

An Olympian's Oral History

JUNO STOVER-IRWIN

1948 Olympic Games – London
1952 Olympic Games – Helsinki
1956 Olympic Games – Melbourne
1960 Olympic Games – Rome

– Diving –



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JUNO STOVER-IRWIN

Today is Saturday, July 27, 1991. This is Dr. Margaret Costa interviewing Juno Stover-Irwin, four-time Olympian, 1948, 1952, 1956 and 1960; bronze medalist in 1952, silver medalist in 1956 and two-time Pan American athlete in platform diving.

Q: Tell me about your childhood.

A: My father was an amateur wrestler and my mother was a very lovely lady who was very athletically inclined. From the time that I was a child, my brother and I were inseparable. We were 15 months apart and did everything together. We went to the beaches, hiked and climbed at Yosemite, one of our favorite places. My father worked in sheet metal as an outside foreman. We did not have the same home for very long. I know that during the depression my father had started to build a home by himself, probably with the help of my mother because she was a really big help. Because of the depression, they lost the house and they did not eventually rebuild until the 1940s. I still enjoy a lot of athletics. Even to this day, I am involved in so many activities. On Wednesdays, I go to five classes, all having to do with movement.

Q: Where were you born and where did you spend your very early childhood?

A: I was born in Los Angeles, on Delta Street, two miles from Alvarado, close by Echo Park. I was born in my grandmother's house -- on my mother's side -- about two miles away. I cannot even remember when I first learned to swim but I must have been at least three years old. I do not remember ever a time when I did not swim. I am not saying that I was a terrific swimmer, but, like Sammy Lee, who used to say, "The way I swim is that I dive down off the board into the water and I push up from the bottom towards the ladder. I only have to take maybe a couple of strokes." I have learned to swim very well and have taught swimming and diving. As a child, I would swim fine and I could handle myself really well.

Q: What elementary school did you attend?

A: One of the first elementary schools that I remember attending was Logan Street Elementary School. We lived in an apartment behind my grandmother's house. When my brother and I walked to school, we would have a couple of pennies in our pockets to buy candy at the corner 'mom and pop' store. I was always very athletic. I enjoyed baseball, kickball, hopscotch and jump rope. In addition, as a little tyke, I enjoyed singing and dancing. I would perform on stage in talent shows. My mother was a stage mother. She and my father were fine ballroom dancers. I have always been in front of the public so I guess you would say I am a ham.

Q: Did you participate in physical activities in elementary school?

A: I was in some plays. My mother had me doing prose and poetry and I won some medals and certificates.

Q: Did you compete in poetry recitation?

A: I was in a festival of allied arts a few times and won something for that. I was always active doing one thing or another. I was always one of the first ones to be picked on

teams because I was pretty good and always put my whole heart and soul into everything I did. I loved baseball and played with the boys during the lunch hour.

Q: When do you remember first wanting to dive?

A: I knew how to do a few dives before I even met Sammy Lee. It was either in 1944 or 1945. I loved diving. I could do a somersault, a jack knife and a back dive. Of course, I was doing all of the dives incorrectly. I was a daredevil. Those who take up diving are a breed unto themselves. Diving takes courage and fortitude. I knew a diver who would never, ever get past the low board. I loved the height. The only time diving was difficult for me was during competitions for team selection.

Q: At which pool did you first learn to dive?

A: The pool was in Indian Springs up in the Montrose, La Crescenta area where my grandmother lived. In the summer when we visited each weekend, I would learn to dive from watching others. I would take an approach of some sort and bounce on the board and I would do a 1 1/2 off the high board. In addition, at Balboa at the Bayshore campground, they would have a mooring for little row boats and on the very end of this long T-float would be a special float with a diving board. Of course, that is really difficult because you are in the bay. It was difficult diving there in the bay because as the boats went by the water would become choppy and the floats would go up and down. If I did not dive out and away from the float I was likely to come up under the float. On another occasion, my brother and I found an old rowboat with holes in it. We patched it with tar, found a couple of long boards and went paddling out in it when the tide was low and about to turn. We would then get a long ride, probably five blocks, in with the tide as it rose.

Q: In junior high school, do you remember being introduced to formal physical activities skill?

A: I went to Logan Street School and later Toll Junior High School where I was a yell leader. I participated in Girls Athletic Association but there was no pool and no diving.

Q: Do you remember competing with other schools?

A: I believe we would have sort of hockey or basketball and would wear red or blue sashes. I think it was a play day. Later, girls who were athletically inclined had gym class during sixth period. I remember belonging to a tumbling team because I did acrobatics really well. I did acrobatics in dancing on the stage. I could stand up and do a back bend, hold on to my ankles and start rolling over forward, over and over, seven or eight times across the stage. My mother made many sequined stage costumes for me. At one stage, I even had a dance partner. I liked competition.

Q: When did you have your first diving lesson?

A: I met Sammy Lee at Exposition Park at the large swimming pool. There were low boards, the 10-foot boards and then the platforms, the 16 feet and the 27 feet. I believe it was 5 meters, 7 meters and 10 meters. In addition, there were low platforms on the side of the pool, which were stationary. Sammy was down there with his diving cohorts

practicing for a national diving meet. My brother and I were down there just swimming. We were about 15 or 16 and we were also trying dives. My brother had a lot of guts and doing sky hooks. He did not have natural poise or line and consequently did not point his toes like I did. Sammy would see me doing some dives, and like most divers, helped the young kids that were in the swimming pool. Sammy would be helping me and I guess I just caught on really fast. Once he asked if I was going to return the next day, and when I replied in the affirmative he suggested that we work together. He would explain to me what he wanted me to do. He was particularly helpful with the tower dives as I had no idea about the correct way to dive. When I learned quickly, he suggested that I might be interested in a meet, which was coming up. In addition he offered to introduce me to his good friend Bud Lyndon, the coach at Pasadena Athletic Club. Sammy also talked to my parents and then at a diving meet Sammy introduced me to Bud Lyndon. I started lessons on Saturdays at Pasadena Athletic Club, which was about 12 miles from where I lived in Glendale. I would also practice on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. It was an indoor pool and my mother would sit in the grandstands and watch me take lessons and practice. It was not too long before my coach suggested that I enter in a meet. I started out winning some diving meets on low board. I believe I probably performed 10 dives, a forward dive, a backward dive, an inward dive, a twisting dive and a gainer dive. We would do a compulsory and then optional dives which are also in the same categories and degree of difficulty. The first forward dive, other than a swan dive, was probably a front somersault or a front 1 1/2. It wasn't too many, many months before my coach suggested that we go to Seattle, Washington, for the indoor nationals. I had only been diving a really short, short time and I ended up diving on the low board and the high board. I had learned many dives in a short amount of time and ended up coming in fifth in the nationals. Zoe Ann Olsen dove, although she had a fractured hand, and Vicki Draves was there as well. I loved it and persuaded my parents to drive me back to Florida to the indoor nationals in 1945. We were not receiving financial assistance so we drove. After awhile, when I began winning meets, the AAU or the athletic club would pay part of my way. I never went to a diving meet without my parents until I was married.

Q: When did you get the idea about competing in the Olympic Games?

A: I do not believe I really thought much about the Olympic Games until probably 1947 when I started winning junior nationals and placing higher and higher in other competition against the same divers. In '47 my big meet coming up was the Far Westerns where I came in first and second place.

Q: Who was your biggest competition?

A: Vicki Draves and Paula Jean Myers.

Q: When did your coach first mention the Olympic Games to you?

A: I had only been diving on platform a year before I made the Olympic team. Platform is a very different facet of diving because you have to rely on your own body, as there is no springboard. We were always taught at that time that you took every single dive down to the bottom of the pool. Just before '48 came along I had a couple of dives to learn and wanted to bring up my degree of difficulty. At the same time, my coach had men swimmers and divers who were going to Tyler, Texas for a national competition. So my mother and I and the rest of the men's team and my coach chartered a plane, a

DC-3 transport, which had no seats in it, and went to Texas. We all had blankets and sat on the floor of the plane playing cards, playing ukuleles and singing. In Tyler I worked out and learned the new dives. The top platform, which was 10 meters, gave a little, if you hit it hard enough, and you had hit the end of the platform. Do your lift, and then reach up as high as you could so you had more time to look for your entry. Tyler was one of the few pools in Texas which had deep water into which to dive. By the time you are heading to the water you are traveling about 30 miles an hour. One of the first things that Sammy ever taught me when I was still learning to dive was to lock my elbows and hand straight. He gave a very detailed explanation of the importance of the arm and hand position and how you had to punch the water. Because he had so much enthusiasm he was an inspiration to all of us.

Q: Did you ever dive into a sandpit in the off-season?

A: I did a little work into the sandpit. Most of my dry land practice was with the trampoline, however. In fact, there was one time when I made the Olympic team that I was not happy with my twisting dive and could not get out of a bad habit. I finally learned to do that dive with the help of the trampoline, twisting the opposite way. We also used the trampoline to practice our approaches and bouncing. Many swimmers and divers are now into weightlifting.

Q: Tell me about being selected in Detroit.

A: I was married in 1948 and the swimmers, divers, our coach and my mother all took a train back to Detroit. We all took our ukuleles and had fun on the trip. Johnny McCormack and Joe Moreno were both divers who went with us. Marjorie Gestring, the champion from the 1936 Games, was attempting a comeback, so she was there also. I was always in the top three in springboard because we all traded places depending on the day. Unlike other sports, you only get one try to dive. You do not get three tries at getting a different height, like the high jumpers. You are graded by seven judges and the high and the low is thrown out. They multiply the scores by the degree of difficulty, and divide, and finally get your score. At the end of course, you can win or lose by a hundredth of a point.

Q: Do you remember your dives in the trials?

A: I was just trying to remember everything my coach had told me. I tried to concentrate on each dive, after which my coach would come over and give me some encouragement for the next one. Because there was usually 15 or 20 minutes between each dive I had some time to sit down, dry off, put on sweat clothes and try to stay warm, stay loose and block everything out of my mind. I would just concentrate on the important parts of the next dive. In the nationals we would do 10 dives. In the Olympic Games, we could not perform the hard dives and we could select six only. We really had to go back to basics because the rest of the world had not caught up to us. It was several Olympic Games before we were allowed to perform our full complement of difficult dives. We had six dives on platform, a standing and running swan, a standing and a running half gainer or reverse dive, a forward 1 1/2 out of the high platform. The 1 1/2 had the highest degree of difficulty. We also performed a 1 1/2 open pike and a back somersault layout off the 5-meter. We could not do 2 1/2s, twisting dives, inward 1 1/2s. Because we all were limited to the three same dives, the competition was very close. In the '52 Olympic Games we could do harder dives such as a handstand cut through half gainer which had

one of the highest degree of difficulties. In addition, we performed a full twisting 1 1/2 and inward 2 1/2s.

Q: Describe the selection for the '48 Games.

A: We had to spend a couple of weeks in New York before we embarked on the boat. We went to Detroit, made the tryouts, and then those who were selected went to New York saw a couple of shows which was quite exciting for me.

Q: Tell me about your uniform.

A: Everyone had a uniform that did not quite fit. We put on a show when we were on the boat. Ann Curtis, of course, wore a uniform that the jacket was too short and some short girls wore uniforms that were too large. We made a farce out of it. It was a white skirt and a navy blue jacket. Because I have been on so many Olympic teams, I would be teased, "I know the reason that you are making this Olympic team ... you are running out of clothes." We always had a hat.

Q: Describe the trip over to London.

A: We all gathered in New York and took 6 1/2 days to cruise over to England. I do believe that a lot of us gained a little weight. There was a rule among athletes and swimmers that if we ordered something we had to eat it. We divers did not have to think about swimming. We would walk around the deck 6 1/2 times which was a mile. It was fun eating and walking and playing some deck tennis.

Q: Describe your London arrival.

A: Of course, I always had my ukulele with me. When we arrived, we were so excited as people were requesting our autographs which made us feel like celebrities. We stayed at a women's college where we would eat our meals, which were not too exciting. We did enjoy packing a lunch and taking it to the pool when we practiced. In addition, we carried lots of towels for drying off. The platform divers stayed in shape by climbing up the platform so many times. In addition, we were given some form of energy pills that tasted like malted milk shakes. I gobbled up many of them.

Q: Tell me about the Opening Ceremonies.

A: We all congregated outside of the Wembley Stadium. We marched into the stadium in such straight lines because we were all so proud. We felt like a body of one. Prior to the diving competitions, the whole day was spent getting up, going to the practice, having lunch, practice some more, having a snack and practicing some more. By the time we arrived back in our rooms, we were quite tired.

Q: Did you eat anything special before your first day of competition?

A: I cannot really recall what we ate, although the night before we probably had steak as it was supposed to be good for you us. I was rooming with Vicki Draves, and the lights were out and all of a sudden Vicki called over to me, on the other side of the room, and said, "Juno, quit biting your nails." She could not see me but she could hear me. I was

really nervous because I did not have my coach or my parents there for the first time in my life. I received many telegrams, however.

Q: Describe the first day of competition.

A: On the first day, we were all nervous and we would have to climb up the ladder. We would arrive at the halfway point, the second platform and wait for the other divers to finish the dive. Next, the other divers scores would be read off at which time you would climb the last phase of the ladder. When your name and dive was announced very properly, the whistle would blow and you would get ready to dive. We were trained to listen to the dive announced because there was always a rule that you had to perform the dive that was announced. If you did not you might score zero. Usually I would have about three things that I would go over in my mind. The dive does not take much time, but it is amazing when you are up there you do go over your major cues; get that strong lift; do the somersault; get a really tight pike; look for that entry; stretch on your entry and take it to the bottom of the pool. You would think of all these things even though you only have a few seconds from the time you leave until the time that you are down at the bottom of the pool swimming up. You then try to swim to the top fast so that you can listen to the scores. By the time you arrive back at your towel you are wondering why someone did not like your dive or what the total of the scores was. I know some of the men divers could tell you exactly what they had to achieve on the next dive to bring their score up. Some people had computer minds. I usually did not do that as I concentrated on one dive at a time. Before I started my dive, I would take a big breath to get rid of all those nerves. Many athlete take some big cleansing breaths to calm down. I am a terrific competitor. I always wanted to be sure that I did my best. In 1948, I came in fifth but it was my first international competition and I was without my coach. I believe I did quite well anyway. After the Games we toured Europe. In France, we American divers had gone to this lake to do this exhibition from a float out in the water. We were taken out there in a rowboat. After climbing the ladder and diving they had to row us out to this float. Each time we dove off the platform we kept going over and could not understand why. We knew that we were not that much out of shape. When we finally returned to shore, one of the interpreters informed us that the platform was 40' high, not 33'. Some of the French athletes were really nice. They taught us a song during which we would throw cotton balls. It was a folk song. Being able to relax and enjoy ourselves was most appreciated.

Q: When you arrived home, was there a special welcome for you?

A: We came home on a reconverted troop ship. There were heavy seas. In addition, there were many nuns on the ship who would be seen walking around carrying little paper cups. The athletes remained on deck as much as possible to prevent seasickness. Fortunately, we were able to order whatever food we needed. While we were waiting for the food, we would eat lots of bread, which was helpful in settling the stomach. Arriving back in New York City was just terrific as my parents were on the dock waiting for me. We drove home across country, visiting relatives on the way. Upon our arrival in California, we were given a wonderful reception and asked to join the Southern California Olympians. We were also given a big navy blue blanket trimmed in red with a big shield on it reading USA. I went to Glendale College and also worked for awhile. At the college I was a song leader and then I went to work for the City of Glendale with Evelyn Hall, a 1932 Olympian who became one of my best friends. First, I was a ticket taker for baseball games and also worked in the snack shop, and the

ceramic department at arts and crafts at one of the recreation facilities. In addition, I took drama lessons at Glendale College and sang in a few singing groups. We had a women's sextet and sang in different places, and had an a cappella choir. I was so interested in music and dancing that some friends of mine talked me into going out for song leading. I continued diving for Bud Lyndon in Pasadena at the Pasadena Athletic Club. We worked out several times a week in the evening, sometimes at the Coliseum pool as well as the Brookside pool. At that time, Brookside had a high diving platform but because the water was only 12-feet deep, it was a little dangerous. It is difficult to dive off a 10-meter and only have 12 feet of water to land in. Many times, we hit the bottom of the pool and landed bumps on our heads.

Q: Were you considering preparing for the 1952 Olympic Games?

A: I was very motivated. In '48 some film directors wanted me to test for movies in London. I was so motivated by my diving career that I decided not to pursue an acting career. Because of my experience in the Olympic Games I was definitely motivated to continue competing. Pat McCormick had been married and her diving was beginning to blossom. Zoe Ann Olsen was still on the diving scene and Patsy Elsener was still involved. Vicki Draves had turned professional and joined a water show. In addition, there were many young swimmers and divers emerging on the scene. It was a good motivator.

Q: Did you continue to compete in the nationals?

A: Yes, I was diving for Pasadena Athletic Club because I needed a sponsor as the colleges did not give scholarships to women athletes at that time. I was still living at home and diving was demanding and very costly. Because my coach did not charge me a fee for instruction and the athletic club gave me an athletic membership, most of my costs were for travel. At that time training became an every day occurrence, even on Sundays. I usually practiced five hours each day, which I enjoyed.

Q: How were you faring in competition at this time?

A: I was coming in second and third and thoroughly enjoying the competition and the exhibitions. Our coach obtained \$10 for expenses for the exhibitions. We certainly were not subsidized.

Q: Do you remember going into any national meets?

A: Mostly the indoor nationals were held in Florida. I think the swimmers and divers really enjoyed that. It was a chance for us to get some sun, go to the beach and swim in the ocean or the gulf. They were usually held in April, usually during Easter vacation because a lot of the divers and swimmers were still in school. Although we enjoyed ourselves we also worked very hard. We did not go out at all in the evening. When I was competing, there were not many times when I had a chance to really participate in a lot of entertainment type things. My life was strictly family and diving oriented. I lived, ate, slept and breathed diving. I loved it or I would not have been in it so long.

Q: Tell us about preparations for the '52 Games.

A: I fell in love in '49, met my husband-to-be, and married about two months before the nationals.

Q: Where were the nationals?

A: They were held in Highpoint, North Carolina, and then on our extended honeymoon, we went to Niagara Falls, where my husband was born. By our first anniversary we had our little son. When I was pregnant, my husband was recalled back into the service. He had signed one of these little papers to be in the reserves. As a consequence our first son was born in Oceanside, at Camp Pendleton, as my husband was in the Navy. There was a diving pool at the base and so once in a while I would work out there. Before I knew it I was back in diving. We moved back to Los Angeles, stayed with his folks and I started diving seriously again with Bud Lyndon. In addition, I became excited about the '52 Olympics. I was getting prepared, diving and practicing and very quickly it seemed it was time for the tryouts. The tryouts in '52 were in Houston. Platform diving was my big love and I had great hopes for Olympic success. I loved bouncing off the end of the platform and soaring into the air like a bird. I guess I was always kind of a little daredevil growing up.

Q: Were you competing against Paula Jean Myer?

A: There were many new competitors who had not reached their peak, as well as Patsy Elsener and Pat McCormick. When I found out I was expecting our second child, my husband and I were the only ones who knew. I did not go to a doctor. I did not tell my coach and I did not tell Sammy Lee. Sammy Lee gave all of us divers who were a little tight for money a physical which consisted of taking heartbeat and blood pressure and asking us health questions. None of the questions he asked nor the questions on the physical form for the Olympic Committee was, "Are you pregnant?" Pat McCormick, Paula Jean and I we were the three top divers in platform diving. I felt I could give it the best shot and not take anything away from anyone. I guess we proved it because we came in first, second and third in those Olympics. The other divers in my room at the Olympic housing did make comments about my tremendous consumption of candy. They would say, "Juno, you sure like candy! Why do you have all of those suckers in a vase by your bed?" I was having morning sickness would put a sucker in my mouth as soon as I woke up. We would also take our lunches to our diving practice where we would stay all day.

Q: After the trials, were you excited that you had made it for the second time in '52?

A: Naturally, we were all anxious to make the Olympic team. Of course, Pat McCormick was really happy. She had really developed into quite a beautiful diver. She had gained poise and concentration, which really was the factor which brought about the change in her diving. Her husband was training her, I believe, by that time. He also gave her a lot of encouragement both at home and at practice. We flew by plane on an enjoyable flight to Helsinki. I noticed a big change in Helsinki at that time of year as they did not have a lot of darkness. We were issued little blinders. I brought along my ukulele that I had taken to the '48 Games. After dinner we would play the ukulele and sing. We had eight in our room. Some rooms accommodated two and others four. We always had fun even though I really missed my husband and little son.

Q: Who was your coach?

A: Swimming coach Dick Papenguth became our official diving coach when our diving coach withdrew. As a result, we were really on our own. In those Olympics, we relied on the guys and teammates to help us. We had always helped each other when our coaches were not available. Some divers had their own coaches. Zoe Ann had her father there. Pat McCormick had her husband. I just relied on the guys to help me. We came in first, second and third so we could not have done any better.

Q: As this was your second Olympic Games, was the competition as stressful?

A: Naturally, your first Olympics is always the most memorable because everything is new. By the second one, you know what is going on. The difference would be the uniforms that we had to wear. They were almost always red, white and blue and depending on the weather we would wear gray skirts, the men wore gray flannel slacks, and we all wore navy blazers and funny, little white hats. I remember diving. They announced my name when I was still in the dressing room. Somebody said, "Juno, come on, you are up." I am running out there, climbing up the ladder and doing my first dive. Apparently, my name had not been called in English.

Q: Were there any other particular experiences about the competition that you remember?

A: We wore wool at lot over there, as it was an outside pool. Even though it stayed light quite a long time it was not warm enough to lay out in the sun. It was a good thing we had our nice, warm, heavy sweat suits and robes because it was a little chilly for us, especially being a native Californian. I was used to a little warmer weather.

Q: What were your expectations for the competition?

A: Many times, we three divers would come in first, second and third in changing order, so I was just happy to make the team. Even though I was pregnant, I still looked good in a bathing suit. No one guessed that I was pregnant. It turned out to be my best pregnancy.

Q: Does that child know that she was in the Olympics?

A: Yes. She is a top-notch skier who teaches children to ski.

Q: Was it exciting standing on the victory podium with your two diving pals?

A: We were all presented flowers and then a medal. At that time, the medal was presented in a box, I believe. Now they have ribbons.

Q: Did you have men attendants in the locker room?

A: I do not recall that at all.

Q: Did you participate in a tour after the Games?

A: After 1948, there were no post-Olympic tours. We just did our job, watched some other events and returned home.

Q: When you returned, did you work or stay home because you were pregnant ?

A: I never worked at a job when I was married and in my diving career. My husband wanted me to stay home and take care of the children. We were given a wonderful ticker- tape in San Francisco.

Q: Tell us about the parade.

A: I had my little boy, Michael, who was not even two years old, my husband and my husband's mother and we rode in this ticker-tape parade. The city of San Francisco presented us with a watch. We had gotten lots of little gifts and a lot of organizations invited us for lunches and dinners.

Q: Was anyone aware that you were pregnant?

A: The day of my competition, I told Pat McCormick and Sammy Lee. From then on, Pat called me PG, Pregnant Guts. I did not do any diving until I went to the hospital.

Q: How soon after the birth did you begin diving again?

A: My husband suggested that I might like to resume diving. In 1953 I started diving at the Pasadena Athletic Club and getting myself in shape. I began by swimming in the winter. Before you knew it that board began beckoning me. I started diving some more and then getting ready for the next competition.

Q: Was Bud Lyndon still there?

A: Yes, Bud Lyndon was still my coach and we would practice on Tuesday and Thursday nights when all the divers would come and practice. Bud always had the door open for all the divers. Even Vicki and her husband Lyle would come over and use the pool. Sammy would come over and practice. My father earlier built a platform for the divers to dive indoor, a little 5-meter, one which helped us learn other dives and kept us in shape for platform diving. Platform diving and springboard diving have different phases. One has the balance, the spring, and the other a lot of height.

Q: What new dives did you add?

A: In the first two Games we were not allowed to perform our more advanced dives. As the rest of the world was gaining information from us the degree of difficulty allowed in the Games increased. Many U.S. diving coaches traveled to other countries to give instruction in new diving techniques.

Q: Did you immediately think of '56?

A: I just did not know what would happen. I had a husband and two children, and because we did not have a lot of money, we could not afford baby sitters. We took one day at a time, one month at a time and it all worked out. In addition, by 1954, I was pregnant with our third child. He was born in April of 1954, so I did not have a lot of

time. I went to the nationals and then I had him. Next came the '55 Pan American Games. When I practiced, I would take the children right along with me. We would go down to the stadium in Los Angeles with a playpen. One baby would be probably in the playpen with a bottle and the other two would be outside of the playpen trying to keep the youngest one happy. Usually I would take a picnic, and we would go to the playground first and they would swing and play. I would then begin practice. After I had returned home, I would cook dinner, put the children to bed and return to practice. The Pan American competition was in Mexico City where I came in second to Paula Jean. Pat McCormick did not have to make the team. I believe she was on a tour that the state department had arranged.

Q: Where were the tryouts for the '56 Games?

A: I think they were in Detroit. I dove well. Pat McCormick, Paula Jean and I still made the Olympic team.

Q: How did you feel about Pat's husband's selection as the coach?

A: I did not feel as good about it as if it had been someone else. He was the husband of one of the competing divers. Naturally, his first obligation was to his wife. Diving is quite an emotional sport in which reassurance is needed. If you are confident of your performance and you have the backing of your coach you can perform well. For some reason, after the preliminaries, my diving list to qualify changed to include a handstand dive. A handstand dive is a very traumatic dive in that you only get one chance and you have to either kick or press up to a handstand, hold it and then do your dive. If you come down in your dive or in your handstand on the platform, they deduct 1/3 off your score. One of the Soviet judges had deducted one of my scores because I had held my handstand too long.

Q: Was anyone there to protest it for you?

A: I was a competitor that dove. I didn't think about protesting.

Q: Why was your dive changed in the preliminaries?

A: Usually you left it up to the diving coach. I do not know if Glenn changed it or not. I cannot remember what it was. I know that Bud Lyndon was upset that it was put in the preliminaries. Each diver had so many dives to do and there was quite a few countries and quite a few divers. There were three divers from each country. We had qualifying rounds, and if you did not get a certain score, you did not make the next round. It was important to perform a dive with which you felt comfortable. My coach might have felt something because he was older and more experienced and may have protested if he had been there.

Q: Tell us the scores from '56.

A: Our scores were quite close, by tenths or hundredths. I really thought that I was going to win that diving meet. I came in second and I knew I had done a good job. The scores are all dependent on the judges.

Q: Did you enjoy Australia?

A: We went to one memorable place that was a sanctuary for animals, koalas and kangaroos, emus, and beautiful birds. The caretaker took the baby koalas away from the mothers, so we would each get a chance to hold them. They were so cuddly. On the way home we stopped in Hawaii and the divers were in heaven because we could go board surfing. The Hawaiians would teach us how to board surf.

Q: Were there parades or any welcoming when you came home?

A: There were always some parades. We were also invited to luncheons so we could speak to various community groups who had raised money for the Olympic Committee.

Q: Did you have another child in '58?

A: I probably went to some more nationals and in '58 I had another child and took time out. When the '59 Pan American Games came up my husband encouraged me to try out for it. I came in second.

Q: Who came in first?

A: I think Pat had already quit diving by that time. I am not sure if Paula Jean might have been first in that Pan American Games. I think she was.

Q: Were your children watching you and were they excited?

A: They were probably 5, 3 and 2 years old. In 1960, I decided to hang in there one more year. Actually, I thought four children and four Olympics was a good omen. By that time, I believe I was very tired at thirty-one years of age. For the first time my husband was not greatly excited when I made the team. My family arranged to take care of the children. Things were starting to be a little different as the Games were being televised and we were provided with an elevator to ride up to the platform. Rome was a beautiful city. I had a chance to buy a lot of presents for my little children and a lot of gifts for my mother-in-law and my parents. It was a nice experience and it was a chance to be in Rome. I was doing a half gainer and landed a little short and really messed up my back. I should have gone to the team doctor, but I did not. Instead, I took my mattress from my bed and put it out in a little laundry hall to sleep. The competition was really strange because the officials were speaking in Italian. I was on the platform ready for one of my dives, they announced it and I dove. It was outside and the Italians are very, very noisy anyway. When I came out of the water there was a man running over towards the edge. As I am climbing out, he informed me that I had to do the dive again. I was told that I had not waited for the whistle to blow. The elevator was not working so I had to climb back up to the top. In addition, I was rather tired from all of the walking we had done in Rome. I did not do too well. There were many distractions, including loud discussions between the Soviet coaches and divers, which was not normally allowed. I allowed the confusion to annoy me. I came home and decided to become a housewife and also became a certified swimming and diving instructor. I later coached at UC Berkeley and a couple of other places.

Q: When did you stop coaching finally?

A: I had another child in '65 and stopped coaching probably in the late '70s. I was too busy with my own children and their activities. In 1980, I did organize the Northern California Olympians.

Q: Do you have any words of wisdom to future divers who may read this manuscript?

A: Place your dream in front of you and pursue it with as much energy as possible.