**TRANSCRIBER NAME: GELBACH**

**Date: 20 AUG 2020**

**Participant #: 268**

**Length of the Interview: 15:58**

Interviewer (Code in Blue):

Participant (Code in black):

**Alright I'm with participant numbers, ah 268 and the time is 1117, it is 10 Feb and this is Commander Ledford and are you good with me, ah recording this interview?**

**Yes, yes**

**Awesome thank you, I’ll give you some softball questions you can get started with. Ah. Did you, uh, which BUDS class did you start with?**

**Three Three Five.**

**Three Three Five?**

**Yeah**

**OK. Alright, we are going to have to trace this out aren’t we, huh. And was that your first buds experience with 335?**

**Yes, yes**

**And so what happened with 335?**

**Ah, hell week ah had six stress fractures and stress changes in uh my knees, so I ended up being performance rolled Wednesday night after chow. And was in PTRR for a long time.**

**PTRR. How long do you think roughly?**

**It must have been like six months.**

**Six months, oof.**

**Yea.**

**And then, and then you went to what class?**

**Ah, 339 sorry. (unintelligible) guys**

**OK, great. Ah, how many siblings do you have?**

**Ten.**

**OK, alright, we are going to have to outline this because I need to know, ages and where you're at and sexes**

**OK. Um. Start from the top?**

**Yea.**

**So my oldest brother is 33.**

**So, brother is 33.**

**Ah, sister, I want to say 31.**

**OK.**

**Another brother who is 30.**

**30.**

**Ah, sister who is 20-, about to turn 29, probably just turned 29.**

**OK.**

**Then there is me and my twin brother, we are 27.**

**Twin brother.**

**Yea.**

**27. OK.**

**Uh, then there is my other brother who is 25. And another brother, (chuckle) who's 23.**

**23**

**Sister is 21.**

**OK.**

**And two twin brothers that are 17.**

**Oh my gosh.**

**Yea.**

**17. That is crazy. It must have been awesome.**

**It was fun. It was wild.**

**To be right in the middle.**

**Yea. Financially irresponsible, but yea.**

**(laughs). Umm, parents, married, separated, divorced?**

**Married.**

**The whole time?**

**Yea.**

**And how's your relationship with your parents?**

**We are a close family, (unintelligible) very, very well.**

**But um, looking back to, your life, what kind of life changing events, either big pinnacle events, that really influence you more than anything?**

**Um, yah, I would say my dad. He was a, he was a captain on a, for a shipping company. He ended up, ah, he had this, um, he got this thing in his eyes so he lost his license for the Coast Guard. So he lost, he's not blind, but he's like legally blind. Ah. It became, I don’t know how old I was, I was probably 10 when it happened. It became financially hard and we kinda struggled for a little while. And that was kinda like a negative part of it but a positive part of it is like looking back now like seeing my dad get that hit. Like he, you know he took it like you know, he took it on the chin and he was a great dad and figured out how to provide for 11 kids which is, I can't imagine now how he did it. It's pretty cool now looking back. That was a good (unintelligible).**

**How do you feel like that helped you at BUD/S?**

**Um, there was never like a point where I thought about it, but I think, just the way he raised us, I don’t know, just like his example, you know, so you can put up with that but what he did was probably harder than BUD/S so, mentally.**

**What do you think it is about your personality that has contributed towards getting you through this?**

**I like to laugh, ah I like jokes. I like to make people laugh.**

**How about your background, um, do you have any SEAL friends or family, military?**

**I have two brothers.**

**Two brothers, that are what?**

**Yea, one is in the Teams, and one is about to check into Team Seven in two weeks.**

**Ah, so two brothers in the Teams, look at you. And they are both older?**

**One is my twin and one’s older.**

**Oh. So that really influenced you? When they came in here?**

**I think, like we always, like when we were young, it wasn't like one decided to go out and do this. We always talked about it, us three. I think them going through it made it seem more achievable because they're human. You know? I know they're human and their weaknesses and everything isn't like before it's like you read the books you think everybody's superhuman, but reality is they’re not, I think that helps.**

**But tell me a little bit about your childhood. Like how are you disciplined as a child? Did your parents spank you, withhold toys? Were they strict?**

**Yes, they did. Not super strict, but they’d spank us, made us work, do chores, from a fairly young age.**

**How about, um did you guys move around at all?**

**Um when I was, we only, I only moved once when I was like five so.**

**Was it far?**

**Uh I am from Hawaii, so it's like a different island, so.**

**Oh, where? Where in Hawaii?**

**Um, I was born in Oahu and then I moved to the Big Island, so.**

**Oh, wow, so you grew up on the Big Island?**

**Yea.**

**Alright got it.**

**You been there?**

**Yeah, I did two tours there, both times, I was in K-Bay for one tour and then Pearle City for the other tour.**

**SDV?**

**Yea, for the second tour, I was a Marine at K-Bay. So teenage years, ah, did you, play any sports, activities?**

**I played, ah, Rugby, ah, it wasn't like in high school or college it was like a league, I played that for,**

**What was that?**

**Rugby.**

**Oh Rugby.**

**I played that for three years and I, I swam.**

**Swimming. So you were on that competitive team?**

**Yea.**

**So looking back five years prior to coming here, BUDS, why don't you tell me, walk me through your life, those five years before you went to BUDS.**

**Ah, I did three years of college. I started when I was 19, I didn’t finish.**

**Where? Where did you go?**

**At the University of Hawaii, studied history, but I didn’t get my degree.**

**What happened then?**

**Um, I, that’s where I met my wife. Um, I worked for a couple of years. And like the whole time, I knew I wanted to come here, but I just, I guess, just delaying it, I don’t know**

**So what did you work?**

**Ah, Construction.**

**Construction. How many years did you do that?**

**Almost three years, I guess.**

**Three years.**

**About three years.**

**Now that was in Hawaii? In Oahu?**

**Yea.**

**Then what?**

**Ah, I came here.**

**And then?**

**Yea, the Navy.**

**BUD/S**

**Coronado for a little over a year.**

**Would you consider yourself impulsive?**

**Nah, not really.**

**Tattoos, any tattoos?**

**(No Audible Reply)**

**What do you think was the most challenging part of BUD/S for you? Hardest day, event?**

**Uh, as far as like a single event, I think I really struggled on the CASEVAC, its like the, but honestly I think the hardest part of BUD/S, was, mentally, was probably the PTRR, getting rolled out of Hell Week the first time, like that was hard.**

**What motivated you to push through it?**

**I guess, part part of it was family, they held their encouraging, and then I didn’t want to go to the fleet, so(laughs). I, I kind of felt like I only had one way forward.**

**What practices, um, did you practice anything like on a daily basis like spiritual, mental, physical?**

**Uh I’m Christian so I, I pray and obviously I’d workout and got a good routine.**

**Did you do that every day, did you feel like you did that every day, how long?**

**Um almost every day, especially in first phase of the second class consistently, its just about praying.**

**How long would you do that for?**

**Just only like a couple minutes in the morning, at night, before I went to bed, (unintelligible).**

**Did you ever have to make some kind of difficult decision, like ah, that you really struggled with, while you were at BUD/S?**

**Ah, I don’t know, I haven’t thought about that.**

**Like running out classmates, cheating?**

**Yeah, there’s, I never cheated, there was. The first, my first class I was pretty like nice to the guys, the second class I didn’t really know anybody, and there was a guy in the class who, he didn’t do very well in Hell Week, I, you know he ended up making it, but I didn’t, I pushed him out all the time. I’m, I used to be a nice person so it was a shock for me kinda honestly.**

**So you pushed him kind of with the intention of trying to get him to quit, making it harder?**

**Just, yeah, get out of the boat. I was just, yeah, trying to get him out of the boat. He was dragging us down.**

**And that surprised you?**

**Yeah, I don’t know. Usually a pretty nice person. Guess if I was like in survival mode.**

**Why do you think that you were successful at BUD/S?**

**Um, I don’t know there’s probably several things, I don’t think I have like the secret sauce, but, um, most of the guys who, the guys who came off as overhyped usually didn’t make it, like, I don’t know. The guys who were like always saying they were so happy to be here, like, alright, they usually didn’t make, I, I don’t know I don’t know if I have any answers. I(unintelligible). I just found the best(unintelligible).**

**Do you think it’s changed you?**

**Um, yeah, kind of in a bad way, I, I find myself kind of a little, a little more negative, grouchy, short-tempered. So yeah changes. More moody I guess you could say.(pause) Also, like, I don’t know, I just seem to, I don’t have as much patience for people not understanding things or even like, I don’t know, even like with my wife I can be a little moody when I come home, and I’ve never been like, I’ve always been a happy dude. I’m hoping that changes after BUD/S.**

**Is there anything else that you think that I should be asking you or that kinda made a difference, either helped you or hurt you at BUD/S?**

**Hm, I don’t know if it’s, you might consider this, but like something that really motivated, is motivating and me is like being around good dudes(pause). There’s a lot of good people here.**

**Awesome. Alright, I really appreciate it, Two Six Eight.**

**Thank you sir.**

**I’m turning this off.**