, you know, structure and guidance is needed with your employees. But you want to hire guys that, that want responsibility. You want to hire guys that want to be the next head coach at Jenks. You want to hire guys that want to be, uh, great mentors to kids. And when you get those guys, basically, you just fan their fire, you just throw some logs on their fire and let them go. And, uh, that's kind of just always been my philosophy. I, I can't tell you how many head coaches and former head coaches I've worked with, but it never bothered me to hire those guys. I mean, the better guys you get, the better I look, right?

DK: Right.

AT: And that's just, that's just kind of how we do it. You hire some young guys that are aspiring, smart, hardworking. Give them a few parameters, teach them what to do, and the next thing you know, it reciprocates and they're doing it.

DK: Um-hmm (affirmative).

Chapter 15 - 2:05

Leadership Qualities

Don King: Where do you think you got your leadership qualities from? I mean, your dad is a hardnosed, worked his whole life—

Allan Trimble: Um-hmm (affirmative).

DK: I mean, shoot, man, he's, he's as tough as nails. And, and your mom is a very strong woman.

AT: Yeah.

DK: You have great faith because of them. Where do you think you got your leadership qualities from?

AT: You know, I don't, that's a great question and I don't know, I don't know if somebody just poured that in my bucket early or I got that on my journey, you know. I watched my dad knock a football referee unconscious one time.

DK: [laughing]

AT: Uh, because he didn't agree with what he said. Not to saying that's leadership. But, so I don't know if that's my—you know, I'm a fighter, but I don't know if I've ever punched anybody out. Yeah.

DK: You've peeled some skin off some sideline officials though in your day.

AT: I have, I have melted a few guys. Uh, but, you know, I think just, I think just those touch points of, of growing up. I had a great high school football coach. I had a great high school wrestling coach. I had, you know, Al Sibal was my baseball coach. In college, I had Ronnie Jones, I had great teachers, Dr. Kent Lashley, I mean, all these different people, um, that I either played for I had them in class or, or whatever it might be.

So I think it's, I don't know, you'd have to just credit it with a bunch of people that I've had some contact with over my life.

DK: As we, uh, wind down here, you visit with the staff here, Terry Dimmick, Donna Nelson. Tommy Burns has been here for years and years. Tony Dillingham had me work for, for the majority of your career here, Tony is an athletic director. When you visit with them, they say, "One of the great things about Allan Trimble that people don't realize is your sense of humor."

AT: [laughs]

DK: Your, uh, dry wit, and, of course, I've known it for years. Where do you think you get that from?

AT: That's my mom's side of the family, I know where I got that.

DK: [laughs]

AT: Um, sitting around her four brothers growing up, some of the funniest human beings, I mean, some great, great family time growing up. I mean, they were, their, I miss those days. But Uncle Joe, Uncle Tate, Uncle Glen, all those guys, yes.

Chapter 16 - 2:04

Jenks Community

Don King: In the end, the community has been obviously so good to this program. Think of longtime fans that have been fans way before we were even involved—

Allan Trimble: Um-hmm (affirmative).

DK: Back in the '60s, Paula Foster and—

AT: Hmm (agreeing sound).

DK: ...some of the people from the '60s and '70s, and they're still fans, fans today. That's what has made part of this program and part of your journey so special is because of this community.

AT: You know, and it's just like, uh, it's bigger, but it's just like growing up in Cleveland, Oklahoma. It's everybody knows everybody, um, this is their high school. This is where half the people went to high school. You know, put out a Facebook or put out an email that someone's house burned down, and watch what happens. They just rally, I mean, it's, it's, it's, it's a very unique situation in this community. You know, just a majestic school. I mean, it's great expectations. But, yeah, it's, the heartbeat is the people, it's just, uh, I mean, it's probably, I mean, there's no doubt why Courtney and I stayed. We raised our kids here, it's a great job. The expectations are very high, which is what gives you a chance to be successful. Makes it challenging at times.

But this is a special community, I mean, if you wanted to raise a kid, not a bad place to start right here. So—

DK: Yeah.

AT: ...it's, it's, uh, very unique.

DK: And you said, "It's not just the football program that has made this school stand out. If you want to be a great, if you want to be great in debate, if you want to be great in

show choir, there, there are so many things to offer that has pushed different programs, different sports as well in, in this school system.

AT: Yeah, and I see, you know, my Tori and my Tyler, I still see their Facebook where their second-grade teachers are still, you know, talking to them. And I just, uh, you know, so appreciative of the good people that, um, that, that was a good people who breathed life into my kids. You know, it's a great place I'm going to miss it.

Chapter 17 - 4:50

ALS Diagnosis

Don King: That all changed for you a couple of years ago, obviously—

Allan Trimble: Hmm (kind of affirmative sound).

DK: ...with ALS diagnosis. It's something though that you didn't know what it was but you really had felt there was a change within you.

AT: Ahh.

DK: Before it was dia, diagnosed in the summer of 2016, really a year before that, right?

AT: Yeah, at least a year. My wife says maybe longer than that. And in the typical Cleveland oilfield fashion, you know, just rub some dirt on it or take an extra aspirin or, you know, um, so I rode it out quite a while, I think. Just had some weird symptoms in my left hand, uh, and then most recently just, uh, the energy level, you know, just, uh, I've always been a hard-worker, I've always been a push, go hard, don't sleep. And, man, just couldn't bounce back, you know. And, uh, so we knew something was going on.

And then, uh, uh, months and months and months of testing before we figured it out. So, yeah, it, we knew for a while.

DK: A lot of people, Coach, would, uh, would certainly not handle it with the grace that you have. And do you credit your faith for that?

AT: Well, that's, that's the only thing you credit. I mean, you, uh, you know as a football coach you're, uh, you're supposed to be a fixer, you know, you got to, you, you practice your plays, you get your team prepared, you have a game plan. And then if the game plan doesn't work, you have your secondary game plan and your third game plan. When do you run your fake punt? When do you go for two? You, uh, you cover a lot of details that we call sometimes our ghosts, because you may never see them.

But, you know, when you get, uh, when you get the terminal diagnosis, when you get the, "Hey, you know what? Huh, this one's undefeated," um, all of a sudden, you realize Coach Trimble doesn't have those answers. You know, there's not a, there's not a vitamin.

There's not a Gatorade regiment or a pushup regiment that gets you through that. So it has to be your faith, I mean, it's, um, and I would even credit it, my faith, long before the, the big disease. Um—

DK: Right.

AT: Because, uh, there are a lot of times in, you know, in football coaching that, um, behind the scenes it's a tough deal. You know, you lose a, you lose a player, you lose a parent. You, you, you have kids make decisions that let, not just themselves down, but let everybody down. So there are, there are quiet, tough times behind the scenes and there's no doubt that, you know, my faith and, and prayer life is, is what carries you.

There's no other explanation because, you know, the first couple of weeks when you know you've got a terminal disease, when you know you've got ALS, you know, all that goes through my mind is, *Who's going to take care of my family? Who's going to take care of my kids?* You know, what, what this, what that? You go easily back to defense mode.

But then the grace of God and then your faith, and then you realize, *Oh, you know what? I've been reading all my life that he's got control of this anyway. So why don't you just go and let him have it, you know?*

So that, that, you know, definitely I would say that's kind of where I'm at. And we've decided, Courtney and I have decided that, you know, never, um, never waste a crisis. I mean, there, if, if our journey can, you know, lend hope to other people, if they can get, you know, some motivation or hope from our journey, then we hope we can share that with them.

DK: Yeah. And that's where the foundation comes in.

AT: Yeah. Um, we're really excited. Finally, uh, the Trimble Strong Foundation is up and running, we're, it's a vision of a lot of people, not just Courtney and myself, but a lot of my friends. And, um, you know, we, our, our buzz word, our, our, uh, we want to be salt and light. We want to, we want to transform people by just injecting positive things into their life.

We've, we have some great friends who love, uh, uh, who love to help people adopt children. We're going to help them and we've got a little church that we try to sponsor down in New Orleans in the inner city that, um, has a wonderful, uh, preschool and, uh, daycare system that we, that we sponsor. We got a little school down in Honduras that we sponsor. And we're looking forward, we're going to name our first leadership scholarship later this spring, uh, for a young man at OSU. So we got a lot of things going on.

We would love to, we would love to get more, recruit teammates for our foundation. And if people are interested in just being salt and light to people and helping people along the journey, one person at a time, we'd love to have them join us.

DK: Trimble Strong Foundation.

AT: Yep, trimblestrong.org.

DK: That would be, uh, the way to go.

Coach, we've, uh, we've been doing this a long time and I don't think—

AT: Aww (disappointed sound).

DK: ...our journey is, is over yet. We still got a lot of things that I know you want—

AT: Aww (disappointed sound).

DK: ...to get accomplished.

AT: Oh, yeah, we'll run a few more laps together, Don. Us, us oil patch guys, we'll stick together.

DK: Absolutely. Maybe a book someday.

AT: Whoo, better hurry.

Chapter 18 - 4:20

Oklahoma Sports Hall of Fame Speech

Allan Trimble: [musical introductory sound] All right, thank you guys very much. Certainly thank you to the committee for, uh, for the, this awesome, uh, awesome award. I still haven't been able to get my mind around it to, uh, hard to believe that in 1995, uh, when I stepped out of the coaching profession to head back in the oil patch, that, uh, the Jenks school board and Dr. Kirby Lehman and Mike Means and athletic director, Tommy Burns, would, uh, give a guy who had no head coaching experience the opportunity to be the head coach at Jenks. They're here tonight and I want to thank them for, for that opportunity. I had no idea that that twenty-two-year experience would be what it, uh, what it has turned out to be. But it's a wonderful opportunity.

And certainly any time, uh, any time you commit yourself and you work that hard, uh, with your career, uh, I, I would be amiss if I didn't thank my wife, Courtney, and my two daughters, Tyler and Tori. We made it, uh, a family affair. Uh, gone from home so much and working so hard, uh, that's where my wife and daughters became great laundry washers and equipment managers and everything else that I didn't have time to do. So I'm very grateful and thankful for that.

Uh, I also noticed that some representatives from our booster club are here tonight, Dan O'Keefe and his family. And if you know anything about Jenks, uh, it's football. We have some great parents and some great supporters. So, Dan, I really appreciate that and everything you do.

Um, I've been pretty public about my diagnosis, uh, uh, with ALS, and, uh, it's been a tough battle. Um, I know, uh, with an audience this size there are a number of you who

face, uh, tough battles and tough challenges each and every day. But, um, I've been pretty public about it. And one of the reasons is, um, I want to be, uh, an encouragement to each and every one of you.

Um, I guess I'll compare the ALS battle with, like, the Midwest City teams of the '90s or the Union teams of the, uh, early 2000s, they're very, it's a very formidable opponent. In fact, uh, medical statistics would tell you, um, that ALS is undefeated.

But I'm always up for a good fight, um, as our players' motto is: um, if we don't win the game our opponent is going to be very tired and very sore the next day. They're going to earn it. So that's kind of the way I'm going into this.

[audience clapping and cheering]

So with all of that said, um, I want to be an encouragement to you. Um, living with a terminal disease has really helped me, um, let go of the grip of some things that I used to really, really believe were important, but really, really are not. Um, so as you run the race, uh, let me encourage you. Love your family a little bit more. Be a little bit better husband. Be a little bit better wife. Be a little bit better father. And whatever, uh, you know, whatever aspect or whatever job you're doing, be a great mentor and, and encouragement to others.

I know my career has just been a ridiculous blessing. Uh, my wife still thinks I go to my hobby every day. Uh, it's, it's been the greatest thing. I love, uh, I love being able to go do my calling each and every day. The Lord has blessed me in amazing ways.

Uh, thanks again for this crazy honor. I can't get over it but I will cherish it, uh, the rest of my life. Thank you guys so much.

[audience clapping]

Chapter 19 - 1:02

Book and Championship Seasons

Don King: Don King hoping you have enjoyed the visit with Coach Trimble. Since we left off laughing about the book, we were able to get the book finished, called *The Golden Years*, before he passed. And you can get the book by going to: jenkstrojanfootball.com. That would probably be the easiest way of telling you how to navigate your way because there are several ways to buy the book. But go to jenkstrojanfootball.com, look for the Allan Trimble Legacy icon, click on that, and it will tell you the different ways to buy the book.

Also look for the icon for Trimble Strong Foundation. And if you would like more detailed information on each State Championship season, Coach Trimble and I went back

and talked about each State Championship season. And you can find that on my page: Don King. Click on the icon history and then scroll down and the top icon from there is: Trojan Football History Audio Clips. Scroll down from that and you will find all kinds of Jenks Trojan football information.

Chapter 20 - 0:33

Conclusion

Announcer: This oral history presentation is made possible through the support of our generous foundation-funders. We encourage you to join them by making your donation, which will allow us to record future stories. Students, teachers, and librarians are using this website for research and the general public is listening every day to these great Oklahomans share their life experience.

Thank you for your support as we preserve Oklahoma's legacy one voice at a time, on VoicesofOklahoma.com.