

## Chapter 01 – Introduction

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**Announcer:** He's a small-town guy who charmed the big city. He was merely a name who coached high school sports before he became the face of Oklahoma high school athletics.

Through his appearances on radio and television, J.V. Haney became the state's most significant voice of high school sports.

From the late 1980s through the early 2000s, Haney promoted Oklahoma high school sports from his pulpit that was Cox cable television. Through football season, basketball season and an assortment of lesser-recognized seasons, Haney provided the passion and the commentary for television audiences statewide.

In the 1970's, Coach Haney led Tulsa's Edison High school to three state tournament appearances during his time as head basketball coach. He later spent four years with the Webster basketball program. During his career as a high school basketball coach, he recorded 313 wins. In the 80s Haney launched his broadcasting career. Due to Haney's outstanding career, he was elected to be president of the Oklahoma Coaches Association. Haney was later inducted into the National High School Athletic Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 2003.

Listen to JV Haney talk about Muhammed Ali, Russia and his promotion of girls' sports. Bill land and Don King join JV for this oral history interview on Voices of Oklahoma.com..

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**Chapter 02 – 5:50**  
**Puddin’**

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**John Erling (JE):** Today's date is August 4th, 2020. So JV, would you state your full name please?

**JV Haney (JV):** Jerome Vance Haney. I go by “JV.”

**JE:** And where did JV — how did that start? Why JV?

**JV:** Well, JV came from Jerome Vance and Jerome Vance is baseball players that my father was a big fan of. So when I came along, why he named me after his baseball players.

**JE:** Alright then. Why weren't you growing up as “Jerome” or maybe “Jerry?”

**JV:** No, I grew up as “Puddin’.”

**JE:** Okay. (Laughing)

**JV:** And, and to this day when I go back around in Craig County, Big Cabin, Vinita, Adair, and Mayes County people say, “Puttin’, how are you?” And people look at me like, “What is this ‘Puddin’?” It's not “Puddin’ Head”, it's “Puddin’”.

**JE:** And why is it “Puddin’?”

**JV:** I don't know. I grew up, I didn't know my real name until I was probably 10 years old.

**JE:** And then you went, on of course, and became “Coach” as well. So we throw that name in. Your date of birth?

**JV:** 11-09-33.

**JE:** And that makes your present age?

**JV:** That makes my present age 86 going on 87.

**JE:** Yeah. And joining us here is Don King who is a major sports broadcaster in our community and the two of you have had a great relationship down through the years. Don, just a little bit about your background.

**Don King (DK):** I've been in the Tulsa media for 40 years, since 1980. I have been doing play-by-play of different sporting events. I've probably broadcast more state championship games — radio and TV combined — than anybody in state history, so I'm pretty proud of that. And I've done sports talk with JV and a number of games with Coach over the years. We've remained great friends over the last 35 years.

**JE:** And then you were the play-by-play for Jenks football.

**DK:** Yes. I'll be — in 2020 — will be, if we have a football season, it'll be my 18th year of doing Jenks football on the radio.

**JE:** And JV joined you on that?

**DK:** JV hasn't joined me on the Jenks football, but he and I established the high school football games on cable television back in 1988. And I credit JV for what you see on 268 Fox 23 on Friday nights and all the coverage that high school sports gets; and a big reason for all of that now is what JV started some 30 years ago or so.

**JE:** Alright, where are we recording this interview?

**DK:** We are recording this interview at Tyler Media out on 21st street. It's an Oklahoma City-owned media company. But they have a couple of radio stations here in Tulsa and I had worked for them for the last four years up until recently, and they were kind enough to give us the studios and since I kind of know how to run the equipment here we are.

**JE:** Yes. And we appreciate that very much. And we're gonna comment just a little bit about coronavirus and the COVID pandemic, which is ultimately kind of what drove us here to the radio station. I'm asking: how is this affecting, you know, JV — COVID-19?

**JV:** Well, I think it has impacted us more about going to restaurants and just really going shopping. We have a tendency not to go. I sat in my chair in my garage door and visit with people walking by, but it's something that I have never experienced and I really don't know where I'm handling it properly or not, but I don't know what to do.

**JE:** Yeah. And you have a mask. And since this is all about history, because people will be listening back to us for years from now, we should point out there are those who are pro-mask and those who are anti-mask and you have a mask there. We don't have them on in the studio now; we felt we were comfortable. But that issue is going on as well. You just don't know.

**JV:** Yes. I have a very difficult time wearing my mask. I forget it. And yet I see people doing it and then I'll put mine on. And it's just been a situation that I've never experienced and most of the people I'm around have never experienced it. And what is going to happen? I hope it's the best thing.

**JE:** Don? Your comment on your experience?

**DK:** Well, it's certainly been a political volleyball and it's unfortunate because I thought we had a pretty good handle on it in the beginning. And then when they kind of opened things up, I think the younger generation really struggled with the mask and the seriousness of this pandemic. It reminds me a lot. John, of what people probably went through in World War Two. You had people — loved ones here — that sent others off not knowing whether they're going to return or not, not knowing when they would return. People here had to do much more for that cause than an 8 to 5 job. And so I just equated to that generation that my father went through in World War Two and, and how tough that generation was. And it's really kind of disappointing how the younger generation — and I'm 66 so, I'll throw my generation in there as well — people not having the patience to want to wear a mask and protect themselves and protect others. It's a little disappointed in that.

**JE:** Yeah. And since we're talking sports, I think later on, we can talk about how it's affecting sports here in the here and now.

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**Chapter 03 – 8:55**  
**Sports**

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**John Erling (JE):** So JV, where were you born?

**JV Haney (JV):** I was born in Vinita, Oklahoma. I always say Big Cabin, Oklahoma. But in the hospital in Vinita, Oklahoma — 1933.

**JE:** Okay. But you grew up in Big Cabin?

**JV:** I grew up and went 11 of my 12 years. My father went to Indiana during the beginning of World War two and was working in a shipyard and we spent one year in Oakland City, Indiana then came back and I graduated from Big Cabin High School.

**JE:** Alright. Big Cabin. Isn't that the hay capital of the world?

**JV:** Well if you're from Big Cabin, you're tough. And that means that people who come in from Vinita or from Adair — that they're in second place; we're in first place. And it was a great life; let me put it that way.

**JE:** Yeah. I was noticing the census in 2010, it was 265. How big is Big Cabin when you were living there?

**JV:** Well we had about 50 kids in high school. So I would imagine we were around 300.

**JE:** Yeah. Your mother's name — maiden name and ...

**JV:** Her maiden name was Flava Larimore. And then she became Flava haney.

**JE:** Okay. And where was she from? Where did she grow up?

**JV:** She grew up in Big Cabin. Her father was named Larimore and he was — did the janitorial work at the high school. So we were all basically Big Cabin Craig County people.

**JE:** Yeah. What kind of personality did your mother have?

**JV:** Oh she was — she was one of the most funny people that you could be around and she lived to be 85 years old. And to the very end she was a funny person. I had her in a rest home here in Tulsa and we'd go riding and we just ride around. She'd stop and want a hamburger and we'd get a hamburger. And finally, then, it was so sad that her memory began to get away and she'd get back and not know where she had been. And so then we just went to staying at the retirement center. We'd go out and sit on the lawn and visit every afternoon and it worked out fine.

**DK:** She was — if I can interject — she was a TV star at Burgundy Place because JV at that time was doing commercials for Burgundy Place because of Flava. And so he put his mom in his TV commercial.

**JE:** Very good. Very good. Your father's name?

**JV:** My dad's name was J. T. And nothing. That was it. J. Period T. Period. "Junior." J. T. Haney Jr.

**JE:** And so we never knew what the initials stood for?

**JV:** No, it didn't. It was no name.

**JE:** Okay.

**JV:** And his father was the same way — J. T. Senior.

**JE:** All right. And so was he from Big Cabin? And is that — where was he from?

**JV:** Yes, he was — they came from — actually, they came from Tennessee back in my great grandfather's day. My ancestors came from Ireland and they were McElhaney's in Ireland. But at that time they could only bring so many people from the family. So they dropped the "McEl" and became "Haney." And that's through Tennessee and Oklahoma.

**JE:** Yeah. Then your father — what was this personality like?

**JV:** Well my father was one of the most brilliant people. He had a high school diploma and that was it. And he was just absolutely brilliant. Had a business — hay, grain and feed business — in Big Cabin. And then after World War Two that began to diminish and he became the postmaster at Big Cabin as a result of that. Why, we pretty much kept abreast with everything that was going on. And he was just a brilliant... And one thing about him that that I really...

He would call the superintendent into his office every fall. And us three boys, he would have in there and he would tell the superintendent: "If these kids get in trouble, and you have to use the board on them, you do a good job; I don't want to have to do it again."

I'm telling you what — I got in trouble one time; that was it, because he did a great job on me.

**JE:** "The board," meaning you got swatch to the rear end, right?

**JV:** Oh! 12 (Laughing). I wouldn't want to tell you how I looked and how long I looked that way. But one thing for sure: I was a good student from that point on.

**JE:** So you had three brothers, err — two brothers?

**JV:** Two brothers.

**JE:** So, three boys in the family.

**JV:** Yes.

**JE:** Alright. Your education and the first school you attended then was in Big Cabin?

**JV:** Started Big Cabin, finished at Big Cabin.

**JE:** And, so, elementary and junior high and high school. Were your parents interested in sports or where did you begin to show interest in sports?

**JV:** My father was very much interested in sports. That's why I was named after a baseball player. And as a result of that, we played one game — all of us together, three boys — and dad was playing third base. I was catching, one of my brothers was playing second base, and the other one was pitching. And it was just something that he was so proud of that he would take us to St. Louis once a year and we'd watch the Cardinals play. And as a result of that, it just made everything that he wanted us to do we would do because of the way he felt about us.

**JE:** So he planted that seed in you, didn't he?

**JV:** Yes, he did.

**JE:** That interest in sports. Yeah. That's very fortunate because they promoted — they supported every athletic adventure you had then. Probably went to your games. And is that true?

**JV:** Yes.

**JE:** Yeah.

**JV:** And he had a very hard time going when I started coaching, that he would get mad at the officials. And the result of that, he got to the point that he didn't come to many games. And you know what? After I retired, and my youngest — oldest — son was coaching, and I would go to his games; and I was just like my father. I couldn't go because the officials was not doing a good job on my son's team. That's kind of crazy. But that's the way it was.

**JE:** So did you have to stay away too?

**JV:** Yes.

**JE:** Yeah. And so — didn't you actually get your first coaching job in Big Cabin?

**JV:** No, my first coaching job was in Adair.

**JE:** But, while you were at Big Cabin, and you graduated in what year? 19...



**JV:** 51.

**JE:** 1951. Weren't you kind of ornery and kind of tough to have? And so didn't somebody say to you that you ought to coach in high school?

**JV:** As a senior, the junior high coach was drafted into the Korean war. So the superintendent called myself and my friend JT Stanberry in and wanted us to coach the elementary boys and girls. I did the boys, he did the girls.

And he says, "Now you know that you're gonna have to change your attitude in regard to your classes because you are going to be a teacher."

Well, that was very smart of him because from that point on we were not in trouble. We studied hard and we demanded more of the kids and that was implanted in me to become a coach.

**JE:** What was his name? Do you remember?

**JV:** Mr. Dickerson?

**JE:** Yeah.

**JV:** He fired me. When I got a job in Adair, he hired me; and three years later he fired me.

**JE:** (Laughing) Okay.

**JV:** But it was the best thing that ever happened.

**JE:** Yeah. And we're going to come to Adair. So that actually was your first coaching job — when you were a senior in high school, right?

**JV:** Yes.

**JE:** And then you played — but you played basketball, football at Big Cabin?

**JV:** No, no football — just basketball and baseball.

**JE:** And you played both those sports, of course.

## **Chapter 04 – 7:20**

### **Semi-pro Ball**

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**John Erling (JE):** So you graduate in 1951. Then what do you do?

**JV Haney (JV):** Well, I went into — this is kind of crazy — but I played some amateur ball in Pryor and in Chelsea and ended up in Miami, Florida. And I was playing down there and that's when I decided that I really had an opportunity to go to NEO A&M on a baseball scholarship, which was sweeping the floor of the dorm. And as a result of that, why, I came back and went to NEO A&M Miami.

**JE:** So you were being played? You were a semi-pro baseball player?

**JV:** Yes.

**JE:** And what was your position?

**JV:** Catcher.

**JE:** All right. And so then tell us a little bit more — who you were playing for?

**JV:** Well, you know, my memory — it becomes so bad. I played for the business in Pryor — had a team in a semi-pro league. And as a junior I played at Pryor. They got me a job at a utility place; and as a result of that, well, we could, you know, make a little money. And then as a senior, I started out playing in Baxter Springs, Kansas and ended up in Miami, Florida. It was just crazy. But I'd just run, jump wherever they asked me.

**JE:** Yeah. Did you play against anybody who went on and became a pro? Anybody who became professional? That you made a play? There was a man by the name of Ralph Terry.

**JV:** Ralph Terry. I caught Ralph Terry. Now Ralph — I was older than Ralph. Like, when I was a junior, Ralph was a freshman. And as I remember, you know, in pitching, we were playing against men; and that's how dedicated we were to the game.

**JE:** Yeah.

**JV:** And Ralph was — he's the one — that I played with a lot of others. I just can't remember their names.

**JE:** Well, Ralph Terry went on with the New York Yankees.

**Don King (DK):** Right! He was a great pitcher in the early sixties for the Yankees. Just a great pitcher during those Yankee days with Mantle and Maris and all of them. And you also, Coach, ended up in New Mexico playing semi-pro ball, if I remember.

**JV:** Yeah, that was after I had gone to school two years.

**DK:** Okay. At NEO. Okay.

**JV:** You know, the one thing about Ralph Terry — and I say this and some people look at me like I'm crazy — but you could be a blind catcher and catch him. All you had to do was hold your glove and he'd throw the ball right in the glove; and we'd move around, and that's why as a youngster, he developed much quicker than most people do. But he was such a great pitcher that it was ... it was just fun to play with him.

**JE:** Hmm! (In agreement). I collected his baseball card at one time, as a matter of fact. Yeah. That was great. So, at NEO: Northeastern Oklahoma A&M, and the home of the Golden Norseman.

**JV:** Played for Homa Thomas for two years and it was two of the most fun years at NEO A&M College. To this day, I go up there and help them when I can. And it was just such a wonderful — and the teachers were incredible. I mean, if you were having a problem, they would just — like it was in high school: “You stay here, we're gonna talk about this.” And they would help us. To this day, I owe them everything. NEO A&M.

**DK:** You are in the NEO Hall of Fame.

**JV:** Yes.

**DK:** Inducted in 2010. Was that because of your athletic prowess or because of what you've done over the years in helping them?

**JV:** I think all of it. We had good baseball teams. And not only that, but Red Robertson was the football coach, and he kind of took a liking to me and he had me keeping stats on the sideline for him. So I got to go to all the football games and it was just — you become a part of the university.

**JE:** Yeah. But then after Northeastern — NEO as we call it — then where did you go?

**JV:** Well, after NEO, that's when I got married.

**JE:** Okay.

**JV:** And I first went Oklahoma A&M, at that time, and enrolled — and that was during the Korean War — and everybody decided that maybe we should be able to get the all of the aid that you got at that particular time. And we group of us volunteered and then I became "4F." They really weren't really wanting many, and they found something wrong with me and turned me down. I didn't get to go.

**DK:** Due to the patriotism — if I can expound upon that — due to the patriotism, they really had more people volunteer for the Korean War than what they needed.

**JV:** Yes.

**DK:** And so they really looked for a way — if there was any minor defection with you — they turned you down; and that's what happened to you, right?

**JV:** Yes.

**DK:** Okay.

**JV:** And then I got married.

**JE:** And your wife's name? My first wife's name was Anne, and we ended up in Deming, New Mexico. I was playing baseball. I had an uncle that was a contractor in Deming, and they were needing a catcher on their team. And I went to Deming and played for one of the greatest managers that I ever played for.

**JE:** And his name?

**JV:** I can't remember his name (laughing). Keep in mind I'm 86 years old.

**JE:** No, I understand that. Maybe it'll come to you later on; if it does, you just say so. So then how many children did you and Anne have?

**JV:** Two boys.

**JE:** Two boys. And did they end up in sports?

**JV:** Yes; they both played baseball and basketball. And my oldest son, Mike, he ended up as a coach and retired as a principal at Sperry High School. And my youngest son, Pat, became involved in sales; so he retired from his sales business, and both of them are retired.

**JE:** Do you have grandchildren now? I have one grandson by blood and then several that are not by blood.

## **Chapter 05 – 6:08**

### **Too Popular**

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**John Erling (JE):** Okay. So then, your actual first professional coaching job — where is that?

**JV Haney (JV):** At Adair.

**JE:** Adair. Alright. What year did you go there?

**JV:** In '56.

**JE:** And then you were there for how long?

**JV:** Three years.

**JE:** Three years. And then did you coach all sports or what did you do?

**JV:** I coached boys and girls basketball. And boys baseball. And then I went to Hughes.

**JE:** All right. But isn't this where you said you got hired by a guy and the same guy fired you?

**JV:** Yes.

**JE:** Did you get fired in Adair?

**JV:** Yes.

**JE:** Why? Why were you fired in Adair?

**JV:** I was too popular.

**JE:** Really?

**JV:** Yeah (laughing). Well — that's what I — yes.

**JE:** And was he the principal?

**JV:** He was the superintendent.

**JE:** Superintendent. And he didn't like you because you overshadowed him?

**JV:** That's what I was told. But later, you know, of course, I was very mad when it happened. But later, it was the best thing that ever happened for me.

**JE:** And why was it the best thing?

**JV:** Because then I began to look and go up the ladder. I would have stayed at Adair forever. And I wouldn't have had the opportunity to do things that I have done.

**JE:** Right. Because you had a great deal of success there and felt comfortable in Adair.

**JV:** Oh yeah.

**JE:** So then you were at Hughes?

**JV:** Yes; two years.

**JE:** Two years. And what's your experience there like?

**JV:** Well it was really great. It had a great superintendent at Hughes. And we, again, had less than 50; and they were closing the school — the state was closing, if you didn't have over 50 kids in the top four grades.

So the superintendent calls us all in and tells us, "You better be looking because we may be out of a job." And that's when I got the job at Owasso.

**JE:** Superintendent in Hughes liked you?

**JV:** Yes.

**JE:** And, as a matter of fact, after school, the two of you used to do what?

**JV:** (Laughing) Well, let me — let me tell you how it started, now. When we move in, they furnished us a home at Hughes. A real nice house. And about six days after we moved in, why, the superintendent's daughter came up and was visiting with my wife, and my oldest son opened the refrigerator door and I had some beer in there, and she saw the beer.

Well, it wasn't after she left and went back down to her home, which was right down from us, and she came back and said, "The superintendent would like to visit with you."

I said, "Okay, I guess I'm getting fired."

So I go down there and go in. We sat down in his den and he talks a little bit and he says, "I understand you drink beer."

And I said, "Yes, sir, I do."

He says, "Good."

He went and got us a beer; and we became very, very close from that point on, that we would go have a beer once in a while. But, it was funny.

**Don King (DK):** For those that don't know Hughes — I don't even know if Hughes is around anymore, but explain how small it was. I mean it was just a dirt road, right?

**JV:** Oh, yes. It was a total dirt road. And they had four homes that they provided to the superintendent, and the principal, and the coach, and one of the other teachers — no charge.

**JE:** So, I'm guessing here, but the Hughes program wasn't up to where the Adair program was. True?

**JV:** Yes.

**JE:** So, did that bother you, then, that I'm at Hughes at a program that's not as big?

**JV:** No. That first year, the kids were so great and worked so hard that it was fun coaching them; and we didn't have a real good team. We played over 500 the first year, but most of them came back and the next year, while we were district and went to the finals of the regional, and they were just —



they were just super kids to coach. And about five of them went on to become coaches. And I thought that was — they had a lot of fun.

**JE:** Right.

**DK:** In the smaller schools, which are known as Class B and Class C, they're not big enough to have football teams. And so those communities — and really they're just communities in the country in Oklahoma — those kids play baseball and basketball year round. And so those are their two passions, right, JV?

**JV:** Yes.

**DK:** And so, you as a coach, appreciated that because you could get more out of those kids because they played those particular sports year round.

**JV:** That's true. And every one of them wanted to play pro baseball. And all of them would love to have gotten some type of a scholarship in basketball. So they worked so hard, but they played as a team, that's what was so great. They played with each other and, as a result, it made all of them better.

**DK:** A great example of that is Johnny Bench, who grew up in Binger. He came from a small school that didn't have football, and so he played basketball and baseball; and he was really a good basketball player as well as a baseball player.

**JE:** And I can say we have Johnny Bench's oral history story on Voices of Oklahoma as well. I'm trying to — this thing about Hughes and Adair. Did Hughes ever play Adair in any sport?

**JV:** No.

**JE:** Okay (laughing).

**JV:** No (laughing).

**DK:** Hughes is down by Seminole, isn't it? I'm not quite sure where it was.

**JV:** Yeah. Actually, it's right out of Lindsay.

**DK:** Okay.

**JV:** It's between Lindsay and Purcell. In the country.

## **Chapter 06 – 7:35**

### **Owasso**

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**John Erling (JE):** Did you think you want to stay there the rest of your life? Or were you thinking of other...

**JV Haney (JV):** You know, we were perfectly happy there. But when that second year, when the State Department of Education had been setting the policy that if you didn't have 50 average daily attendants in the top four grades, you're going to be closed. And that's when they've been looking. And one of the people at Owasso that I knew, Dwayne Sullinger, he was the head football coach, and he played at Miami when I was there. And as a result, why, I got the job at Owasso, and...

**JE:** You must have been pretty happy with that.

**JV:** Yes.

**JE:** Because that was a bigger school...

**JV:** Yes.

**JE:** ... and all. And I think you went there in 1961?

**JV:** Yes.

**JE:** And you were there for about three years; is that true?

**JV:** Four years.

**JE:** Four years? '61 to '64. And you were coach of the year in 1964.

**JV:** Yes.

**JE:** Tell us about what your experience was there in Owasso — in boys and girls basketball.

**JV:** Well, it was one of the most fun places. Every place I went, it seemed like it was better. How it could be, I don't know.

But, at Owasso, most all of our kids played football that played basketball. And as a result, why, we would do a lot of extra practicing. And I wanted to practice them on Sunday afternoon. And the school said, "No, you can't do that."

"Why?"

"Because of the religious element here."

So I went and visited with the minister's group and I said, "Would you rather have your kids practicing basketball Sunday afternoon, or be over on 11th Street and Admiral Street in Tulsa?"

"We'd rather have them practice."

"Okay."

So they approved it and we began to practice. And then the girls, immediately, they threatened me: "If you practice the boys, you should practice us!"

And I told them, I said, "Girls, you don't need it."

"Well, we want it."

"Okay."

So I practiced the girls for an hour from 2 to 3 and the boys from 3 to 5 on Sunday.

**JE:** What class is Owasso at that time?

**JV:** At that time, we were class B.

**JE:** Okay. Do you have any memorable tournaments or victories that you might remember? While you were at Owasso?

**JV:** Oh, gosh (laughing).

**JE:** Yeah.

**JV:** Yeah; I hadn't thought about that. The games that we played against Skiatook, and Collinsville, and Haskell, and Tulsa, and East Central... It wasn't public schools; it was an independent school. All of those. And we won several district tournaments and it was just ...

Great superintendent, great football coach and staff. It was just a wonderful place to be.

**JE:** All right. So, then, is that another place where you said, "Well, I could stay here the rest of my life."?

**JV:** That's right.

**JE:** Okay. What happened?

**JV:** Well, they came at me from Seminole, and offered me more money than I thought existed. And I go to the superintendent and I explained it to him. He says, "Take it!"

So I took the job in Seminole and bought a nice home. We were just really enjoying it. And then, suddenly, the superintendent and I — we're real close; we played golf — Uh, and he was a tough one.

And as a result of that, it became where they didn't like the

superintendent, and the board of education told him he was gone. “And that little basketball coach goes with you.”

**JE:** Oh! Really?!

**JV:** Yes. So he calls me and he tells me, he says, “We're gonna get fired.”

And I said, “Well, I should get out of here, shouldn't I?”

He said, “Yes, you should.”

So that's when I went to Webster High School with Bill Allen.

**JE:** So, in the long run, it wasn't good to be that tied to him. Why get rid of you when they get rid of him?

**JV:** Because we were good friends.

**JE:** Oh (laughing).

**JV:** Well, I did what he wanted. I coached. I was hired as the basketball coach. And then suddenly I became an assistant football coach. And then, before school started, I became the head coach of 8th grade football. Now, I was not a football person. But we won eight out of nine games because I had the good kids (laughing). And we did it simple — very, very simple. And, as a result of that, we really became close.

And then he says, “You got to coach the ... “

**Don King (DK):** Golf team.

**JV:** The golf team. I don't know anything about golf.

“Well, you're gonna coach it.”

“Okay.”

I coach golf and baseball in the spring. So we were real close and the Board of Education didn't like that.

**DK:** It's pretty similar nowadays to where, when an athletic director who runs a college gets fired or leaves, the other coaches there — the moving van start coming by their house because they don't have that support. They don't have that backing anymore. They're fearful of their jobs.

**JE:** Yeah.

**JV:** Yeah. You're right.

**JE:** Right. So then — that was another good thing that you were fired at Seminole, right?

**JV:** Yes; because when I came to Webster, I worked for the — unbelievably, in my mind — the best basketball coach ever: Bill Allen. Bill Allen knew more basketball. If he were coaching today, it would be incredible, because he was an up-tempo coach with his players. And I worked four years for him and never had as much fun in my life as I had with him. And then went to Edison.

**JE:** Alright, well, did Bill Allen bring some titles to Webster during his time there? Did he?

**JV:** He had just won the state tournament. So we started from the bottom and we were back up and we were winning when I left.

**JE:** Alright, so how did you get from Seminole to Tulsa? Somebody at Webster reached out to you? You went to Webster or what?

**JV:** Well, actually, what I did — they were trying to hire me at Memorial and the principal would not go along with it for some reason. And Bill Allen heard about it and Bill had come down to Seminole and scrimmaged with his state team, and we thumped him pretty good. So, as a result of that, as soon as he found out about what happened to me at Memorial, that's when he called and wanted me to come to Webster.

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**Chapter 07 – 9:04**  
**Webster – Edison**

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**John Erling (JE):** Didn't you have a great player there — Robert Iverson — who played at Webster?

**JV Haney (JV):** Yes.

**JE:** Tell us about him.

**JV:** He was, you know, Bobby was like about 6' 6". He could play a guard like he was 5' 10". And he could play center, like he was 7' 0". He could play a forward like he was 6' 6". He was one of the most outstanding players that I ever was a part of in coaching.

And he went to K State and I ended up at Texas.

**Don King (DK):** North Texas.

**JV:** North Texas State. But he was super and Bill Allen was the one who made him.

**JE:** Mmm-hmm (In agreement).

**DK:** What was it like to coach on the west side at Webster as compared to the other schools in Tulsa? Was it different?

**JV:** The pride of Webster High School was unbelievable. And if you were a graduate of Webster High School, you were there to promote them.

And I'll never forget, one time, that it came up later that they were talking about closing it and there was a group that went to the board, as I was told this, and they said, "Where will our kids go?"

And they said, "To central."

"How will they get across the river?"

“We'll eliminate the bridge.”

So that closed that.

**JE:** This was a good time for you. You'd been to these small towns in the area and here you were in Tulsa, the major city in Northeast Oklahoma. So this was a real wonderful time for you, wasn't it?

**JV:** It really was. And, you know, the thing — and that's a good point because Webster High School was really like an independent school district because we were on that side of the river. And then when I went to Edison — the Edison Group — we had a lot of 3000 students in 10, 11 and 12. And it was — Jim Sellers was the athletic director — and he was just a fantastic director of athletics, and it was like a small town.

**JE:** Okay, so then you leave Webster because you got a better job? Or why did you go to Edison?

**JV:** Well, because they wanted me to come and I was kind of looking to become a head coach again.

**JE:** Okay.

**JV:** And that was the reason I went.

**JE:** Right. All right, all right. And then you went to Edison in 1970, and I think you were there until 1976.

**JV:** 6 years, yes.

**JE:** Alright, so tell us about your Edison experience. I see you took them to the finals in 1976? Tell us the lead-up to all that.

**JV:** Well the Edison kids — I helped him in football and the coaching staff got along so well. Everybody was in favor of promoting their program and helping the others. And we had a rule there that if you played football as a 9th grader and you went out as a sophomore, you had to stay there until



football was over before you could come in in basketball. And we got that working real good together. And, as a result of that, I think that just really got our kids going.

But we had such a strong desire to win. And those kids played as a team — unbelievable. And that's hard to do. You look anymore and it's hard to see five kids play together. But I say this, and people listening in basketball will think I'm crazy, but Bill Allen ran a side break. Unbelievable. Today would just be the best thing that anyone can do. They don't do it. But we ran the side break, and all of the kids got to score off the side break. So this made them work a little harder. And, as a result of that, we had good basketball teams year after year.

**JE:** What is the side break?

**JV:** You take the ball down. The first person that receives the rebound — if he dribbles, he goes to the sideline. If he makes a pass, that person goes to the sideline. And then the first person down the floor from that goes to the corner on the ball side. The second one does a loop and becomes a low post. The third one goes offside and the fourth one is the trailer. And one of them will get a shot every time.

**JE:** (Laughing)

**JV:** We really didn't need much of an offense because we're gonna score; and they'll stop one, the other one gets it.

**DK:** Bill Self, when he was at TU — I know, and we'll get into this later — but he's the only coach, right, that you recall that ... I mean, there have been others, but he did run it at one time, right?

**JV:** Well, he ran it when he was at ORU.

**DK:** Okay.

**JV:** And then he ran it a little bit at KU. But I'm sure on a level where you have that many great players that it's more difficult; but on the high school level, that every one of them would like to get a shot but they won't take it unless it comes their way, and this way it would come and then the people

rebounding would know when they need to go to the boards. And then the big guy normally, that made the rebound to begin with, was the trailer and we had All-Staters because they would get their shot there from the top of the circle.

**JE:** Mhmm (In agreement). Did you ever coach against Bill Allen or was he gone?

**JV:** You know, that's a good question. I think I did. I think we played a couple or three games. Yes.

**JE:** Did you beat them?

**JV:** Uh... It wasn't any fun. Yes, we did (laughing). And it wasn't any fun.

**JE:** You really — you had an emotional attachment to him?

**JV:** Oh, he was — Bill Allen was just unbelievable. And he was just as good an administrator as he was a coach.

**JE:** Yeah. But didn't you take Edison to the annual all-college basketball tournament in Oklahoma City?

**JV:** Yes.

**DK:** Took 'em and then you would take a team to Kansas city as well, right?

**JV:** Yes. We went to Kansas City a couple of times. And we'd go up there and watch the Big Eight tournament and we stayed at a junior college on the way up; and the president of the junior college tried to hire me and I wouldn't go. But he would come and watch his practice. We took 50 kids with us and we'd practice 50 kids at one time and he couldn't believe it.

**DK:** Tell us the story about you leaving — I mean, Jono Helmerich played for you. Of course, people — well known, the Helmerichs, in Tulsa. Tell us that story when you left without him.

**JV:** Well we had pretty strict rules that we would tell them what time we were leaving on the bus. And if you're not there, we left you. And we were at the state tournament. And we were coming home, and we told him what time to be on the bus; everybody was on there but Jono. So, we leave him. Well, when we get back to Edison High School, he pulls up with a guy that he had hired to bring him.

**DK:** He'd hired somebody to bring him home.

**JV:** Yes.

**JE:** (Laughing)

**JV:** Thank goodness that it all worked out and I didn't have to call his parents and tell 'em. Some of those personal things — you look back today, they'd put you in jail for 'em, wouldn't they?

**JE:** Did you have to talk to Jono: "This is not a team thing to do — to come home individually. You should have joined your team." You had a life lesson there for him.

**JV:** Well, I was so happy to see him. I really didn't get on him other than to say, "You know that you didn't do what you were supposed to do and you paid the penalty."

**JE:** Right. Was he a pretty good basketball player or did you...

**JV:** Yes, he was. He did a great job for us.

**JE:** Yeah. Yeah, that would have been tough to call his father, Walt, and say: "Jono — we don't know where he is." (Laughing)

**JV:** (Laughing)

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**Chapter 08 – 8:40**  
**Girls Sports**

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**John Erling (JE):** You're at Edison for time. And then what happens? You wanted to be back on the west side again, didn't you?

**JV Haney (JV):** Well, after the six years there — and I was so content to stay at Edison, I love the teaching. It was just great. But Mr. Coffee was the principal at Webster High School and he had been the principal when I was there before, and he had become like a father to me. And he took me out to lunch and said, “I want you to come back and coach. Bill Allen is gonna move into administration; I want you to come back and be the head coach and the athletic director.”

And I said, “Mr. Coffee, I'm happy at Edison.”

He said, “I want you. Well, what do you say?”

“Okay.”

So I went back because of Mr. Coffee and he was a wonderful, wonderful boss.

**JE:** And you were there...

**JV:** 10 years.

**JE:** 10 years there.

**JV:** That's where I had one of my big heart attacks and the last two years — or the last year maybe it was — I was just a PE teacher and helped a little bit coaching. But not too much.

**JE:** No, but you had successful teams — boys and girls basketball you coached? And the athletic director at Webster?

**JV:** Yes. Well, we started girls basketball and that's back when they played six-on-six, not the five-on-five. And it was a lot of fun teaching girls that didn't know how to play but wanted to play. And every day they got better. And at the end, I think we won a couple of games that first year. And it was it was a lot of fun; but we had a lot of problems.

**Don King (DK):** I think even before, if I remember, you went to Webster at Edison — you really started girls over there because you had Kathy Barclay, who's in the Tulsa Public Schools Hall of Fame, she would come and practice, right, with the boys?

**JV:** Well, Kathy did a lot in baseball. She was a great softball player later on, but she could play baseball. But at that time, they didn't start girls until I went to Webster.

**DK:** Right.

**JV:** And Kathy did that for so many — well, her three years in school, she was out there and she pitched batting practice; and I would have played her if we could have.

**DK:** Right. So that really spurred you and Ed Lacy to really establish girls sports in Tulsa.

**JV:** That's right. And had it not been — Ed Lacy and I agreed that it was time to allow the girls to participate, because they were doing it all around us. And I had been involved, and I was very prejudiced, and when we first brought it up with the administrators and the athletic directors, they said “No.”

We stayed with it. And finally the next — it was either one year or two years later is when they finally decided “Okay, we'll have girls athletics.”

**JE:** Alright. And at that point — and this is in the seventies? You were there in '76 ... Are you talking about the late '70s ...

**JV:** Yes.

**JE:** ... that you finally brought in girls sports.

**JV:** Yes.

**JE:** Before that, there were no girls sports.

**JV:** No girls.

**JE:** You said “prejudice.” “Prejudice” — how did you mean that word?

**JV:** I think we still had some girls that was swimming. The athletic directors at that time just did not want girls athletics. Because it would take in when they practice. How would they do it with the gym and all of that sort of thing? So, as I remember, we practiced the first hour of the morning.

**DK:** And you had coached, obviously, at Owasso and all these other schools — you’d coached girls basketball and knew how good they were.

**JV:** Well, and the fact that it meant so much to the girls; and it was beginning to grow on the college level. The scholarships were beginning to become available for kids. So I felt that we should just be able to provide them with everything that we possibly could.

**JE:** Yeah. You should tell us — Ed Lacy. Who is Ed Lacy?

**JV:** Ed Lacy was a head football coach at Booker T. Washington and later became director of athletics for the Tulsa public schools.

**JE:** A well-known name in this community.

**DK:** You’re at — if I can interject — you’re at Webster and I didn't realize ... I realized you had a heart attack, but you actually had two heart attacks?

**JV:** Oh, I’ve had so many, I can’t... (laughing)

**JE:** (Laughing)

**DK:** (Laughing)

**JV:** You know, I have a pacemaker. I don't have a heart; I've got a little machine in there that does it that I've been using for years and years and years.

**JE:** Well, you're a miracle then, aren't you? You seem to be in good shape, good condition now.

**JV:** I don't work out like I used to, but for a long time there, I really worked out and ran and did everything that a person should do up until I became about 80. And then I got lazy.

**JE:** You know, you have many virtues. I would imagine one of your virtues is patience, because you'd have to have patience and you had students who would try out and they had absolutely no athletic ability at all. And I don't know how you handled that situation, but maybe you encouraged them to the point where they knew they couldn't play or — kind of talk about that.

**JV:** Well, what we did, I did that more so at Edison than any place because we had so many kids that wanted to play basketball, but we would have a large number of them that was my size: 5'6".

And then we had guys that were 6' 0" that was playing that position. So we began to convince them maybe that they would be good wrestlers. So we got them to move in into wrestling. We got them to move into cross country. But tried to get a sport that they could participate in — swimming — and that helped everybody.

**JE:** That's great. That's great that you've viewed it that way. Throughout your career, you had one entity that you had to deal with, and that was the parents. And I'm sure you have many parent stories.

“Coach, why aren't you playing my son?”

Or they're yelling from the sidelines, they're doing something and you had to tell them to shut up — about the parent experience.

**JV:** You know, that is something that I know that people don't even believe when I say this anymore, but throughout my 30 years in the public education in 28 of it in the head coaching position or assistant coaching, I

never had but one parent to challenge me. Other than that, I don't care what they did. And we always — we always emphasize to bring their parents to some of our practices — and we would have a parent night in which we would explain what we're doing. And I think parents, at that particular time, was so proud of their kid — their boy or their girl was involved in something — and that to make them mind what they were told to do would help them whatever they were doing later on in life.

And as a result of that, that's why I always say that if I got back into education today, they'd put me in jail because I would demand some things that they do.

**JE:** I have a grandson who's been playing baseball and we sensed some of that, the parents would talk to the coach: "How come you're not using that?"

And he'd feel pressure from the parents?

**JV:** Yeah.

**JE:** You never felt that pressure because you knew the parents understood.

**JV:** Yes. I never felt any pressure from them. And there were several times that some little thing might happen. Like I had this one — I won't call the name — but he offered me a job if I would.

"No, no."

Because then that would have an impact upon our selection of players and we didn't do that.

## **Chapter 09 – 7:28**

### **Russia**

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**John Erling (JE):** So you retired from coaching then in 1986.



**JV Haney (JV):** Yes.

**JE:** Then you got involved with the station that I worked for — that's KRMG.

**JV:** Yes.

**JE:** And that's when you met Jerry Vaughn, and Ron Blue, and later Bill Land. Tell us how you — did Jerry Vaughn bring you into the station?

**JV:** Yes I had done things for them and also done things for Channel 8 back when I was at Webster. But when this all happened, on retirement, that it was such a — I had fun on the radio. I wasn't doing it for money. But it was fun. And it was fun helping someone.

And Jerry Vaughn — he was so much fun to work with. And, you know, I need to tell you this: It was during that period of time that Dan Kirkham came out with his idea of taking a football team to Russia. And he came and I went — paid my own way — and sent the information back to KRMG and Bill Land. But we were in Moscow behind the iron curtain with 120 football players and about 30 parents.

And you talk about being different. Things were different at that particular time. And, as a result of that, we were over there for about 7 or 8 days. And then we came back and Dan Kirkham was so great. We went to New Zealand and Australia with the group. And then we went back to Europe with another group — to England and France and Germany. This was just something great that happened in between, right after I got out of teaching.

**JE:** Dan Kirkham. Tell us about him. Who is he?

**JV:** Dan Kirkham was the head football coach at Rogers and also at Edison. And he was one of the most brilliant people that I've ever been around. And how he put that together, no one really knows. And we were all set to go to China with another group and that's when all hell broke loose over there and we had to quit and we didn't do it. But Dan Kirkham was just an unbelievable person, and how he did that, to this day, I don't know.

**JE:** And how many football players went along?

**JV:** We had from 100. On one of the trips, I think we had 110 and then 120 and a little over 100.

**JE:** But these weren't all sports people that went over there. You were heading up, probably, the tour. He was using your great name and popularity and then selling the trip to people, I would imagine, and they came because JV Haney was going to these countries.

**JV:** (Laughing) Well, now, I don't know. I don't know whether he was doing that or not because, as I said, I paid my way to Russia the first time.

**JE:** Yeah.

**JV:** And from then on, I helped him by doing different ... Control — he would give me a group that I had to control — and I did that. And it was just incredible.

**JE:** Did you see any sporting events or anything sporting-wise when you were in Moscow and in Russia?

**JV:** No, we didn't. We played in Moscow and we had very few. I bet we didn't have 1000 people there in a little stadium. But then we hit the big one with 50,000. But it was just ...

**JE:** Oh, so you hit a big stadium, you said — of 50,000 people?

**JV:** Yeah.

**JE:** Watched the football team?

**JV:** Yeah.

**JE:** And you were playing intramural against each other?

**JV:** Yes.

**JE:** Okay. And you were teaching them what football is all about?

**JV:** Yes.

**JE:** Great ambassador for him, weren't you?

**JV:** (Laughing) And what was so incredible about that is, as I said awhile ago, you know, we had 50,000 people there, but in 110,000 seat stadium it didn't look like many people.

**JE:** Right.

**JV:** But the way they put them together — it was just unbelievable.

**JE:** Well that was an experience they remembered the rest of their lives for sure.

**JV:** Yeah.

**JE:** I have been there myself and it was so different, and the food was different, and everything...

**JV:** What year were you there?

**JE:** I can't remember (laughing)

**JV:** (Laughing)

**JE:** Probably! I don't know; I can't remember. I don't know. Maybe if I have more time to think about it I could. So, and then, Ron Blue was the manager of KRMG at the time. And so he obviously put his blessing on you and wanted you there.

**JV:** Well, he saved my job.

**JE:** How do you mean?

**JV:** Well, I was doing a job for Jerry Vaughn. He had to go do something and I was doing his show. And, as a result of that, they had an inspector that was — I think he was from Chicago.

**Don King (DK):** A consultant.

**JV:** Yeah. And he called me in before the show and said “You need to improve your language; you sound like an Oklahoman.”

And I said, “Well, what the hell? I was born and raised in Oklahoma. Shouldn’t I sound like I’m from Oklahoma?”

He says, “You need to do this, this, this, this, and this...”

And I said, “No, I quit.”

And I go ahead and Ron Blue — boy, he gets that guy and chews him out one end to the other and he told me, he says: “I like your voice; you do just exactly what you've been doing.”

So I went back and did the show.

**JE:** And the show was Sportsline then, I suppose, right? That's what you were doing. Ron Blue had an instinct — because I worked for Ron Blue too, of course, and was hired by Garry Swanson and Swanson Broadcasting and all that. So I knew that instinct of his for sure and I'm glad to hear that he did that. Of course you want to be an Oklahoman and talk like an Oklahoman.

**JV:** Well, I couldn't change my voice if I wanted to.

**JE:** Right.

**DK:** So Jerry gets you — he, really, Jerry Vaughn kind of gets you into the radio thing and then he just leaves one night and leaves you with it, right?

**JV:** Yes (laughing)

**DK:** ... That kind of got you started on your own?

**JE:** For that show.

**DK:** For that show. Yeah.

**JE:** For that show.

**JV:** Well, I helped him a lot. He would call me and I think it would be times when he felt like maybe that he wouldn't be getting a lot of calls and he said, "Can you come be on the show?"

"Well, yeah."

So we'd go and we'd talk and, you know, and just just had a good time and I wasn't in any way wanting to become involved and I just kind of got involved. But I certainly enjoyed it. And the people that we worked with — oh, you know — KVOO and KRMG, my goodness, there were some great people.

## **Chapter 10 – 10:00 Muhammad Ali**

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**John Erling (JE):** Right. Jerry Vaughn was actually the program director and then he did the afternoon show.

**JV Haney (JV):** Yeah.

**JE:** And then he was on on Sportsline as well. So I have fond memories of Jerry as well. But then, somewhere along the line, this guy by the name of Bill Land comes along and he then — I believe he comes from Wichita — because Swanson Broadcasting owned a station there and they suggested that he come to Tulsa, which of course he did. And that's why Bill Land came to KRMG.

**JV:** Well, when Bill Land came, I was doing it. And that was in the spring. I don't know what year it was. But it was in the spring and I was still at Webster High School. And, as a result of that, Ron and I just kept going. I kept saying, "Hey, I can't do this. I've got a job."

And so, when Bill Land comes, why, he comes and listens to me for a couple of days and doesn't come on. And then he takes over, and we became good friends, and just admire him and his work.

Don King (DK): This would have been 1981. Bill came to Tulsa. I'm not sure what — I think it was the summer of 1981.

**JV:** Yeah.

**JE:** Alright. So that was your connection to Bill and how you became friends and stayed. We'll talk about that as well. And you had the opportunity to interview many great sports people as a result of being at KRMG and with Bill — some names like Muhammad Ali.

**JV:** Ah! Muhammad Ali is one of the best ones because he was in town conducting some kind of a social affair that he was a part of, and they had a set up where we were going to have him on the show. Well, he comes in and he sits for 10 minutes and then they come and get him. And I'm sitting there — what am I gonna do? I was in a little closet.

So they bring in one of his aides and we get through the show. He comes back and he apologizes. And, as a result of that, he says, "I want you to come to my party tonight," and gave me the ticket and okay. I go to the party...

**DK:** At the Camelot Inn — I might interject...

**JV:** No, it was at a hotel downtown.

**DK:** Okay.

**JV:** And up on the top floor. And I go through all the process, and I walk in there, and he is standing up at the end of the table and there's probably 25

people on the table. And I walked up at the end and he did a magic trick where he pulled a handkerchief out of his hand and he shook it and he put it back and it was gone. Well that was a fake thumb that he was doing. I was a little magic myself. And I had one that was the same — a handkerchief. And when he did that, a bunch of the people says, “Where'd it go, where'd it go?”

I said, “Here it is.” I pulled it out.

Mohammed looks at me like “What in the world?”

I said, “Okay, I'm gonna give it back to you.” I let it go. Boom, I throw it.

And he says, “Thank you.” And he says, “Come with me.” We go into his bedroom. And he said — that is, I introduced myself again, and he thanked me — and he said, “Do you have any others?”

And I said, “Yeah, I have a 50 cent piece here.” And I had a 50 cent piece that you could hide in your hand and put in a glass of water with a piece of glass.

And so I showed that to him and he says, “Can I have it?”

And I said, “Well, sure.”

So we go back out and he does that trick. So we were good friends.

**JE:** Oh, what a wonderful — and that was in the 80s? Sometime in there?

**JV:** Yes (laughing)

**JE:** Right, right. And you're thinking — and by that time he had, I don't know where he was in his career, Muhammad Ali, he had obviously been the heavyweight for some time.

**DK:** Right. He'd been retired. He was retired at that point.

**JV:** I think just recently he was retired.

**DK:** Right, right.

**JE:** Alright, alright, alright. And you're thinking, "Here I am teaching Mohammed Ali a trick!" What a great experience that was.

**JV:** (Laughing) Well, it kind of scared me when he says, "Come with me in the bedroom."

**JE:** (Laughing)

**DK:** (Laughing)

**JE:** Okay then. Were you used to carrying tricks with you all the time? Why would you bring a trick to the Muhammad Ali interview?

**JV:** Well, I don't know. I was at Webster high school — also belonged to the Lions Club. I don't know how, but I just got to doing it. And I had about 10 different tricks that I could do and I did them well. I mean, if you didn't know what it was, you'd have a hard time finding out. And those two, I just carried in my pocket.

**JE:** Okay. So you were normally doing it. And you didn't know that Muhammed Ali did tricks?

**JV:** Oh, I had no clue.

**JE:** Yeah, that was a great story.

**JV:** I had no clue.

**JE:** (Laughing)

**JV:** (Laughing)

**JE:** And then — The Tulsa Roughnecks in our town. That's a great story because soccer was never as big as it was when the Roughnecks were in our town, and the whole town was talking about it. But of course Bill Land



did the play-by-play for the Roughnecks. And then you did the sideline reports, right?

**JV:** Yes.

**JE:** And then I will bring up the name of Noel Lemon. Noel Lemon was the owner or the manager of the Tulsa Roughnecks. I don't know what kind of experience you had with Noel Lemon or not.

**JV:** Well, I didn't have as much experience with him as I did — I did it because of Bill Land. And I made so many mistakes that... I didn't know anything about it. And, as a result, why, it was sometimes not very well for me to be a part of the program.

**JE:** Well, Noel became a huge name in our town and controversial at times, but he brought it to us and I feel funny telling you sports guys. But if you're gonna name one of the top five events in Tulsa, Oklahoma, it would be when the Tulsa Roughnecks played the New York Cosmos. That great soccer player, Pele. And the town, I'll never forget. And when the Roughnecks beat New York, we thought we were on the top of the world.

**DK:** Major leagues.

**JE:** Major league. And I just know that that has to be counted as one of the top five sport events that happened in our town. When Nolan Richardson won the NIT at TU would be another one, as a matter of fact, but you guys could fill out the rest of them. But anyway, it was fun and we enjoyed the Tulsa Roughnecks in our town. They brought soccer to our town. There's no question about that.

**DK:** Yup. Yup.

**JE:** And how he did that is beyond me.

**DK:** Yup. He was quite the showman and later ended up helping bringing the World Cup to America. He ended up, after the Roughnecks, Noel moved to Miami and Marlboro paid him millions to promote the World Cup coming to America. And that's what Noel did in his latter years.

**JE:** Yeah. No longer with us now. And then you were in — you continue your broadcast career. You helped build with ORU games?

**JV:** Yes.

**JE:** And with Tulsa University when Nolan Richardson came to town. Now, that was a big thing when Nolan Richardson came to town. And you remember Ed Becerra and Hoss, how close those two were. That was a great time for our city.

**JV:** You know, Nolan Richardson, I think, is one of the best basketball coaches that we have had here at the University of Tulsa and he was such a great person to work with. And, always, I would be with him right after the game is over. Why, we'd have him for a few minutes on the radio. And there would be times when maybe the game was just tough — I mean tough — and we won in the closing seconds and I'd be there and he'd say "Let's rest a minute." And we sat there and we've got to talk and he says, "Okay, now let's go." And he'd come aboard. But he was — it just wonderful to be around him.

**JE:** As I recall — and you guys can embellish on this — we've never seen this before. He played two sets of five guys, and he'd play five, and his other five are ready to come in and replace them totally. Is that true?

**DK:** He'd wear other teams out.

**JE:** Right.

**DK:** Yeah, that was really the mode of operandi for him. And Nolan was, I mean, if you got to know him and understand his background, it's a lot like Barry Switzer's. You can't help but respect where he came from and where he ended up because Nolan's one of three TU coaches — the first of three TU Basketball coaches — to go on to other schools and win national championships at the college level. He and Tubby Smith and Bill Self and JV worked with all three of them on the broadcast.

**JV:** Well, you know what was so great about Nolan? He started out on the high school level and, I mean, he knew it from the very bottom what had to be done with players, and had to be done with media, and all of the other fans. And, as a result of that, I think that's why he was so successful and everything that he did.

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## **Chapter 11 – 8:07**

### **Tricky and Roberts**

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**John Erling (JE):** Ken Trickey was coaching then — his second stint there. And Ken, of course, was so colorful. You comment what you remember about Ken Trickey.

**JV Haney (JV):** Well I have said this many, many times and people look at me like I don't know what I'm talking about. But having growing up in Oklahoma that you were really controlled a lot by Henry Iba. And now, suddenly, Ken Trickey comes along and there's no “slow down,” its “speed up,” and I thought it was great.

And, as a result of that, I think that he has been — we had a falling out, I maybe shouldn't even say this — but we had a falling out after he had retired and went back to Muskogee and coached the high school; and he went into a slowdown, and we got into a big argument. I said, “You know, what in the world? You had the most active and the most successful fast-paced basketball of anyone I've ever known and now you're gonna go over there and play like Henry Iba? Come on.” Well, he did.

**JE:** You'd said “your falling out.” Did you go with him as a coach or assistant coach to Muskogee?

**JV:** Was I?

**JE:** Yeah.

**JV:** No.

**JE:** Okay.

**Don King (DK):** You were just there to watch it.

**JV:** Yeah. I was just there to watch it and I was doing some stuff for one of the radio or TV, I don't know what.

**DK:** You guys had a — I wouldn't say a love/hate relationship — but you had a couple of run-ins with each other. But, I mean it, it ended up as a great friendship between the two of you. I don't want people to think that it ended up not, you know, not harmonious because it was. One of the great things about Ken — and he'd talk to you and he'd always poke you in the chest: "Donnie, I'm telling you right now. I'd rather get beat 120 to 80. If I'm going to get beat by 40, I'd rather get beat 120 to 80 than 80 to 40. 120 to 80 sounds so much better than 80 to 40."

But he was a guy that really set — as you can hear his story on Voices of Oklahoma — he was the one that really set Oklahoma basketball to a different level because of his offense.

**JV:** I can't agree more. And, you know, to this day, I have nothing but compliments and praise for the way that Ken Trickey was able to handle his team and the way he influenced the fans and well, the Mabee Center was full, wasn't it?

**JE:** Right. Absolutely. And it was the place to watch basketball. I came in '76 in that period there, he was — that would be his first time, I guess, there. Everybody who wanted to be seen by anybody special went to the ORU basketball games. The place was packed and it was because of his style of basketball, and I'm trying to think of the star player at the time when I came —

**DK:** Anthony Roberts.

**JE:** Anthony Roberts. Exactly. Right, right. And then the fact that Ken Trickey — we'd never seen this before — he'd leave the bench and he just walked down the sidelines and he says, "Start talking to the fans." While the play was on!

**DK:** Yup. Oh, he had a wonderful compassion. You know, I've always said not to get off on a political tangent, but in the year 2020 that we're doing this, we not only have the pandemic, but we have such a racial divide, not only in the city, but also in the country. And I've always said if there are two people in the state of Oklahoma — you can hear that both of their stories on John's Voices of Oklahoma — Barry Switzer and Ken Trickey did more for race relations in our state with black basketball players. And it's a shame that Barry Switzer — Ken Trickey's no longer with us — that Barry Switzer isn't used as some sort of liaison between the black community and the white community for the state of Oklahoma.

**JE:** Yeah.

**DK:** He had a great love for what the black people were about and and the athletes and it's just a shame that his expertise and his ability to bring those races together isn't used more as an advantage today.

**JE:** You know, Ken — I think he came out of Tennessee?

**DK:** Out of Chattanooga.

**JE:** Chattanooga and, of course, basketball was a favorite sport of Oral Roberts. So that was a big thing to him. And didn't he bring largely black players ...

**DK:** Right.

**JE:** ... that town had never seen black players play before ...

**DK:** Correct.

**JE:** ... until Ken Trickey brought them in.

**DK:** Well, TU had brought some in the mid 60s and had some success with Ken Hayes and Joe Swank, but not to the national success that Ken Trickey did. And you knew Oral. Speaking of Oral Roberts, you knew Oral very well.

**JV:** Yes. Well, you know, that was always one of my great thrills to be able to sit with Oral Roberts and watch a game, because he was such a basketball fan. And I'll tell you what: he could have coached just as well as anybody and what he has done for basketball in Oklahoma — I don't know where we would be without that. I mean, he really changed it throughout the state.

**JE:** Okay, so you sat and watched games with Oral Roberts?

**JV:** Yes.

**JE:** And you, apparently then, heard him — you knew he knew the game as he talked about it? Is that true? He wasn't just a fan, but he understood the playmaking of it?

**JV:** He understood it and not only that, but he loved to watch the games. We would go down and watch OU play every now and then. Ken would call me and say, "Let's go."

I always like to tell this story. We would stop at Mcdonald's on the turnpike.

**JE:** With Oral?

**JV:** Yes.

**JE:** You said Ken would call you?

**JV:** Well, to go with them.

**DK:** Ken Trickey.

**JV:** Ken Trickey.

**JE:** Okay.

**JV:** So we'd stop at a Mcdonald's. And Ken would always tell me, "Now you make sure you get right in behind President Roberts because he won't pay for it, okay?" And he was a big hamburger man. So he'd get it and I'd pay

for it. But we had more fun and he was such a — I don't know how to explain it — other than “it was just fun,” and you would never think he was the minister that he was when you're going and watching a game.

**JE:** He was one of everybody, right?

**JV:** Right.

**JE:** Human, right.

**DK:** I always liked the fact that you would occasionally tell him a salty joke and he would chuckle and say, “JV, I'm gonna pray for you.” (Laughing)

**JE:** Well, so, that relationship that with Oral actually came about because you and Trickey hit it off, correct?

**JV:** Well, no, you know, I had nothing to do other than I was doing the radio, but I wasn't a big dog. I was the little dog.

**JE:** Yeah, but your connection to Oral comes through Ken, doesn't it?

**JV:** Yes.

**JE:** Alright.

**JV:** Well, no, I'll take that back because I had a player at Seminole that played for Oral Roberts and I met Oral Roberts as a result of him and that's that's where we became... we knew one another, and then with Trickey, it was even better.

**JE:** And he took a liking to you, so there's that personality — that charisma of JV Haney that kicks in.

**JV:** Oh, that was a...

**JE:** Did you play golf at all?

**JV:** Yes.

**JE:** Did you ever play golf with Oral?

**JV:** No. I didn't want to, because he'd beat me. (Laughing) No, I never did.

**JE:** Right.

## **Chapter 12 – 6:06 Tulsa Cable Sports**

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**John Erling (JE):** You followed Bill Land. He left KRMG, went to KELI, and then you followed Bill to Tulsa Cable...

**JV Haney (JV):** Yes.

**JE:** ... to produce Sports Scene with Dean Blevins.

**JV:** Yes.

**JE:** And then you would host that occasionally?

**Don King (DK):** Right. Yeah, that's after ...and Bill was really the first to — had a contract with KRMG — was really the first to challenge the no compete clause, if I remember, in the state of Oklahoma.

Because KELI, 1430AM, at the time, had come along and a couple of attorneys here in town wanted to challenge KRMG as a news talk and sports station. And so Bill challenged the no compete clause and won, and ended up going to this 1430. And, of course, JV came along and then I was hired. Keith Isbell, who later did sports at Channel 2, we had a great staff but it didn't last long, only six months.

**JE:** Fred Weinberg was it?

**DK:** Fred Weinberg was the general manager. He wanted to turn it into a news talk station like KMOX in St. Louis which is one of the premier news talk



stations in the country. And it didn't last long because Fred blew the budget out in about six months — six months time.

**JE:** Isn't there a story about a plane that he had and he flew you to...?

**DK:** I remember, JV. At that time we did the Big 8 Sky Riders Tour and so people would fly around the Big 8 teams and do reports and they said — Bill Land couldn't, he did some of them and he wanted you to do the one in Columbia, Missouri. Do you remember that story where you got the station plane and they were gonna fly you to Colombia?

**JV:** Yeah (Laughing). Oh, my goodness. Yes, I remember all of those and that, you know, that's something I hadn't even thought about in a long time, but we had such a wonderful time and it just seemed like that coaches and people involved with the media were so close and understood one another and enjoyed one another.

I know that the head coach at Nebraska...

**DK:** Tom Osborne?

**JV:** Yes. When we'd go up there, why, he would always be one of my guest interviews because I was a coach. And, as a result of that, he said, "Yeah, I'll go with you." And we'd have him and others couldn't get him and we'd get him. It was always a lot of fun.

**JE:** He was a nice man, wasn't he?

**JV:** Yes, he was.

**JE:** You did high school sports on TV at Tulsa Cable?

**DK:** Right. JV, after I stayed at Tulsa Cable, after SportsScene was shut down, producing that show and did several shows including a John Erling Wednesday night weekly show for awhile on Tulsa Cable. And that's when, really, cable was looking to do a lot. They, at that time, were doing a lot of sports, they covered TU, OU, OSU, ORU, basketball, and the football games, and Mark Savage, the president at cable at that time, because ESPN and

Fox sports wasn't around, you could buy a package to where you could get all of these games probably doing 50 or 60 college events a year with Bill Land and Dean Blevins.

And when that kind of started to fade away they looked for an avenue": "What can we offer that nobody else can offer?"

And that's when JV came to him and said, "You guys need to look into doing high school sports like you did college sports."

**JE:** So there's your influence again.

**JV:** Yes. Well, I knew that it would — as a result of it, it would improve the attendance at the high schools and you always were looking to have more people and they did so much. And I think it had a great impact on young kids playing that maybe wouldn't have played but they had seen it on TV and that kind of hit their spark and they'd like to be a part of it.

**JE:** Didn't the two of you did games together? Basketball?

**DK:** We did. JV and I did 50 to 60 events a year on Tulsa Cable, whether it was football, basketball, baseball. We even produced — we even did a dog show at the fairgrounds one year for --- you couldn't be a purebred, you had to be a mutt; and we produced our own dog show one year at the fairgrounds but we've done every sport imaginable.

And, I'll say, when JV came to cable, cable was anxious to do something like that. The athletic directors around town were a little bit hesitant, weren't they? Of doing sports on television?

**JV:** Oh, they really were. And, you know, we had to get them to the point to where, on the night that we would televise, that would be their biggest crowds. So then they were all wanting us: "Come and televise us." And, as a result, I think it really created more interest in high school athletics than anything that they had been able to do at that point.

**DK:** And I think when you look in 2020, as compared to when this started in 1988, the TV stations, didn't do nearly the high school coverage that they

do now. And I think a huge reason for that is what JV started by bringing those games to Tulsa Cable on a weekly basis in Tulsa. And then later, Tulsa Cable became Cox Cable, which became Tulsa and Oklahoma City. And then we started doing games statewide and that even furthered the importance, and I think, the appreciation around the state for high school sports.

**JE:** And it still is today.

**DK:** That still is today.

**JE:** They're doing that.

**JV:** You know, I thought it was great when we began to televise some of the baseball games as well, because that gave those kids a lot of recognition.

## **Chapter 13 – 16:24**

### **Bill Land**

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**John Erling (JE):** As long as we were talking about Bill Land, look, who's on the line here: Hello Bill, thank you for calling!

**Bill Land (BL):** Hey, my pleasure. Anytime I can be a part of anything that has to do with JV Haney, I am all in.

**JE:** And, of course, Bill Land is the play-by-play announcer for the San Antonio Spurs. This is about your 17th season, is it?

**BL:** Yeah, it's been amazing. It's been a lot of fun. Great time with a great organization. And I'm just glad, as we tape this, that they're finally back to playing basketball again.

**JE:** Right. And so we were talking earlier — your career, when you were at that station in Wichita, you could never envision that you'd ever be in Texas in San Antonio at all. I mean, what a career you've had and still having.

**BL:** Yeah, it's crazy how it all ends up connecting. And that's kind of the wildness of this business, I guess. When I was in Wichita, I was working for a station that was owned by Gary Swanson and KRNG. And they eventually brought me to Tulsa, where I had a chance to work with you and so many great people. And then that's where I ended up connecting with JV because when I first came to Tulsa, it was '81. In fact, my first day on the job was the Labor Day and the raft race was taking place. That was my indoctrination to KRMG and the raft race. JV was, at that time, I think the fill-in host for SportsLine, the sports talk show and he kind of took me under his wing, as I slid into that role. Because anytime you go from one market to another, there's certainly a period of transition and learning, particularly when you're doing a talk show. He kept me out of a lot of trouble spots with some of our listeners.

**JV:** (Laughing) Those were great days, Bill Land. I'm telling you for sure. I don't think people have the opportunity to experience that much fun today.

**BL:** Yeah there's ... I don't know how many stories you've told, but this thing could go on for days if we got into all of the details of some of the great times that we've had.

**JE:** A story that the two of you can share or shouldn't share? Or is there --

**Don King (DK):** There's too many of those.

**JE:** Is there a game or personality — sports personality, Bill? Do you have any on JV?

**BL:** Well, there's, yeah, there's a number. When you say "personality," JV can tell this, because I was not there for this one. But one of the few times I regretted ever missing being on the air — you know, traveling, doing games and different stuff. There were times where JV would fill in for me and we just, whoever we had scheduled his guests on SportsLine at that time on KRMG, JV would pick it up and run with the ball, and sometimes it was some pretty high profile people and I would be disappointed that I couldn't be a part of that because I would look forward to interviewing some of those great sports personalities.

The one I really regret was I was on a vacation and something came up within the last week of scheduling it and there was no way I could be there. Muhammad Ali was in town and JV ended up getting a sit-down interview, one-on-one with Muhammad Ali and I don't know how long it lasted. But, JV, you can tell the rest of the story but make sure you include that you and Mohammed Ali actually, at a post-party that was a private party, exchanged magic tricks. Am I right?

**JE:** You were right, Bill. He talked about that earlier...

**BL:** Oh, okay.

**JE:** ... as we were waiting for you to come on. And, so, yes; we heard that great story and I can understand why you were disappointed — jealous, too, I would imagine — that you couldn't have been there.

**BL:** (Laughing Right! Right. Did JD tell you about the “Wilma from Oilton, 8-man football” story?

**JE:** No, he didn't.

**BL:** Okay. This kind of relates to JV over the years. He's always been so positive as a person — on and off the air. And that's one of the things I've most admired. But we got into a point where years of doing shows together and everything else that JV would very seldom be critical of anyone on the air, particularly if it's a local coach or a personality. He was always gonna defend him.

Now, later, when we're out having a cocktail or if we're having a lunch, he'd tell us how his true feelings were. Well, there happened to be — this was when I was at KRMG in the early eighties — and I told JV, I said, “You know, I've never seen an 8-man football game.”

And he goes, “Oh, well, it's a mainstay of small town Oklahoma, let's go.”

So one on Friday night, JV, me, my wife Gail, JV's girlfriend or wife — I'm trying to remember at the time, or maybe both — went out to Oilton, to watch this 8-man football game. And, as you can imagine, there's not

many people sitting in the stands, so they recognize both of us and we had a great time.

And JV, as we're coming back, was going, "Man, that coach from Oilton. I don't know what he was doing. Why didn't he play this kid? Why didn't he do that? He's doing this and that."

Well, the next morning — a Saturday morning — JV had an hour show and they're discussing everything. Well, my wife calls into JV as "Wilma from Oilton," and says, "Coach! Saw you at the game last night! Man, I appreciate you and Bill Land coming out there. That was so much fun to have you guys get out of the big city of Tulsa. What did you think?"

And JV went on about how much fun it was and this and that.

And then Wilma says, "Well, I'm very disappointed in our coach. I just think that he doesn't have it together and my son should be playing more," and just going on.

JV just went into Wilma and said, "Hey, you don't know how lucky you are to have the coach you've got. He's phenomenal. He's this, he's that..." He goes on and on and on, slobbering.

Well, he gets done with the show, and about an hour later, I give him a call and I said, "Hey, I didn't catch your show this morning, how'd it go?"

He goes, "Oh, you can't believe it." He goes, "Some gal from Oilton saw the game last night." And he goes, "Remember how bad that coach was?" He goes, "She started ripping him and I backed him and defended him."

And I started laughing, and I said, "Well, did Wilma sound familiar, that voice at all?" And I said, "Like, kind of like ... Gail?"

And JV just stopped — and a bunch of expletives, following that.

**JE:** (Laughing)

**DK:** (Laughing)

**BL:** (Laughing)

**JV:** (Laughing)

**JE:** That's a great story.

**JV:** You got set up on that one, Coach.

**JE:** That is a great story. Well, let me just — the two of you, Dean Blevins from Oklahoma City and you were at Tulsa Cable and then you did SportsScene right?

**BL:** Right, right.

**JE:** From '85 to '88. And then, before you left Tulsa for Dallas in '98, JV and you put together the Tulsa World of Sports show.

**BL:** Right.

**JE:** Which eventually became SportsScene. And I think you did that on twice a month, twice-monthly basis for about 18 years, true?

**BL:** Yeah, Yeah. Talk about a test of endurance. It was great fun and JV was largely responsible for doing it. But, you know, we'd worked at almost every radio station in some form or fashion — part time here and there, been fired from a couple of them, whatever. So we finally figured out that “Hey, what we need to do is we need to be working for ourselves.”

So we went to then-Tulsa Cable and said “We would like to buy the time and sell the time so we control everything, and if we don't get enough sponsors, then this thing goes away, but we don't want someone else determining our fate.”

And they bought into it. It was as much fun as I've ever had, particularly when I moved away, because it gave me a connection and a reason to come back to Tulsa and maintain friendships with so many people. It was just an absolute blast doing that program. I think of so many things that JV

did that kept it going because of sponsorship. And one of the great things that I learned about JV was, we had a sponsor there who was one of our original backers. They came upon some tough times. I'm not gonna give the name. We'll call him "Sam" today. And he was gonna go out of business, it appeared, but we had kept running his commercials on the air and he hadn't paid in I don't know how long I got to the point where he owed us about, I think, \$2500 to \$3000. And JV would send the billing out every month.

And, finally, I got to the point, I said, "Well, Coach," I said, "You know, I don't want to get heavy-handed, but shouldn't we call him?"

And JV goes, "He knows what's going on." He goes, "He's either gonna pay us or he's not." He said, "But let's not beat him up. You know, this guy has been great to us."

And I said, "Alright, I'll go with you. You're the man of experience."

Well, not long after that, we finally — JV notified him — that we just couldn't run his commercials anymore when we hadn't been paid in a couple of months and — "Sam" I'll call him, now — called JV and told him, "Hey, I understand. You guys have been great. I appreciate it. I'll guarantee you." He goes, "I'm in financial woes here." He said, "I got people beating my door down, but I will pay you guys." He goes, "I promise you, I will pay you guys someday."

Well, four or five months go by, we haven't seen or heard from him or anything else; and I'm in town and we go into a little restaurant there for breakfast and JV's holding court — everybody knows him, of course.

And I see out of the corner of my eye, Sam and his wife having breakfast across the room. He kind of gives me a look of like, "Hey, come over here."

I walk over to him, he reaches into his pocket, apologizes profusely, and hands me \$2,000 in cash and says, "I know this isn't all I owe you, but I am so appreciative of the way you guys have treated me, I just want to make sure I get you the money back. You're the first person, the first group, that I've owed money to that I've been able to pay back and you're going to be



taken care of.”

And I was like, beside myself. I just couldn't believe how gracious he was. And so JV doesn't see anything. I put the cash in my pocket, we get done having breakfast. I get up to pay, JV always pays — he's the accountant, he's the financial officer of the company and everything. And he knows I don't have much cash anyway.

And I go, “Hey, Coach. I got this.”

I reached into my pocket, I pull out those \$100 bills and he's like, “Where the hell did you get that?”

And I looked over and I said, “You see Sam sitting over there?” I said, “he just paid us \$2000 and what he owes us.”

JV sprinted over there. I mean, and thanked him profusely. And, anyways, Sam eventually paid us everything. But it was just another lesson of JV Haney being patient and treating people right and look how it turns out.

**JE:** That is a great story, Bill. That is wonderful that you shared that with us. Absolutely.

**DK:** And you two have been all over the country doing games. I've been all over the state of Oklahoma doing games with JV. And, Bill, you can attest to this. You can go anywhere and somebody knows JV Haney.

**BL:** That is a fact. Did you tell him the “Leroy Farkenbacher” story from Peoria, JV?

**DK:** No, he saved that for you.

**BL:** Okay. We're doing TU basketball on KRMG. It's the Nolen days. So it's, what's? Somewhere in that again? '83, '84 or something like that? And they're on a two game road trip to Illinois State and Bradley in Central Illinois where they played Thursday and Saturday. They play Illinois State on Thursday in the midst of an incredible cold blast. I mean, I'm not kidding. The temperature — not the windchill — in central Illinois was like 20 below

zero.

So we have Friday where we're entirely off and we're staying in Peoria and JV and I go have lunch and we decide we'll start an early happy hour. So about two in the afternoon, we go into the Pierre Marquette, this hotel bar that was known as the place in Peoria, on a Friday afternoon. Well, we left there probably about 12 hours later. You can imagine our condition. And we met everybody in the city of Peoria who came through there and as we introduced ourselves and told him what we were doing, I gave them my name. JV says, "Hi. Leroy Farkenbacher. Nice to meet you."

And they start laughing.

And he pulls his, "Well I didn't laugh at your name. What's so funny about that? I didn't choose this name."

And these people are like, "Yeah..." They're looking at him like, "Yeah, right..."

But he maintained — through 12 hours of heavy drinking — Leroy Farkenbacher and introduced himself. And another person joined us, Charlie Smith, who used to work for The Tulsa World was in town. And he played it off. I played it off. We never called him JV throughout the entire evening.

In the meantime, these people find out what we're doing and the game was sold out for Bradley the next day. TU and Bradley were both really strong at that time. They're wanting to know if we can get tickets. JV's promised tickets to 100 people. "Sure, we got you covered. We can get your tickets to that game."

You know, "Oh! Leroy! Thanks!" Everything goes on and on and on.

Well, the next morning, at 7AM at our hotel. The phone rings — JV and I roomed together. He jumps out of bed like he's been shot out of a cannon, picks up the phone and just answers: "Farkenbacher here."

And the guy on the other end is somebody that we met in the bar and I'm

guessing he called the hotel and asked for my name, and the phone rings in our room and JV, answering, — not knowing who it is — “Farkenbacher here!”

Guy says, “Hey, Leroy! Just wanted to thank you for the conversation last night and the chance to get some tickets. Do you really mean that? Can you actually get us some tickets for the game today?”

And “Leroy” says, “Well, of course! What do you need? I can come up with three or four.”

And he goes, “I just need two.”

And he goes, “We got you.”

We follow up, we got a couple of tickets. The guy picks him up, we go to the arena, and about an hour before the game, he comes by to our broadcast area: “Leroy. Thanks a bunch, man. I can't tell you how much I appreciate you getting me these tickets.”

And Mr. Farkenbacher just smiled and said, “You're welcome.”

**JE:** (Laughing)

**BL:** (Laughing)

**JV:** (Laughing)

**DK:** (Laughing)

**JE:** That's another great story. And, Bill, you're a good storyteller, too. I've gotta — I've gotta add on to that.

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**Chapter 14 – 2:00**  
**Bill Reflects on JV**

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**John Erling (JE):** Kind of sum up your thoughts about JV Haney and what's your thoughts about him and his — what he means to sports in Oklahoma.

**Bill Land (BL):** Oh man, I should be able to put it into words, but I can't. And “legendary” is just part of it. But his impact with people and I'm going to students through just teaching, through his athletics, fellow coaches, athletic directors, sports fans in general, his impact with the media. It is just the — as Don mentioned, anywhere you go, people know JV Haney and the respect that they have for him and how he treated people and the... Just think of the years of coaching and then going along with his relationships with coaches, and athletic directors, and all the people he's influenced in the media where, I think, that he had an impact with the sports media for those of us that weren't in coaching to understand more of what coaches go through, and what these athletes go through.

And then to be so positive all the time, and especially today when there's so much negative out there. JV would always find something good about people that he would express. And just a dear, close friend. I consider him, in some ways, a fatherly type and in other ways like my brother. And I just can't pay him enough respect for that and man, I love you Coach.

**JV:** Now, listen: You know, I appreciate that, Bill. I, of course, feel the same about you and your lovely wife and your two great sons and we miss you in Tulsa.

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**Chapter 15 – 6:43**  
**San Antonio Spurs**

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**John Erling (JE):** Bill, a little bit about the Spurs — you're going into this season and they have problems with COVID and the basketball season. And what we do here is actually for history and when people look back on

this... Are you in Florida or how are you able to do the play-by-play for the Spurs?

**Bill Land (BL):** It's 2020, isn't it? Man. It's absolutely crazy. Brief synopsis: The NBA established a "bubble" at Disney World where they brought in 22 teams and they have limited the amount of people that are associated with those teams that can come there. All the local or regional broadcast teams with these NBA ball clubs are staying in their respective cities. And, in our case in San Antonio, we're getting a feed from Orlando and we are actually at the AT&T Center, their arena in San Antonio on a set, watching an 83-inch screen along with everybody else and calling the games from here.

And the technical part of it, I totally don't understand how they're able to pull it off to where to, with satellite delay and microphones here and there — and no fans allowed in our arena here because of COVID. And no fans, of course, allowed in Orlando. But we're just excited that basketball is back and they have, so far, knock on wood, have had no positive tests from any of the players in the last two weeks, which shows you that this bubble and masking and all of that stuff works when you're able to keep people in that kind of situation.

I'm just hopeful that we can come up with a vaccine and people are smart enough to continue to social distance and mask and that we can hopefully, we'll get around to the start of next season, and be able to get back to a little bit of normalcy. But I'm just grateful that I'm able to participate even if it's 1000 miles away from where the actual games are. And it's been fun just to have our crew back together.

**JE:** Right. Bill, I have always, down through the years, admired your coach. You call him "Pop" — Gregg Popovich. And I am certain that's been an interesting experience for you to be around him.

**BL:** Yeah. He is the original "most interesting man," I think. It's been amazing that, when there's coaches — I can't remember what the number is — how many coaching changes have been made since he became the head coach 24 years ago, but it's in the hundreds, and he's the only coach I've known as the Spurs and in the 17 years I've done it.

What I tell people is that — and some people don't agree with some of his commentary and this and that. But I tell people that I hope you look at his actions and his actions have been absolutely incredible. The way he bonds with his players and he truly cares about people first, before any of the basketball stuff comes in and his belief is, "If I believe in you, and and get to know you as a player, then the trust that you're gonna have from player to player or me is going to translate on the basketball floor automatically."

And then when you look at the things that he's done for charity — he's literally given hundreds of thousands of dollars to the food bank here. He's done all kinds of charitable things that he purposely does not get announced because he doesn't want anybody talking about him. He's way beyond the sport of basketball and the impact he's made with his players and so many others is far reaching. He's quite a guy.

**JE:** Yeah, I like his down-to-earth talk.

**JE:** Well, Bill, this was very nice of you to call in and be a part of this oral history for JV; and I know I meant a lot to him and to us to have you here with him. So you guys say goodbye to each other.

**JV:** Bill, I'll be calling you a little bit later.

**BL:** Alright. Hopefully not from the casino. Protect your money. And John and Don, it's been great to connect with you guys again, man. Great times with both of you and appreciate you including me in this with JV.

**JE:** Absolutely. Thank you so much, Bill.

You have worked as a director for state basketball tournaments, all-state games; you've worked as director for the Tournament of Champions for the Oklahoma Junior College at state tournaments. You're past president of the Oklahoma Coaches Association, member of the Oklahoma and National Coaches Hall of Fame. I mean that's quite a record. And you've been a great commercial pitchman. Everything from bakeries, orthopedic specialists, to retirement homes. You're a salesman on radio and television.

**JV:** Well, you know, most of those that I talked about, I really believe it because I've been there, I've watched it, I've studied it, and it's just a pleasure to be able to be complimenting them on the radio or on television.

**JE:** And you're an inventor. You have a patent — for a rebounding machine!

**JV:** Yes.

**JE:** And how did that go over?

**JV:** Well, it went over real good, to be very honest. We had them in ... Oh, gosh. About 70% of the high schools in Oklahoma had one of them. And I think there's still several of them around, but we closed the company down years ago, but it was a great move in order to help young men be good rebounders. It worked.

**JE:** And how did it work? How did it operate?

**JV:** Well, we had it attached to a wall on the end of a cable and you could set it where that the middle of the ball was, say, was 10 ft or 11 ft and then you had to get your hands above half the ball in order to pull it down. And this made kids start to grab the ball that way, instead of just getting it underneath and then get bumped and they lose the ball.

**JE:** Hmm (In acknowledgement).

**JV:** So it worked.

**JE:** Yeah. Did you have to work on that a few times to make that, finally, the finished product?

**JV:** You know, we had a couple that was at Edison when I did that, and we had a couple of investors that put in the money to get it done. And they helped a lot as well. Yeah.

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**Chapter 16 – 2:00****JV Advice**

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**John Erling (JE):** So your advice to young people who are listening and want to be in sports in high school or whatever level, what kind of advice do you have to these young people?

**JV Haney (JV):** Well, you know, it would take me a long time, I think to really get into it. But just briefly, I think any player that is following in a line of a particular sport, do what the coaches ask you to do, try to blend in with the people that you're working with, and just enjoy it and have fun and don't think that at the end of the world, this is where it's all going to take place. But just work for that particular point in time and I think you'll enjoy it.

**JE:** Mhmm (in agreement). How would you like to be remembered?

**JV:** Oh (chuckling). Now that is a tough question. I've tried to be good to everyone and I hope that the people remember me as being a very honest and a contributed person to them.

**JE:** Well, that's clearly come through our interview with Bill and Don. You would “amen” what he just said.

**Don King (DK):** Absolutely. I don't think, again, there's anybody that's done more; that's made such a great transition from coaching to the media, as Bill said, than JV. And what he has meant to this community, what he's meant to basketball in the state of Oklahoma. We're all known as a football state. But JV was instrumental in making this a basketball state as well. And I'm certainly on the campaign to get him into the Oklahoma Sports Hall of Fame for what he's done as a coach, and what he's done in the media over the last 30 years or so.

**JE:** Well, for the last couple of hours, I thank you for your story and telling it. Thank you, Don, for being here to help.

**DK:** Thank you, John.



**JE:** And we want to say to Bill Land again, thank him for that which will be heard on [VoicesOfOklahoma.com](http://VoicesOfOklahoma.com). I appreciate you very, very much, JV.

**JV:** Thank you, John. It's been fun.

Thank you for your support as we preserve Oklahoma's legacy one voice at a time, on [VoicesofOklahoma.com](http://VoicesofOklahoma.com)