**TRANSCRIBER NAME: Gordon Livermore**

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**Participant #: 342 (342\_2020.02.10\_08.25\_01.MP3)**

**Length of the Interview: 18:48**

Interviewer (Code in Blue): Alex Dietrich

Participant (Code in black):

**Interview Guide**

**Uh and so you’ve signed the consent and do I have your permission to record?**

**Yes ma’am**

**Ok great and can you state your participant ID number**

**342**

**Great ok when did you start your BUDS class?**

**Um I got here originally October 1st 2018 with 34 um and then I classed up with 339 or then I went through hell week with 37 um got injured after hell week then classed up with 39 um and I’m not sure exactly the date but after they finished hell week I went with them**

**And so this this whole is your first BUDS experience**

**Yes, yes ma’am**

**So congratulations on making it (unintelligible)**

**Thank you**

1. **Standard Interviewer Question (SIO): Can you talk about your family?**

**Sure**

**How many siblings do you have?**

**I have uh a sister and then a step sister and a stepbrother.**

**Ok um so are you the oldest or?**

**The youngest**

* 1. **SIO: So um can you sort of give me the birth order?**

**Um my step sister is the oldest I think she’s like 28 , my step brother is probably 26ish and my sister is like 26, 25 and I’m 22**

**So um so your parents are... previously married**

**Yes so mom, my mom and dad divorced when I was probably like 2 months old um and then my mom remarried when I was probably (unintelligible) 8 I’d say**

**Ok**

**And then she’s been with um him since**

**Ok um (unintelligible) and then how would you describe your relationship with your parents, your mom, your s-**

**Pretty good um**

**Step dad, you keep in touch with your biological father?**

**I do yes I talk to him, we have a good relationship probably 2 or 3 times a week um my mom, I wish I talked to her 2 or 3 times a week but she calls me every single day**

**\*laughs\***

**Um and then my step dad, I talk to him when my mom calls so we hav--we have a pretty good relationship**

1. **SIO: Ok and are there any life changing events thats happened in your life prior to BUDS**

**Mmm no not really um pretty normal life, nothing crazy happened**

**Ok um can you give me an overview of high school, college**

**Um yea um so grew up in North Carolina just stayed there my entire life, born and raised in the Outer Banks um went to elementary school, middle school uh was kind of trouble kid I guess um**

**You were a trouble kid?**

**I was**

**Ok**

**Uh teachers called my mom alot uh played baseball um**

**What did you get in trouble for?**

**Just like uh like talking in class or like just like horse playing really just like messing around with my friends when I shouldn’t have been messing around with my friends um**

**Were you in like juvenile detention?**

**No no no no nothing like that nothing like that just uh like phone calls home Hunter was talking in class alot, asked him to stop, he wouldn’t stop like stuff like that**

**Testing boundaries**

**Exactly**

**Yea**

**Um and then in high school uh just skateboarded alot and then um played baseball till like my junior year and then quit playing um went to college and then stopped going to college after like 2 years and came here**

* 1. **SIO: Ok um…..how do you think your personality has contributed to your progression through BUDS?**

**Um I think uh being able to have a a sense of like uh sick sense of humor like in the twisted type when you go through is a huge factor in it um seems like like all the all the dudes I-I’m close with like they all are pretty consistent in the fact that they have uh they have a way of laughing things off when we probably shouldn’t be laughing**

**Ok uh so that’s, does that help you, yourself or does that help the team**

**Um I think both um if if everyone’s like a solid member, it definitely helps out the team but uh like definitely definitely personally I-I think it helps moral whenever you can joke about something when it’s not exactly going your way**

**Um anything else in your personality**

**Um**

**Like anything conscientious or uh..**

**I don't think so**

**Extroverted or introverted..**

**Uh I’d say um I’d say I’m extroverted probably yea um but nah I just think uh like more than anything I’m probably just like one of the dudes that jokes around the most yea**

1. **SIO: Describe your background that led you to pursue becoming part of the SEAL community. Is there anybody in your family...**

**Mmm**

**Family friends...**

**No um**

**Any military…**

**I do, my-my Dad was a Marine um he-uh-he had a pretty cool career he had a bronze star with valor um but my entire li-cause my mom like knew my disdain for school she was like well you’re either going to college or joining the military like you’re-you’re not gonna be a bum or whatever so she always pushed pretty hard for me to join the military but I was like super anti-military like did not want to do it whatsoever um I was a big skateboarder so like I thought I was gonna have a career in skateboarding**

**Ok**

**And um**

**Like go to those X-X sports?**

**X-games or something like that yea um like I started-started getting sponsors and stuff, I thought I was gonna be like able to do that as a career, uh turns out I wasn’t um and then yea just one day I uh I went to the recruiter and uh I wanted to be air traffic controller and um he told me about the PST and so I uh took the PST um got a contract and then figured out BUDS and boot camp figured out about BUDS and boot camp and um just been along for the ride ever since**

* 1. **SIO: Ok um so tell me about your childhood. For example, um you know you mentioned getting in trouble at school**

**Mhm**

**How were you disciplined at home**

**Um**

**Spanking, timeouts, did they take away your video games**

**Uh all the above, mom was pretty uh pretty hard on me she um she like grew up with a single mother so she like didn’t (unintelligible) for a little bit, she didn’t like want me to be a jerk so yea if I got in trouble she would-she would hit me or like take my things away she was-she was pretty uh strict my entire life um like you know, always had to know where I was going and who I’d be with and stuff like that, she was very much so into that**

* 1. **SIO: Ok did you move around uh throughout your childhood or teenage years?**

**No um like in the area but like like I was born and raised in the Outer Banks like stayed there**

**Ok**

**Till I came here**

**So same area, different houses maybe?**

**Yes ma’am**

**\*pause\* so that didn’t um uproot you from school or..**

**No**

**Your friends or anything?**

**No**

**So tell me about your teenage years, you um mentioned skateboarding, did you do any team sports or was that skateboarding, were you competing?**

**Uh I was, I was competing with uh I did play baseball from the time I was like 12 till probably like 16 um I played like pretty competitively I guess like AAU uh showcase teams things like that um**

**And then you mentioned you quit**

**I quit**

**Your junior year**

**Yes..**

**Why’d you quit?**

**Um everyone just kinda like I-I really just like the sport everyone kinda started taking it really seriously and uh it seemed a lot less about how fun it was and like firs-first everyone thought they were gonna be a professional baseball player than like just enjoying playing the game um so I didn’t really like that about it um yea I played up until junior year and then just lost the love for it I guess but uh started skateboarding when I was probably like 14 and then I think that kinda replaced baseball which also helped chauffeur that out of my life**

**Ok and you like the um actual uh feeling of being on the board, did you like the culture around it**

**The..**

**The people...**

**The culture and the people are huge it was um it’s like uh like it’s like cliche but like it was like skate culture is a whole different thing and um no it was it was really cool like uh it took really hard work like you weren’t gonna be good at it without like slamming your head off the ground multiple times like took a lot of hard work um and it was like something that like everyday if you didn’t practice, you weren’t gonna be good so it was cool**

* 1. **SIO: So what have you done in the last 5 years of your life (prior to BUD/S training)? So you did mention you had some college**

**I had some college um**

**2 years of college..**

**2 years of college**

**Can you tell me why you didn’t finish that degree?**

**Um I just didn’t like school, I-I went to kinda appease my mom because she said I was either going to college or joining the military and I didn’t want to join the military so college it was. Um but yea I really had no interest in going to college um I was before or during and while I was in college I managed a pizza shop and uh movie theater um 2 separate times, pizza shop and moved away from home and then got a job managing a movie theater so I was doing that while going to school um yea**

**And um do you think any of those experiences..(unintelligible)**

**No no**

**Would you consider yourself impulsive**

**Um yes**

**Do you have any tattoos you just got on a whim or**

**I do**

**Ok**

**I have 2, both my tattoos I got on a whim**

**Ok**

**Um but yea I think I think I would actually definitely consider myself impulsive**

**Really? Ok um can you give me some more examples**

**Um I don’t like..same thing going back to the school I got like pushed in the envelope um and kinda like having fun with life I guess**

**What about do you get speeding tickets**

**Um I’ve gotten a lot of-I’ve been pulled over a lot for seat belts but I’ve never gotten a seat belt ticket but..**

**So you don’t wear seat belts**

**I don’t wear seat belts**

**Never?**

**No I hate wearing a seat belt**

**Really?**

**Yes**

**Um \*pause\* is it a comfort issue or is it…**

**It is a comfort issue**

**Ok \*pause\* have you gotten into any trouble during BUDS for sort of not using your safety gear or..**

**Um no**

**Not following procedures..**

**No um I’ve only gotten in trouble in BUDS once and it was for losing something so**

**(unintelligible)**

**Losing something, you know**

**So it wasn’t necessarily..**

**It wasn’t like**

**Essential..**

**No no**

**Ok**

1. **SIO: What was the most challenging component of BUD/S? This is a holistic question so it could be you know thinking about your hardest day or you know was it sort of water or some other challenge**

**Um I think the uh I think running um just cause like like uh like before I came here like I wasn’t like nearly as well trained as most the other guys that come here, like the dudes that come here are absolute animals and I was not that um so I think like running because physically like I was not good at it, definitely one of the worst runners and then mentally um everyday like when you had a 4 mile it was like like I selling my soul for that 4 mile like it was like at a huge put out and the whole rest of that day would just be like me recovering from doing that 4 mile so I think like the hardest part of BUDS was like the like slick 4 mile runs was the worst part**

* 1. **SIO: Ok uh so what motivated to push through?**

**Um just wanting to pass um like I like I was capable of passing the 4 miles or it was just like like it was hard like it was uh definitely a put out for me to get across the finish line**

**So this is me just sort of going through what I know here but you know you quit baseball when it stopped being fun**

**Mhm**

**You quit college when it stopped being fun**

**Mhm**

**It sounds like running wasn’t very much fun**

**Running was not fun**

**So so what was it that you were able to tap into**

**Um I don’t know uh maybe just like (unintelligible) um just like being able to imagine what’s on the other side of the 4 mile um realizing that like it is like it’s just a 4 mile and like my life will soon cease to be just 4 mile timed runs like it will be better**

**Ok**

**Um I’d say that’s it**

**So having (unintelligible)**

**Yes**

**So did you feel so so that sounds like a very internal motivation did you feel supported by the group**

**Absolutely yea um I met some of the greatest dudes here um like best friends like all all of them feel the same way everyone hates 4 miles you know it’s not like I know it’s-it’s not just me having that idea um**

**So sort of a solidarity**

**Yea**

**Ok everyone’s suffering**

**Yes**

* 1. **SIO: Ok did you have any practices like (physical or mental or spiritual) that you used to push through these hard times?**

**Mmm**

**Like a prayer, a mantra or a visualization um you know some athletes before they go into a game will have like a warm-up routine**

**Umm**

**Anything you’ve used to..**

**\*pause\* I want to say no but like I’m I’m sure there’s something like uh….um actually yea there was uh there was this movie called Fury um it’s about, I think Brad Pitt’s in it, but they’re like tankers like back in the day I don’t remember which war**

**Ok**

**Um but they always said uh best job I ever had**

**Ok**

**So maybe that**

**So you said that to your-, so you said that**

**Out loud yea to my buddies like it was kinda a funny thing cause obviously it sucked we were saying it’s the best job we ever had and it clearly was horrible**

1. **SIO: When you made a difficult decision during training at BUD/S, what went through your mind as you made that decision and were there any decisions you struggled with for example running classmates out or turning in a cheating classmate?**

**Um yea uh so I wasn’t very big on the whole running people out thing um I-originally when I came through like in 334 like I was like dang that’s like rough um pretty m-mean in my like opinion I thought it was like a very mean thing to do um but in-in 37 we like we did run a couple guys out and it was uh like it wasn’t I don’t-I don’t know why like I think it was for like a uh I think it was more so for morale boost for the guys who were doing well um because like those are the guys you want to keep up and the guys who are like kinda bringing you down you wanna get rid of them so it really doesn’t make sense because even with them not doing well like it makes everything harder because like whatever little weight they’re carrying, they’re still carrying some weight so I think that was just like a like a morale boost for the guys who were doing well so... can you repeat the question again, I’m sorry**

**So hard decisions, so this decision to in fact you know uh shed this er cut them out**

**Mhm**

**Run them out, how did you come to that conclusion to take action to do it**

**Oh um I think it was um more so decided by anger of like like hearing guys I can’t keep up or like like like the complaining of like guys I’m hurting when everyone is hurting um which is like like uh a poor attitude you didn’t you didn’t want to be around anymore especially when you’re like sleep deprived and tired and stuff like uh I guess the negativity they were bringing was like what did it for me**

**So your decision to you know that-that it was what’s best for the group or..**

**Yes, I’d say so**

1. **SIO: Uh why do you think you were successful in completing BUD/S and then those that dropped like what was going on with that?**

**Um I thi-like like again I think like being able to uh to like laugh during the hard times and keep like a like a good head on your shoulders, um never taking yourself too seriously**

**Like a positive mental attitude**

**Yes**

**Ok and then those who dropped**

**I think they just got caught up in their head um cause like I-I by no means was physically superior to really anyone but like I think being able to being able to keep a good head on your shoulders during times that’s very easy to lose yourself in the bad things happening**

1. **SIO: BONUS QUESTION - Has this experience changed you as a person?**

**Yes**

**How?**

**Um it’s..it’s made me realize one going through hell week and then also getting rolled then working hell week like like people are capable of doing some insane things and working through a lot uh gives like gives you like an appreciation for the guys you’re around and like the like the caliber of men in this world that are like willing to do this kinda work, it’s pretty impressive**

**And are you impressed with yourself like**

**Uh**

**Like a confidence boost**

**Yea I wou-**

**Or in awe of everyone else**

**Like like I would say so it was it’s uh yea I’m um I’m happy where where I’m at right now**

**Ok um anything else I haven’t asked that you think would be uh relevant**

**No**

**Ok so I’ll hit stop**