

An Olympian's Oral History

JOAN LIND VAN BLOM

*1976 Olympic Games – Montreal
Member, 1980 United States Olympic Team
1984 Olympic Games – Los Angeles*

– Rowing –



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Today is Sunday, April 25, 1994. This is Dr. Margaret Costa interviewing Joan Lind Van Blom, silver medalist in the single sculls in the 1976 Olympic Games in Montreal, Canada [and in the quadruple sculls in 1984 in Los Angeles].

Q: Tell me about your childhood.

A: Well I grew up in Long Beach. We lived in the same house from when I was born until I moved out, when I was still training for the Olympics. And, I have three sisters. It was a close family. I started the activities that I did as a child. I remember we used to play a lot of evening, hide and seek, and ditch them throughout the neighborhood. I didn't play in organized sports at all as a child until maybe about sixth grade on the elementary school play ground in the summer, playing softball.

Q: OK, describe your neighborhood.

A: In Long Beach, it's four blocks from the ocean and the beach was a big part of my life growing up. My father had been a life guard in his 20s and he stayed active in swimming. When I was born, it was a big family activity going to the beach and body surfing and swimming. As far as the neighborhood, there are a lot of children that I played with in the neighborhood. It was a pretty typical Southern California neighborhood, California bungalow-style house. It was a two bedroom, one bath. A small house with six people in the family.

Q: Do you remember the first time you went to the beach?

A: Oh, the first time I went to the beach? No, it just seems like we were ... I am sure I was going as a baby. We also took a lot of trips to Catalina. My father was a policeman, but on the side he worked on boats, refinishing yachts. Lots of times as part of the pay, he'd get to take the boat instead of getting paid. So we did a lot of trips to Catalina. There was a lot of water time there, but nothing competitive, just swimming and having fun.

Q: Do you remember learning to swim?

A: My father taught me primarily, but I do remember going to some formal swimming lessons. I think it was probably through the recreation department at the high school. They have them at the high school. And, my sister, older two sisters, didn't swim competitively, but they swam and so I remember learning from them also.

Q: Do you remember swimming at the beach when you were very young?

A: No, I don't remember. [I remember] just swimming to catch a wave. I remember my dad throwing me in a wave, and telling me to swim, use your arms and just to swim hard, but I don't remember just swimming to be swimming. The concept of working out was not there until maybe high school.

Q: What did you think of your own physical ability when you were tiny? Did you ever get a feeling that you could do things physically?

A: No, I'd say I don't remember the desire to be great at anything that way. I remember going to a ... I think it was a policeman's picnic or a church picnic, and having a race and there was a

run to the ribbon. I was like five and I remember my dad, because he always brought it up to me later, that I stopped at the ribbon because I didn't know you were supposed to run through. I was first, but I stopped so all the kids went through.

I'd say I was coordinated as a child. I mean, it was never a problem where I felt like I was not going to be on a team or something that way. I remember in first grade playing kick ball. I was good, but I wasn't the best. I was maybe the top 25% of the kids. I was tall, too. I was always big so there is a factor there. But nothing, no standout, nothing that I felt I was going to be exceptional.

I was a little kid, I wanted to be sing. I even remember songs I get hooked on ... "Que Sera Sera," Doris Day. I mean that was before my time, but I remember that song being out and liking that. That was the type of thing I wanted to do, be a singer or an actress, not an athlete.

Q: Do you remember physical education in elementary school?

A: Nothing formal, no. When I think of physical education in elementary school dodge ball comes to mind, the rings, going around with the circular rings, and the travel bars, jungle gyms, but no, nothing formal. I did a lot on the playground during the summer, like I said. The softball thing, my parents didn't get me involved in any of that either. I think now with my son, I'm getting him into everything. There are different opportunities. There were people doing it then in swimming for girls, but I wasn't active.

Q: You were involved?

A: No. I know with my mom having three kids , and I was the third one, just ... She was busy.

Q: What was the makeup of Long Beach at that time... ethnic makeup?

A: It seemed to me that it was primarily white. There were, African Americans I was aware of in my elementary school, but there was maybe one, or two there for a magnet class. My high school was primarily white. Well, I say white, but there were Asians and Hispanics that I went to school with but I didn't, at the time I didn't think of them as being Asian or Hispanic.

Q: You weren't aware of it; they were just Americans.

A: Yeah, they were all Americans. And, it wasn't brought up, I mean our close friends were Japanese-Hawaiian or Japanese, but from Hawaii, very close but I didn't think about that as being, she's this. A lot of very close Hispanic friends, too. We were all kids. [In] high school, I think there were maybe three or four African Americans at Wilson, and that was out of about 3,500 students.

Q: Do you remember any messages you received as a child about being a girl, about ways to behave, or clothes to wear?

A: Well, at school you were always wearing dresses. That was just accepted. No one thought you'd wear anything else. And, then my mom ... I had the frilly dresses, which I know I didn't like. I remember not liking that stuff just because it was itchy or the lace.

Messages as a girl? I don't remember feeling like I couldn't do things because I was a girl. I don't remember feeling discriminated that way. I remember even playing kick ball with the boys

in elementary school. I remember kicking it once, really high, and the boys going, "Wow, you can kick it!" But, it wasn't like I did that all the time. So, as far as me being an Olympic athlete, it wasn't like I really had this background that was leading up to it all the way.

Q: But you still didn't get the message deterring you from doing that ever, not from your parents?

A: Oh no, no. I don't remember anything. I wasn't rowing in high school, but I remembered wishing that I had gotten into some sport prior to that, but it seemed like it was too late for everything by high school.

Q: So you really didn't compete in junior high school?

A: No, no.

Q: What did you do in the summers, though?

A: Well, we'd go to the beach a lot. Spend a lot of time. That's what I remember the most, body surfing.

Q: So you really were getting physical activity, but you weren't aware of it?

A: Yeah, and we'd walk. We'd walk to different beaches and there would be activity that way. I rode my bike a lot. I remember riding my bike all over the place with my girlfriend. That was in junior high and then fifth and sixth grade, I'd started riding my bike more. So I'd say bike riding and swimming were big things, but nothing competitive.

Q: Do you remember, do they have any big festivals at Long Beach in the summer that you took part in or ...?

A: Not that I took part in, that I remember. The summer playground, I did do things up there, but it was more like crafts and dancing and stuff. Just more typical things, but not typical today where girls are real active. But, none of my friends were doing things like that either. I really wasn't even aware of the Olympics until 1968 when I was 16. So I didn't ...

Q: So you didn't have any idols or you didn't know of any women athletes ... any athletes, men or women?

A: No, no, my father wasn't the type that ... He swam, and he started over again, but that was after I was into rowing. That was about the same year he started competing again in the senior Olympics, or the masters. But before that, I don't remember thinking about any athletes. I am thinking the first woman that I really thought about was that was Peggy Flemming. That was '68 or so – an athlete that I thought was neat. So, I am rather unusual that way.

Q: OK, let's get into high school and physical education. Which high school did you attend?

A: Wilson High School. And, it was 10th through 12th. It didn't start in the ninth grade. But in 10th grade I just took general physical education and then in 11th, I did the ...

Q: Do remember who your teacher was?

A: In 10th grade? No, well, I think it was Mrs. Young. Mrs. Young was her name. I definitely remember my 11th and 12th grade teachers because I was real involved with the drill team, the big drill team, and then in the senior year it was like a, they called it like a pepster at the time. They were just 10 of them. I did flags, not the tall flags, but the twirling flag stuff.

Q: So give us an idea about getting involved.

A: That to me was a big deal and I really wanted to do that. And, being on the drill team, in 10th grade trying out for it, that was ... everybody did that. I thought that was the thing to do and real neat if you made it. But there were like 80 on the team, and then it was the goal ...

Q: Walk us through the try outs.

A: The try outs, well you stayed after school to practice and learn the routines along with every other 10th grader. I don't remember thinking that it was physically hard, it was just learning it and hoping you remember the routine to do it when you are nervous about trying out in front of people. And, then after you made it – it was during the summer – there were practices. I don't remember that being physically demanding. I think the thing that was more physically demanding was when I was a pepster and doing the splits.

Q: Like a cheerleader?

A: It was like a cheerleader. It was cheerleading to music. They had cheerleaders as well. To be a cheerleader, you didn't have to be on the drill team first. To be this pepster thing you had to be on the drill team first. So I thought, this was really ... and I wasn't just into yelling in front of people, I wanted to perform. Like I say, when I was younger I always used to want to perform. It was just that there was nothing. In fact, thinking about when I was younger, instead of doing sports I even was in a talent show. I sang. I can't believe it now, but , that's what ... I wanted to be doing something well in front of people.

Q: When did you get the realization that you really had to work harder and do, over and over, with the fundamentals? Was it when you were doing the drill team?

A: I think the drill team gave me some discipline. The drill team gave me a little bit of discipline and then this pepster thing. I think there were 10 of us, five or seven of us performing on stage in front of the assembly in high school. You really had to practice. If you didn't practice, then you would be really embarrassed because you would mess up. At the time I don't remember thinking, oh I've got to go practice, I am going to be tired. But, it was every day because we were all into it. It's kind of embarrassing now to think about it. I remember also near the middle of my senior year thinking, what a waste, this is so silly. And, that's when I really remember wishing that I'd swam or something worth putting that time in. Why didn't I put that time into something where you really get somewhere with it? But like I said, I thought it was too late.

Q: Oh really?

A: Yeah, now I think, gosh if I'd really worked as hard [at another sport] as I've worked at rowing, I wouldn't have gotten as far as I did in rowing.

Q: So were you always tall?

A: Yes, I remember in elementary school, in sixth grade, we did a thing about who was the tallest in the school. But I wasn't, I think maybe I was the third, or I was only the second tallest girl. So I wasn't what you might call extra tall, but yeah, I was always tall, even in high school.

Q: So was that an advantage, or a disadvantage?

A: I don't remember feeling bad about it. And, my mother is 5'8", only she's like 5'7" now, but she said she always felt bad and was like, ashamed of it when she was growing up because she seemed real tall with her peers. With me in high school it was neat. It was good to be tall. You could be a model, although I didn't really seriously think that, but that's what they said, it was a good thing to be tall. The only thing is I have these huge feet, and that was never good.

Q: What made you come to the realization in your senior year high school about wanting to really play sports?

A: I think it just was weird. I think it was just the timing. I was 19. I graduated from high school in 1970 and I don't know, it was just what seemed to be going on everywhere. Women's equality, and women's sports seemed to really be here. I said before, I wanted to be cool and I didn't do sports and in junior high. It seemed like it wasn't cool to do that. So maybe we are saying, I was discriminated against as a girl. Maybe I just got the vibes that the cool girls didn't do sports. There was too much peer pressure to be cool and in my mind this was so. I now realize if I was really cool, I would have just gone and done it. In high school, I had boys that were ... the boys that I hung out with, the boys that I liked were on the water polo team and the swim team and they worked out, and they were in good shape. You'd go to the beach and then you wanted to look good, and you realized that ... You got the idea that there was a connection there. So I think that was all a thing of getting the exercise. It was a factor. Maybe I didn't listen in physical education. I should have learned that in junior high, but I don't remember. I was real boy crazy. So, I don't know, but I felt like I got it out of my system in junior high. That got in the way of a lot of stuff.

Q: When you were in high school, what did you think you were going to do when you grew up, when you went to college and you grew up?

A: I knew I was ... It was definite to go to college. But sometimes there I was thinking oh, I'd like to be an airline stewardess, but then I wanted to go to college, too. I feel bad about this; I didn't have high ambitions about the colleges I'd go to because we didn't have money and I didn't realize that there were opportunities maybe to work, or grants to things to go away. There was never a thought that I would go away to college because the money wasn't there. So I knew I was going to Cal State. If I was going to go anywhere, it was Cal State.

In high school I went through a lot of things about what I wanted to do. Teaching was always in there. Or, an executive secretary, because I was real good at typing and shorthand. I took it in high school. Maybe that's just a thing ... the girl thing. After I got into rowing and traveled a lot and went to the East Coast I saw that a lot of the women who row have gone to Yale, Radcliffe, most of the good ones that were on a national team. I don't know what I would have changed or if I would have, but I wasn't really aware that there was an opportunity to do ... to go for it, to go bigger than what I went for.

Q: So you went to Long Beach, and what happened?

A: Well, let's see, the first year there I remember the first semester I was real depressed because all this high school activity I'd been real involved in was gone. I didn't want to do a sorority. So there wasn't an outlet, a social outlet. My friends had gone. I had very few friends that went on to Cal State. So I just really concentrated on my studies. I think I took 18 units the first few semesters, and got straight A's, and just really worked hard in school. And, then I was looking for something to meet people. I think around November, October or November, a boy that I had been going out with in high school was rowing on the freshman team at Cal State.

Q: Were you aware of rowing, because there would have been a lot of rowers in Long Beach?

A: Yeah, like I said, I went to the beach. I spent my summer on the bay and I remember seeing people row out there. I always try to think of when I first saw, or heard of rowing. I remember on a camping trip when I was 12, this guy that was in the campsite next to us, my older sister goes, "He rows for Dartmouth!" And, I remember thinking, rowing, he's on the crew team. OK so that's a neat thing. But when I saw them out rowing, I didn't know there was a boat house. I didn't know anything about it. No, not until I went down to watch this boy who was a freshman at Cal State, a good friend of mine, row. I saw the boat house and I saw what boats looked like. So it was pretty weird growing up in Long Beach and ... Was my head in the sand? I don't know. I was pretty wrapped up in myself.

Q: So how did you go about rowing yourself?

A: Well, I went down ... yeah, I went down there to watch him a few times, and there were women that were doing ... They didn't have a women's crew team, but they had Shell & Oar, which was a fund raising, or booster team for the men. They'd go out on this thing that was called a barge. It was a barge. It had oars, 16 people, and you could walk around in it.

Q: We used to call them whalers, yeah.

A: Yeah. I mean, you'd walk around in it and it was training. And, they did that. And, I don't remember if I did that first, or if when I'd been down a couple of times watching, this woman came up to me because I had asked this other fellow that I knew, that rowed, "How do you get to do this?" Because I saw all these women and this woman who belonged to the club, who wasn't part of Shell & Oar, said, "Are you interested? I'll take you out in a boat." Her name was Melinda Collis. There were only about three or four women, and there were only maybe two or three in the club rowing for the Long Beach Rowing Association, which has the same facility as Cal State Long Beach's crew team. They had different garages where they keep the boats. So she took me out in a double and that was the first time, or maybe it was a ... she put me in a wherry, a wider training boat, and I was just off.

Q: How did you like it?

A: Oh, I loved it and she was so enthusiastic. It was almost this magical thing. She was crazy about it, too. Her father was a kayaker and I think he was almost on the national team. He was older and I think it was the wrong Olympic year that year. They didn't have it; he missed it. But he was a real dedicated athlete and she was real excited about rowing. And, the year before, in the fall of 1970, in the summer of 1970, she and another woman had gone into the nationals in the double. That was a big deal. I mean, you say the nationals to anyone, there weren't that many things to compete in.

Q: Especially from the West Coast.

A: Right, right. There weren't that many women rowing. Philadelphia, Vesper and Philadelphia had a big contingent that had been rowing for a while. I think the first time the United States sent rowers to the World Championships, or the European championships, that were for women was in 1969. So, this is 1970 that I was getting into it. So it was just right at the beginning. Women had been rowing in the United States. I mean there's a club in San Diego 100 years [old]. It wasn't like I was inventing anything new on that, but the international competition for the United States [women], that was. So I think it was the timing for me was just real, real lucky.

And, so, I went out with her a lot. Then around November, I think, I met Tom McKibbon, who ended up being my coach. I don't know exactly when I really talked to him. But he was kind of the guy ... Tom McKibbon, he's a great rower and my husband, John Van Blom, they were the first ones I remember as being athletic heroes. They great rowers and you'd watch them row and it's just perfect. And, of course, it's a little biased because I am hearing this from these other people and they knew how to row. But it was just ... You're down there meeting people. It was a nice social experience. I was a freshman. It was all these college-age men around rowing. It was fun and you'd be in shape and there was so much to learn. And, I was successful. It felt natural. It wasn't like it was real difficult for me to do.

Q: You had the upper-body strength obviously and the legs.

A: Yeah, the legs. I think I did have some natural legs. Like I said, I did ride my bike a lot. I mean, I didn't compete but, I remember with my high school that summer, I got out of high school, riding my bike down to San Clemente and not many women were doing that and I did all three speeds. So, I was getting into being active but still nothing like on the level that I ended up doing it. But [rowing] was just a thing I just kind of got hooked on and Tom wanted to coach.

Q: What was Tom doing at that time?

A: Tom, in '69 he competed with John, in doubles. They won the World Championships in double sculls ... It was the European Championships because they didn't have World Championships that year. And, then in '70, he and John trained in the double and in the summer of '70 they were third in the world. And, so that was, between '70 and '71 was when I met him. He's was an instructor, still is, at City College, sheet metal.

Q: Oh yes, I was wondering if he was at City then.

A: Yes, he was working there. But he had this idea of coaching women ... that he wanted to coach women. I thought that he eventually wanted to get an eight together. I am pretty sure that he was going to coach women that were not only fast, and could beat everybody, but also looked good , but looked pretty aesthetically.

Q: That fits in with that time period.

A: Yeah, it was going to look good and go fast. He kind of conveyed that to me and Melinda ... I've got to tell you, Melinda the woman who originally taught me, had another partner. Her other partner, Karen McCloskey, is who I started rowing with in a double because Melinda had this boyfriend. She was going to get married, and she wasn't going to row. So Karen and I were going to train in the double. Karen was real motivated because she had already gone to the nationals and seen how exciting it was in June of 1970. By February of '71 we were doing

double work outs and training. I started rowing in November, I know I started the week before Thanksgiving.

Q: In '70?

A: In '70. And, by February of '71, we were training twice a day.

Q: Were you working always in the boats, or did you do any of the running that they did later on.

A: We did running and I remember talking about now we are going to run and ride our bikes everywhere and not go in a car anywhere, and I did. I was already riding my bike to school most of the time anyway, so now I just made an effort ... We'd talked about it, OK when you come to stairs, you are going to run upstairs. It was just a mindset that I hadn't ever thought about. I remember talking at the boat house with Karen. It seemed there were other women there too, that we were telling them, "This is what we are doing to do." This was different. People didn't do this. We did running and things like squat jumps, but the first year was mainly in the boat, and I think that set a real good base. Tom spent hours with us, just hours out with drills in the boat, just Karen and I. I don't remember being in the singles a lot that first year in 1970, or the '70-'71 year because we were just going for the double. This is what we were going to race in. This was going to be our big thing.

Q: Walk us through a work out.

A: Well, in 1970 it was just rowing around Naples Island, which is about four kilometers around. And, we'd go around there. I don't know in that year ... if we'd go three times.

Q: Were you just rowing, you weren't doing specific things for your legs or your ... like what?

A: Yeah, you'd do different drills. I could tell you what kind of work out I did in '72-'73. But that first year, I don't really know.

Q: You don't remember any ... you didn't have it down yet?

A: No, it was still learning and doing things, to get your catch right and your release right and rowing together, how to use your legs, how to use your arms correctly and rowing with your eyes closed, and rowing with your feet locked.

Q: Why would you row with your eyes closed?

A: Just to get the feel, so it was just a natural thing of not having to look at anything, not having to look where the oars are, so that you are just feeling it, you are just doing it. And, we did do hard things. It's difficult at first when you are learning to pull hard without having the oars dig in and tipping the boat over. So we did a lot of I'd say, hard strokes. What it might be was you'd do 30 strokes hard and then you'd row, paddle 30 strokes easy, and then 30 strokes hard. Or maybe you start out rowing hard and you build it up and you row as many hard strokes as you can without messing up, without the oar touching the water on a recovery part of the stroke. Or you build it up and row for as many strokes as you can, row hard and keep the power on. That's the type of thing that we did at the beginning. Then later on a work out could be 20 kilometers, maybe racing four kilometers and rest.

Q: Did you know anything about nutrition in the beginning?

A: Everything kind of built upon the year before. You'd learn things ... I am trying to remember when carbohydrate loading came in, and not eating steak ... I never remember thinking that the steak thing was good. And, we knew donuts ... Even in high school you knew what was bad ... soda and chips and cookies and sweets, and high fat. I think we knew that.

Q: Tell us about that first trip then, in February was it?

A: Well, the training was in February. The trip was in June.

Q: So are you still working out all the way through that spring semester?

A: Yes, and I remember just being so tired. And, I remember wanting to quit and not do it anymore. Tom had put in so much time with us. I remember talking with my mother about it saying, "Gosh, this is just too hard. I don't want to do it." Yeah, I was too tired. I was not going out with boys anymore, just training. I think that Tom had invested so much in it that I felt I just had to keep going. I would have just been a terrible person to quit. So I did it.

At the first trip we went back to ... it was in old line Connecticut. I'd never been to the East Coast and it was just really hot, and really muggy. We'd been told how it was going to be, but there were things that we weren't prepared for. The boats at that time ... Everybody brought their own boat and would put it in a pool of boats. This is crazy. You would draw for a boat. It was totally absurd. We'd trained in this boat that we were used to rowing, and we ended up not ... and I don't remember what happened because it was a real nice boat. It was like the nicest boat that our club had. It was a double, obviously it was a double.

Tom was going, too. He was also going to train for the trials in the Pan American Games in this scull. So we took the boat back, towed it on my car, which I had just got or my dad had just got for me a year ago. It was an older station wagon, but with this big trailer, and towed it across. Some boys, some friends of mine, drove the boat across, and we flew. Anyway, we didn't get to row the boat and I think we didn't even put it in the pool. There was a big fight. Tom was always controversial with everybody. I don't know if you know Tom. There was always a lot of conflicts and he was right most of the time. We felt, and I still feel discriminated against, being from the West Coast in rowing. But anyway, we did row. We rowed this heavier boat and came in second. The next day Karen got the measles ... Was it the chicken pox or the measles? My experience was getting out of the boat after the race, and I remember I immediately had to lay down and I thought I was going to pass out or throw up. I remember seeing stars and just saying, "This is terrible." I doubt I've ever rowed that hard again. Maybe it was just because I wasn't prepared mentally for how hard it would be. But it was neat. I remember thinking, gosh, I wish I could row that hard again.

Q: What other teams? Was Wellesley there, were the women's colleges?

A: Wellesley, I don't remember Wellesley being there. I remember the big one. I remember there was Vesper. We were in double, so it was just clubs that would race against us. And, probably Oakland, the girls from Oakland, and there were probably people from Boston. There were a lot of women there. I am trying to think of the other places. Oh, Philadelphia just had a bunch of clubs.

Q: Women were rowing primarily for clubs rather than colleges? Not even the women's colleges, huh?

A: Yes, not many. That was 1971 and I remember the first time that they sent an eight it was a college team to the Worlds Championships was in 1973. That was Radcliffe and I don't think they'd been rowing very long. It was just everybody was just getting started here. It was a big breakthrough whenever a women's team got ... Getting Cal State's women's team started and that was in 1972. That was a woman who was rowing for the club who just fought for it. I was never really interested in really pushing for it because ...

Q: How did you mix with the Easterners?

A: Oh, there were our big enemy. They knew the ones who had won before. You didn't give them dirty looks or anything but you just ... I was kind of in awe of them too because you'd heard of these girls ... One woman's name was Jinx Becker. And, Karin Constant were the two big ones. And, they were the ones who beat us. She was the single sculler in 1970 ... or maybe '71. She did well in the United States in those years until Long Beach came around and then we blew everybody's doors off, once we got training in sculling. And, it was really Tom. Tom did it. He did everything; he built the program.

Q: So that must have been a thrill coming in second?

A: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah, it was. It was a big, yes, second in the nation? Yeah, so it was a big deal. And, Karen my partner was real ... I didn't sew, but she sewed and my mother sewed, so we had dresses made for our plane trip. I mean, this is big deal. It was real funny deal. We were our own little team of two and just having space. The guys that were training at the club, I remember they gave us stuff before we went. It was real neat. I also remember taking our oars. We had to take our oars on the plane and they got broken. All sorts of little things happened. It seemed like we weren't prepared for it when these little crises came up, but it was, it turned out OK.

Q: Where did you stay?

A: We stayed at some people's house, some people's house they'd arranged for the nationals ... Oh no, no. When we first got there, no, it was friends, relatives of Karen and then we just stayed at a hotel or a motel. When we first got there the first night be stayed with relatives of Karen's.

Q: Did you pay for it yourself?

A: Yeah, but we had help from the club. There were only two women and then the men. There was John, Tom and some other men going from the club. There was a foundation, the Southern California Rowing Foundation, and donations could be made that were tax deductible. So we did get help there. My parents had to pay for some, but we didn't have to pay for all of it. So there was help that way. But it was always a struggle. I remember because I worked. I was always working as a waitress or something. I remember that first summer out of high school, which was the summer before I started training, saving up money because I was going to go to Hawaii and then I used this money for this trip to the East Coast. But, we came back and we were more enthusiastic about it than ever.

Q: Was there newspaper coverage?

A: It was good, it was real good as far as here in Long Beach. I remember that it was the Marina News or the local paper. I remember little stuff and even Cal State Long Beach had run something. They had a magazine or something. I remember some pictures. I remember it being good, I mean not great, but as good as could be expected.

Q: So you came back, and then what happened ... you had the whole summer to train?

A: Then it's June, the middle of June. I must have come back and rowed because at that time, I didn't take too much time off. It was just rowing and running. It was neat to row. But then the next year coming up was '71-'72 and Tom was training for the Olympics, so he wasn't going to coach us. Also at that time this Melinda was getting married and this women came down that they had originally rowed with. She was from Cal and she came down and trained with us. And, I got another high school friend to train with us, so there were four of us. This Carol from Cal, and this high school friend, Jane, who was the one that eventually started the crew team at Long Beach State, and then Karen and myself. And, we were going to row a quad. We were doing it all for the nationals in '72, which were in Seattle. That was our goal then. We were going to have a single, and a double and a quad.

'72 was when I started [the single]. We got singles to row in the club. At that time the club didn't have any single shells, the racing shells for the club members to row. Every single shell down there was privately owned and people were just real generous. People in the club were just great to us as far as being supportive and letting us use their equipment. So we used these men's shells. They let us train. We took turns. There were some crummy ones, and there were some good ones, and we took turns training in those.

I say there was this fourth girl ... No I was wrong. There were just really three of us, three of us rowing and we'd train in these singles because Carol who had been in Northern California moved, and she rowed, in '69, in the eight that that was the first one that competed in the World Championships from the United States. So there were three of us and it was real neat – three of us to train in singles. That's when I started realizing that I was fast in the single and liked the single. I remember rowing in the heavier plastic boat – it was kind of a water logged one – and being able to stay with them and they were in the lighter boats. I also remember when we went to the nationals for the sculling events, there's a single, a double and a quad that you can row with two oars. I'd just planned on rowing in the double and the quad and Carol Simpson, was going to run the single, because to me the single seemed too frightening. It just seemed too scary to be out there by yourself.

Q: Too much responsibility?

A: Too much responsibility, and yeah, too scary. I remember looking at her ... well you can't because it's a thousand meters away ... but I remember seeing her row the start and going, oh, boy I am glad that's not me. I'd be terrible. And, she won! And, so that's when I went ... Well I knew I could beat her. She was five or six years older than I was and so was experienced, but that gave me, [the thought], oh look, maybe this is something I should pursue. So '73 was when I really went for the single.

Q: When did you start lifting weights?

A: I don't remember. I think of people that were in the weight room with me. I don't remember Carol Simpson lifting weights with us. So the weight training, going into the weight room at Cal

State Long Beach, must have been the year '72-'73. It must have been the fall of '72, because Carol went back to the North, and it was just Karen and I again and Karen McCloskey, my original doubles partner. The World Championships, or they were the European Championships, were going to be in Moscow. Karen was real motivated by these trips, and she would get things going and I would just kind of follow along with her. It ended up being real sticky in that year, '72-'73. I won the single and we also won the double and you usually didn't row in both events in the World Championships. I thought was obvious, because I beat her by 13 seconds in the single, that I would go in the single. But after nationals, she wanted me to row the double with her, so it was ugly then.

Q: So had you both been training singles?

A: We had both been training singles. We did doubles together too because we knew we wanted to race in the doubles.

Q: If you beat her than wouldn't it obvious?

A: Well, I thought it was. Yeah, it was touchy though. There were a lot of bad feelings. It was real touchy, but she ended up getting another partner to row in the double and she was from the East Coast.

Q: This was the '72 nationals?

A: The '72 nationals we were in the single and the double. Wait a minute. I went backwards ... '73, '73 ... because '72 was when we won the double and the quad, I am sure that makes you wonder what we did? OK, then I should go back to '71. That was our first year. We came in second in the nation and we didn't go to the national team because you had to be first. Although we could have been because the women that were in the double that beat us? One went in the single and one went in the quad to the worlds. So, we could have gone in the double. But we didn't. The money thing, the whole deal, we weren't ready. But in '72, we trained. This is when we had Carol there and we knew were wanted to go try to go to be on the national team. It was in Brandenburg, East Germany. The Olympics were in Munich, and then the women's rowing would be in Brandenburg. And, they were a couple of weeks before Munich. Anyway, so that year, '72 at the nationals, our team won the single. Karen and I won the double, and this boat with four people, Carol from Northern California, and Karen and I and this Melinda, who was getting married, came back and rowed the quad with us, but she didn't want to go ...

Q: Had you ever rowed together very much?

A: Oh yeah, the four of us. Melinda was in and out of it because she had this boyfriend. She knew she wasn't going to go to the World Championships if we won. So, we ended up together '72. Even though we won the double and Carol won the single [at nationals], we kind of planned ahead that we were going to go in the quad [to European Championships]. We had a little coxswain here that was 12 years old, and 60 pounds. She couldn't go with us, so we got a coxswain from Philadelphia. Melinda was our fourth, couldn't go with us, so we got Gail Pearson, who was a very good rower from the Boston area. She was a professor at Harvard in economics and she was a character – older. It seemed then she was real old, but she was probably in her late 20s. So she rowed with us in the quad there in the European Championships, in Brandenburg.

Q: What was this experience, going there?

A: Well, it was just unbelievable. First we raced in Hanover, Germany. We had some pre-races there. We won there and then we traveled to East Germany.

Q: What was your feeling about West Germany?

A: Oh, I just loved it. I couldn't believe I was there. I never dreamed ... There wasn't a thought that I'd get to go to Europe I guess when I grew up. There were four girls. My dad was a policeman and my mother didn't work and we didn't have money. To do that, to go to Europe, was just a drain.

It was just so exciting to see these boat houses and these beautiful places to row and little kids rowing, and a lot of people excited about it. Hanover was pretty, but nothing like other parts of Germany that we eventually went to, but for me it was just, it was great. So everything was just great, except for there's always this thing hanging over my head this competition. You had to focus on that. And, that was forever. I mean, I always think of that. We had these great trips, New Zealand and places we'd go, and we couldn't really enjoy it until the races were over, enjoy it as much as I would have liked to because that was always on you, the competition and being prepared.

On this train trip from Hanover to Brandenburg they made us get off the train because we didn't have our right papers and it was just a trip. Gail Pearson's mother was on the train. She was an older woman from the South, real strong Southern accent and just a Southern belle, and was just going crazy. At the time it was scary. They put us off and they took us in this room with bars all over it and they weren't going to let us go in because something wasn't right on our papers. I am trying to remember if Karin Constant was with us, who was supposed to have arranged it, who spoke German. I think, she had some German background anyway. I don't know how long we were held up in this room. It seemed like an hour or so and then we finally got ... it was OK, and we could go. But, you get off at the train station and there are machine guns, guys walking around with machine guns, and you see the towers. So that whole experience was ...

Q: Were you scared at all?

A: Yeah, it was kind of scary. I don't think I ever felt ... I don't know if I really felt in danger. It was just so strange. It was like going from a colorful world, to black and white ... yeah, and everything when I remember it in my mind, it just seems like everything was in black and white and going back to West German was like a colorful world, the real world, like a switch in the "Wizard of Oz" from black and white to color. It was so dismal. We had this housing that I think they had kicked the students out of. Out of their student housing for us. The beds were smelly. It was just dismal, real bleak.

Q: And, how did you find the people?

A: The people were interested. A lot of people hanging out of their windows. We'd go to and from the course and people not doing much, just sitting outside, or just hanging out, looking out the windows, and it just seemed real sad. Real sad. What they told it was a restaurant was like, oh, like some unfinished ... like an empty room. I can't even describe it. The bread was like , weeks old, it seemed hard, real dry. The food was awful.

Q: Do you remember getting any ... what did you drink?

A: , I don't remember if we had that stuff that they would call Limonada. I don't remember if that was it and there was always weird red foods. You could never get enough water, or ice water. And, I do remember eating ice cream and there was this guide, this East German woman, who'd been ... I remember the big deal. She'd been a world champion. It's like the East Germans had been around forever. And, she took us to ice cream a lot. I think about that now and I feel like it was sabotaging us because later on when the lady was around I wouldn't eat ice cream. I wouldn't eat that stuff. I was real careful for years. I didn't eat sugar, no caffeine or anything. I just didn't want to cut any corners. Anyway, it was bleak and we finished eighth. We just missed it. The finals are the top six and you have to race to get into the finals. I think it was maybe the top three or the top two in the race that we were in. It depends on how many total boats there are and how you race to get into the finals. The finals, the race progression, is really developed to make sure that the top three boats get in the finals. Anyway, we ended up not making the finals and we were in the petite finals which is seventh through 12th. I remember at that time we raced and I was in the three seat, which is right behind the stroke going backwards, so it is three from the back, and I remember even now, sitting at the starting line and just being scared out of my mind, not wanting to be there, just being really scared.

Q: It was you first big international meet?

A: Yeah, competition for the petite finals and looking over and all these coxswains, because we had a coxswain, and so everybody speaking different languages. I do remember thinking, this is exciting, because Tom kind of coached me that way – This is it! That '72 European race was one of the worst I ever felt after a race. After our race was finished we were still out on the water and I am not even wanting to look [at the final] and thinking, I don't care and I'm never going to do this again anyway. Just get me out of here. It was just a feeling. It's so funny because I was so sure that this was it, I am not going to do this again. And, then I go back and, I talked to Tom and Karen is going, let's go for it in Moscow and so we were off again

Q: So you came back here and then went back to Moscow?

A: Yeah, so OK that was '72. I jumped ahead. Moscow was '73. So that was the summer of '72 and we ended up staying there for a long time.

Q: What did you do?

A: Well, first of all, everywhere we went we had these oars with us, so it was an experience that way because we took our own oars. We borrowed boats over there. After we came back from Brandenburg, I remember we took a trip to Berlin. Somehow I went to Scotland. We traveled around. We went to Innsbruck. Just Karen and I traveled down in Southern Europe, with our oars on the trains. I remember going on the train one time, we couldn't get in, we back out. It was just real funny things. Carol was visiting. She had some people in Freiberg. She was like this worldly woman to me, and so she was off with some friends and Karen and I were over, just traveling by ourselves. But we were all going to meet in the train station at Munich before the Olympics and we didn't have a place to stay. We didn't know what we were doing. We were just going to show up at the train station, and we were going to meet Carol. Somehow she was going to get there ahead of us. I remember, Karen and I get there, we don't know what we are going to do, and Carol was there and had a place outside of Munich, and had gotten the train [arranged], a subway ...

Q: The metro?

A: Yeah, it was the metro. So she got us a place. Carol spoke German so it was all just peachy. All three of us were in Munich, and John was there. I mean he had another girl friend, but John and Tom were racing in the double. And the security, well obviously the security wasn't that good, because we got in the Olympic Village, and saw it. We weren't close friends with John at the time, so Tom took us in the Village and showed us around. We'd met other men rowers in Hanover, when we'd raced in Hanover, the New Zealand team, a fellow who was a rower with the New Zealand team. It was great, everything was wonderful.

Q: Were you there when the ... during the problem?

A: We left, no. See, the men's rowing was the first rowing, well men's rowing was the only rowing. Rowing was the first week and so we left that night, the night ... We left one day and the next night I remember hearing about it. I was in England or Scotland. It was terrible because we had been there when everything was just so wonderful, the Munich Stadium ...

Q: This was their big comeback after the '36 Games and they had to show off.

A: Yeah, and Munich was just beautiful, just everything that a sports arena should be. So to have that happen was just tragic. It was terrible. I couldn't believe it because things had been great. We watched the men's races and New Zealand won the eight. They got the gold medal. We went to these parties with them and I shook hands with Jesse Owens. It was all great and then to have that happen was awful.

Then I traveled and met several relatives in Scotland. I had a big European trip. It was real, real exciting, yeah. And, that certainly helped with my motivation to keep training because these trips and meeting people ... And, then after '73 when I really got good in the single and I was more motivated by seeing how good I could be. Then it wasn't trips. Trips were a nice perk, but the real thing was the competition.

Q: Did you, OK when you came back to college in '72, what was your major, what did you decide to major in?

A: In '70-'71 I don't even know if I declared ... Oh, it was business. It was business education like I said. I was doing typing and shorthand and somewhere along the line they discontinued business education at Cal State. And, also during that time I was meeting people, rowers, and I met this one rower who I started going out with who was a P.E. major. And, that got me realizing, well hey, maybe ... His name was Jim Gorman, and he was a stroke of the eight for Cal State Long Beach, and he was really into riding his bike everywhere. He kind of talked it up that it's real neat to be a physical education major. And, so I remember I took my first class, which was team sports. I had already taken some, I took a swimming class my first year.

Q: With Betty Edmondson?

A: No, with Jack Rose. That was my first P.E. class at Cal State, swimming. It was fun, but I just wanted to have a class. But the first P.E. majors' class was team sports. I got a C. I never got a C anytime in college. The sports were maybe basketball, volleyball, I don't know if it was softball or not but, yeah, and it was hard. I didn't do those in high school. I didn't compete in any of those things. So it wasn't anywhere near the typical woman competitor and I wasn't real aggressive that way. I really feel and felt then too, that the reason I was in physical education

was because I liked fitness. I liked to see how good your endurance is, how strong you are and what pull ups and push-ups and training you could do, but not doing ball games. Then after I started teaching, I realized, gosh I really should have studied more of the rule books because I had to just go back. I could have practiced more to get better, but I was training and so tired. So it was real hard doing that, being a PE major with all those hours of classes and then also training full time. Once I started with it, I looked at it as this is just making me better, just more activity. Although, there is a fine line, because you get so fatigued, it's hard to train.

Q: So what was your daily schedule?

A: I'd row in the morning.

Q: What time?

A: If I had an 8:00 o'clock class then I'd be rowing at 6:00 o'clock until 7:30. Lots of times, since they were P.E. classes, I'd just ride my bike from the boat house and go to class that way.

Q: Really fast?

A: Yeah, kind of disgusting. I'd mean I'd be sweaty from rowing, but I had these classes that were 8:00 o'clock that I had to take and I remember going into volleyball class like that. The activity classes ... I'd do those classes and then at noon we'd meet for weight training, three days a week. And, I remember the first time going in the weight room. It was just Karen and I, and it was all football players going in there. I think that was in '72 and Tom met us there. He was teaching, but he'd be out. He had a great schedule. He was out by noon. But the people were real nice. There were not too many times did we feel like they were going to kick us out of the weight room. We went in there. I don't really know what the rules were. It was only supposed to be if i[the room] was free. If it was only supposed to be the football team in there, if there was only the track team, they would let us train. But anyway, we went in there and it was small and we just started training with weights.

Q: No one told you how to do it?

A: Yeah, Tom told us what to do because he'd done training. We did upright row things and they must have had the leg press then, a lot of leg stuff and then, and they had the machine, the Universal machine. We'd do a lot of mainly things just pertaining to rowing. So sit down rows, up right rows, and then leg press. We didn't do squats. That was at the beginning, early. Later on like when I trained there in 1979 there were trainers. There was Art Venegas, who later went on to UCLA, who really taught me a lot of technique. So anyway we did do weight training. And, I don't remember when we started running the hill, but definitely by '73, 1973 we were running up Signal Hill, Hill Street.

Q: Where did you get that idea about running up Signal Hill?

A: Tom. Most of the stuff he had us do was stuff that he and John did for training. I know he ran for training. He wasn't a very good runner, but he did it for training. We used to drive down on the weekends, and maybe that was '72. In '72 he lived in Laguna Niguel. There were hills, Crown Valley Parkway or something. It was a long hill, and we'd meet him there and we'd run, run these long runs up this hill. Other times Karen and I would go and run 10 miles in the Back Bay. That was the year that it was a touchy thing. So it's weird, in a way. It probably wasn't healthy for Karen. She had someone to train with, but I was becoming so much further ahead. I

was really putting more into it. She had a lot of other stuff going on and she was into. She was still doing some gymnastics and she sang. She could do all these things, and I was really single-focused. I could only really do this, and that's all I really wanted to do. I just wanted to see if I gave everything I had to it, how good could I be because I saw that there was potential and in '72 at the Olympics is when we learned that women's rowing would be an Olympic sport in '76.

Q: So that was a big motivator?

A: Yeah, it was. I also remember thinking that I wasn't going to go four years. Not maybe until '74, did I really think, well maybe I'll go for '76. Even through '72, or '73 I think I was always [asking], well am I going to be able to do it, keep it up? Is someone going to come along? I mean, because I had come along pretty fast. But nobody ever did. Through my years of rowing there were ones who got close but every year I was the single sculler up until 1980.

Q: So your life was really rowing, rowing, rowing. Did any of the other women at Long Beach get more interested in this now in '73?

A: '73 yeah, there were a lot then. Well after ... let's see after ...'73. Karen and I were pretty much on our own. Then in '74 came Jane Loomis, who had been a flag girl with me at Wilson. She started training with us regularly. Also in '74 Tom was recruiting people. In '74 we did a lot of long distance rowing, out to the Queen Mary and back, and rowing over to the L.A. Harbor in these wide training boats. We did a lot of that in the fall and I loved it. I loved just going out and just rowing. It was good for the technique, but our race at the time is only about 1,000 meters long, and that's a four minute race. So, you really needed to do the sprints and the weight training and the hard running. The big part of the training in the spring was racing each other. In '74 we had more people to race in single and I think that was a lot of it. And, I loved to win. I loved to win in the single, and I hated to lose. After '73, after winning in the single, I had a lot to lose when I lost, so I think I raced out of fear a lot, too. It was love and fear. It was '73 that I raced the singles in the nationals. In '74 I won all the four races that you could possibly win, single, double, quad and the singles short race, so that was a big deal for me to do that.

Q: And, where was it in '74?

A: It was in Oakland, the nationals. Then I went as a single in '74 the World Championships were in Lucerne, Switzerland. And, I came in seventh. I think I lost to the 4th place, I had real tough heats; it was real bad. I won the petite finals, so I was 7th. It was bad because that was probably the hardest year I'd trained. I'd done this real long stuff and heavy weight training and a lot of running and I thought that I was doing real well. I need to also say that every year that we went there, I borrowed a boat, it wasn't my own boat, we never took a boat over from here to Europe and I just got what I could. they definitely weren't the best boats. Lots of times I remembered we borrowed it from Ratzeburg in West Germany. And, then we'd take it to Lucerne. We always borrowed boats in those World and European championships.

Q: That's got to be different.

A: Yeah, they are different. I think I'd take my own oars, but they are still rigged differently and they aren't even the same make as the one I was rowing here. Actually, the one I was rowing here in '73 was when I got my first, my own single. Someone donated one to the club and then the club sold it to me. It was like \$400. It was a wooden, a Japanese boat. I still have it. That was a big deal, my dad bought me that. \$400 was just a real big thing. So '74 I was seventh in

the world and in '75 we didn't go to the nationals, but they had the trials here and we won the trials.

By that time Tom had quite a lot of women rowing. There was a lot of competition here. And, a lot of women were trying to knock me off. I think some women felt that Tom was just getting these people to have them help me get faster. I think Lisa Hansen, who was my biggest competitor, still might think that about Tom. But Tom probably would have loved to have someone who was faster than me. But nobody ended up being faster. It was real dog-eat-dog because we would race each other every day out in singles. We'd all line up and race and then turn around and race back and race back and forth in these 500-meter pieces. Some people would bag one, go easy on the next one. And, I felt that I had to win every one because mentally I didn't want anybody to beat me. So maybe this time one person bags one, so the next one she's fresh, and another bagged the next one so she's ready for me it. Looking back, that's what made me fast. I had this competition and I had a lot of people. If someone went easy on one, then someone else was going to beat me on another one. And, someone else could look at it the same way as I did. So that was '75. In '75 we had all these people here. Tom was the national sculling coach. He was also the national sculling coach in '74. We took a single and a quad. I was still in the single. And, the World Championships were in Nottingham, England. It was a really windy course, I think they ...

Q: Who else was going from here?

A: From here? I am trying to think of all the people, OK, Lisa Hansen, Liz Hills, they had all come out here to train. Karen McCloskey; our coxswain, the coxswain for Long Beach; Irene Moreno; Nancy Hilliard, it's all people who had come here to train. Marion Grieg was a woman who came here, she's from Ithaca, Cornell and she stroked the quad. I know she was always trying to beat me. I think of these people who just came here and that was the thing, to beat me. They wanted to be the singles sculler.

Q: When did you meet Debbie Ayers, when did she ...

A: Oh Debbie, probably in '74. I think I must have known her in '72. We'd go down to San Diego. She was rowing at Santa Barbara for a while. She managed our teams.

Q: She was the caring person, she looked out for you guys.

A: Right, yeah, we had all this support group. We were all competing, but Tom was there, and Debbie and other members of the club, different years. We had different guys down there that were part of it, that were helping out and training with us.

Q: Now was you big competition at UCLA?

A: Well, see I only competed in singles. I wasn't even really aware who was picked for the competition in colleges. UCLA was probably good. ... Cal ... San Diego, all during those early '70s those teams started coming up, teams that the colleges didn't have before. They could be nothing one year and within a couple of years be good because people hadn't been doing it that long in the eights.

Q: It was brand new, a brand new Olympic sport.

A: Yeah, yeah. As far as the eights, though, I really didn't pay attention to that. That was really never a goal – to be in an eight. I just wanted to ... It was neat being in the single. Everything you did, everything you did right worked for you, and everything you did wrong you knew it was you. Yeah, you didn't have to depend on everybody else and worry about everybody else getting sick. There were things I liked about the eight, the quad. I rowed in eights, I rowed in a eight in San Diego, we raced. And, we would always win when we put all the scullers together. Even today, I go down and talk to people that have rowed in eights, and they think that people from the sweep teams could do well in the singles or the sculling if they went. But when I was rowing, even in '84, you put all the scullers in a four and we raced in this pre-Olympic race, I don't remember in '83 maybe, or maybe in was in '84, on Lake Casitas, and we beat the people who were the Olympic contenders in the four. And, in Europe the club teams were even more into sculling than sweep. I felt sculling was tougher in Europe. In '75 I came in fifth, and that was in a borrowed boat. It was big. It was a plastic boat that I hadn't rowed before. I thought it was neat because it was plastic, the newest style. But I found out later it was pretty big for me. I was nine seconds back from first place and that was the East German, Christine Scheiblich, who eventually won the Olympics in '76.

Q: And, where did you come in, in '74?

A: In '74 I was seventh, but I think I was as fast as the fifth. Like I said, the races are arranged so the top three get in, not necessarily the top six. I needed to be in the top three and I wasn't. In '75 I came in fifth and then in '76 I had to student teach, there was kind of a pressure because they were changing the credential, the teaching credential and if you didn't student teach that year, then you were going to have to teach more classes. So, you had to. After that you were going to have to teach another class and it would be more time and I thought well, I wanted to keep on rowing, so it would be more time and be real hard to row, so I better get this student teaching in now. It was the fall semester, and it was real scary because I was student teaching and all these other people were just training full time. It was this Olympic year. So and everyone was out here. Jan Palchikoff, she came from UCLA. I talked with her and Diane Bracelan, who was from Vesper. Diane Bracelan was her name, and she'd moved out here and she was from Philadelphia. She was one of those one that were in that group when I started the big power. And, then Lisa Hansen ... Lisa Hansen, who Tom recruited from ... She was from Piedmont. I don't know if she rowed at Oakland or Berkeley. I think she went to Cal State. And, Liz Hill was from New Hampshire, or Boston, Boston actually. Anyway, so a lot of people were out here training and they had a whole house. I remember there was one on Quincy Street that a bunch of them were living in. I don't know how they lived together, but a whole lot of them lived together.

Q: Where did they live?

A: There was a big house on Quincy that about six of them rented.

Q: Was it a two story? I remember going over there once.

A: Yeah, now when did you come here?

Q: '74, 1974, yeah, I do remember that house...

A: Yeah, OK, and then a couple of them were living on the peninsula. Diane and this girl named Wong, who was also ... and so it was real funny. I was still living at home because there was no way I could have ... I mean I worked, but there was no way I could have supported myself and

gone to school. When I was in high school there was no way I dreamed that I would still be living at home when I was in the fourth year of college, or out of college, graduated but, doing my student teaching.

It was real frightening to student teach. It was real hard for me because I felt like I spent a lot of time on lessons. I'd write out these giant lesson plans. I remember that teacher saying, "You shouldn't have to stay here this long. It shouldn't take you that long to write out these lesson plans." But, I am going to do it right at the same time I had this rowing. I knew people that ran the hill and I wasn't able to run the hill because I was teaching. It was real scary. But, it worked out. Then in January, when that was done, I just went full-time training. That was the first year, first time I had ever just trained. Before I had, I'd always kind of worked. I had different jobs on campus. I worked at Electrical Engineering. I worked in the French Department, secretarial, just doing Xeroxing and filing or whatever in those offices. Then I was waitressing, but it seemed like working on campus was less ... When I got those jobs I thought it was really good because I could usually sit down, whereas waitressing is terrible, yeah. I remember sometimes working until 1:00 o'clock and then you'd have to row. That was like in '72. I don't think I waitressed after '72. But '73, '74, '75 I was working on campus. But then '76, my parents let me just train and that was heaven.

Q: When did they have the trials for '76?

A: The trials were in May. Gosh, it was May 9th. I remember because it was a big deal.

Q: And, where were they held?

A: They were held in Long Beach, so it was perfect. They had the nationals here, the trials here.

Q: And, it was the first time you were rowing your own boat?

A: Yeah, it was like things were really coming together. In the trials I raced my own little Fuji, my own Japanese boat. After trials we ordered a new boat.

Then I broke my foot running hills. I did a lot of running and it was a stress fracture. And, now that I think about it, it might have been a thing, I hadn't had my period for a long time, and I don't know what ... all that stuff. I had them cut [the cast] on the sides, so I could take it off the to row, walking with crutches down to the boat. It was a broken metatarsal. It was painful, I mean I couldn't run on it, but it wasn't like it was excruciating pain. If I ran, it was excruciating but I could still train.

And, I remember still going in and training [on the bicycle]. In '73 I took that class with Mastropaolo and that was a bit inspirational, another awakening when I realized how good I was, with all these P.E. majors, and there was the other side of me ...

Q: He was assisting on the bicycle wasn't he?

A: Yeah and training and this class full of P.E. majors and he had us do this 30-minute training. You were supposed to train and get better, and a lot of them, it was like they were dying. Here's a lot of these people who were really into the ball stuff, which I was not into, and I thought, here's my thing. I knew it was. So anyway, I did go back in '76 and train on the bicycles real hard when everyone was running the hills because it was a mental thing for me. I

thought I needed this because the hill was real mental because I could win on the hill and it was excruciating pain running that hill. I thought it helped in the boat, knowing that I can beat everybody. So losing that and missing out on that I was real worried. So I trained real hard with bikes, along with the rowing and weight training. But the trials were in May and so I don't know if we ordered the boat before that happened. We got this Empacher from Germany, which is supposed to be the nicest. It was just beautiful. I had to go pick it up. I don't know how it came. Someone went and picked it up for me at customs. It came in a big crate. It was a big deal to open up this wood, beautiful boat with this black line around the edge of it. It was beautiful wood. And, so I trained in that from May until ...

Q: Were you aware of any of the other people, back to the trials, were you aware of Anita DeFrantz, for example, at the trials in '76?

A: Now in '76, the trials for the sculling were here. [Anita is a sweep rower.] Yeah, see were are really pretty separate the sculling and the sweep. Lot of times we had our camps totally different places and then we'd meet together in Europe.

In '76 yeah, [at the sculling trials] we selected the quad, after the single and then the double. Jan Palchikoff and Diane Bracelan were in the double. Then the quad was Karen McCloskey, who'd been my partner and who was the one who kind of got me going, and Liz Hills and Lisa Hansen, and Claudia. Claudia came back from sweep rowing. She switched from sweep rowing into sculling. I think they were seventh in the Olympics in '76.

Anyway, about the boat in '76 ... So, I took this boat to Hanover, New Hampshire, where we all got together and trained. The sweep rowers, everybody was there. And, I got this new boat, a new American boat, a Van Dusen that I'd never rowed in before. Maybe I had just heard of it that year. The Van Dusen was really fast, so I ended up not even rowing in that Empacher. I raced this Van Dusen, and I still have that boat. I didn't buy it, I mean it was a long story on that one, but anyway that boat ... I finally got to race in a boat was right for me, your own boat essentially. It was on this continent, so I didn't have to pass through a time change, the food wasn't that much different. I just think everything was right.

Q: Let's get into the Olympic, before you get into the actual competition. How about getting your uniforms?

A: Uniforms in '76? Gosh, what about uniforms in '76? Oh, we went ...

Q: I know you guys hated them.

A: Oh, God yes, yeah! One year? Every year they have been ridiculous. I mean, I don't know if it's low bid or whatever it is. I guess they don't pay for them.

Q: Is it the design or what was it?

A: Well, it was, we were saying it was Montgomery Wards I think, and it was supposed to be Halston. I probably have them out in the garage, or maybe we have tossed them. They were long, navy blue, we just used to joke about Salvation Army people. I am sure you have heard this from other '76 people. We got them, they are long, navy blue polyester and dark blue stockings, and navy blue shoes and this ...

Q: And, they were shapeless ...

A: Yeah, it was just ugly.

Q: And, then you had a sweat suit, or what else did you have?

A: Well, what we ended up wearing is ... I think we had blue kind of polyester pants, and these we called them marshmallow jackets. They were white puffy jackets, and that's what they ended up actually wearing because these other things were just hideous. They were just funny. People modeling them, just how funny the stuff was, how silly it was.

Q: Where were you when you ...

A: When we got this stuff? In New York, across from Lake Champlain ... Lake Placid, Lake Placid, New York. We were there for a few days before we went over to...

Q: Were you at all aware of the political problems leading up to '76?

A: No, you mean with Montreal?

Q: China and then with the South African thing...

A: I don't remember, but I was so into my rowing, so focused and I was teaching. I don't remember being aware of it until I got there.

Q: To Montreal? Or to Lake Placid?

A: Well, maybe to until I was on the team. But see, I think it was also because that didn't affect us. There weren't Chinese rowers. There weren't African rowers so ...

Q: Except the one time the United States was going to pull out, were you ever aware of that, that they were going to pull out of the Olympic Games in '76, when you were in New York?

A: I don't remember. Did other people say they all knew, I mean that you've interviewed?

Q: Athletes don't usually know what's going on.

A: Yeah, I don't remember that.

Q: OK, so you are in New York and you get ready and then how do you go across the boarder from New York to Montreal?

A: It seemed like we were in vans because I remember leaving Lake Placid and people being out. I have pictures that I took, "Win A Gold Medal," "Bring Back A Gold Medal," or "Happiness Is A Gold Medal" ... Kids out in the he street. I don't even know how far it is, but I remember like being on a ferry-type boat too. Maybe crossing Lake Champlain ... I don't remember how long it took.

Q: Do you remember arriving in Montreal?

A: I remember arriving in Montreal. I remember because I have these pictures that I took too. I had pictures of Shirley Babashoff. She was kind of tense at processing, getting into the Village. She was outside and was tense. I remember the swim team was there, and she was famous. She was famous. Yeah.

Q: When you arrived at the athletes Village were you aware of all the military around, the security?

A: Yeah, security, security. We were real aware of security by that time because we knew after what happened in '72 there would be all the process, having the credentials and everything. So by that time, we were aware and it was fine. I thought, if that's what they have to do ... It's sad what they had to do that in '76 because I remembered in '72 remember one time I got in ... I got in from the boat house, wearing sweats, with the New Zealander's in their bus. Whereas, in Montreal the busses are outside and you are coming in, getting checked off.

Q: What were your thoughts, who was your biggest competition did you think.

A: In '76? The East Germans. And, I'd have to look back in '75 when they won everything. They were just way out there. And, so in '76 I knew Christine ...

Q: Had you considered at all, or had you thought about steroids because the '76 were called the "Anabolic Games."

A: Drugs? I guess I had faith in this testing, that that would work. I used to question the Russians. I think the Russians had gotten caught. Probably there were races they didn't go to because ... Although the other thing was that there was this mystic about them and about they train so hard. John had this one acquaintance, a man on the East German team, that he'd known since '68. We'd talk with him at different times and I remember him telling what mileage they do, and that's all they do and they get an apartment and a car. So you think ...

Q: ... that's all they do.

A: Yeah, so my, I think my thought was, well gee, that's all they do. That's just all they do and there's this giant motivation. And, at the same time there's a thought, although she didn't look ... It wasn't like Christine ... Now the other ones, there were other ones that were real big, but she didn't look ... She's strong, but she didn't look ... have any look like she's on drugs. She wasn't. I don't know if she was taller than I was or about the same size. She's thicker. I was like 140 when I was racing so I wasn't very thick compared to a lot of rowers anyway. Yeah, I think they thought about it, but I don't think anybody really ... No one knew. And, they didn't get caught in testing. It was kind of the same thing with the swimmers as with the rowers ... with women's swimming and the women dominating everything. In Montreal, I think they won everything, the East Germans, the women, but not the men.

Q: But some of the American swimmers were rather outspoken about it too, the same with the rowers.

A: Right, yeah, I remember that. Now I look back on it, all I was doing was training. I was training real hard, three work outs a day. You think, well they've got this blood, they can test their blood and know when they can train again and so you have this mystic that they know all the tricks, but maybe it's not illegal. I like to think now that she was on drugs then and so then I'd say, "I would have won. I was .06 of a second off." That would be a big feather in my cap to

find out, get to Christine Scheiblich and say, "Did you take?" No, but I'll never know. I don't know, I'll never know, yeah.

Q: Would you describe your practices prior to the Games themselves once you arrived in Montreal?

A: Yeah, I am trying to remember how early we arrived before the actual opening ceremonies. But the practices ... We'd go to the course, and the course was really nice. It was just a 2,000-meter course, like a big swimming pool, but just for rowing. It was a beautiful course. So we did a lot of practice on the course and you could do time pieces. It wouldn't seem like we would do a lot of hard work because you are tapering down. We stayed at Lake Placid. I mean we were at Lake Placid pretty close to before the Games started, where we got processing.

We did sprints, shorter than the distance of the race, and then just long steady-state pieces getting used to the course, getting used to the markings on, what you are going to do strategy-wise, trying different lanes. That was the main thing, getting the boat set and ready, or you'd try different oars depending on which way the winds were going, headwind, tailwind, that type of thing.

There was on the day of the finals, there was ... Can I say it? Unfair advantages or unfair disadvantages by lanes for the last 250 meters of the course. It was a very strong headwind, a quartering headwind, meaning it's coming off where the stands were for the last 250 meters of the race. The wind was coming from that direction, coming from behind the stands towards the course. I was in the farthest lane over, farthest lane away from those stands, and the woman who won was in the second lane from those stands. So, the rough water and the headwind made a difference. At the time, though, I don't remember thinking about that so much, but it was a difference. If you look at pictures of the race, you can see that the water was much rougher in my lane. The further you got from those grandstands, the rougher the water was.

Q: So the grandstands were protecting it. Talk to me about strategy.

A: In our race you are going backwards. I mean you are looking at who's behind you. It's not like running a race where you would have to turn around to see who's there and where you are. I was in lane one, the Russian ... I mean I was in lane six, the Russian was in lane one and the East German was in lane two. So they are as far away as you can get from me. And, they ended up being, first and third. The strategy is just you want to get a good start, be right on the start, meaning right when they give the signal to start at that time. It's since changed. It was in French, "Êtes-vous prêt?" You want to make sure you were right on. I was, but someone else had false started in the race. In rowing you get two. You get a false start and then the next one you are out. It tends to make everybody kind of stay back. I am trying to remember if they delayed the races or what. There was some reason why we didn't have too much time [at the start]. Either we had a lot of warm up time or ... Anyway, I got on the line on time. It just seemed like it was kind of hassled ... I am trying to remember what happened exactly. There was something different that happened at the start. I look at the pictures and at the start, and I feel like I was right on. I wasn't jumping it, but my oars are moving more than other peoples are. So, I got an OK start, right off the line. About a quarter of the race in I was in fourth or fifth and the first place was the Dutch woman, who ended up not getting the medals, but she had gone way out, jumped out, way out.

What I am saying as far as the strategy is you've got to race your own race, but you don't want to be so far behind to give the other people psychological advantage because they can see you.

They see where you are. My strategy was just, you go out hard and maybe 30 or 40 strokes of the start real hard and then you ... They used to say that you settled. There used to be a thing where you would call it settle after you do a 30- or 40-stroke start you would settle into a little bit lower stroke and then you would do power 10s along the way. And, I do remember planning that. I was going to do a power 10 at the 500. So, it seems like I was rowing as hard as I could, but then I remember, OK, now I'm at the 500 I've got to do this power 10. I distinctly remember doing that and thinking that I was moving. But, I didn't really realize ... I think about maybe over half way into the race, maybe three-quarters of the race, I remember looking back and counting how many were there, and thinking, my God, I am in third, I am in the medals. And, just not believing in seeing that the Russian was back. I remember getting in the bus with her and looking at her arms. She was over 6'2" or 6'3" and thinking ... She rowed a real low stroke. I think she rowed like 29 strokes a minute and I was probably like 36 strokes a minute. It's not necessarily how you look, but I did remember thinking about it and thinking, boy I've got to beat that. But I'd say for my strategy, it was just, row your own race and just row as hard as you can and just go for it, and take a 10 and take another 10. That's what I remember doing, just going. So, just going and going and not thinking about settling for anything less than the most I can do.

Q: Now was it the same strategy in the heats? Did you have heats?

A: I the heats? No, Christine Scheiblich was in my heat, the one who eventually won. She was my first heat so I had to ... and she won that, and she was like four or five seconds ahead of me in that heat. I had to go into the semi-finals or into a repechage, but I had to race again. The strategy in those was you want to qualify.

I remember distinctly thinking in that finals race that this is it. This is it. This is everything. Plus, along the side there was a truck or a station wagon that coaches could ride in. Tom, my coach, and John, he's my boyfriend at the time and now my husband, they were both in that truck. So, even though there was a lane disadvantage, from the wind, when I remember lining up for the start and looking over and they were right there. Yeah, it was wonderful. But they couldn't, they weren't allowed, you are not allowed to yell anything. The coaches aren't allowed. It's coaching from the sidelines, so they couldn't yell anything. But, knowing they were there and then being able to see where I was, and knowing that I was ... I thought I was in third. I didn't realize how close I was to pulling up on Christine at the end. To be .06 seconds back. People always say, "Well, she was way far away. If you'd known where you were, could you ... " And, I am like, my feeling is that if I could have, I would have.

Q: That's not very long!

A: .06, no it's not very much.

Q: I saw that race and how could you actually measure it? Is it very distinct in a boat because of the length of the boat?

A: You mean when they measure? They have bow balls. You mean exactly when the bow ball crosses, you mean how they measure .06?. Yeah, when the bow ball crosses the line, and they have photo finishes, this line, set up on the camera. So its ...

Q: Very precise? Obviously ...

A: Yeah, yeah and there have been ones where we ... In '84 I remember that we won by less than that in a heat, which was a real ... I think it was by .001, or .002 , and they show this photo finish and its just, nothing that you can see. But mine, it was .06. You can see it.

Q: And, when you crossed the line were you, exhausted, exhilarated?

A: I'd say exhilarated and exhausted. I don't remember the exhausted part. I'd look over and, and I'd see it was me, its her. She's the only one there, and then the Russians started coming in. The Russian was three or four seconds back, a sizable margin back, still finishing the race. I had looked over and then they flashed it up. They flashed up the results. It was the best feeling in the world, and to have Tom and John right there. I knew my parents were in the stands. They had never seen me race internationally before, so it was perfect. Well, perfect would have been ... and that's what I hate when I see on the Olympics, things like, oh, they got the silver medal or they got the bronze medal. To me, I was nine seconds back the year before, and to get the silver medal and especially, with the East Germans, with how they just dominated things ...

Q: Where was your race, do you remember as far as the other races, because I remember being out at the rowing event getting tired of hearing the East German national anthem.

A: Mine was near the beginning because I know that the eight came after mine. I know I was the first woman from the United States to get the medal. So it was near the beginning, but it wasn't the first. Quad might have been before.

Q: Did you realize the time, you hadn't ... Do they usually tell you the time?

A: No, they flash it up. Then you see it. I couldn't believe it. It was just a thing I couldn't believe because I hadn't raced a lot of the Europeans. I knew some of the women in my race. The Dutch woman that I said went out so fast, this was '76, but in '72 she had won the gold medal in the single, or '71, no '72, she won the gold medal in the single and I knew that. There was a Bulgarian in the race and Bulgaria always had fast rowers, single scullers. And, Hungary. They were all in my race, were all Eastern Bloc countries except for me and the Dutch. The Dutch, who was already a gold medalist, and the other four were Eastern Bloc, which had pretty much dominated most of the competition. So, I had no idea where I was going to be. I knew I was fast, but since I hadn't raced anybody I didn't know how fast I was. That was all a surprise and a wonderful surprise.

Q: How did you feel standing on the podium?

A: Oh, it was unbelievable. Even now I think about it. Lord Killanin presented the medal and it was nice. You get out of the boat and they had people all in uniform holding your boat for you. You come up there. You are in your socks. But it was great and all the people There were so many people that I knew in the stands. I never experienced that before, I mean racing internationally and have people yelling in such a big race.

Q: Who knew who you were.

A: Yeah, that was great. I guess people were yelling USA during my race, but I wasn't aware of that. I did know people were screaming, but you don't know if they are screaming for you or who they are screaming. You just know they are screaming. Everyone told me afterwards, "Oh I though you were going to catch her." I realized that I was pulling up and also my forte has

really been distance. I was usually better for distance than for sprints, so I always think, if it had been a longer race, it would have been better for me. But then, the East Germans would have had people that were trained for long races, so I don't know. It was a thrill. It was just so wonderful. I think how terrible it would have been to be on the opposite side having been a medalist, or a gold medalist the year before and then getting silver, but it was just ... It was perfect.

Q: What did Tom say do you remember?

A: Oh, I don't remember what he said to me, but they were happy. They were thrilled, both of them in the truck and looking over. It was just great to have them right there when I got done. I don't know where they were when I got the medal, but then I know my parents were up in the stands for that. So that was neat.

Q: Real exciting. So then what did you do after your event? The next ... did you stay out there for the rest of the ...

A: Yes, I stayed. Right after it you get out of the boat and I put my sweats on and I went out to the stands. There is a place where athletes can watch, too. I watched the races. After that I came out and my parents were out there outside the stadium. I saw my parents. My dad was just going nuts because he'd always been ... Like I said, I was the only ... He didn't have a son, so he'd always been my biggest supporter.

I was trying to remember, I was with Tom and John [who] met me at the dock after I got the medal. Oh, I know what happened. It wasn't right away that I got to the stands because I had to do drug testing. Yeah, and it took me forever.

Q: Tell us about that.

A: Now, I remember that part and it was terrible. I couldn't get out right away because I couldn't go. You are drinking all this liquid and I just couldn't go. Yeah, and it seemed like I always got called to the drug test a lot of places. It's supposed to be random, but I think they also do it to the finalists, the medalists. So that was a little bit of a downer. Yeah, right away they come up to you and you've got to report to this drug ...

Q: What do they say to you?

A: I think they give you a paper that tells you that you have to go. You have to go report to so and so. I mean that's what they did then. I remember a lot of times having to go. It always took me a long time. People come in there and before a race I want to go to the bath room 10 or 15 times before the race. So it was always difficult. So right after racing then I went and watched the rest of the races and saw the women's eight get the bronze medal and that was all real exciting. But I remember being outside with my dad, and him telling people. It was quite embarrassing, not ... Well, it was people who knew my dad that he was always telling everybody. Yeah, yeah real proud.

Q: Now what about the rest of the Olympic Games, what did you do?

A: Then after that, I still stayed in the village. The men's rowing was still after that. John Van Blom was rowing in the quadruple sculls and that's the first time that men's quadruple sculls had been in the Olympics, so that was a big deal. They ended up coming in sixth, but they had

some problems. Their original coach had a heart attack so there were a lot of problems with the boat. I stayed to watch that in the men's races. You get your credentials that let you into everything, so we went to a lot of track events. You could just get on the bus and go to these places.

Q: Do you remember which events you were at in track and field particularly?

A: Well, I remember seeing John Walker. So I was at the 1,500. And, Bruce Jenner, the decathlon. Those were the big ones.

Q: Yeah, that was the big disappointment though because John Walker was to run against the African and they had had the boycott. By about this time did you know about the boycott, the pullout?

A: We knew about the boycott when we arrived. And, I don't know if we learned before then, but when we did the ceremony, when each team arrived, they did a flag raising ceremony within the village. You wear your uniform and they take pictures. I remember looking up at those flags, and they weren't there. I am trying to remember if they were there and they took them down or they just weren't ever there.

Q: I think they were there and they took them down because the African athletes were there and it was the big competition between John Walker and Filbert Bayi from Kenya and I had been in the restaurant, the restaurant across from the Village with Bud and his wife, I think that's who it was and he found out and it was devastating that he was not going to compete. And, it was the big competition between him and John Walker because they had both been breaking the world's records, and so you saw that? And, you saw Bruce Jenner win?

A: They took them down, yeah. Oh, my goodness ... yeah, God, the two world's records, yeah, yeah, yeah so that was a major deal. That was wonderful to be there for that.

Q: Do you remember any others?

A: We went to a volleyball ... You mean at the track? I don't remember any other track. Dwight Stones was there in the rain? Yeah, I remember that, watching that and how people were... They were booing him. That was bad. And, I do remember seeing Kathy Schmidt.

I don't know if it was Dwight Stones or Kathy Schmidt complaining about the conditions in the Village. I just realized how spoiled some of the athletes were. I don't know if I was jealous or what because just for us to be there was like ... I mean in the Village ... It wasn't finished. There were parts that were bad, but it was still exciting and wonderful to be there. And, I just thought it sounded so crass to complain.

Q: Were you aware of, did you get to talk at all to the Eastern Bloc athletes because I noticed that they were very protected?

A: No. Christine Scheiblich, I asked to trade her a shirt. You do that, trade shirts and no the East Germans didn't do that very much. I'd never had one before, but I asked her somehow with hand signs because she didn't ... I don't think she spoke English, or not much, and she secretly did it. She went in the bathroom at the course and brought it out to me, just kind of

handed it to me without ... like snuck it to me. It was really a thing she wasn't supposed to do, trade them. So that was kind of neat and I have that.

Q: And, none of the other Eastern Bloc athletes were around the Village. They seemed to be protected when I was there.

A: I don't remember specifically seeing them, but I do remember seeing Olga Korbut there. I don't remember seeing the rowers in the Village. They must have been in there. I remember somewhere where there was a medal standings, maybe that was someplace where the East Germans had it up, a chalk board with how many, what teams had won, how many medals.

Q: They were kind of rubbing it in?

A: Yeah, it was all kind of crummy.

Q: So did you participate in the he Closing Ceremonies?

A: Yes, and that I got to ...

Q: Were you disappointed that you didn't participate in the Opening Ceremonies?

A: Well, it was my choice. Tom kind of recommended it and in the end given the result, I am glad I didn't. I did go and watch them. I had never marched in them before anyway, so I didn't really know. I could see what I was missing, but to know the feeling ... to just be there was pretty neat. To me though, I mean there was a lot of things I'd sacrificed up until that. When we'd go on these trips to Europe, we'd be invited out to parties and things beforehand, and there were other activities before the Olympics and most of the time I wouldn't go. Most people would.

Q: You were well disciplined.

A: That's what I mean. I felt like I sacrificed so much, or not sacrificed. I'd made these choices not to do these things because I wanted to be the best I could be. And, that was to not go and stand for a couple of hours. Not to know, what we'd be doing for those hours prior to the Opening Ceremonies. And, I remember thinking, boy I am glad I am not down there standing because it's something that I wasn't used to doing, two days before my race. I don't know if it would have an effect or not, but I didn't want to take any chances. I'd do it again. Not in '84. We did march because it was more days before.

Q: Now tell me about the Closing Ceremonies. Was that fun? It looked like a lot of fun.

A: Yeah, it was real fun. We had the Indian things or what was it? Yeah, the big circles. At first I thought it was just selected people that were going to go out, and the athletes ended up ... then everybody came down. But, I was one of the ones marching at the beginning. I remember John Naber, we were all kind of walking together, and he took my hand. I don't remember if I cried but, thinking that this was just wonderful. And, the stress, the worries were over and then to have the medal and to have it all turn out OK and it was just ...

Q: Did you wear the medal in the Closing Ceremonies?

A: I don't really remember.

Q: Did you put your medal in a special place once you received it?

A: I guess I just had it with my stuff in the Village. I don't remember. Yeah, it does seem crazy now, but it doesn't seem like such a threat at the time, hide it with your things. I don't remember doing anything else special with it. Oh, people got theirs stolen on the trip home. I am trying to remember if Claudia did or not. But some people, other friends of ours, Germans that we'd known, took a trip afterwards around the United States got their car broken into. This was later on, not in Montreal. But I don't remember if I hid it or I wore it all the time. Maybe I did. I may have. I remember going out to dinner that night with my parents and I don't think John went with us, and wearing it then. Yeah, yeah it was real neat. I know we had parties and they have always had this big FISA, the International Rowing Federation ... I don't remember having it on them. So, I don't know.

Q: So what did you do after the Games?

A: After the Games were over John, another friend and I drove back across country in the van, John's van from Montreal. I had never driven across country before.

Q: That was exciting wasn't it, a good release.

A: It was lots of fun. Yeah, it was something. I'd been not taking any real vacations, not that that was. It was just driving home, but we stopped places and camped. We went to Maine and, going through New York and the other places. We had friends. We stopped where we had friends. Then Colorado, places I had never been. So that was real fun.

I didn't think I was going to train again because I was coming back and looking for a job. I came back and I did go up to Reed College and interviewed for a job up there. I didn't get it, but I really couldn't imagine me going up there, just moving up there. The only job offer that I remember was at Long Beach. They called me right away. I'd already put my application in before, and I hadn't heard anything before the Olympics. So, I always think when people say, "What'd you get out of it?" Well, I got a job out of it.

Q: And, your first job was at?

A: Was at Marshall Junior High. So I moved out that summer. The Olympics were over at the end of July or early August. We did this trip and then I did this interview for the job and then I remember I had some wisdom teeth out, went to Catalina with John's family and then I looked for an apartment. Just kind of getting my life, starting my life, was really what it was. I'd been kind of putting it on hold. I was 23. So, finally moved out. Once I got the job then I got an apartment right away. So it was all exciting, too.

Q: What did you think about training? Did you have any ambitions to ...

A: I thought I wouldn't because it would just ... thinking that it would be too hard to do it and teach. I was going to work full time. And, although, I had been working and going to school, it wasn't the same as having a new job and putting in the hours to get used to a new job. But I also remember when we were packing up the boat in Montreal ... because after [the competition] you always have to rig and derig these. I always hated that but, it's all part of doing it, loading up. After your race you are tired, but it's kind of fun when everybody's doing it there also. I remember undoing the boat and thinking about how we were going to pack it up. It was

the boat that I'd rowed. And, Tom saying, "Well so and so," this other woman that I knew was ... I remember he said, "Ann Warner, she'll be rowing this next year and making ..." Tom always said things like that to me all through while I was training. It was probably all a ploy to get me fired up to train. And, I remember that hurting, saying that someone else would be in the single next year other than me. You these, these other women that I knew wanted to go for the single. Had gone for it that year. At least Ann Warner was in the eight that won the bronze. A lot of these woman thought, oh now I am going to go in the single. I remember that, going, oh well. But, I don't remember thinking that I was going to train for '77. I did come back and I remember teaching. I don't know how long it was before ... but I always wanted to keep rowing. It wouldn't be that I would just quit training or quit working out because I loved it so much. But the actual, the weight training and the running and all the other stuff that goes with it, I don't remember when exactly that happened, but it had to be in the fall, probably in October, maybe even September. Tom was willing to coach again. There were still people that wanted to train and I think he probably kept me going by saying these women ... I know I was still a lot faster than ...

Q: He said they would take your place.

A: Yeah, I think that knowing that I could still win in the single ... why quit? Or maybe wanting to show that I was still good. But it was real hard. It was real hard training and working that first year. I remember a lot of ...

Q: Was it hard to get motivated?

A: Well, motivated I was just tired, but I was thinking I was going to come back and win a gold, and try for the gold. In retrospect when I think about how I trained before '76, to not have, that spring semester anyway, not working and just training and how I worked so hard ... In '77, I was still real fast but I was going on all the training I'd had, that big base from '76. I really couldn't work out. I just didn't have the energy to work out as hard as I did. I need a lot of sleep. I would always take a nap before my afternoon workout if I could. So, in '77 I'd row in the the morning and then go to work and then near the springtime would go and run hills because I had a big lunch. Run hills in the middle of the day and then go our out again in the afternoon. It was just exhausting and still have to do work, prepare, because of all the preparation for my first year. I coached things. I was coaching almost everything there was to coach. Junior high, it was low key, but still you wanted to do a good job. So anyway, they had the nationals first and then the [national team] trials in '77. In '77 it was real hard to do the trials. I won the trials in '77. I ended up being fifth at the World Championships.

Q: Which were at?

A: Amsterdam. Conditions in Amsterdam were real fast. You get this. I don't know if it's the current or what it is there, but you can get real fast times compared to the year before. I was fifth again, and it was just like, OK, I don't want to do this anymore. This isn't fun. To be on top of the world, .06 out of first, and then to be fifth. It seems like I was like maybe four or five seconds back from first. It wasn't close. So, that was terrible. I was going to quit for sure, and then '78, I met some people from Japan. Tom had talked a lot to these Japanese people. We always liked talking to the Japanese, although the Japanese didn't have any women rowers there. But, Tom always liked to think he'd he was going to make big trips. I remember he arranged this trip to go to Japan and coach the scullers, the national team for a month or six weeks. Then I got involved. He got me to go, too. This businessman would sponsor it because I think – I don't know – he wanted me to go to show, to beat the men, to show the men how slow

they were because Japan was notoriously slow, like a minute back in these 2,000-meter races for the men. So, I had this motivation in '78 to at least be in shape enough to go to Japan and race. The [US national team] trails were going to be after I got back from Japan. I did end up going to the trials for the World Championships, which were in New Zealand that year. So, it was a great year and a year that I couldn't pass up.

Q: Did you enjoy New Zealand? What time of the year was it?

A: It was October, late October or early November. I remember we were there during Halloween, so it was October-November. Looking back at it, I don't know how I ever thought I wouldn't try for the New Zealand trip. Oh I remember what it was, I thought I wouldn't do New Zealand because it was in October-November and I would have to take off from my job and it'd be a big hassle. I was going to do this Japanese thing and that would be my big trip, but then I trained really hard in Japan because that's all I did – trained. We did sightseeing, but the fun part was training with these Japanese guys, with these long rows and weight training. It was fun because I was training with the men. I know that this guy who sponsored me really wanted me to show how hard you can work. It was just Tom and I that were there from the United States. So it was just a wonderful trip, but at the same time I was getting faster. So, I came back and went to the trials and won those. And, it was the year that Proposition 13 passed and they were giving lay off notices to teachers. I got one that you could be laid off. I think that happened in June or July or something. So, I was able to say, "Well I planned on going on this trip because I thought I wouldn't be working." So, when I got the job, they let me take off and it worked out great. I was teaching, working full time again and then went to these races.

Q: Where were they held?

A: They were held at Lake Karapiro. We stayed in a city called Hamilton. Karapiro, it was just great being there. It was just so beautiful. Every noon they had beer, everything on the radio was all about the rowing. Everyone from New Zealand came to these rowing races, it seemed. They had a giant turn out. I was going to say about the beer, they even had beer cans and milk cartons with the rowers on them. It was something that you wouldn't have here, to see beer cans with rowers on them. It was real exciting. But, I came in fifth there too. The reason I did so well in '76 was that I just trained full time. It really, really takes an edge off when you've got to work full time, eight to 10 hours a day.

Q: Then you don't have the focus.

A: Yeah, you've got this other stuff going on. It was frustrating to a lot of the rowers in the United States. A lot of them are wealthy. They come from families where they are able to just take off and move to another place where the coach is. They move there and just get by working, but not doing much. [They were] able to go and race in these big races like the Head of the Charles that they have in Boston. I could never do that. I could never afford to go back there and take off from work. A lot of people just took it for granted that they'd do that. So, I think I was always a little jealous or envious of these women rowers that did come from families with more money. It would have been nice to go and compete in Europe and have a boat over there. It takes a lot of money to do it in the way, but that really needs to be done. I feel I had I was real fortunate that I had the coach because that was the big deal having Tom there. That was a big plus for me that a lot of people didn't have ... Was such supporter and so great, such a motivator. People who were the single scullers, Anne Marden could go live in Europe and train, just things I couldn't do. But, I got a lot out of it.

Q: And, then you came back, and what happened?

A: So in '78 I did the Japanese trip and then I did the New Zealand trip. That was around November. Then the next year, John, my husband, was coaching ...

Q: So when did you get married in all of this?

A: We married in '85. We got married after the sculls. It was never that we could really take the time. It was just too much hassle. We started living together around 1980. John had been coaching in '78 and in '77. He coached Liz and Lisa. So there was a motivator there, it was hard for me to have him coaching and to be so involved. Here he is coaching women of all things, not even coaching men. So, that was always there too, but in '79 he was still going to coach Liz and Lisa because he'd coached them and they'd been very successful. They got two bronze medals in the double and nobody had ever done that for the United States. And, so he was coaching them and I was going to go in the single, or trying for the single again in '79.

In '79 and then '80, while in I was in Detroit for the nationals, Bill Smoke, whose wife was Olympics in kayaks, Marcia ... She won some medals I think. Anyway, they were in Detroit and he was real interested in sponsoring or helping me out in '79-'80 so I could just train. And, so he did that. He had a kayak business. So, I worked for him. He also sold rowing jewelry and I did a little bit of that. He also helped me out financially so I could train and not work. That was '79-'80, and that was fantastic, except for when it all came crashing down in February, when the news ...

Q: OK, walk me through that time and exactly what you were doing.

A: I didn't work '79-'80, I took off. I did have to resign from the school district even though I had three years of full-time teaching. Long Beach School District was pretty sticky and they wouldn't ... You didn't have tenure so ... Each year I had been a temporary contract. So, when it came down to asking, it wasn't that I could really ask for a leave of absence because I wasn't employed until I started teaching that year. So, I resigned. That was scary. I really liked the school. I really liked being at Marshall. I really wanted to go back there, but I had to resign.

And, the training, it was just myself and a few other people here in Long Beach, but we were training. Tom wasn't the national sculling coach. I don't think he'd be designated. I remember it was John that was doing the sculling. I don't remember who did the quad, if it was Tom too, but Tom was coaching me in '79. I remember that he had to pay his way to New Zealand. Tom was on the outs a lot with the committee, so it was kind of tough that way. But in '79-'80, I was doing a lot of weights just training. I thought I was real fast.

I don't remember exactly when I'd heard it. There had been news about it, with this Afghanistan thing, the Russians invading Afghlympians Oral History Project.anistan and Carter talking about that. I remember around February hearing about it. And, I remember being over at John's. I used to lift weights at John's, he had a workshop, and thinking, they are not really going to do it. We are just going to keep on training because they just really couldn't do this. And, I just kept training, and thinking that no, they are not really going to do it. I'm still going to the trials in May. I think until it actually happened, after the trials, we were still on the team and did the whole deal, the Olympic team. I won the trials. They were in Princeton. There was a lot of competition but, I won. It wasn't close that I remember. Here I was a single sculler and felt that I was the fastest I had ever been because I had a whole year off to train and not really believing it until, maybe June or July.

then I got the job back. I got a job still in Long Beach, but at Lakewood High School. There was a woman who was a principal at Lakewood who really helped me get the job. She was also in personnel. Helen Hansen, she helped me.

Q: Was Jan Prince the athletic director?

A: Yeah, I think it was athletic director. Lakewood, it was really a lot of fun because I had been at junior high, which was nice. I liked the junior high kids, but we didn't have a lot of teaching, not the experience of being in a high school. The first year I coached the swimming team, varsity swimming. I coached JV basketball and I co-sponsored the drill team. It was like a joke and then in the off season I had the badminton during the off-season class. I had like every class. It wasn't like I was teaching different subjects, but it was different sports and different activities. I remember basketball. We coached from 5:00 to 7:00, gym time, it was coaching time. It was terrible. I didn't really row, but I did start running more. That was '81, and then '82 was the first marathon in Long Beach, the Long Beach Marathon.

Q: Did you run in that?

A: Yeah, and I really started running a lot. I mean I didn't train, nothing like I did for rowing because I was still working and I just didn't want to do it. I didn't want to train in anything as hard as I did in rowing, but I was successful in running, in local races. I'd win a lot of 10Ks and, I was pretty fast. I wasn't fast nationally, but locally I was fast. In the summer of '81, I did get asked to coach at the Sports Festival in rowing.

Q: And, where was that?

A: It's in Syracuse ... and John was still ... No, John didn't coach that year either. So I just coached the Sports Festival and that was interesting. I'd never been to a Sports Festival before because I had always been on the national team. Usually for the national team you weren't always in the Sports Festival. The Sports Festival was kind of like the B team, but it was a good experience. And, in '82 I was still running and that's when they had the Long Beach Marathon, and I ended up being the fifth women, but I went out way too hard. Joe Carlson was a marathon runner. He was the director then. He'd help me out a lot, gave me a training schedule, and really helped, what I should do building up to the race. I'd been right on target, done a lot of 21 milers, did all the preparation I was supposed to do, I thought. And, I'd done a lot of fast 10Ks for me and I set a pace. This was what pace I was going to run in the marathon and I started the marathon and I just felt great and I just went out way too fast. The first 10 miles I ran like a six-minute pace. I ran like an hour, which I means in 10 miles I'd done six minutes [a mile] and I just died. And, I wouldn't have finished the race except for that it was in Long Beach and I had all these people that knew I was running. I finished in 3:12. I watched as people passed me because I just ran a real stupid, stupid race. But, I still finished fifth, so that was OK.

That was February of '82 and then in '82, the summer, I coached again. They asked me to coach again at the Sports Festival and I did that. That was in Indianapolis. And, that was the first time I'd been in Indianapolis and that was a lot of fun. And, that year or the year before I ended up coaching Ginny Gilder. She ended up in '83 being the single sculler in the nationals, and got a bronze in the World Championships. But then in '84 the trials, she'd been injured and she didn't do very well, but ended up racing with me in the quad in '84. So anyway, that was '82. In '83 John had been asked to be the Olympic coach. I don't remember when he knew exactly. But I think '82 he coached and it was real hard for me. In '82 he was coaching and he

went to Europe. During that summer that was terrible. And, that's when I got to coach in Indianapolis but it wasn't the same as what he was doing. That was kind of bad and got me realizing, I need to do something, but I didn't want to row. It was just too hard to row. And, I thought I was too far out of it. But then in '83, I had been asked to coach the Pan American team. It was the first time women rowers would be in the Pan American Games and they were just taking a double and single. So, I was going to get the leftovers from the national team. John was coaching the national team. We were all in Hanover, New Hampshire, where they were doing the selection process and then I saw who I was coaching and it ended up being Monica Hevelka and Anne Marden in the double. That was great, and then the single was Chris Ernst, who rowed as a lightweight a lot of times. She just missed being in the national team. But during this training time in Hanover, John had me get in the boat sometimes because he needed another person maybe to race two quads. Or, I would fill in where he needed someone to row. When I wasn't doing that or coaching, I would just go out in somebody's single there. And, I realized while I was rowing, hey, I can do this. This isn't so bad. I think I can. This is a possibility. I just remember rowing the quad, thinking I can do this still. And, then knowing that John was going to be the coach in '84, that was just going to drive me crazy. And, it was going to be here. So I think I still had doubts though if I could do it for sure.

Anyway, we went to Pan Ams in Caracas, Venezuela, and that was a real experience. An interesting thing there was Chris Ernst. She's been a light weight. I don't know how much she weighs, 130, 135, but she's very, very muscular, defined. I remember the doctors, the sports doctors on our team calling her in a few times, talking to her about steroids. She wasn't doing steroids and she was real upset about it. She's real outspoken for women's sports and it was real hard on her. I remember her crying. It was just real upsetting that someone was doing this to her and making innuendoes that she'd been doing steroids and she hadn't. She saying just woman trained me. Anyway, both of them won in '83 in Caracas, Monica and Anne won the double. So that was neat because I was coach of these two teams that I really hadn't done too much for, but I had to do rigging. There was a lot of rigging. The course was an hour from our village, and the village in Caracas. It was an athletes' village, and it was just not finished. I remember we got Snickers candy bars because Snickers or somebody, Mars or somebody, was sponsoring. You'd come back in your room and they'd been eaten by rats. This place was just a joke. It was raw cement, really terrible, no hot water. At first when we got there, there was no water, it was just ... but it was still funny. Well, it wasn't funny. It was real interesting. But I had a good time with Monica there.

Anyway, I came back. I don't remember where I talked to him the first time or how it happened or what, but Dr. Mastropaolo from Cal State had this training idea. And, maybe it was even before, maybe the spring of '83 when I started doing it. It must have been the spring of '83 because I wouldn't have done it in the fall because in the fall I started with everybody, John's group. I was training with him trying to see if this was going to work. His idea was this kind of thing where you didn't have to train very much. You had to train real intense. It was real intense on a measured course. You'd do these short pieces, very intense and he would measure it. He would be mad at me if he heard me talking. I can't remember how he measured it. We trained over in Marina Pacifica, in this small little area off Marina Pacifica, in this small channel. While everyone else was training in the spring for the the '83 worlds, national teams, and I was doing this, just seeing if this was going to be some magical way I could get faster. He really thought it would. He really wanted ... I was willing to give it a try. If I don't have to do all these long, long rows and I can do this with real intense ... With me the problem is to do that day after day just as hard as you can go in short things, it was hard mentally to do. Theoretically, it sounded good. In practice for me, I needed to have people to race because I like to win. I like to beat people. And, I didn't have that with this kind of training. I needed someone next to me. This is

terrible to say, but I really know that what made me work is ... is beating people, doing a piece and looking over and seeing that I am winning. It is worth it. It was worth it for the pain. It wasn't worth the pain to just go against the clock. I couldn't make myself hurt as much as I could make myself hurt and know that I was going to win.

That was the spring of '83. Mastropaolo really got me back in the boat and believing that I could do it. Then when I came back in the fall I started training with John's group, all the rowers that were here to train. I quit my job again ... Oh no, this time Helen Hansen was the principal and if I came back to work the first days of '83, in the fall of '83, then I'd get my tenure and I could take a leave of absence. So I did that. I wouldn't necessarily be back at Lakewood. I really wanted to go back to Lakewood because I really liked it there. I ended up not having those next two years to coach. I said the first year I'd coached everything in the world. The next year, I just coached cross country and track. That's what I didn't say in '82. I was doing this training. I could run with my cross country team too. So anyway, that's going into '84. OK so, get back from Caracas and me not going to work. I'm living with John and I was going to substitute. I substitute taught and I had some savings. We moved into this one apartment. He would coach and he was working, but he was coaching us and we had a big group here training with. It was great a lot of real great athletes to be training with. People would come from Washington, the East Coast. Anne Marden was here, and Monica and this woman, Robin Reardon. Anyway, it was terrible, but great. It was terrible because you had all these people to compete against. It was scary that way, but the weight room and doing all that stuff, like it was horrible but good. It was real hard. We trained real hard. Then we lifted weights down at the Y downtown. They had a nice facility there. It seemed like we also did some at Cal State, but it was mainly at the Y. I remember going down there and lifting and meeting some people from sailing that were training there too. In '84 they were going to be in this area, so it was real exciting. Real scary because I took off, I lost my place at Lakewood and was just living off the savings. I cashed in a TSA that I had just to train.

So that's what we did. It seemed like in '83 there was a pre-Olympic race somewhere where we raced before, or maybe it was in '84. We raced in a four with other people against top scullers. All got in a four and we raced against the fours that were the national team fours, and we beat them. So that was neat that we did good. The trials were in May for the Olympics. I'd been in the competition and our competition in our training. Anne and I were winning most of the competitions. When we did distance things, it was always Anne and I. No one was close to us on that stuff. But I beat Anne most of the time too. I'd ordered a new ... I'd got a new boat. It was like \$4,500. But, it wasn't the new style. I wasn't aware that there was a new style until my order had been in for a long time. A lot of people had got the new style boat and I think there was a difference. Ann got the new style boat and Lisa Rohde, who I had always beaten in training. She ended up finishing second in the trials. Anne finished third in the trials and I was fourth in the trials. Carlie Geer, Judy Geer's sister, Carlie Geer won the trials. She didn't have a new boat, so I can't draw up anything, but I didn't race well. I think there was a thing inside me maybe that thought, you missed those years. John says that too, but bottom line was that I didn't race well and the trials are it. You've got one shot. I mean you've got the preliminaries. This was the deal in these races where Ginny had tipped over in the heats and they restarted the race and all. It was all crazy. Then someone else tipped over too. I don't remember if it was Cathy Thaxton or someone else in another heat. It was just a mess so the trials were a lot of controversy but, Ginny Gilder ended up finishing fifth, from third the year before in the worlds in the single, but she'd had broken ribs. I broke my ribs in November of '83, Thanksgiving, training for '84. Broken ribs, I did break my ribs a few times. I remember going to Dan Bailey up in Cal State Long Beach and just sitting putting that machine. I mean laying underneath the ultra ... what is it?

Q: The ultrasound?

A: Yeah, the ultrasound machine and then Dr. Doug Jackson did a study on it because we would break our ribs. It was like our muscles were too strong for our bones. Anyway, I did break a rib in '83, but I recovered from that. So Ginny had broken a rib. Carly was a single sculler. Then we had this camp selection and it was real ticklish too because John was the selector and here I am. It was fortunate that I finished at least fourth. I should have finished higher. What I remember in the training camp was John always said that there is no question, there is no question that I should have been in the boat. And, I remember people wanting to be in the boat with me when we were doing the seat racing. Why aren't you in the boat with Joan? I remember hearing people complaining about that to John, meaning, I think, that I rowed the boat. It ended up being that who was selected in the boat was second, third and fourth in the single. So it's pretty clear. I think it was the best and John certainly wanted to put in the people who would have the best chance of winning a medal. It was fortunate I think, that I was fast because it would have been bad if I was borderline, and fighting. So, I was real glad that it was clear and I won the seat races.

Q: What did you do after trails?

Then we went to Europe after we got the boat straightened out and then there was this, I am trying to remember when Cathy, and then Monica ... was that the year? In our quad then was Ginny Gilder, who'd been third in the world; Anne Marden, who had been a single sculler in '81 the year after I stopped, she was the single sculler in '81 and I think in '82; and then Lisa Rohde, who'd finished second in the trials, who came out here to train, and she'd never been that fast prior to coming out here. She hadn't beaten me a lot in the training, but she was fast. She was up there. She was real strong, weight training, she was one of the strongest. So, we were all in the boat and it was pretty neat, getting it, working out, working out things and where to put people, what seat. When we raced, the first race, big race we had ... It must have been '83 because we went to Lucerne and raced in Lucerne. We didn't medal in Lucerne. The eight ended up doing real well. It was kind of hard that way, when the eight is going great and the scullers weren't. But like I said, I always thought that sculling was the toughest in Europe. I don't remember if Anne stroked. We switched. When we came back we switched who stroked the boat. Maybe Ann was stroking and Ginny was in the bow in Lucerne. When we switched we ended up with Ginny stroking and Anne in the back. There were just a lot of things we changed because we were out of it in Lucerne ... Then we raced at Casita. Teams that ended up racing at this Casitas, we beat. I mean teams that beat us at Lucerne, we beat at Casitas. So, really we made a lot of changes. It was real motivating to get beat like we did in Lucerne, although, it wasn't very fun because the other teams had been successful. We weren't way out of it. We were in the finals, but it wasn't nice. And, so then we came back home and just trained for the Olympics in L.A., or in [Lake] Casitas.

Q: Was that fun training at the course itself, did you feel great about this or not?

A: The course at Casitas ... no, it wasn't, it wasn't very fun. It was hot, and it would get windy and it was a long way from where we had to stay. We were staying in Santa Barbara, so it was a long bus ride. While we were there we went and trained in Berkeley. I can't remember why. Before the Olympics we were training in Berkeley on a reservoir. There's a weird name for it. I can't remember ... some desolate place we trained. We got some good training up there and then we came back. We didn't train at Casitas very long because we figured it was best just to train once a day because the bus ride would take it out of you going up there. Plus, it gets really

windy in the afternoon. It wasn't so nice. It was pretty. It's real pretty, the course, but it wasn't great training on it. It seems like there was only certain places you could go. So, mainly you just did pieces. It wasn't easy to see. Training there ... just getting used to the course, and where you are on the course, was a big thing.

The actual racing ... when I talked to you about bow balls making a difference ... Our first race was a heat and it was ..

Q: In the Olympic Games or ...?

A: This was it the Olympics.

Q: Let's go back. Did you, this time did you walk in the Opening Ceremonies?

A: Yes, OK. We stayed in Santa Barbara, but we did go. We arranged it all. How did it work? I remember going to the Village at SC and seeing how that was. Maybe that was that same day and that night going to ... Maybe we ate there and went to the ceremonies and remembering that I was happy that we weren't staying at SC. Not that it was so terrible, but there was just so much going on. It was kind of exciting, yeah, distracting, yeah, and thinking that it was real quiet at Santa Barbara. It was just super quiet because there was nobody there. The kayakers ... I am trying to remember if the kayakers got there after us because their races were the last week of the Olympics and ours were the first. Bu,t it was exciting for the day to be down there at SC.

Q: What do you remember about the Opening Ceremonies?

A: I remember being in this arena for a long time before hand. At first we were watching a TV screen and then it went out. We didn't know what was going on. I didn't ever see the piano thing or all the neat stuff going on. We were sitting up in this big ... I don't even know where we were, at the convention center or what it was.

Q: The Sports Arena, wasn't it?

A: Sports Arena, yeah, yeah. Just sitting there with your team and it was a long time. It seemed like it was just a real long time sitting there? When are we going, when are we going? And, then, oh marching in ...

Q: Do you remember the roar of the crowd when you came through the tunnel?

A: Oh yeah, yeah it was just great and thinking, God, this is thrilling. Now the year before in Caracas they had a little Opening Ceremonies, and that was pretty neat too. They had a neat one there walking in and it was ... the only thing I had to remind me of it was this, but it wasn't anything like the ... And, then to know that my parents were out there in the stands somewhere. I can't remember if I knew ahead before hand where they were going to be because I did find them, so maybe they came down is how it was.

Q: Oh, wonderful. Do you remember how it was when you ran down where all the movie stars were on the other side, do you remember that?

A: No, no. My parents were around near the ... As you were looking at the pianos, they were on the opposite side. They were maybe near that, that part. It seemed like we walked around

and then ended up on the other side. Just seeing the different athletes ... It was funny about those Opening Ceremonies. It was like they were more like how Closing Ceremonies should be, like near the end when you are singing and stuff. It was neat, but I remember talking with John, "It's really how the closing should have been and maybe not the opening." I thought, the closing wasn't very good, I mean with all the fireworks. Sitting there being entertained. We don't come there to be ... to sit there and watch a show with Lionel Richey. It was entertainment, but it really wasn't the spirit like opening was, with everybody, good warm feelings amongst countries. "Just Reach Out and Touch Somebody," "Reach Out and Touch Somebody's Hand," was that the song?

Yeah, so they [the Opening Ceremonies] were neat. They were fun, but it was a long. I remember thinking it was a lot of standing, tiring. I think our races were like two or three days later. It probably would have been better not to as far as competition. But it was fun. It was fun and I'd do it again.

Q: So you went back to Santa Barbara and trained?

A: So we went back to Santa Barbara that night, yeah.

Q: And, the first heat, how did you do in that?

A: First heat was this big competition with Denmark. I think they'd beaten us in Lucerne. So, we knew they were going to be tough, and ended up being ... It was a photo finish. It was a real close race and Kelly Rickon, our coxswain, was calling, "You're down, you're up," and "Where are you?" So in the Danish race, the first heat, to qualify and it was one to go in. It was a big deal because you wanted to win because you didn't have to race again until the finals if you got in. They were ahead. The Danes were ahead and Ginny and Anne Marden and I were all strong finishers. Lisa wasn't known for that, but she wasn't bad. We were tended to not be great off the line, but just kept moving on people, when other people were dying. And, that's what we did, but we just barely did it. It was a photo finish. And, we didn't know until after we'd finished the race. We were waiting. Nobody knew. They had to flash it up on the stands.

Q: So when did you find out?

A: It was a while. We were sitting in the boat and oh, we won, we didn't win, didn't know and then finally flashed it up there, and the crowd just went crazy. So, that was real exciting. Then had three or four days before the final.

Q: And, did you have somewhere to practice?

A: We practiced at the course. I don't remember how it worked with the races, if you could go early in the morning. Maybe it was early in the morning, but there wasn't a problem that you couldn't practice. That was OK. But, then you didn't race. You are looking at the other races. The West Germans looked really strong. The West Germans were real ... and the West Germans had come here and trained in the fall so I was friends. I knew them, a couple of them real well. But, they looked, when you'd see pictures of them, they looked real muscular. They were a threat and then the Romanians. We knew the Romanians were going to be real good. It ended up at the final, we were back and the West Germans went out real fast. I think they were leading until 500 meters. But then they ended up not getting a medal. Denmark was third. So Romania was first. I think Romania led the whole way from what I can remember.

Q: So it was Romania ..

A: Romania, first and then us. We were a 1.5 seconds back ...

Q: I didn't know you were second, you were second in '84? I didn't know that.

A: Yeah, yeah so we were second there, and then the Danish were third.

Q: Was that exciting?

A: Oh it was, yeah it was great. We were ecstatic. I remember thinking before the race, I just want to row as hard as I can. I just want to be ... I guess there was a fear in me that I couldn't race as hard as I could. That's what I wanted to be able to race, so I couldn't be out of the boat. I think that when you are in really good shape, it's really hard to race that hard, when you've done a lot of racing, which we had done a lot of racing that year, racing each other in singles. Still I did get on the boat, but it was hard. Since the race had been so close to Denmark in the heats, we still had a worry. And, then I was also worried about West Germany. So it was a worry that we wouldn't even medal going in to the finals. We ended up pulling through. People didn't seem [to realize] we were there. Like I said, the West Germans got way out, and I thought, oh geez, it seemed like they were like a boat length. And, a boat length in a quad is a lot and they just died. They just went hard for 500 meters. But the Romanians just were ... and now there is the drug thing there. You don't know. But they won everything except for the eight. The United States won the eight.

Q: How did it feel this time?

A: Well, its all ... well its all tainted because of the ...

Q: Drugs?

A: Well no, the Eastern Bloc countries not being there. The medal to me in Montreal, means a whole lot more. Everyone was there. Everybody was there. I know the Africans weren't, but everybody who mattered in rowing was there. I was in a single and it was neat. Now the quad, I was happy to be in the quad, like I said. A year before that I was wondering if I could make the team. To be in the quad was great and to have that experience, and John coaching and to be with all these women that had been single scullers. It was neat. I got a closeness with them and friendships that I wouldn't have had because I didn't mingle that much. When I was training I did, but once I was on a national team it was pretty much somewhat isolated. I think I did that to myself, just to focus. It probably seemed unfriendly. But, I just felt I had to do that. It wasn't as carefree. I think there was also that stress being a single sculler. There was no one else to say, "Oh, we've got to do this for our boat, or we will do this. This is OK to do, or this isn't OK." Everything I did, I was the only one in the boat, or if I chose to do something that might affect my performance, like go to a party, or stay up late or anything, it was only me whereas in the quad, or you're in a bigger boat, you have other people to validate what you are doing is right or wrong. If that makes any sense. So, it's a different mentality, but the quad was real exciting. To have John coaching it and to have everybody getting along well. All these women had been my competitors. Anne Marden had been a big competitor of mine. Gilder not so much because I didn't race in '81, '82, '83 and that's really when she was in the single. But Marden had been racing in '80 in the trails, and '79. So it was neat, and it was neat she came out here to train. She's from Boston. She's from all over, Princeton, and now she's from England.

My whole family was there this time. They'd ... I can't remember if they camped or what they did. I think it was camping. They have this campground up at Lake Casitas, so all my sisters and their kids and so that was real nice. Two sisters had been to Montreal; one of them didn't go. So this one time, I have three sisters, and they were all there. And, then all the people in the United States. That was great. And, then the real neat things were the Southland tour afterwards for medalists. Southland Corporation, I don't know if you are aware of that, a week long whirl wind tour of the United States. I think it was like the day after the Closing Ceremonies or so, ...

Maybe I should finish the Olympics. After that then we came down and stayed at SC village. We stayed there some nights and some nights we came and stayed at home. During that year '83-'84 we also bought a house. John and I and this other, a friend of ours went and bought this house. That was in February and I didn't have a job. So this guy helped us. John had a job so that helped us get the loan. This house came up and it was a good deal so it was like, OK, we've got to do this. It was amidst all this training. I was stressing out with this house, never having a house. May is when we had to move in. We had to move out of our apartment and that was right a week before the trials. So, I had a lot of stuff going on, stupid stuff, but stuff that I had to do. But, back to the week after, the second week of the Olympics, when we were able to go to other events, just like in Montreal. It's just like a giant perk being on an Olympic team, to go to this stuff. We were at the stadium when Mary Decker, when that fiasco happened, and Greg Louganis, going to the diving, and to volleyball in Long Beach, to the gold medal night. It was great. There were so many things going on. It was like, well, what do? What choices, what do we do?

And, then to be in the Village and looking at people that was fun too. They had all sorts of little things for you do in the Village. I never played video games much and that was in '84. They had this free room of video games. It seems silly now, and I don't even like video games, but then it was kind of fun to do that. And, they did your hair. There was a place they did your hair for free. Sassoon? ... I guess I should know who did it. Anyway, all these fun things which they also did in Montreal. There were a lot of neat things in the village there, too.

Then after the Olympics were over they had a tour for the medalists of the United States. Southland Corporation funded this giant tour. I don't remember how many athletes there were, medalists that wanted to go, which was most of them. A week of travel and I don't know if they had two or three chartered jets. You could take one person with you. We went to different cities and they had parades in every city and we stayed in these real nice hotels. First it started off with this thing at the Century Plaza, this breakfast with Reagan. Then we all got our picture taken with the president. John and I first got him separately and then we got him together, with both of us. So that was real fun and then there was a whole team deal with everybody. And, for me it was just neat being in the room ... Here's Carl Lewis sitting at a table and then all the people in our rowing group and then they brought a friend, or a parent and that was just really fun. And, there were athletes that I'd make friends with. Joni Huntley I remember in particular, the high jumper. We'd met her at other times and then, sitting and eating with them. It was wonderful just going on the jets. I remember Bart Connor doing handstands. Mary Lou Retton was there. I can't remember the first place we went, but I know the places we went. We went to the Century Plaza in L.A. In New York it was at the Plaza Hotel. We got a book about it and it was real gorgeous. You look out and it's right by Central Park and that was real neat. I'll tell you about New York. At New York they had the tickertape parade. I remember looking at the fire boat spraying red, white and blue out on the water. Our whole team walked together. Ginny is from New York, Ginny Gilder. Her father was there, I remember. Every meal was this big, thick fancy meal with waiters walking in, or we had one place where we had linen napkins all

printed up with what the day was and the whole deal. Or chocolate, in the shape of different things with the writing on it: Olympians and Olympic rings. Another city was Washington, DC. There they had a parade. We were in like trams, open air trams and that was real neat.

Q: You went to the White House?

A: The hotel was right next to the White House. I think I went for a run, I can't believe I'd go for a run because it was just everything, boom, boom, boom. We did Disney World, we did Orlando, we stayed at the Disney World Hotel. They always had things in our room, fruit baskets and stuff. It would have been nice to spread those things out, like maybe one a month because everything was so fun, so fantastic. Each time the planes landed a lot of people would be at the airport. I mean not looking to see us. They were looking to see Mary Lou, but you were in on it. People would come and ask for your autograph.

Q: And, in Washington?

A: In Washington, I think we were on the Capitol steps. They had a reception there.

I remember the last one was in Texas, in Dallas. They had a big parade there. There we were in cars, convertibles, and they had the big long horns on them, on the bumpers. With John I rode in this one convertible. They had a big barbecue at a place for us and it was a real fancy hotel, real nice. Then they had a big barbecue on some estate, some Texas estate. They had, Margarita machines. Anyway, we just had a great time. It was real fun to be with all these medalists from the United States and then to see all these places and to see how this has touched so many people all over the United States. It was a real neat thing that Southland did.

And, then I came back and it was back to the real world. In May, I had gotten a letter about what school I would be at. I knew I would be at Hill Middle School. I really wanted to be back at Lakewood, but that was gone since I took off. And, Hill, it's interesting because I remember then while I was training, Hill is at the end ... The school is at the end of the channel, where I trained, so I remember. I'd be looking out, looking out and wishing I was out on the water. And, lots of times I do now, I look out at that channel and think about it would be nice to be rowing. But, that was the end of it pretty much. I've raced since then. I've raced in some eights races and I think I raced that fall in some head, what they call head races but I haven't done any other racing since.

Q: Now somewhere I read that you ... Didn't you at one time race at Henley? When did you do that? I thought I saw that, that it was written somewhere.

A: No, I didn't do that when I was rowing. John did a lot of the Hanley. John won the Hanley one time in double sculls. They had women's rowing in the Hanley, but they never had it when I was rowing. I think it [came in] '81 and '82 or maybe '83, '84 ... I came back in '84. We wouldn't have done that because it was Olympic time. I did go there the last time John raced. John raced in '80 there. That was the boycott year. We were down in Amsterdam and John had one more race at Henley. They didn't make it into the finals, but it was real fun to be part of that. It was just an event. A lot of people, it's fun.

Q: It's just historical.

A: Yeah, it's historical, but its certainly not up there on the par with the World Championships or even this big Lucerne Regatta they have. At least when I was rowing, this big regatta that they

have in the middle of June in Lucerne, Switzerland showcases a lot of people. People come there. And, Amsterdam. That's why in '80 we went to that one, this Bosbaan Regatta, in Amsterdam. So those are usually the big ones, but right now I don't know what's big.

The year after I stopped rowing they did away with the coxswain in the quad. That's Kelly. I really liked Kelly. She's a great coxswain. She really helped us a lot. And, the race also went to 2,000 meters. That hurts because I really was much better in the 2,000 meters than the 1,000 meters. I was always better in distance than in sprints. So anyway, there were those two things ...

Q: That's a good distance.

A: Yeah, so now women's races are up to 2,000 meters.

Q: So when you came back did you decide to then take up running again?

A: It was the school year '84-'85, around February. John and I got engaged in like '82, but we didn't take action. Then we just [said], "OK, now we are done with this rowing stuff and we can get married."

Q: When did you get married?

A: We got married right ... My sister lives next door, so we got married in her backyard because there is a deck and then we just had the reception here.

Q: When?

A: Oh when, I'm sorry. In May of '85.

Q: Was school out?

A: No, no it was Memorial Day, a weekend thing. I remember I just didn't want to wait until June, chance the heat or something. Just wanted to do it in May. I just wanted to get married soon.

I kept running and rowing a little bit. I know I was running because in '85 in December they had a big annual rowing, national rowing meeting, and they install people in the Hall of Fame. I got into the Rowing Hall of Fame that year. I was inducted where they had the meeting. That was in Portland, Oregon. But they had a running race. They had a 5k and there were a lot of other women rowers that I competed against.

Q: That was fun.

A: Yeah, that was fun to beat everybody. I beat everybody by a lot. All these people run and do all this other training on the outside. I do too. I don't know, I just feel one side of me is so competitive and the other side just goes, it doesn't matter. I think that's kind of where I am right now. It's not the most important thing in the world.

Q: Did you train when you were pregnant with your son?

I rowed. I rowed and I ran until it was too hard. You just felt like you were bouncing around too much. Rowing was a little bit easier, but then I was worried about squashing him. It's still kind of embarrassing, but in a rowing outfit ... I only gained like, I think, 15 pounds or so, but afterwards breastfeeding was just awful because I was just tired all the time. He wanted to eat all the time. He woke up a lot during the night, so I was just too tired. Times when I had time to train, I was too tired to do it. All I wanted to do was sleep. So I gained weight after I had him. I mean I lost right after I had him. I was back pretty close, maybe four or five pounds over and then I gained like another nine pounds during that six months. It was terrible, it was depressing, but it's all OK now.

Q: Did you find you were stronger because do you remember the number of athletes who had babies and came back stronger? There's one theory about that and there's one theory that it doesn't make any difference.

A: Yeah, I didn't really test it because I haven't ever trained anything like I trained prior to '84. I haven't trained anything like that since. So, there is no real comparison to see if I trained like that again would I be stronger. I felt it didn't hurt me because I have run fast since I have had him, but since '88 I haven't really trained real hard. I mean, it's probably what some people would consider real hard, when I run.

Q: You've got some hills around here that you can run on.

A: Yeah. In '87 John coached the men's crew team at Cal State Long Beach for a year and I remember we'd go and train and run the hill, and I beat most of them except for the ones who were really runners. So I stayed ... In '87 I was still in good shape, and '88 after I had him. I've done a few races, but not anything consistent. With him there's always things going on.

Q: And, school?

A: Yeah, it's fine.

Q: You enjoy that.

A: Yeah, I have a little bit more free time, but I don't have the need, or hunger to prove anything. It might come back, but right now I don't feel I need to prove anything. A lot of people are into masters rowing. Some of them go into with a real gusto [including] some people who have never competed on a national level before. I think about the masters, but to get into that would be like training for the Olympics all over again. You couldn't just get into it kind of haphazard because people are out for blood. They are out to prove something and I feel like I don't need to prove anything at this point.