**TRANSCRIBER NAME: MCVICKERS**

**Date: 12 AUG 20**

**Participant #: 85**

**Length of the Interview: 20:03**

Interviewer (Code in Blue):

Participant (Code in black):

**Interview Guide**

**Is it OK if I record the interview?**

**Yes.**

**What is your ID number?**

**85.**

**OK easy questions first, when did you start BUD/S?**

**I started BUD/S I believe in June, June of 2019.**

**And that was with 338?**

**Yes.**

**How did you end up in 339?**

**I ended up in 339 when I failed to meet the standard on a pistol qualification.**

**OK so in Third Phase?**

**Yes, Third Phase.**

**We will come back and talk about that. Tell me about family life, how many siblings do you have?**

**Uh I have one brother and one sister.**

**What’s the birth order?**

**My brother was born first in 1995 I was born in 1997 and my sister was born in 2000.**

**OK so you’re the second child?**

**Yes.**

**What is your parent situation? Two parent household?**

**Two parent household.**

**Are those your birth parents?**

**Yes.**

**What’s your relationship with your parents like?**

**Great I talk to them often, had kind of a normal suburban middle class lifestyle.**

**Where did you grow up?**

**St. Louis.**

**Did you move around at all?**

**Always in the same place.**

**Any life changing events before you came to BUD/S?**

**Not really I lived a fairly normal life in the suburbs, went to public school and then went to college.**

**Where’d you go to college?**

**I went to Iowa State University.**

**And you did four years there?**

**Yes, I graduated in 3.5 years.**

**Did you go straight into the military after that?**

**I was in bootcamp two months later.**

**OCS or enlisted?**

**Enlisted.**

**Anything that you think factored into your experiences here at BUD/S?**

**Uh my family always … sports … we were always pushed if you’re going to do something do it right. My dad was an engineer went to MIT, my older brother does very very good in school and is an investment banker now. We were always told to go for absolutely everything if we were going to do something. That was big in our house, out in the backyard we were very very active as kids and the way my dad pushed us we did very well in school but I just wanted to take a different path and be a part of something greater.**

**Did you always want to be a SEAL or was that later on in life?**

**Uh… at 17 I originally wanted to but I don’t think I had the maturity and physicality to do it so I decided to go through college and kind of reassess later. And towards the end of college I decided that I wanted to do it. I didn’t really look at any other unit or any other place in the military besides this.**

**Is there anybody in your family that made you want to go Special Forces?**

**Uh … I actually found out later my dad was also thinking about being a SEAL back before his love of engineering kind of took over. But uh I don’t know we were always kind of pushed to do like the best so I knew I wanted to do something with Special Operations you know because they’re special. And that’s when I found that the SEALs were the best of the best.**

**Tell me a little bit about your personality and how you think that might have contributed to getting through BUD/S?**

**Um I don’t know I really like being active I like being on my feet and doing something physically challenging that’s what gives me the most satisfaction and doing it and like being a part of something greater, doing it as part of a team and … doing drills or whatnot and doing them right. It’s really cool to be a part of a community that is constantly trying to make you better. … I don’t know there’s not anything to complain … especially when you get to this point now (unintelligible).**

**Any military in your family that directed you towards Navy?**

**Uh I had to uncles in the Air Force and my grandfather was in the Army but nothing really like my parents weren’t in the military … nothing really around this realm.**

**Any friends that were going into the military?**

**No.**

**From what point were you when you decided to join the military?**

**Like I said when I was 17 I decided I wanted to do something a little more active. I wanted to do it then but then next thing I went to college and then I might want to do something with law enforcement. I always knew I wanted to do something active it was just whether it was the military or what. January 2018 was when I actually joined.**

**Anything that was the final switch?**

**Let’s see … an internship opportunity kind of fell through so I knew that uh I knew that it was going to be nearly impossible to do law enforcement that and its also impossible to get into right out of college without experience and I’m like alright I’ll do something else cool and I’m like alright I’m going to do this at least for a number of years**

**Tell me about your childhood, parents parenting style, were you disciplined as a child?**

**Um I was a kid that went to Sunday school every Sunday. We were … were were pretty well behaved kids we didn’t do anything really stupid. Yeah we had our friends and you know went ... I don’t know it was a pretty normal upper middle class suburbs life. I can’t think of a time that my parents had to really like come down hard on us … they disciplined us whenever we did something bad as a kid but we never did anything really stupid.**

**And what was discipline like? Timeouts, spanking, etc.**

**Yeah we got spanked but that was about it.**

**Nothing that stands out?**

**No not really.**

**What about your teenage years, did you play sports?**

**I played hockey for ten years … baseball for nine … and football for three years in high school. And I played volleyball too when I was in college. Track too, but for football the bond with the guys too was so much more. I played ten years of hockey but in three years of football I felt much more of a bond with the guys.**

**Was that just the dynamic of the team or the sport in general?**

**I mean we were a winning team but I don’t know the guys were just always … we would have fun and … I don’t know I can’t really describe it the guys were just really good. We were a winning team so that helped winning so much we were able to just relax sometimes.**

**How do you think being a part of those sports contributed to your experience as BUD/S?**

**Knowing that guys went through the same thing or guys working together to achieve the greater goal and … just being around like minded individuals.**

**In the five years leading up to BUD/S you went to college, straight out of college you did boot camp. Anything else you were doing?**

**I mean I was lifting, working out, living a healthy lifestyle. I participated in intramural sports um I was in a fraternity in college … that was kind of like a little bit of that brotherhood aspect but not nearly as much as here. Yeah just went to college and lived the college lifestyle and had fun but that’s kind of why I graduated in 3.5 years you know I did everything that I wanted to and there wasn’t much left for me.**

**What about do you consider yourself impulsive at all?**

**Impulsive… um … I wouldn’t say so.**

**Any tattoos, speeding tickets, purchases without really thinking about it?**

**No not really.**

**What do you think the most challenging component of BUD/S was?**

**… I would say First Phase daily grind.**

**And why is that?**

**It’s not one evolution that gets people but uh … First Phase it’s just five days a week you’re getting destroyed and uh guys think too far ahead. Like I said it’s not one evolution that gets somebody its thinking too far ahead you know they’re not taking it one step at a time.**

**Was that your method of getting through it? Just one step at a time?**

**I had my own motivation that I knew I needed to make it through BUD/S.**

**What motivated you in general to get through?**

**I … I just knew there was no way in hell I was going to quit.**

**So what about getting rolled in Third Phase? What motivated you to get through after that roll?**

**Um I took a step back to look at the bigger picture uh there were guys who had been rolled who had been to Hell Week and had been sent back to BO and I’m here already in Third Phase so it kind of makes you appreciate you know what’s… it’s just seven weeks of your life. It’s not that long it’s not a big deal. What motivated me to get through was its not that big of a deal. You know its stupid things but it’s not that big of a deal. A Third Phase roll it’s not that bad. There are much worse things if you get rolled all the way back.**

**So it’s just keeping things in perspective?**

**Yeah.**

**Anything physical, mental, or spiritual that you utilized to push through any challenges here at BUD/S?**

**… um … spiritual I would say so. That’s part of the reason why I’m here and why I didn’t get hurt you know that’s … sometimes people say that BUD/S is just about getting lucky and not getting hurt. I wouldn’t say it’s luck I would say … I wouldn’t say I was more protected than others but I think I had someone watching over me. There were some things that I could have very easily gotten hurt on but somehow someway I didn’t. Physical … yeah I think we all workout I think we’re all in pretty good shape because you know just to get into First Phase we’re far surpassing numbers for O-Course and for runs. You know for me it was uh the second I think the times were getting tough I think I missed that evolution uh knowing that it’s not going to last that long I know everything is regulated … I know they’re not going to do something stupid to where … as it went on it became more relaxed and I think that changed our perspective on the weeks. Two and a half hard weeks of first phase and then things start to taper off and then you go through Hell Week. Then after that things get a lot smoother so it was just putting it in perspective that I can make it through the 2.5 weeks … so it was just segmenting. Especially in Hell Week I really segmented the days.**

**So your segments were by day, hour, minute?**

**I did all three of them. If I was getting beat down for a personnel inspection I would do it by minutes or by hour. Somehow if I could find out what the time was and we only have twenty more minutes that’s not a big deal just twenty minutes. Uh when I lay my head down at night I knew I only had this many days left. So like I said I didn’t overstress time but I would just take it minute by minute and hour by hour.**

**What about any time you had to make a difficult decision, moral or ethical, whether you personal or seeing someone else do something and you have to decide?**

**… I can’t really think of anything… Yeah nothing comes to mind.**

**Anytime someone was taking a short cut?**

**No not really.**

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

**… It’s just … I chose to keep going … and also putting others before yourself… and after Hell Week you start doing things that you somewhat like doing … So even lifesaving and going head to head with an instructor underwater … I found that fun. You know you're either aggressive or you start doing things that you like.**

**What do you think the difference is between people who made it and specifically people who quit?**

**… At least from the guys that started First Phase because there’s some guys who started BO who just couldn’t pass a run or … but starting First Phase you see the guys who can physically make it but the guys who you see that there’s just nothing that can make them quit.**

**How did this experience change you as a person?**

**… Um humility. It’s hard at times.**

**Anything else that I didn’t ask that I should have?**

**Not really, its just mental. Everybody here is physically capable but the difference between us and the helmets on the grinder is there is nothing they could do to get us out of here.**

**OK well we’re all done. Congratulations.**