

Oral History Interview
with
Ann Pitts Turner

Interview Conducted by
Jerry Gill
April 15, 2010 / May 13, 2010

O-STATE Stories
Oral History Project

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O-State Stories

An Oral History Project of the OSU Library

Interview History

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The recording and transcript of this interview were processed at the Oklahoma State University Library in Stillwater, Oklahoma.

Project Detail

The purpose of O-STATE Stories Oral History Project is to gather and preserve memories revolving around Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College (OAMC) and Oklahoma State University (OSU).

This project was approved by the Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board on October 5, 2006.

Legal Status

Scholarly use of the recordings and transcripts of the interview with Ann Pitts Turner is unrestricted. The interview agreement was signed on April 15, 2010 and May 13, 2010.

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About Ann Pitts Turner...

As Oklahoma State University's first women's golf coach, Ann Pitts Turner experienced twenty-four years of ups and downs, hills and valleys, and everything in between. Growing up in Tulsa, she enjoyed playing sports with her brother since her school did not provide sports opportunities for girls. In 1957, she enrolled at OSU, finally able to participate in physical competitive activities like cheerleading, basketball, flag football, and synchronized swimming. After graduating in 1961 with a degree in business education, she went to Fort Benning, Georgia, for a year and then returned to Stillwater to settle in. In the late 1960s with the creation of the Stillwater Country Club, Ann developed an immediate interest in golf, taking lessons, and competing at every opportunity.

Still interested in athletics as well as education, she went back to OSU for a graduate degree in Health, Physical Education and Recreation. Two years later, as she was weighing her career choices, she was invited by the dean of HPER to become the women's golf coach. Not yet part of the Athletics Department, women's golf at OSU was more of a Title IX compliance than an "official" sports organization and was under the Association of Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (AIAW), not the NCAA. Accepting the job in 1976, Ann committed herself to learning everything about coaching and collegiate golf, fundraising, recruiting and strengthening the group. One year later, the team won its first Big 8 championship. Within the next five years, the golf team became part of the OSU Athletic Department and moved from the AIAW to the NCAA.

During her twenty-four years as the OSU women's golf coach, Ann led the Cowgirls to fifteen conference championships (fourteen Big 8, one Big 12), fifteen NCAA Championship appearances and six AIAW Championship appearances. She coached a number of All-Americans, players who eventually moved to professional golf, and the NCAA women's team that went to Japan in 1981. She also led the OSU team twice to a top-three slot in national rankings. Ann has been named Big 12 Coach of the Year twice, West Region Coach of the Year four times, received the Gladys Palmer Meritorious Service Award twice, was inducted into the National Golf Coaches Association Hall of Fame and the Women's Oklahoma Golf Hall of Fame. She has served on the NCAA committee, the Women's Oklahoma Golf Association, and currently serves on the Women's Golf Hall of Fame Board. In her interview, Ann discusses her career, the players, her lawsuit that affected female coaches' salaries at OSU, and her overall love of golf.

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Ann Pitts Turner



Oral History Interview

Interviewed by Jerry Gill
April 15, 2010 / May 13, 2010
Stillwater, Oklahoma

Gill *My name is Jerry Gill. Today is April 15, 2010. I'm visiting with Ann Pitts Turner on the Oklahoma State University campus in Stillwater, Oklahoma. This interview is for the O-STATE Stories Project of the Oklahoma Oral History Research Program. Ann, my first comment is you're really special to Oklahoma State University golf in many ways. Just summarizing a few of those things, as first coach, you built the [women's golf] program from scratch over the next nearly quarter of a century. You developed it into a nationally competitive and respected program, won numerous major tournaments across the country, several Big 8 and Big 12 conference championships, including a third place finish at the NCAA championships, and I could go on. Congratulations on your career. Ann, first what I would like to do is step back and ask you where you grew up and about your family and some of these things.*

Turner I grew up in Tulsa, Oklahoma. I attended elementary school, junior high school, high school there. Went to Lanier Elementary, Woodrow Wilson Junior High and Will Rogers High School. At that time there were two major high schools in Tulsa: Central High, downtown, and Will Rogers was almost new, on the outside of town. And then we had Webster, which was on the west side of town almost, we thought, out of town, and Booker T. Washington. Then I attended Oklahoma State University starting in 1957 and graduated from Oklahoma State University in 1961.

Gill *Ann, can we back up just a minute, if you don't mind, back to Tulsa? Did you have brothers or sisters?*

Turner I have one brother, Bob Adams. He is seven years older than I am, and he went to Will Rogers High School also and then Tulsa University and then after the service over to Oklahoma State University.

Gill *Can you tell me about your father and what he did?*

Turner My father worked for Sinclair Oil Company for quite a long time, for as long as I know. All of my life he was at Sinclair Oil Company. They lived in Seminole, Oklahoma, in the oil fields early on, and I was born in Shawnee, Oklahoma, and then moved to Tulsa when I was two. We lived in Tulsa until they both passed away.

Gill *And your mother worked in the home?*

Turner Yes, she was a homemaker.

Gill *Growing up, were there some principles and values that you learned from your family that contributed to your success later in life?*

Turner Well, in the fifties, when I grew up, everything was pretty structured for kids. All the parents were on the same page. We all had the same rules and all that kind of thing, and I think that kind of carried over for me when I came to college. When I came to Oklahoma State University, there were a lot of rules, hours in the dorms, you had to be in at a certain hour, you couldn't go out during the night, and it was all male and all female dorms, etc. So, I grew up in a very structured time, and I think then later on being married, I kept that structure with me a little bit, and I kind of had to grow out of some of that structure that I was taught in the fifties to get with it in the sixties and seventies. But, you know, honesty and fairness, that type of thing I think was basically what all of us were taught in the fifties. Get a good education. I know my mother didn't exactly promote me having a career. She always said, "You need to get your education for insurance," which was kind of interesting, just in case I needed to work, because at that time most women were homemakers.

Gill *Well, Ann, if you don't mind me saying so, I've known you for several years and you are a very competitive person. Where did your competitiveness come from? From your family?*

Turner You know, I think I was always competitive with my brother. We played a lot outside. I'm sorry to say that's not available for kids today, but we just played a lot of games outside, and so my brother always let me play. Those boys were seven years older than I was, and so I became quite a tomboy when I was young, and until I went to junior high school I was a real tomboy. Then when we went to junior high school you couldn't wear slacks to school, so you kind of had to become a girl. Anyway, I think I just grew up being competitive because of the times that I spent playing with my brother and his friends and then the neighborhood friends. We had games. We just had a lot of games outside, and I was

competitive in them.

Gill *Did you participate in any sports? Were there any community school activities for girls in sports?*

Turner No. When I grew up, there were no sports for girls or females, period. We played some sports in gym class, but that was it. There weren't any extracurricular things for girls.

Gill *There weren't any Y programs or summer league programs or anything?*

Turner No. Now, I did a lot of swimming because the Red Cross always offered free swimming lessons. So, I went clear through the Red Cross program and became a WSI (water safety instructor) because that was something that I could do and it was available. Mostly, the people that I grew up with, we watched the boys play. We traveled and watched them play football, and we watched them play baseball, and we watched them play basketball, but we didn't play any of those sports.

Gill *Other than sports activities, were there other school activities, organizations that you were active with in high school?*

Turner I was very active in high school, but there weren't any sports activities that I was involved in. It was mostly pep club and trying to be a cheerleader. You know, I tried out every year in high school and never made it and then came to OSU and became a cheerleader, (Laughter) which is kind of funny because I never gave up. I look back on that and I think, "What kept me going? Why did I keep trying? Why didn't I get the hint that I wasn't going to make it?" But I didn't. I just kept trying. So, that's kind of my competitive—or I don't know what that is.

Gill *Competitive persistence?*

Turner Yes. I don't give up, I guess. You can tell me no, but I'll try again. (Laughs)

Gill *They have to find a different way to tell you no the next time.*

Turner But really there weren't that many outside activities besides school activities, you know, student council, stuff like that.

Gill *And you mentioned earlier that you enrolled in Oklahoma State University. What year was that?*

Turner Nineteen fifty-seven. Fall of 1957 and I was a freshman.

Gill *What influenced you to enroll at Oklahoma State?*

Turner I don't know. I just decided that I wanted to go to Oklahoma State University and none of my friends did. All of my high school friends went different places, and we were still very good friends, but we all went to different schools and I didn't follow anybody. I came over here by myself.

Gill *How did you find out about OSU? Did you come over for a visit?*

Turner Well, at the time I had a boyfriend over here. My high school boyfriend was in school over here, and so I wanted to come where he was. That was one reason I wanted to come to OSU. Then my brother was over here, and he and his wife—he was married at that time, so they were here. I guess that's why I came over here.

Gill *What were your first impressions of the Stillwater campus?*

Turner Oh, I loved it. It was huge and big and it was just exciting to be out on my own, and I loved it.

Gill *Where did you live that first year?*

Turner Stout Hall. I loved it. It was super. That was the place to live.

Gill *What was your major at Oklahoma State?*

Turner Well, I started out majoring in business education. What they had at the time was a two-year program called secretarial administration, and I thought I was going to be a secretary, so I enrolled in secretarial administration for two years. It's kind of an associate degree. Well, then I got married. I met a guy here and got married after my sophomore year here, so then I changed my major to business education and continued on and got a degree in business education, which they don't offer that anymore. All of the business machines and all of the things that I learned to do are obsolete at this time.

Gill *That didn't help your golf swing, anyway, right? (Laughs)*

Turner No. I wasn't a golfer.

Gill *What were some other student activities that you were a part of as a student?*

Turner Well, when I was a freshman I tried out for freshman cheerleader. There

were like 600 girls and boys. They chose one and I got it. Don't ask me how. (Laughs)

Gill *Wow.*

Turner So, I was a freshman cheerleader, and then I was a cheerleader my sophomore year, and then I got married. You couldn't be married and be a cheerleader.

Gill *How exciting was that for you, Ann?*

Turner Oh, I loved it.

Gill *With all the rejection in high school and then out of several hundred applications, you were picked.*

Turner Isn't that something? I don't know how that happened because, as I said, I never was a high school cheerleader. I wanted to be, but I wasn't ever chosen.

Gill *Well, congratulations. (Laughter) Were there some faculty members that you recall or administrators or dorm mothers or others?*

Turner Well, we had Dean of Women and that was Dean [Zelma] Patchin, and I remember her. One of the instructors that I had for shorthand was Labron Harris. I had him for shorthand and for transcription, and he was fantastic. He wrote beautiful shorthand and I remember talking to him later when I became golf coach. I told him, I said, "You know, I had you for shorthand." And he said, "Well, you must not have been one of the better ones and you weren't one of the worst ones because those are the only ones I remember." And he was right. I was right in the middle.

Gill *Did you compete in any intramural sports teams?*

Turner Yes, with the sorority, I competed on their team. That type of thing.

Gill *What sorority did you join?*

Turner I was a member of Pi Beta Phi sorority here.

Gill *And what were some of the intramural sports that you recall?*

Turner Well, I remember we played basketball, three-on-three basketball, and I had never played basketball and so this was exciting for me. I shot hoops with my brother out in the backyard playing horse and stuff like that, but I had never played basketball at all, so that was fun. And then I think we

played intramural football, but I can't remember very much about that, flag football. But I participated in as much as I could.

Gill *Now, I understand you were in synchronized swimming. Was that a class, an intramural program, a team?*

Turner No, it was kind of a team type of thing that they had here. They had a synchronized swimming team, and that just appealed to me because I had done so much in swimming. And so I did compete in that, and I competed in that even after I was married. That was fun. I enjoyed that.

Gill *Did you have competition with other teams outside of the university?*

Turner I remember I went to Norman one time to do something in synchronized swimming, but we put on a performance here every year, a program.

Gill *At the old gym?*

Turner At the old gym, yes.

Gill *So synchronized swimming...*

Turner I know, people laugh about that, but you know that is not an easy thing to do and I just loved it.

Gill *Didn't it used to be an Olympic sport?*

Turner It is, still.

Gill *Still is? Well, it probably fits with your pattern of being very detailed and very...*

Turner I guess. Structured, yes.

Gill *Probably fits right in there with that. I saw that on your resume.*

Turner I know. Everyone laughs when I say that. They laugh when I say that I was a cheerleader and they laugh when I say I loved synchronized swimming, but I loved doing both.

Gill *Well, Ann, you talked about you married Lynn Pitts after your sophomore year?*

Turner Yes.

Gill *Where did you live?*

- Turner** We lived in married student housing on Sixth Street. Those were the Quonset huts. They're no longer there now. We paid fifty dollars a month, all bills paid. (Laughter) We lived there for two years.
- Gill** *Looking back on your four years and your undergraduate experience, were there any special times or special memories that you have? Any highlights for you?*
- Turner** Being cheerleader, I loved that. That was so exciting to me to be chosen as the freshman cheerleader. It was just kind of special because it was one out of all, you know. They chose one female and one male and I loved that, and I loved traveling and doing all that. That was a lot of fun for me. I had never done anything like that. You know, when I got married everybody was getting married in college at that time. That was not unusual. Everybody was getting married, and so that was a fun time, too, to be married and in school and really have no worries. My husband was a football player, and that was fun to be included in some of the athletics stuff there. I don't remember very much more about it. I loved my sorority life. I loved living in the house and doing that. I just lived there one year because then I got married.
- Gill** *Because freshman year you had to live in dorms?*
- Turner** All freshmen had to live in the dorms.
- Gill** *So, after you graduated, can you share a little bit of information about your life between the time you graduated and the time before you became a golf coach?*
- Turner** At the time that we graduated...
- Gill** *Which was in...*
- Turner** Nineteen sixty-one. Military service was a requirement and my husband, Lynn, had been in ROTC here at OSU for all of his four years, I guess. I'm not sure how long he was here, but, anyway, when we graduated he was sent to Fort Benning, Georgia. And that was very exciting because I had never gone out of the state to live anywhere. So, we lived at Fort Benning, Georgia, for one year and that's where our first son was born. Robert Real Pitts was born there. And then we came back after a year. He was supposed to be there for six months, and because of the Berlin Crisis he was extended six months, and so then we came back in like July of '62. So, came back to Stillwater to live here, and that's where we established ourselves was here. Then in 1965 my second son was born, Bryan Linford Pitts. He was born here in Stillwater.

And then in about 1968 or '69, and I don't remember the dates on this, Stillwater Country Club was formed by a group of people, and the only other course they had was Lakeside Municipal. But, anyway, Stillwater Country Club was formed and they were recruiting young couples to be members. A lot of our friends were joining, and so we decided to join and neither one of us had ever played golf. So, I took golf lessons and Lynn took golf lessons and I took group lessons. And I think I took my first group lesson from Don Sechrest who was the first pro at Stillwater Country Club and who was the one that designed it, I believe. I kept taking lessons. I just fell in love with the game. So, I kept taking lessons, and Paul Hanks came and I kept taking lessons from him, and I competed at everything they had at Stillwater Country Club. The Women's Association had a lot of events, and so I looked forward to playing on Play Day with the women, and then we had a Friday Foursome and we played every Friday. We thought we'd be doing that for the rest of our lives, but, you know, things change and everybody moves and it didn't happen, but anyway, for that time I loved playing golf.

And then in 1974 we moved from where we were living into a new house, and my kids were getting older and they were in school, and I was kind of bored and I thought, "You know, I think I'll go back to school just to see what it's like, just to take some classes." And, so, I enrolled in graduate school in the HPER Department—Health, Physical Education, Recreation.

Gill *So, you were a business undergraduate major now changing to P.E. This is a pretty strong shift.*

Turner Yes.

Gill *Had your interests shifted in terms of where you wanted to go with physical education, and did you have a career track in mind? Were you thinking about teaching or coaching or what you wanted to do?*

Turner Oh no, no, no. I wasn't thinking about doing anything except just going back to school and seeing what it was like, but I thought I'd like to do something in physical education and health. I was kind of into that era in the seventies. It was kind of all about health and physical fitness and getting in shape, you know, and that was always important to me. So, I always liked to read Kenneth Cooper and their aerobics and all this type of stuff, so I was really interested in health and physical education.

Gill *I've got to ask you one more question, and this is a tough question. How good of a golfer were you? Did you pick it up pretty quickly? Were you*

competitive?

Turner Oh, no, no. I look back on it now and I just think, “I’ve come a long way.” (Laughs) It’s much easier to learn when you’re young and not an adult because children mimic very well, and so it’s easy for them to see somebody do a golf swing and then they can just do it. But adults get too technical and too frozen. So, it was very hard, but I loved it. I just loved the game.

Gill *Did you win some of the tournaments?*

Turner Yes, I won some club championships eventually, but I look back and I got beat severely by some people. I just look back and I laugh because I thought, I probably could have beaten them later on, but at the time they were just better than I. They had been playing longer and it takes awhile in golf to...

Gill *Did you compete in any tournaments outside of Stillwater, like in the state?*

Turner Oh yes. We went to state tournaments and we just thought that was so much fun. A big group of us would go and it was so much fun. We just loved it. I loved doing it, especially in that day and age. I wasn’t working and so it was fun to get away from the family. I mean, it was a vacation, you know?

Gill *I didn’t mean to interrupt. You were talking about physical education and so you enrolled in a master’s program?*

Turner I started a master’s program. I took one class: health. (Laughter) I’ll never forget it. I was scared to death. I think I was thirty-four years old or thirty-five years old, and I just thought, “Oh my gosh. All these people in here, what am I doing with these young people?” And I sat on the very front row in the very front of the class. I look back on it, and in my college days I remember older students that would come in, older people that were coming back to school. They always sat in front. They always paid attention, and all of us were just back there doodling and not paying attention. But I loved it. I took that one class and it hooked me.

Gill *Where did your program go from there? Did you specialize in something?*

Turner Well, I had to take some catch-up classes, [prerequisites] that were necessary for me to get a physical education and health physical education because I didn’t take it when I was in undergraduate school. So, these are requirements that I had to take. I had to take all of the

sports. I remember I was in a P.E. class with Robert Turner. Remember Robert Turner, the football player?

Gill

The running back, yes.

Turner

And he remembered that, too. I talked to him recently or saw him somewhere and he remembered me because it was co-ed at the time, and that was very new to have a co-ed P.E. class, and here I was this older woman trying to play these sports with these people, but I loved it. So, I had to take all of the sports: basketball, softball, track and all this type of thing. I learned a lot in that and I got really hooked on it, and I started thinking maybe I might want to do something with track, maybe at the high school or something. Maybe help out at the track, and it just kind of popped into my mind. Nothing big that I was going to pursue.

And then, two years into this, George Oberle, the Dean of the Health and Physical Education Department, asked me if I would like to be the women's golf coach. I was just flabbergasted. I said, "Oh, I can't do that. I have no experience." And so I went home and I was discussing it with my husband, Lynn Pitts, at the time, and he said, "Sure you can do that." He really encouraged me. I owe a lot to him for encouraging me to do this. So, I went back the next day and I said, "You know, I think I'd like to do this," and that's how it began.

Gill

So, there was no interview process? There was no committee? Just George asking you to do it. Can I back up and ask this question: Why was OSU starting a golf program at this time?

Turner

Well, Title IX. Title IX came into existence in 1972 as part of the education amendments. So, Title IX mandated that there could be no discrimination in any federally-funded programs at any federally-funded institutions, and athletics was one of them that hit the news. So, from that day forward until just recently they've been fighting it ever since because they don't like it, but it has stood the [test of] time. So, in 1972 this was mandated, and I think by 1978 you had to be in compliance, and so OSU was beginning to get into compliance with Title IX by offering so many sports for women and funding them with scholarships, etc. So, to be honest with you, I didn't start the golf program at OSU. They had a golf program at OSU that was a club sport, that wasn't sponsored by athletics or the HPER Department or anything. It was just a club sport. Jackie Riggs Hutchinson, she was Jackie Riggs when she was here, had the first golf team, and I think they maybe played one match. She kind of kept it together and she taught golf in the HPER Department. And then after she moved to Oklahoma City, Joyce Seward took over, and she kept it going and it wasn't much, but at least it was a group of young women that were competing in golf. So, when I took over, there was a

group of young women here already that had been sort of what you would call a golf team. They were so excited about having a real season.

Gill *Well, Ann, let me ask you, what motivated you to accept the position and step up to this challenge? You were going to start it as an intercollegiate competitive program and...*

Turner And I knew nothing.

Gill *Well, I'm sure you had experience, but it had to be a challenge. What motivated you to step up and want to do that?*

Turner I don't know. Probably the same thing that made me try out for cheerleader. (Laughter) I just thought that maybe I could do it and learn and, you know, Labron Harris was retired at that time and they did hire him to be my assistant, and I learned so much from him.

Gill *Labron was your assistant?*

Turner Yes. (Laughter) Isn't that fun? And he helped those girls and they just loved him, so it was wonderful. I had a wonderful start, but I didn't know anything about coaching. I had never been a coach in my life. I didn't know anything about collegiate golf. I didn't know how many people were on a team or how they scored. I had no clue, so I learned it all that very first year. Well, not all of it. I'm going to say I didn't learn all that I knew that very first year, but I learned about collegiate golf that first year.

Gill *Can we step back for just a minute? I want to pick up on your comments earlier. I want to get back into your golf program in just a little bit, but can we talk about, as you said, in the early to mid-seventies and the early eighties was a transformational period for women's intercollegiate athletics, to say the least. You talked about Title IX driving the change. How did it impact OSU? And I want to come back to the question at OSU right now. So, adding sports is one of those things they did, including golf, so how was it impacting OSU at this time in the mid-seventies?*

Turner Well, there were scholarships offered which had not been offered before. There was funding for travel for a real season, not just one match here and there, but a real season. And I think that's basically it. It was more—it wasn't a club sport anymore. It was really going to be supported by the HPER Department. Now we were in the HPER Department, so this was supported and controlled in the Health and Physical Education Department. That's where it was. We didn't move into the athletic department until 1980.

Gill *So, when you came in, right before they started making this change, and you're saying sports were under the Health and Physical Education Recreation Department. Previous to that point, had they been more club sports in nature?*

Turner Yes, club sports. Just like there's a lot of club sports here at OSU today.

Gill *And they would play maybe some other schools in the Oklahoma area occasionally?*

Turner Maybe.

Gill *Some just here on campus?*

Turner Yes.

Gill *So, it was under HPER when you started. You talked about scholarships now and travel. Where did the money come from, the funding?*

Turner Well, from the university, I guess, because it came through the HPER department. I do want to say one thing. I started coaching in the fall of '76. In the spring of 1977, we won our first Big 8 Championship.

Gill *Wow.*

Turner And that is due largely to Labron Harris. I want to make sure that that's known because other schools—Oklahoma had started before us. University of Oklahoma had started their golf team before us. Tulsa University had started their team before us. They had Nancy Lopez, so they had really put it on the map. They put Oklahoma on the map. We were behind.

Gill *How many years did Labron work with you?*

Turner I'm going to say that I don't know exactly. I can't tell you exactly, but maybe five?

Gill *What a tremendous asset. What was the organizational structure for women's athletics at this time when you came in '76? You said it was the HPER Department that organized it. Who oversaw the women's program?*

Turner I don't remember exactly when I first started. George Oberle was the head of it, but then Betty Abercrombie, I believe, became the women's athletic director for us at the time, and then soon after that they hired

somebody to be the athletic director that was a coach there, and then we hired somebody from the outside to be athletic director. What I remember is Susan Hall. We hired Susan Hall to be our athletic director and that was all before we moved to the athletic department.

Gill *Can you tell me a little bit about what would have been a typical budget for one of the programs at this time?*

Turner Well, my salary was \$200 a month for ten months.

Gill *Not \$2,000 a month.*

Turner Two-hundred dollars for ten months. That's \$2,000 for the year. One of the things I knew was that we had to fundraise. The very first thing I did was talk to Mr. Iba and Doyne Iba, his wife. Doyne Iba was a successful golfer and I knew her very well, and so I went and talked with them and he said, "You're going to have to have more money." And so I started fundraising from almost the day that I got the job because I knew we had to have more money if we wanted to compete like University of Tulsa and University of Oklahoma were doing and travel. And so I started fundraising. I can't remember what our budget was, to tell you the truth. I have no recollection. I know we stayed within it, (Laughter) and I know we got new golf bags and everybody had matching bags and matching uniforms, and they were just so excited. I mean, these young women were so excited to have a full-fledged program presented to them.

Gill *What was the working relationship? You had women's sports in HPER and men's sports in intercollegiate athletics. During that period, that transition when you went over, merging with the men's program, what was the relationship between the two programs?*

Turner Well, there was no relationship really. We saw them when we practiced because we practiced at Lakeside. That's where we could practice. We didn't have Stillwater Country Club memberships for maybe two or three years. We couldn't go out there. We couldn't afford it. Now the men had memberships out there, so there was a big difference in what the men and women could do, but, you know, we did what we could do. And also, I have failed to mention, women's sports at this time were governed nationally by AIAW, Association of Intercollegiate Athletics for Women. Donna Lopiano, who was at the University of Texas as AD [athletic director] and went on to be executive director of Women's Sports Foundation and then on to something else since then, was the director of the Association of Intercollegiate Athletics for Women. Oh, I learned so much from her. We really tried to keep our own organization, but the NCAA convinced all of the athletic directors that we should all

merge with great promises that everything would be better.

Gill *I want to get to those promises in just a little bit. I see you smiling. (Laughs) Facilities when you first started, not just in golf, but for women's sports, I guess some was over in the Colvin Center, some here and there in the intramural fields. Was there competition for facilities amongst the club sports programs that were now emerging and intramural programs in the athletics department? Was there a competition there for getting playing time for facilities?*

Turner I don't know. I don't know about that. We were at Lakeside so that's where we did our playing. I don't even remember how I worked that out where we practiced and played and had qualifying out there. I don't remember, Jerry. That's terrible, but I don't really remember how that worked out. We had a lot of sports. There were a lot of women's sports.

Gill *Can you remember some of those? Can you go over which sports...*

Turner Yes. Swimming and diving, softball, field hockey, volleyball, basketball, track, all of the track, three of them. They count as three. Golf. Tennis.

Gill *Was gymnastics offered?*

Turner Gymnastics, yes. Yes, we had gymnastics. All of us were there in the HPER Department, so we saw each other every day. A lot of us were graduate students. I had a little desk there.

Gill *Who were some of the coaches you remember in women's sports at that time? Any stories that you want to tell?*

Turner Larry Bilhartz was the gymnastics coach, and he and his wife, I remember them very well. Had a good gymnastics program. Jacy Showers, I think Jacy Showers was the basketball coach, and I also had her for an instructor. So, not only was she coaching, but she was teaching me in some of these classes I was taking because I had to take basketball and softball and all of these sports to play.

Gill *Is that common for a coach to teach their class? For example, did you ever teach golf?*

Turner No, but at the time a lot of the coaches were teaching because they were in the HPER Department, so they were instructors and coaches. It was different than today. (Laughs)

Gill *Their salary for teaching was probably as much as it was coaching.*

Turner And they probably made more teaching than for coaching.

Gill *Ann, you talked about the AIAW. As I understand, you were active in the association.*

Turner Yes.

Gill *Could we talk about the guiding principles and then maybe get to how it changed as it went into the NCAA? What were the guiding principles and the founding principles of AIAW?*

Turner The founding principles were to provide intercollegiate competition for women's sports and have it governed by an organization that had rules for recruiting and competition and had championships and this type of thing. It paralleled the NCAA.

Gill *How was it similar, in your thinking, or different from the NCAA guidelines? You went under the NCAA a few years later, and we'll get to that, but was there a difference in philosophy between the two organizations?*

Turner Well, I think at the time that I started coaching it was 90 percent female coaches, and that's how it started. It started in the physical education departments to begin with. In 1941 was the first intercollegiate women's tournament, and it was started by Gladys Palmer, who was a physical education instructor at Minnesota, and Patty Berg was her prime student and she wanted to have a competition for her.

Gill *Would that have been true in the early period, that most of the administrators, most of the leadership, in AIAW would come out of a P.E. background?*

Turner Yes, as a coach or as a teacher in that era.

Gill *Did that perspective affect or impact how they thought about sports so that they looked more at education, not as much the competitive side of it, more of an amateur, if you will, student athlete perspective?*

Turner Oh yes, I think so. I think that it was, definitely. All of the players were very appreciative of anything they got to do because they had never got to do much before, and they kept it that way and they wanted to govern themselves. And this was the thing. Women wanted to govern women's sports. That doesn't mean that a male couldn't be in the administration of governing, but we wanted to govern ourselves. Well, this didn't hold up.

In 1979 here in Stillwater, Oklahoma, Oklahoma State University hosted the AIAW National Golf Championship at Stillwater Country Club, 1979. That's two years after I started coaching. (Laughter)

Gill *Now you were on the golf committee?*

Turner Yes, I became a member of the golf committee, and they were looking for a place to have it and I said, "We'll have it!" (Laughter) Not really knowing what I was doing, but I'm really glad we did that.

Gill *Was that a good experience for you?*

Turner Oh yeah. It was a great experience, and I thought it would be a good experience for the people of Stillwater to see women's golf. You know, it was so brand new to everybody. Everybody knew about Labron Harris' success, and then Mike Holder took over from him. Everybody knew about that, but nobody knew about women's golf and they were able to witness some very fine women's golf. Some Hall of Famers played here.

Gill *Do you remember some of them?*

Turner Yes. Juli Inkster played here. Patty Sheehan played here. Pia Nilsson, who was the first Swedish player that came to the United States and played at Arizona State University, played here. Without really thinking, that's who comes to mind for me.

Gill *Did that event help bring publicity and visibility to your program?*

Turner Oh, lots and lots of publicity, and I think it really helped here in Stillwater to kind of get us accepted as being worthy because we didn't finish last, and so that was exciting. (Laughs)

Gill *Do you remember where you finished?*

Turner I think we finished twelfth.

Gill *Out of how many teams?*

Turner I think there were twenty-four.

Gill *In the middle of the pack, that's pretty great. Back to AIAW, there are a couple of questions I want to ask you. What were the feelings amongst the leadership in the AIAW generally about the switch to NCAA governance?*

Turner Very disappointed. Very disappointed.

Gill *What was your disappointment primarily?*

Turner Because they wanted to keep their own identity and their own governing body. As I said, it was the athletic directors of the universities and the presidents, I guess. I don't know who decided all of this. But that's when the switch happened, and what happened is we hosted our last AIAW, and then we went to NCAA championships.

Gill *So, there was a little bit of a, maybe not a good analogy, but shotgun wedding, maybe kind of pulled to the altar on this thing. I think you said a little bit earlier, but just sort of summarizing, generally what were the philosophical differences between the two organizations? This was interesting. In your transition, you moved right over to the women's golf committee for the NCAA, so you were right there when it happened on both sides of it. What were the philosophical differences?*

Turner I wanted to do that because if we were going to switch, I wanted to be involved. I wanted to make sure we got things done the way it should be done. And that wasn't real popular, either, for AIAW, for me to switch from AIAW golf committee to NCAA golf committee, but I did that because I felt like that was going to happen and I wanted to be in on it.

Differences, right away the number of participants in the national championship was cut down. Right away, the athletic department started eliminating sports because they couldn't fund them all. Some of the things that were positive, I guess, was we didn't duplicate sports information. Some of the duplications that we had were funneled all into one department. We still kept our women's athletic director, but she became less powerful. I don't know how to explain it. We lost our governing power.

Gill *Did you feel any difference in impact on budgets, salaries, facilities when you moved over?*

Turner Was there any difference? You mean, did we become better?

Gill *Better or worse? The same?*

Turner Well, I think some of it became better. Facilities maybe became better, somewhat. They still weren't equal by any means. I'm trying to think back on how it impacted me. I've been under several athletic directors at Oklahoma State University and I can't think of a time when I wasn't pushing for equality. So, I think things became a little better, but it never got equal.

Gill *Was part of the anticipation of moving to the NCAA that additional money is available?*

Turner Yes, and additional funding for national championships and things like that, and that didn't happen. As I said, our championships numbers were cut way down. Like I said, we used to have like 128 participants in our national championship, and I think they cut it down to seventy-something. We fought for a long time to get those numbers up, but they had a certain formula they went by and they applied it to the women. Well, the women hadn't been in it that long to—I felt like they should have adjusted their formula, but they didn't. NCAA should have, in my opinion, had a different formula for the women. You know, there were many, many more men's programs in golf than there were women's, but the women's programs that were playing were really competitive.

Gill *What years did you serve on the AIAW committee and then what years did you serve in the NCAA?*

Turner Okay, let me think. I think I started serving on the AIAW committee in '78 because I was hosting the '79 championship, and then I don't know if it was 1980 or '81 when I went into the NCAA. I know it was in 1981 that I went to Japan. I think it was Japan. I took three players over there with the NCAA. That was the first time they took women, and I was their coach. And then I served on the NCAA until like 1987 or '88. I don't remember those exact dates.

Gill *Ann, let me go back to a statement that you made earlier. You were sometimes not fully appreciated by some of your fellow coaches because you moved over to the NCAA committee. Did AIAW continue for a time after NCAA [was formed]?*

Turner No.

Gill *Okay. How many of them moved with you?*

Turner Everybody did because there was no AIAW.

Gill *But on the committee that chose to then join the NCAA?*

Turner Yes, I think there were a couple of us. I can't remember who was on the golf committee at first that was on the AIAW committee. I'm having a real hard time remembering that, but we had a very, very good committee on the NCAA committee, the very first one.

Gill *How many people would have been on AIAW's golf committee? Fifteen?*

Turner Ten, twelve, something like that.

Gill *Only two of you then chose to go over into the NCAA?*

Turner I don't know how many of us went over there.

Gill *Two or three, but a small number.*

Turner Yes, but we had about ten on the golf committee, too, NCAA, I think. We had different divisions: division one, division two, and division three. This was the other thing that was different. We had one championship for all divisions, so we had to include division three and division two and division one. When we were our own people, we had our own separate championships. NCAA made us go together. That was different. I just now remembered that, but I learned a lot on being on a committee with some division three people and some division two people, too. It's a whole different philosophy.

Gill *When the program came together under the umbrella of the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics, that was fairly soon after Dick Young was hired as OSU's new AD. What year were the programs officially merged? You said '80, '81?*

Turner I think we had our first NCAA championship in '81. I'm not positive, but I think it was in '81 that we had our first.

Gill *Maybe that '79-'80 year they started the transition?*

Turner Yes, yes.

Gill *Did different sports select when they moved out of AIAW into the NCAA, or did all of it...*

Turner No, all of it happened at the same time. I think all of it did. I think all of it happened at one time. I remember one year we had our last AIAW national championship and our first NCAA championship in the same season. So, May and June, and we had two championships: our last AIAW and our first NCAA.

Gill *That would have been in '81?*

Turner I think it was '81. I'm not positive on that, but I think it was '81.

Gill *You alluded to this a little bit earlier, but how was the folding of the women's sports program into the intercollegiate athletics department perceived by supporters of the women's program, players, coaches, alumni, fans?*

Turner Going into the Athletic Department?

Gill *Yes.*

Turner I think they felt like it was going to be a good thing. Everybody could identify with the NCAA. They never could figure out what AIAW was. They'd call it AWAI. They just called it everything. They didn't even know what it was, so AIAW was not a familiar name to our fans or the students or anything, but NCAA was. So, it made it more familiar.

Gill *What was the perception of the supporters of the men's sports? Were they positive about bringing women's sports into...*

Turner Leery, I would think leery because they felt like we were going to take something away from them.

Gill *What would that be?*

Turner Money.

Gill *Money, facilities, budget, travel, scholarships, etc.?*

Turner Money, yes. Money controls everything.

Gill *You mentioned an athletic director. Was that still Susan Hall? When you did the merger, who was the Director of Women's Athletics?*

Turner Susan Hall was our women's athletic director, and I'm thinking that when we first moved over there that Floyd Gass was the athletic director, but he wasn't long. I know that Dick Soergel was the financial person, but I'm trying to think of who was the next athletic director. I think it was Dick Young.

Gill *And many felt that Dick Young's hiring, in fact, was due partly to his experience in merging men's and women's [athletics] from Bowling Green University, where he had been previously. In your opinion, how supportive was Young in women's sports?*

Turner I think he was supportive, but, you know, he could only do what he had money to do with. We were all scratching and scrambling for the dollar because we needed more money to support our programs, and so was it going to come from the men or where was it going to come from?

Gill *How effective do you think he was in managing that merger?*

Turner I think he was good. I really do.

Gill *During Dick's tenure, which I think went through about '83, so summer of '78 to '83, were there noticeable changes during his tenure in budgets, facilities, coaches' salaries for women? Did you see any noticeable change in those?*

Turner Yes, you know, my salary was increased once we—I'm trying to think of how my salary got increased, but I was still on ten months. When I was first hired at \$200 a month, that was part-time pay. Well, you can't coach part-time. There's no way because if you travel, it's 24/7 or 24/4, however many days you're there with them. You have to travel and stay with them. So, anyway, there was no way to be part-time. So, I did get my salary up before I went to the NCAA and then it was increased, but I was still on ten months. And I remember—I'll never forget this—they were going to put me on twelve month but leave my salary the same, (Laughter) and I thought, "You know, that's a pay cut, I think." So, I fought that and I got an increase, two more months of monthly salary because really OSU pays you by the month. So, they just gave me two more months and made me on twelve months, so that was good. So, I think things happened, but it was very slow and it was not very high.

Gill *What was your salary at the time when you went into the merger? Do you mind saying?*

Turner Well, I don't even remember, but I'm thinking that I was maybe making \$10,000. I'm not sure. I don't remember that because I didn't make very much money for a long time. It took a long time.

Gill *So, in your opinion, were the women's sports programs stronger after the merger than before? What's your feeling about that?*

Turner I think they were. There were fewer of us, if you want to know.

Gill *Fewer sports?*

Turner Yes.

Gill *Some of them that were cut out were...*

Turner Yes, they ended up dropping gymnastics, volleyball. Now, volleyball and gymnastics were there for a while, and they dropped swimming and diving and field hockey pretty quickly, I'm thinking. And then they dropped volleyball and gymnastics, so we've done a lot of dropping of sports instead of adding sports at OSU. That is one thing that I do know for a fact. (Laughs)

Gill *There's a minimum amount the NCAA requires you to take, and they kind of moved to that minimum number of sports, didn't they?*

Turner Yes.

Gill *In the early years were there issues of visibility for your program and the other women's programs?*

Turner Issues of visibility?

Gill *Like media coverage.*

Turner Oh, definitely. It was always hard for the women to get any kind of media coverage. It's so much better today, but it's hard to remember what it was like then.

Gill *Was OSU's sports information department helpful to you? Was there somebody assigned in the department to help with women's sports?*

Turner Yes, we had somebody to do that, and we had some kind of a media guide, and we had some kind of schedule printout. It was better than we had had before, but it wasn't equal. That's what I'm going to say. (Laughs) That's the only way I can say it.

Gill *Could you speak to what kind of coverage you were getting at that time in the O'Colly, Stillwater NewsPress, Oklahoma City, Tulsa papers for your program?*

Turner Very little coverage. Maybe if we were in the same tournament Tulsa was in we could get coverage, but it was usually in the results section in very small print, not big articles unless we did something. If we did something exciting, like when we had Val Skinner, she was a very well known player and very successful, we got some coverage on her.

Gill *Did you or someone on your staff have to write up something yourself?*

Turner No, I never wrote it, but I would do a lot of the calling.

Gill *You were sort of called on to promote your program?*

Turner Yes.

Gill *Now, you think coaches would say, "That's not my job. Someone in the department does that," but you...*

Turner I didn't let that happen. I'd promote it. I pushed.

- Gill** *Just sort of wrapping up this era, again, the mid-seventies, early-eighties era, are there some stories, special memories that you have, some joyful, some humorous, and maybe some painful from this time that you could tell?*
- Turner** Of the seventies and eighties? Well, one of the exciting things was recruiting Val Skinner because she was probably our first big name recruit. We were very successful in her time there. Val Skinner, and then Alicia Smales came in and she was very successful. Well, she was Alicia Ogrin at the time. Patty McGraw was on the team then. We just had a very young, competitive, exciting team and they were so appreciative and it was a lot of fun. And I think as time went on, and women's sports became more accepted and more girls got to play, scholarships became the most important thing that everybody was after, and parents got really involved. Everything changed at that—you could just see it changing. Once the parents got involved in wanting their children to get scholarships, full rides, it was different, but it was all fun. I loved every minute of it. I loved coaching a Japanese team. When I took the three girls from here over to Japan, Juli Inkster, Val Skinner and Kris Monahan, it was great.
- Gill** *There was another impact on the timeline that affected your program, the quality of players coming out of high school and junior programs because of the schools had to also enact the program.*
- Turner** Exactly. It sifted down on into high school and junior high.
- Gill** *So in talking about recruiting, the quality of the players that were coming up [increased].*
- Turner** And there were more of them. More of them to go around, yes.
- Gill** *Getting back to, specifically, your program, we talked about women's sports and that transition. In 1976, you were the coach in charge of the new program, recruiting a team, scheduling tournaments, finding playing facilities, managing a budget, everything. I am wondering what was going through your mind, like, "Why did I ever take this job?"*
- Turner** No, I loved it.
- Gill** *You loved it.*
- Turner** I was so excited about it. See, I was still going to school. I had two more years on my degree program. I wasn't finished yet, so when I started coaching I was also going to school as a graduate student. But, oh, I

loved it.

Gill *Did you have concerns about how well your playing career had prepared you for coaching?*

Turner Well, you know what I had concerns about was, was I ever going to get to play again? Was I ever going to get to play in the Country Club events? But then I got so involved in this that it didn't bother me anymore. But that's all I knew was what I was doing socially, and then I got into this and I just loved it.

Gill *Did you have priorities for recommended programs, some things you needed to do, one, two, three?*

Turner Well, we needed more money for travel, and so I knew that I was going to have to raise that for travel and uniforms and equipment and stuff that we wanted to do. I just wanted to bring our program up to where Tulsa University was. The women's program at Tulsa University is what I remember. I wanted to be as competitive as they were. You know, and we needed to travel by airplanes sometimes and not take these twelve-hour drives in a van that were just awful and rickety and you wondered if it was going to make it. So, just upgrading everything.

Gill *Can you recall your first competitive golf event you coached, when it was, and what do you remember about it?*

Turner Yes, I remember we went to Oklahoma City at Lincoln Park, and we played in the Susie Maxwell Berning All-College Classic. Joan Blumenthal was the OU coach who hosted that tournament and she invited us. We were so excited to be included and it was just exciting. I remember I gave each player one golf ball. I didn't even know. (Laughter) I didn't know anything different than, "One will be enough, won't it?" And they were just like, "I guess." (Laughter) I just had a dozen balls, so I wasn't prepared, but I learned quickly. I really learned quickly and it was so much fun. I loved meeting all the coaches and listening to them because they had been competing. Women's golf was competing out there way before we got started. Some of these coaches of women's teams were great. They were legends and I loved meeting them and talking to them and learning from them. I listened and it was just great. I loved it.

Gill *I've got to ask you, did you have enough balls to finish the tournament?*

Turner Yes, we did. (Laughs)

Gill *How many to spare?*

Turner I don't know. I don't remember, but I just remember that I learned from then on that one isn't enough. (Laughter)

Gill *I can imagine the girls were like, "What if I slice this?"*

Turner Oh yes.

Gill *Then go find that ball. Amy Weeks was telling me the story, and I hope you don't mind me mentioning, about at practice, you would give them one ball and [they had to] follow that ball. You're responsible for keeping that one ball. (Laughter) Were there differences when it changed at that time from AIAW? Did you change some rules, the number of players' scores you counted, the number of players that could participate, any differences?*

Turner No, no. That remained about the same.

Gill *What about special challenges that you faced in those first couple of years? It had to be pretty daunting, and you had a lot of enthusiasm and excitement, but just the whole momentum, getting the program started, what were your major challenges?*

Turner Coaching women, because I had two boys at home. I had been in a house of males. Coaching women is totally different. Being around a bunch of females and trying to get them to be cohesive, that was hard. And the other thing I learned is to be honest with them, not to try to act like I knew something I didn't know because they could see through that. So, I learned right on that I was going to be honest, that I'm not a golf teacher. I'm not as good as you are. I will get you help if you need help. I knew my strengths and I knew my weaknesses really pretty quick and I wanted to be fair. That was one of my most important things was to be fair and honest with them.

Gill *What were some of the biggest challenges you had with the girls?*

Turner I don't know if I can pinpoint one of the biggest challenges. Val Skinner was a challenge for me right off the bat. She was wild and came to school and was wild and crazy, and I had to hang in there with her. I knew that she was going to be okay if I could just get her back the next year. She came in the year of '78 when we were hosting the national championship in '79, and she didn't make the team.

Gill *Wow.*

Turner If you can believe that. What an outstanding person she turned out to be, though. Wonderful, wonderful, wonderful golfer, person, philanthropist,

great, so I learned to hang in there with them, to give them a chance, let them grow up and to realize that they will grow up. That's the thing I think was the biggest challenge. You want to hurry up the growing up and the maturity process, but you can't.

Gill *Recruiting, did you have scholarship money?*

Turner Some.

Gill *What the NCAA or AIAW allowed you or did you have other forms of financial aid you were able to offer?*

Turner No, this all came from the university. I had a certain amount, and so I would just give somebody tuition. Usually half-rides was the key right then, was to give everybody tuition.

Gill *Golf is what they call an equivalency sport where you break your scholarships down into partials and...*

Turner Yes. Break it down. I had kind of forgotten about that. Yes, it was, so I tried to have at least six players on some kind of money.

Gill *Ann, did other programs that you were competing against have pretty similar kinds of budgets and scholarship offers?*

Turner No. I felt like they were further along than we were. Much further along. They weren't as new. They had come into existence a couple of years before. It makes a difference.

Gill *Practice in early years, I think you said earlier that Lakeside Golf Course is where you worked out.*

Turner Yes.

Gill *Can you tell me a little bit about that? Were the facilities adequate for you?*

Turner Well, Lakeside at that time did not have a driving range. They had a driving range, but you hit your own balls. So, I had to get practice balls for all the girls and they had to pick them up. Well, they didn't like doing that, but looking back on this, it was the best practice ever because when you have to pick up your own golf balls, you care where they go. So, they were a little bit more diligent in their practice, a little bit slower. Practiced a little bit more methodically. And, you know, also, when you walk out there to pick up your golf balls, you're learning that feel of distance without knowing you're learning. You don't just stand there

and hit to something that you think is 150 yards because you're walking out there to pick it up and you kind of can judge your distance. I thought it was excellent practice, looking back on it.

Gill *In those early years what would have been a typical practice week for your team?*

Turner Well, we'd go to Lakeside in the afternoon after they got out of class. They'd come out there and hit balls, and then maybe they'd play nine or eighteen holes or whatever they wanted to play. Labron was always there early on and he would help them with their swing if they were wanting to learn something or do something. And then if we were trying to go to a tournament, I would try to have three days of qualifying, and that means that they would go out and play eighteen holes and you'd rank the scores and take the top five players to the tournament.

Gill *How many women would you have on the team?*

Turner I might have eight to ten, and sometimes I had twelve. Twelve was too many. Can't control twelve.

Gill *But you'd only travel with six.*

Turner No, five.

Gill *So, they're in competition, then.*

Turner Yes, but see a lot of walk-ons, a lot of walk-ons, which was fine. You wanted a big squad. You wanted competition, but really if you could have six players competing for five spots, that was ideal.

Gill *Were you out there with them, observing practice?*

Turner Yes, watching.

Gill *At that point, I know later in your career you had morning workouts. Early on, did you have the girls come and do...*

Turner Any kind of fitness program? No, not early on. Well yes, I did have, early on, fitness programs. I asked them to all jog, to run a mile or something like that, so I did have that early on. I don't know that we did it as a group. They were to do it on their own, and I trusted them to do it on their own. (Laughs)

Gill *Oh, my gosh.*

Turner I know.

Gill *What was your travel budget like?*

Turner I don't remember what my travel budget was like, but we traveled. I drove a lot.

Gill *Did you have a team van or something?*

Turner Yes, we had athletic vans of some kind. We'd have that and they were just awful, but we did it. I did most of the driving and sometimes I would let one of the girls drive if we were driving late at night and I was getting tired, but I always had this rule that the driver gets the ticket, pays the fine.

Gill *Most of them let you do the driving then, didn't they? (Laughs) Where did you stay?*

Turner The cheapest place we could find.

Gill *Motel 8.*

Turner Yes, well, I don't know. Most tournaments we played had a headquarters and so we'd try to stay there, but we doubled up. There'd be three and two in a room, and then one of them would stay with me. So, we usually had two rooms, three and three.

Gill *The lucky one got to stay with the coach?*

Turner Yes, two of them had to stay with me, because we'd have six people counting me.

Gill *Have two rooms and three to a room.*

Turner Yes, so I bunked with them. I stopped that soon after about a year. I decided, "I'm not doing this. I'm going to get my own room. I don't like that." Oh, I didn't like it.

Gill *Can you talk about what a typical season would be like and where you were going? How many tournaments did you have in the fall and the spring and where were you playing?*

Turner Well, I remember we went to Oklahoma City and played in the All-College Classic. And then we were fortunate enough to get invited to the Dick McGuire Invitational in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and we drove out there. It's a long drive up through nothing. We'd play some of the Big 8 tournaments. I mean, if Kansas had a Sunflower Tournament, then

we went up there and we drove. Where else did we go? We played at Texas A&M one time. We played there in a tournament. We drove to that. We went to the University of Texas, and we drove there and played in that tournament. Wherever the Big 8 tournament was, we played in that. I'm trying to think of early on where else we went. Mostly just locally around, someplace we could drive.

Gill *How many tournaments would you do in the fall and the spring?*

Turner You know, I don't remember that exactly. I think we probably had maybe three in the fall and four in the spring, counting Big 8, and maybe five in the spring counting the Big 8 championship.

Gill *You were talking about the early part of your career and those first [tournaments in the] late '70s, early '80s. How did you do nationally competitively?*

Turner Well, we got to play in the National Championship, AIAW. The first year, we sent an individual to Hawaii.

Gill *Wow.*

Turner I know it, and so I got to go to Hawaii. I didn't have a clue. I never even watched her play golf. I just enjoyed Hawaii, (Laughter) but that was Patty Zimmer, our very first entry into the national championship. That's when I kind of got involved because I went to the coaches meetings and I got really involved in this. I said, "I like this. I want to work in it and get involved in it." So, that was my first endeavor.

Gill *Did you feel that you had adequate resources to build a competitive program?*

Turner As I've said before, no. I needed more money to travel and to compete in the bigger tournaments. I can remember when we first got invited to the Lady Gator in Florida. We were so excited to fly down there and play in the Lady Gator Invitational for Mimi Ryan, who became a very good friend of mine in coaching, and that was just one of the highlights of the whole season.

Gill *What year was that, again? Did you say?*

Turner I think the first time we went down there was probably in '79.

Gill *So, the first time you flew as a team.*

Turner Well, I'm not sure that was the first time we flew as a team, but that was

the first time we went there because I can remember that Val and Patty, I think they were freshmen. Val Skinner and Patty McGraw were freshmen, and they were so excited to be there. They had put baby oil all over their body to get this suntan. That was the thing they did in those days, and they came in and they just looked awful. Everything was stuck to them. Dirt, grass was all over them. (Laughs) Anyway, I'll never forget that. That was so funny.

Gill *Again, in your early career, how did you feel about what kind of administrative support you got with the department?*

Turner I don't think I worried about it so much. You know, I just kind of went about my own business and tried to do what I could to support the team and raise money and have fundraisers and do all of this, and that was just my way of dealing with the inadequacies, I guess. I wanted us to be able to play at the Country Club, and we tried to work it out where we could play two days a week there, and we did that, and I don't remember the details of that at this point in time. That's been a long time ago, but I do remember that we got to play there two days a week for a while, and that was just wonderful.

Gill *Were you restricted in any way in fundraising on who you could contact or not? Were there any guidelines on fundraising?*

Turner Nobody gave me any guidelines on this, so I did it all. I had a group of friends here that helped me organize stuff, and we did everything we could to raise money.

Gill *If I'm correct, somewhere around '79 was when OSU actually started the Cowgirl Classic, but before that, could you talk about your fundraising, how it evolved into the tournament?*

Turner Well, I know I had a clinic one time, a spur of the moment clinic that Labron put on for me out at Lakeside, and I probably had twenty women out there or something like that. That was our first little bit of fundraising.

Gill *They, maybe, paid fifty bucks a head or something like that?*

Turner No, they probably paid twenty-five, something like that, just anything to get anything going. And then, I had a clinic out at Stillwater Country Club and pros donated their time, and I think I charged fifty dollars then, and we had different stations. That was a one-day event. I had Paul Hanks, Freddy Forbes, Jackie Riggs Hutchinson. Gervis McGraw came over from Ponca City. So, I had all of these pros there donating their time to give lessons and raise money there. Then I met Bob Toski at a

clinic somewhere and talked to him, and he said he could come in for a minimum amount of money and he'd be glad to do it. So, he flew in and I did a Bob Toski clinic, and then he played golf with Jimmy Johnson, and I think it was Alicia or Val that played with them, and that was an exhibition. Raised money doing that.

And then I had Varsity Duffer Day, which was for the women. They paid a certain amount of money, and they came over and played Stillwater Country Club, played with the team members and got to know them, and that was very successful. I didn't charge a whole lot of money, but it got interest, which I think is important. And then in the spring I had the Cowgirl Golf Classic for men and it'd be the same kind of thing. I learned early on that men give differently than women, especially in that day and age, so I separated them because I didn't want the men paying less, and I knew the women wouldn't pay more. So, I had two events. (Laughs)

Gill *So, what were those two events again?*

Turner Varsity Duffer Day for the women in the fall. They loved it. And the Cowgirl Golf Classic in the spring for men.

Gill *Can you tell me how you came up with the idea, because were you one of the few women's programs that was doing that kind of event at that time?*

Turner In our athletic department? Yes.

Gill *And in this region in terms of women's golf. I mean, having a fundraising tournament.*

Turner Well, I knew to do it because the men were having the Cowboy Pro-Am every year, so I knew that this could be done. I didn't know how to get started exactly, so I got some people together from different parts of the state, and we met, and we had kind of a beginning recruiting people to come play in it, and after that started it kind of snowballed.

Gill *Did you talk to Mike about his tournament? Was he helpful in giving you ideas of starting...*

Turner Not really, no.

Gill *When you first started, what were the gift levels for the Cowgirl Classic?*

Turner Well, it was probably \$100. I don't remember exactly. I could look back. I'll tell you who helped me with this the most was Labron to kind of

know what to do, how to kind of get it going, the format and everything.

Gill Turner *Did he give you some suggestions on people you could invite, as well?*
No.

Gill *Relationships?*

Turner No, not really. He didn't do a lot of fundraising when he was a coach at all.

Gill *Ann, can you describe for those who haven't been to a Cowgirl Golf Classic the format and how it worked?*

Turner The fundraiser for the men in the spring? The Cowgirl Golf Classic? Well, they would send in their pairings. If they wanted to play with a foursome, they'd send in the money and list a foursome. Then I would have a Cowgirl play with them, a Cowgirl Golfer. We called ourselves Cowgirl Golfers. I would have a Golfer play with them, nine holes or three holes, depending on how many people I had. Then they would drop back and play with a group behind them and stuff like that, so that they would get to meet everybody. We'd have it in the afternoon on a Friday, and then we'd have hors d'oeuvres and drinks afterwards. They'd get to mingle with the girls, and it was just really, really neat because they got to meet them and [develop] an interest in them.

Gill *Were they surprised at the quality of golf from the women?*

Turner Oh definitely.

Gill *Did they come back humbled just a little bit at the end of the day?*

Turner A lot of them always told me they played the best golf they played in the Classic because after playing with the young women, their tempo was better. (Laughter)

Gill *I had to ask that because I recall talking to some of the men that participated that said, "Wow, they can drive off a tee. Women can play golf."*

Turner They can play.

Gill *So, that had to be a plus for you.*

Turner Oh yes. See, they have to know that it's really a worthwhile project, I guess, that we had going.

- Gill** *Women's golf was not a Friday afternoon at the Country Club. These were serious competitive golfers.*
- Turner** Yes. These people could play.
- Gill** *How has it evolved? Say when you left in 2000 at the end of your career, what was the ante for participating in the classic at that point?*
- Turner** Well, it was much higher. I think it was \$300 individual. I'm not sure if that's the price, and maybe \$500 for two. How did we do that? We made an exception on the giving if you brought four. Four would be twelve. It was probably \$1,000 for four or something like that. We wanted as many people there as possible, and we wanted to make money. (Laughs)
- Gill** *Those first couple years can you tell me how much you were getting from Duffer Day and the Classic?*
- Turner** Well, I can tell you this, we were charging twenty-five dollars for Duffer Day, and we were giving them lunch, so we weren't making a lot of money there, but the key to it was to get interest. You know, if you get interest, then when they give money to the athletic department, maybe they'll designate some to go to Cowgirl Golf. You know, this is kind of what my thinking was. I wanted people to be interested in and care about our program, and then you can go on and raise the money a little bit. So, I think by the time I was finished with Duffer Day, I was charging seventy-five dollars or something like that.
- Gill** *About how many participants would you have?*
- Turner** Oh, we'd have a lot. I'm thinking seventy-two people would be a foursome on eighteen holes. We'd have at least seventy-two women. Maybe more than that.
- Gill** *Great. What were you netting on the spring Classic?*
- Turner** Well, we were making more, and I think I always tried to net \$10,000. And I didn't set my sights as high maybe as the men's program was doing, but I felt like if we netted \$10,000 that would just be a place, and then that went in my Development Foundation Fund and I could use it for stuff.
- Gill** *Did you have discretion on how you could use that extra fundraising money that you brought in each year? Could you put some in scholarships, some in travel?*
- Turner** I used it mostly for maintenance. I think maybe we did use some things

for scholarships. I'm not sure if that was allowed or not. I can't remember if we did that or if I could meet some other needs. The university might give me more money for scholarships.

Gill *I'll put it this way: you were rewarded. By being able to use the extra money, they didn't adjust according to what you brought in, what you were getting from the athletic department?*

Turner No, not necessarily, but maybe a little because they knew I could raise it, so they didn't keep increasing mine, and they were helping the others that weren't fundraising. I did get that drift.

Gill *(Laughs) You were carrying the load for some of your...*

Turner Well, I was doing what I could for our program and...

Gill *Speaking of the program, at that point, referring back to around the early '80s, late '70s, were the resources that you had available to you similar to the men's programs? For example, golf. Were the resources financial-wise fairly similar budgets?*

Turner I don't think so. I wasn't privy to know what the men had, but I knew that they were traveling different than we were, (Laughs) and they had Country Club memberships.

Gill *So, when did you finally get the Country Club full-time? You talked about at one time in the early '80s you moved a couple of days of practice and then did you eventually get to where you worked out of...*

Turner No, I think that was in the late '70s, very early '80s, we got to play at the Country Club, and then I think I worked out something with the Country Club where I bought some memberships. I don't remember exactly how all this went, but I know that we bought some memberships and maybe it was because I had raised enough money to be able to do that. I'm not real sure how all that worked, and I had the athletic department involved in this, so they might have helped me some on that. I'm real fuzzy on that. I don't remember the details.

Gill *Eventually in the transition you started practicing and playing out of the Country Club, of course.*

Turner Yes. We were restricted, I think. I don't think we were allowed to play there on Saturdays and Sundays. I can't remember if we were or weren't, but eventually we became full members and could go out there a lot. At first we weren't full members.

Gill *Did you have locker room privileges or changing...*

- Turner** No, we had no locker room.
- Gill** *How would you compare your program with the resources you had, the facilities you had with others you were competing against, say in the Big 8, in the region?*
- Turner** Well, I think in the Big 8, our biggest competitor that I would compare ourselves to would be OU. The other schools in the Big 8 were not up to the competitiveness of the nation. They were just getting started and they weren't nationally competitive. That's what I'll say. And I wanted OSU to be nationally competitive, so that's where I focused. We were going to play the best tournaments, the most competitive tournaments we could, and so that's where I focused my attention, on getting enough money so that we could travel to these better tournaments and be nationally competitive. And I got that idea from Tulsa University, to be honest with you, because she had a very nationally competitive team.
- Gill** *When you got some additional resources, did your tournament schedule change? Were you able to add more tournaments?*
- Turner** Yes, better tournaments. Better tournaments, meaning we traveled to California, to Arizona, to Florida, wherever the better tournaments were.
- Gill** *And you were flying to those events?*
- Turner** Yes.
- Gill** *And that was basically just the outcome of your fundraising, more resources?*
- Turner** Yes.
- Gill** *How did your coaching philosophy evolve over this period? Can you talk about, not in total because I want to come back and ask you about what it looked like in 2000, but just in those first few years, how did your philosophy about coaching evolve?*
- Turner** I think when I first went in it I was very competitive and I just wanted to win, win, win, win, win, you know. And I was going to do anything I had to to win, win, win, win, but then I got a little bit more involved with the future of these young women and what this was going to mean to them, and that meant a lot to me, and I cared about them. I recruited. I had never recruited in my life, and I had to get out and recruit. I recruited people that I thought were going to make us nationally competitive, and I brought them into OSU, and I wanted them to love

OSU.

My coaching philosophy changed. I think I was able to learn a lot from some of the traditional coaches that had been there. I went to a lot of coaching seminars. I went to teaching seminars. I wanted to learn as much about golf as I could. I wanted to be knowledgeable because I was recruiting nationally. I didn't want them to come in here and have me not know what was going on. I knew I wasn't a teacher, but I wanted to learn as much as I could about the golf swing so that I could guide them. My coaching philosophy changed because I wanted to learn more, I guess, and be more knowledgeable in golf, swing, competition, and I also wanted to know how to manage people. And so I really worked a lot on the mental part because I knew that that's where I could help them, is the mental part of the game.

Gill *Could you share some of how you did that, how you coached that part of the game?*

Turner Well, I read a lot and studied a lot about the mental part of golf. I had friends here at OSU and I gave them personality tests so they could learn about themselves. Just anything I could possibly come up with I tried, to help them mentally.

Gill *So, you gave your players a personality test?*

Turner I did that one time, yes, and it was really interesting and I took it with them, and I remember one player said, "Oh, now I understand why you are the way you are."

Gill *(Laughter) They started analyzing you?*

Turner Yes, and it really helped. Just different things like that.

Gill *Did you discover a certain type of personality that's a better golfer than another?*

Turner No, I didn't, but I understood them more once I understood their personalities, and that's important because they're not all the same.

Gill *Can you talk a little bit about your recruiting process in those early years? Can you walk us through your recruiting of a typical athlete? How would that evolve and the larger part of your relationships with high school coaches, junior golf coaches, etc.?*

Turner Well, I don't think I had any relationships with high school coaches and junior college coaches. Really, I went to the high school tournament here

in Oklahoma and walked around and watched, you know. I did that kind of thing, and that's kind of how you see what's going on. You know who the leading players are and you kind of watch them, and if you're wanting to recruit them, you just show up so they'll know you're interested. That's basically what recruiting is, to let them know you're interested, and you kind of know when you go out to a tournament later on. Not right at first but later on, I started going out in the summer to the national junior tournaments, and basically it was to let them know you're interested by being there because there were rules. You couldn't talk to them and stuff.

Gill *Was that where the really top flight were coming from, those competitive junior college programs even more than high school at that time?*

Turner Right.

Gill *Did you develop relationships with some junior program coaches at all?*

Turner Not really, no. I didn't really know how to recruit early on. I did the best I could by writing letters and that type of thing. The men were recruiting much more vigorously than the women were. I'm talking about coaches of women's sports. They were not recruiting as vigorously as the coaches of the men's sports were, but we soon learned to.

Gill *What would have been your steps? So, you'd pick up a student somewhere maybe as a junior or senior that summer after junior year. They're having a great junior season or maybe they were a medalist at the state tournament. How did you then pursue a student?*

Turner Write a letter, send them information about Oklahoma State University.

Gill *Make visits to their home or their school?*

Turner I did. I didn't do that with all of them. I didn't have to. I asked them to come over, and they would come over for a recruiting day or something like that, and I'd show them around OSU and talk to them, you know, just do all that kind of stuff.

Gill *What are some of the things you would do, typical activities, when you had a student athlete or a prospective student athlete?*

Turner Early on?

Gill *Yes, on campus.*

Turner I would just have my office in the HPER center, is where I was officing

at the time, and I'd take them around campus because I always thought the OSU campus was just beautiful. I wanted them to walk on that, go to the Student Union and see everything, show them the Country Club or Lakeside, go out there and do all that, just show them everything.

Gill *And so then you'd follow up with letters. Now what was your recruiting territory? Did you recruit nationwide?*

Turner I was trying to recruit nationwide, yes. I recruited Alicia Ogrin from Illinois, Val Skinner from Nebraska. You get tips on players, and you just kind of follow up on it and they came down and visited.

Gill *Ann, what do you think was attractive to competitive golfers about Oklahoma State? You had a young program. You couldn't have established a lot of national prominence or attention yet. How were you getting some of these better golfers in the early years?*

Turner I think one thing is it felt like they were wanted here. They could be the big wig. All of these special golfers are big in their hometown or wherever they are, and they go to a school with a bunch of other number-one golfers and they're just another golfer. This was the beginning of a program, and I think they kind of looked at that like exciting, that this was going to be something that they could help build. Plus, maybe it was closer to where they were living and they didn't want to go to California or Florida or something like that, and they wanted to be closer.

Gill *You were talking about some of your better golfers you got from out-of-state, but let's say in-state and states surrounding Oklahoma and Texas, was that where most of your players were coming from?*

Turner Most of them came from Oklahoma initially.

Gill *Was women's golf pretty strong in Oklahoma?*

Turner There were a lot of very good junior players in Oklahoma, surprisingly, but it wasn't because of the high schools. It was because of the state organization and junior program.

Gill *Ann, talk a little bit, if you will, about your training. You talked about the mental aspect of your training, your practice techniques and how it changed from the time you started, because, again, you're learning about coaching, you're learning about the sport. How did your techniques of what you were doing change and evolve?*

Turner I think I just learned more about how to be a coach, and I figured out

what was important through trial and error, and so maybe that's what changed. From the very beginning of not knowing anything and then listening to some legends in the coaching field and listening to how they did things and seeing if that would fit with how I wanted to do things, I knew early on it had to fit with me. I couldn't try to be somebody else. I had to be me, and these had to fit with what I felt like were important and things I wanted to do. I always tried to make sure it fit with the way I felt, and I don't know what I changed, but I think I just matured and learned more.

Gill *Did you change up your practice format during the week at all as you moved along in your career?*

Turner Maybe so. I might have scheduled them a little bit more when I realized that they needed more structure and maybe that I needed to practice one area of the game a little bit more than others, but also I learned that golfers like to do their own thing that day and not to try and schedule them every day. Let them do what they want to in practice. So, I did learn that. I do know that's a change I made.

Gill *One of your former golfers told me about your morning stadium routine. Can you share a little bit about that?*

Turner Well, later on in coaching, fitness became a real thing. Everybody was into fitness and doing something with fitness and weight training, and I tried to figure out how to get this done because there was always a reason not to do it. So, I scheduled it at five thirty in the morning.

Gill *Oh, five thirty? Wow.*

Turner Because I knew that nothing was going to interfere with that, no test, nothing. So, we met at the stadium and did stadium stairs. I didn't make them run them. They walked them, but I felt like that was a very good workout for about twenty minutes. And then we left there and went to the weight room, and we had a physical trainer and they did a weight training routine. So, by six fifteen or six thirty they would have been finished, so if they had a seven thirty class, they could get to it. And I think we did that three days a week. I'm not sure. I don't think I made them do it every day, but they also used it as a consequence if something happened that I didn't think was necessarily the right thing, then I'd give them extra.

Gill *Not punishment, just extra incentive for the next time not to do that.*

Turner Yes.

- Gill** *Kind of a behavior modification program.*
- Turner** Yes. And I had a group at one time that I had to change the way I felt about that because they might not care if they had to walk ten flights of stairs, so I made it punishment, or consequence, for the whole team. That made them be a little bit more careful.
- Gill** *A little more accountability.*
- Turner** Yes.
- Gill** *That's great. Can you share some milestones in the golf program in these early years? You touched on some of these, but some of your outstanding golfers and some of their successes, some of how you were doing Big 8 tournaments, just milestones in those first five or six years.*
- Turner** The first five or six years? Well, I think being competitive the very first year at the Big 8 and winning it, that was huge. And then going to the national championship and hosting the national championship here, that was a milestone. Knowing we were going to be competitive nationally by doing those things was exciting because I think we won the Big 8 in 1977, and then I don't know if we won it in '78, but I think we won it in '79. We won fourteen Big 8 championships, I believe, and one Big 12 while I was coaching.
- Gill** *How about some of your special players in those early years?*
- Turner** Well, I've had lots of special players and, gosh, I hate to name them because I'll leave somebody out, but Val Skinner, Alicia Ogrin, Patty McGraw-Coatney, who was an outstanding player in Oklahoma, came to OSU and that got a lot of interest because she was well known here. Janice Burba Gibson who was from Oklahoma, Janet Grone Miller was from Oklahoma. Then I got some outstanding Swedish players. I recruited my very first Swedish players, Eva Dahllof and Katrin Mollerstedt, and Eva turned out to be outstanding. And then I got other Swedish players from that connection to come here. They had a great program in Sweden so they put out a lot of junior golfers and they played here.
- Gill** *In the early '70s and '80s, were there some turning points, some milestones early in the program? Might have been about your players, might have been about your fundraising, might have been about your coaching. Just things you remember how it evolved and "We climbed this mountain and we made this change"?*
- Turner** No, I don't remember that. I think it was just gradual. I don't remember

just being all of a sudden overwhelmed by something. I'm sure that we won a tournament someplace that we went, and I'm sure that was interesting, or an individual won a tournament and that was probably a first. We probably had a lot of firsts in those few years and I don't remember them. I'm sorry, I just don't remember them. I know the first Big 8 championship we won and I'll never forget that, so that was just very exciting.

Gill *Ann, in those early years, didn't you win most of the Big 8 tournaments? I think you won nearly every one of them.*

Turner Yes, we were the team to beat, I guess you could say. We were the most successful.

Gill *Did it give you a lot of sense of pride?*

Turner Yes, it did.

Gill *The rest of the conference was following the Cowgirls?*

Turner It was, and I wanted the Big 8 to get better because I wanted the competition in the Big 8 to get better. It took awhile.

Gill *Which teams finally stepped up?*

Turner OU. University of Oklahoma, and Big 8-wise would be Missouri. Nebraska was competitive, believe it or not. That's about the ones that I can remember.

Gill *You coached for a quarter of a century, twenty-four years.*

Turner That's a long time, isn't it?

Gill *Long time. Your retirement in 2000—sort of flipping, I'd like to ask you some questions about your program after it evolved and it grew to a more competitive comprehensive program. How did the financial resources you had available to you change over a period of time?*

Turner Well, of course, I began fundraising from the very beginning and I continued fundraising, and that was a big thing for us was to have fundraising, but we got more support from the university. It got better, so our budgets were a little bit better, but it was never enough. I always needed to fundraise, and I knew that.

Gill *At what point, between you and the university, were you able to fund up to the NCAA limit of scholarships? Did you ever get to that point?*

Turner Yes, we were fully funded, and I don't remember what year that happened, but we were fully funded on scholarships.

Gill *Would that have been in the '80s at some point?*

Turner Yes, the '80s.

Gill *We were laughing a little bit earlier about your travel budget, the amount of money that you had to go to major tournaments, to be able to fly, stay in a bit nicer [accommodations]. When did that start turning for you?*

Turner I don't know. I don't remember that because I think that it just kind of happened. The more I fundraised, the better off we were.

Gill *University funding or additional fundraising dollars or just kind of a combination of those things?*

Turner Well, we got additional dollars once we became a part of the athletic department. That's when we really got more money, I think. That's the beginning of getting more money.

Gill *How did your funding, when you were creating your scholarships in terms of recruiting budgets, how did that compare to the men's program? Do you know?*

Turner The men's golf program? I don't think that we ever had the budget they did, but I'm not sure of that because I don't think I had knowledge of that. I just knew that we needed more money. I'll go ahead and tell you that. I just knew we needed more all the time.

Gill *Ann, we talked about facilities and how they changed. You started at Lakeside and moved to Stillwater Country Club. Talk about how that evolved, and eventually, at some point, you started playing out at Karsten [Creek].*

Turner That was in '94.

Gill *Can you talk about that evolution a little bit, the differences in facilities and how the program changed in relation to the facilities you had to work with?*

Turner Well, as I said, we started practicing at Lakeside where you hit your own balls and picked them up. Then we started playing at Stillwater Country Club and got to play out there more and more and more, and less and less and less at Lakeside. Then all the practice was at Stillwater Country

Club because they liked hitting golf balls on the range where they didn't have to pick them up. But we had limited use of the range and so I made sure that they didn't have... Also we had a place on Nineteenth Street here in Stillwater, and the man that lives there was Dale Ringwald. He had a big acreage there and we hit balls there. It was right down the street from the Country Club. Everybody had their own shag bag full of golf balls and they could go there and hit balls right there on Nineteenth Street. So, we hit a lot of balls there and then they could warm up on the range at Stillwater Country Club and we hit balls there. Then in 1994 we had privileges at Karsten Creek because that's the year it opened for us, and we hit balls out there some and played out there some.

- Gill** *Did you at some point get to where you were primarily doing most of your practice out at Karsten?*
- Turner** Yes, towards the end.
- Gill** *And I guess when they built it, the clubhouse and the locker rooms, etc., did you get to use those facilities in terms of locker rooms and so on?*
- Turner** Well, I don't remember using the locker room that much at all.
- Gill** *People got dressed out before they'd come out to practice and then went home?*
- Turner** Yes.
- Gill** *Were there some other facilities that they had available out there? Were there any at the course? You talked about the driving range, of course, the tough course. Playing that course is wonderful practice.*
- Turner** Right.
- Gill** *Were there other facilities they had out there that were available to your program?*
- Turner** Most of them. There were some of them that weren't available for us to use.
- Gill** *You might mention what some of those were.*
- Turner** Well, there was some kind of a short game area and a team area that was mostly used by the men's program. It was reserved for them. We did fine. We were fine.
- Gill** *In these later years, the same kind of question but fast forward some in*

terms of you got better facilities, you got a better travel budget, you could recruit nationally, play nationally. Did that impact your coaching, your teaching? Did it continue to evolve? I'm thinking here at the end of the '90s. What was different about the program than let's say in the early era?

Turner

Recruiting became much more difficult. I mean, you had to be out there all summer long, and that really wasn't what I liked to do. I wanted them to want to come here, and if I could find somebody that I was really interested in and I wanted to communicate with them, bring them in for a visit, maybe visit them at home, etc. But I started having to go out and recruit. Plus we started having assistant coaches, and so I had an assistant coach and I sent him out to do some recruiting, too. Recruiting was not my favorite thing to do. I didn't really like traveling all summer long. I had traveled all year competing and I didn't really want to travel all year, but I did it. I had to do recruiting and that was really what changed from the mid-'80s to 2000. You had to be out there recruiting these players, talking to the parents, letting them see you out there, letting them know you're interested. And the parents became much more involved in where their child was going to go to school because they were wanting full scholarships and wanting to know what kind of scholarships and what was going to be done for their child if they came here.

Gill

In those later years, were you able to offer more full scholarships or closer to full scholarships?

Turner

No, I had full scholarships, but you had to offer the best players a full scholarship. You couldn't piece it. You couldn't give them pieces of scholarships. Not anymore. So, you had to be careful who you recruited because you gave them a full scholarship.

Gill

You were talking about having an assistant coach. What was the first year you had an assistant coach?

Turner

Well, the very first year I coached, Labron Harris.

Gill

Oh, well, that's true.

Turner

So, I had an assistant coach from then on. Labron Harris was an assistant coach. Then I had Willard Wood, who was Willie Wood's father, here for a little while, lived in Stillwater. I had him for an assistant coach for maybe two or three years. I had Fred Warren as assistant coach. Then I had Bruce Heppler, who was here as an assistant coach for me and Mike Holder. I guess it was Bruce who was my last assistant coach, and then I had Sheila Dills came over to be an assistant coach for a little while part-

time. Then I had Amy Weeks as an assistant coach.

- Gill** *How did that help you? What kind of duties did you assign your assistant coach?*
- Turner** Well, a lot of times they could go out to practice and they could take care of some of that, and I didn't have to be out there every day for everything, and I let them kind of take over some of that, oversee it, just to be there.
- Gill** *Did they do more, like as a swing coach? Did they do coaching technique at all?*
- Turner** No, no.
- Gill** *Even Labron?*
- Turner** Well, Labron did. Labron really helped the girls. He was more of a swing coach type of thing.
- Gill** *Which he obviously had a great success with his other players. We talked about working out on the steps and so on. How did conditioning and strength training change? How important was that to your program and what kinds of things were you doing?*
- Turner** I think it was very important. Every program was doing strength and conditioning, and so this became a real thing with all of the women's golf programs, and we were doing the same thing, mostly walking stadium stairs and doing some weight training afterwards.
- Gill** *What kind of weight training were you doing?*
- Turner** Well, I had whoever was our physical strength trainer in our athletic department would work with the girls and give them a program to go through, doing some squats and some bicep stuff and just whatever.
- Gill** *What did you emphasize? What were specific techniques to golf that you're teaching your women?*
- Turner** I think mostly leg and arm strength, that type of thing, core. You know, we're not trying to build muscles, just strengthen.
- Gill** *We talked earlier about single players in the early era. You had some truly outstanding players throughout your career and certainly mid-to-late years that played in the pro circuit. Can you talk about some of those players?*

Turner Yes, well Val Skinner played on the pro tour, and I think she won seven times on the LPGA Tour. Janice Burba Gibson played on the tour for thirteen years. Eva Dahllof played on the tour and is still playing on the tour. She's a Swedish player. She was a very outstanding player here. Robin Hood played on the tour. She was an outstanding player here at OSU in the early years. She played out there on the tour. I'm trying to think of who else. That's who I can come up with right off hand.

Gill *Were there some players, not necessarily because they were great players, but are there some personalities that stand out in your mind of some young women that you really bonded with or were special for some reason in your program?*

Turner Well, of course, all of the ones that I just mentioned. They were very special to the program because they were winners, and Stephanie Martin was a special player here at OSU. She won a lot of awards for OSU. Let's see, she won the Edith [Cummings] Munson Award, which was for outstanding athlete and academic, and she won the NCAA Female Athlete of Oklahoma one year, and she was an All-American. Very outstanding player.

Gill *How many All-Americans did you have? I know you don't know an exact figure, but give or take in your career?*

Turner I don't know. I don't know.

Gill *Thirty, forty, fifty?*

Turner No, I don't think that many, but eighteen, twenty, something like that. I don't know.

Gill *Going back to the Big 8 and the transition to the Big 12, first of all the old Big 8. How many years did you coach in the Big 8?*

Turner Well, until '97. I believe '97 was our first Big 12.

Gill *Out of those whatever years, how many years did you win the Big 8 conference tournament?*

Turner Fourteen.

Gill *Fourteen out of about seventeen years or so?*

Turner Yes.

Gill *Wow.*

Turner Well, from 1977 to 1997 is twenty years, right? Nineteen years.

Gill *Pretty good record. The change to the Big 12 Conference, how did it affect your program? What were the impacts of that change?*

Turner Well, it's more competitive. We got a lot of the Texas schools in with the Big 12 Conference, and it made it much more competitive. University of Texas was always an outstanding program, and so it came in and it was probably our number one competitor.

Gill *How about A&M? Did they develop a strong program?*

Turner Yes, they had a good program, but they weren't as strong as University of Texas.

Gill *How did you do in the Big 12 years?*

Turner I think we won the Big 12 championship while I was coaching, and I'm not sure when that was.

Gill *In about three years, give or take, that you coached?*

Turner Yes, two or three years.

Gill *Still pretty good. What about academic performance of your players?*

Turner Had a lot of academic All-Americans. The female golfers were always interested in getting their degree. Most of them got their degree.

Gill *What would you say your graduation rate was?*

Turner Well, I think it'd be very high. I don't know what it was. Now, Val Skinner did not graduate. She lacked like three hours or something when she left school, but she was here four years. Almost everybody that played was here four years.

Gill *As we talked about the men's program a little bit, the success of the men's and women's program, have they reinforced each other? Has it been mutually beneficial to have strong men's and women's golf programs?*

Turner I think so. I think the female golfers know that the men have been successful, so it makes them—you know, if they don't know anything about the women's team they know something about the men's team, so it helps.

Gill *Have the two programs over the years been generally supportive of each other?*

Turner Well, I think so. I think the athletes are very supportive of each other.

----- End of April 15, 2010 interview -----

Gill *My name is Jerry Gill. Today is May 13, 2010. This is a follow-up interview with Ann Pitts Turner on the campus of Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, Oklahoma. This interview is for the O-STATE Stories Project which is part of the Oklahoma Oral History Research Program. Ann, thank you for graciously consenting to a second follow-up interview from our first one. I appreciate you coming to Stillwater to take the time to do this.*

Turner My pleasure.

Gill *Picking up where we left off, we were talking about your twenty-four year coaching career and looking back. I want to follow up with this question: in your opinion, over that twenty-four years, what were the major changes in the women's golf program? How did it change in terms of quality of the athletes and maybe strength and conditioning programs, recruiting, number of tournaments, facilities, things like that?*

Turner I think a lot changed from the time I started coaching in the fall of '76 until when I ended coaching in June of 2000. One of the things you mentioned was quality of athletes. With Title IX came more opportunities for females to participate in sports, so it opened up participation in high schools and the junior high schools and the junior golf programs and all these things. So, from '74 to 2000 you had a generation in there of girls that got more opportunity, and they saw more opportunity for being successful in a sport. It could lead to a college scholarship, and so they took sports more seriously, especially the parents. They took it much more seriously because that was a way for their daughter to get a scholarship. And by the mid-'80s and early '90s, there were many, many Division I schools and Division II schools giving scholarships for college education to female athletes in golf and all other sports, so it made the quality of the athlete better. We had more choice, lots more choice. Also, there was more recruiting of foreign athletes because, actually, even with the quality of athletes coming out of the United States, there weren't enough. There were some very good athletes, for instance, in Sweden and that's where I had my foothold was in the Swedish community. I think I recruited my first Swedish player in '85. There were two of them, and from that point on, I had an in, you might say, to the Swedish National Team and to the Swedish golfers who were very well organized and very good competitors. They were

competing across the United States at different universities.

Gill *Ann, kind of moving sideways a little bit, how did you get that first in? What motivated you to go to Sweden to look at Swedish players and how did you make that contact?*

Turner Well, I didn't go to Sweden, and what got me into this was I received a letter from a player from Sweden. Her name was Eva Dahllof. I received this letter, and I hadn't been successful that year up to that point in time recruiting in the United States and getting the players I wanted, and so I thought, "You know, I really have nothing to lose here. I think I will pursue this." And so I called her and wrote her, and evidently I was the first school to reply. She had sent out fourteen letters, she told me later, and I was the first school to reply. She took me up on it and became an outstanding player. I mean, it was just unbelievable the talent this player had. I recruited two that year. I brought two in from Sweden that year and it was just very, very interesting, and from then on, about every other year or two or three I got a Swedish player.

Gill *Did you ever go over to Sweden and make some contacts personally?*

Turner Well, I went to Sweden for a Swedish seminar that was put on by Pia Nilsson, who was the Swedish national captain over there. She was head of the Swedish national team and she put on this—but this was late in my coaching career. This was in '97 or '98, somewhere in there. I don't even remember when. It might have been in '95, but that wasn't to basically recruit, but I did see players over there. Most of my recruiting in Sweden was done by phone calls and letters and word of mouth.

Gill *And from former players talking to prospects?*

Turner Yes, word of mouth. It was a small group over there, and so they all knew where everybody was going to school, and so they would talk to the players and find out what they wanted to know about a certain coach and a certain school and this type of thing. So, it was interesting.

Gill *I didn't mean to interrupt you. You were talking about the change in the quality of athletes.*

Turner Well, and that was the other thing. We got more funding and we had our full scholarship limit funded to us. You know, fundraising was a big part of my coaching. It was necessary to fundraise in order to participate in the quality of tournaments we wanted to participate in because we needed more travel budget. It's hard to fundraise for scholarships particularly, but you can fundraise for your operating budget, and so that's basically what I did. Our reputation improved, and we were

invited to the elite tournaments, and we tried to play in the best tournaments available to us that would work in our schedule because that's what our players wanted to do. If you want to get quality athletes you had to play in quality tournaments. That improved as we went on and basically, we got full rights at Stillwater Country Club, so that improved. Our playing availability of our practice area improved. We had a lot of improvements.

- Gill** *Towards the end of your career, did you ever start working out at Karsten?*
- Turner** Yes, Karsten opened up in 1994.
- Gill** *So, again, a really quality facility, going from Lakeside to Country Club to Karsten?*
- Turner** Yes, and I liked Lakeside. I loved Lakeside. I thought it was an excellent practice facility because you have to pick up your own balls. That makes your quality of practice much better. You're not so apt to just stand up there and hit a lot of balls and not pay attention to where they go. Then I liked the Country Club because it is totally a different kind of golf course than Karsten Creek. So, we tried to play at both places. It was nice in a town the size of Stillwater to have three places to play. (Laughs)
- Gill** *I'm going to say strength conditioning, maybe not doing squats, but in terms of strengthening core and other things, did that become more prevalent in your career as you went on?*
- Turner** Oh yes. I always felt like they needed to work out. So, even from the very beginning I had them running or doing something. A lot of it was more on let them do it on their own and be honest about it, that type of thing, but then I got into more organized strength and conditioning. I talked about earlier we did stairs at the stadium, and I felt like that was a very good workout in a short amount of time. I don't care if you run them or you walk them, it's a workout. I didn't care how fast they went up because I knew by the time they got to the top they were going to be working out. Then we'd do strength. That became very popular and is still today.
- Gill** *Ann, you talked about international recruiting. What other ways did recruiting change during your career? Did it become more intensive, more competitive?*
- Turner** Well, you had to really get out there and be seen and be visible and be at the junior tournaments and follow them and show them that you're

interested and go visit in the homes and visit with the parents, and so it was more competitive. Recruiting was more competitive because there were more schools after the limited pool of quality athletes, so it was more competitive. I have to admit that recruiting was not my favorite thing to do because after traveling all year, I really didn't want to travel all summer. I had a family. I didn't want to do that. So, I have to admit that I was very selective in the tournaments that I went to and I didn't spend all summer out there on the junior circuit, so maybe it hurt me in some ways not being able to get some of the quality athletes, but I never regretted the people that I got.

Gill *Can we go back and discuss in more detail—we touched on some of it—but the issues and early outcomes of folding women's sports under the athletic department at OSU. I think it began in the late '70s and early '80s and that period. For example, what were the concerns initially in coaching women's sports about being merged under the department of athletics?*

Turner We were our own group when we were under Health and Physical Education. We felt like maybe we had more say because we were only worried about women's athletics in our area. When we moved into the athletic department it was men's and women's athletics under one umbrella, and I think it felt like at first that we were there because they had to take us. I don't think the coaches of men's sports were glad that we were there. I think there was a little bit of anxiety about having to share the funds and this type of thing, so I think when we went over there and we merged into the athletic department, we felt like it was going to be better for us, maybe that we would get more support, more attention, more funding, all those kinds of things. It took awhile for all of that to happen.

Gill *What were the perceived benefits of the merger from the coaches' perspective?*

Turner I think that perceived benefits was that it was going to be upgraded from being just women's sports kind of like over here on the side, that we were really going to be fully integrated as an athletic team and this type of thing. Women's golf was really going to be right there with men's golf, and women's basketball was going to be thought of the same way as men's basketball.

Gill *Taken a lot more seriously and on a larger stage.*

Turner Yes, because the public didn't understand women's sports at that time. It was under AIAW which is the Association of Intercollegiate Athletics for Women. They didn't know what that was. Everybody knew what the

NCAA was. Plus, they didn't even know some of the teams we had in women's sports, and so by moving into the athletic department, we felt like we'd get more publicity, more people would know about us, it would be easier to fundraise with the help of the athletic department, this type of thing.

- Gill** *Stepping back for just a minute, you were talking about being under Health, Physical Education and Recreation. Was Betty Abercrombie head of Women's Intercollegiate Sports when it was housed over in HPER?*
- Turner** No. Dr. George Oberle was head of the department. Now, Dr. Abercrombie might have been his associate, where she kind of was with the women's. I don't remember that so much, but I do remember Betty Abercrombie, a great mentor for me over there.
- Gill** *Were there some actual or implied promises or benefits made to the coaches in the women's department when you were first talking about merging?*
- Turner** I don't know that because we had a women's athletic director, Susan Hall, and we wouldn't talk with anybody as coaches.
- Gill** *You weren't involved in the decision.*
- Turner** No, no. Not that I remember.
- Gill** *So, Susan Hall, before the merger, was hired as athletic director for Women's Intercollegiate Sports, and then when you moved over under NCAA, she was still on the staff.*
- Turner** She was the women's athletic director.
- Gill** *Was there any discomfort with the merger, from your perspective?*
- Turner** I think what I mentioned earlier is that you could feel the anxiety from the men's side. The coaches of men's sports I don't think were real pleased that we were there because they felt like that was the beginning of them having less because they were going to have to take care of us.
- Gill** *They were going to have to share, share resources with the women's program.*
- Turner** Right, and facilities and everything, so it made it a little different. You know, you bring women's basketball over there and you've got to share the court and you've got to have basketball games, and there was no

sharing before that. (Laughs)

- Gill** *Volleyball on top of that?*
- Turner** Volleyball and gymnastics. So, there was a lot of—you know, we were happy to be promoting our sports and happy to be having a place to promote it on a better stage, we thought. If I remember correctly, I think it bothered the coaches of men's sports. You'd have to ask them, but just all of a sudden you've got people coming into your place that weren't there before.
- Gill** *Taking that same question, fast forwarding to today or say towards the end of your career, have most of these initial concerns been positively resolved?*
- Turner** I think so. I think you can see that across the board. I don't know if they still have problems here at Oklahoma State, and I'm sure they do, but you can look nationally when you see teams playing on television, especially in basketball, men's and women's basketball. I think that they are proud of their counterparts. I see that more. They're proud that the women have been successful.
- Gill** *How about participation by fans?*
- Turner** Yes.
- Gill** *TV exposure compared to what it was is just night and day.*
- Turner** Yes, but you can see, too, that some of the men's coaches are supporting women's basketball and the women's coaches are supporting men's basketball just by being there. I think it's better, much better. Of course, we've had how many years since Title IX went into effect?
- Gill** *Thirty-plus years.*
- Turner** Thirty-six years. That's two generations.
- Gill** *It's about time, right?*
- Turner** Yes. (Laughter)
- Gill** *Well, generally, what do you think has been the legacy of Title IX?*
- Turner** Oh, the legacy of Title IX, it opened up all kinds of opportunities for women, not only in sports, in other areas, especially in universities because they receive federal funds. Any place that received federal funds could not discriminate on the basis of gender, so it opened up a lot of

opportunities for females. You know, when I grew up, I had no opportunity for sports, just in gym class. That's where we learned all about sports. I had no sports offered to me. My sport was watching the guys play, the boys. We followed our boyfriends around and watched them play baseball and basketball and football and all that kind of stuff. Tried to be cheerleaders and all that kind of thing, but now you have young girls playing in Little League stuff from the beginning of six years old just like the boys, all the way through and then maybe choose a sport and go with that. You've got soccer leagues all over the place with girls playing. Softball is huge for girls now.

Gill *Soccer is getting huge, too.*

Turner Yes. And basketball, golf. Tennis has always been out there for the girls it seems like. I think Title IX was huge. You know, everybody says, "Oh it would have happened anyway." I'm not sure. It's kind of like the right to vote, you know. You have to push for some of these things.

Gill *Sort of the same question, but has it fulfilled its expectations of its original advocates? Do you think it has come full circle from what we anticipated it to be, the impact of Title IX?*

Turner Well, it took a long time because my perspective on this was the '80s were spent by groups fighting Title IX. They never won, but it was at a standstill because there was always litigation and trying to get the legislation and all this kind of stuff. It never worked. It never happened, but there was a lot of time in the '80s spent fighting. So, it kind of stood still for a little while, but since then it's just gone full force forward.

Gill *You mentioned this earlier, but I'll give you a chance to respond to it again. Do you feel that the women's intercollegiate sports have achieved parity with the men's programs, or at least on the Olympic or nonrevenue sports, if you throw football out of it and basketball?*

Turner Right, right. Well, I don't know because I'm not there. I love women's sports. I'm really interested in women's sports, and I'm really more interested in women's sports than men's sports. I think the public is still heavily more interested in men's sports than women's sports, but I think the people involved in women's sports are very, very good at what they do. Parody, I don't know. I don't think so, probably, especially in recognition and acceptance by the general public.

Gill *Following up on that, Ann, in your opinion, what remains to be done to ensure an equitable relationship between men's and women's sports at OSU and nationally? What's the work that remains to be done?*

- Turner** Equal opportunity for women. I hate to say this, but when I was coaching, 90 percent of the coaches for women's sports were female across the United States, and now at OSU we have one female coach. That's a little upsetting to me because I think that there's a lot of very, very qualified women out there that aren't being given the opportunity to coach because women's sports has become such a big deal at universities and there's more opportunity for men to coach.
- Gill** *I hadn't thought about that. What do you think the mixture is nationally now between men's and women's coaches in women's sports?*
- Turner** Oh, it's much higher. We've lost a lot of women coaches, and it starts, in my opinion, with administrators. Almost all administrators, athletic directors, are male, and you tend to hire like you. You're more comfortable. So, I still see that as something that needs to be really, really worked on.
- Gill** *Good point. Let me change the subject for a minute. I know a contentious issue for women's sports through the years really has been equal pay, fair pay for men and women coaching the same sports, for example, men's and women's golf, softball, baseball, basketball, etc. I know you were involved in a lawsuit against Oklahoma State University concerning this issue, and we've talked about it a little bit before. Do you feel comfortable in sharing some of your information with us about that? For example, could you talk about some issues and circumstances that led you to take action?*
- Turner** I'd be glad to. Never, never in my wildest dreams did I think that I would sue Oklahoma State University for anything, and I can't remember the year. I think it was 1993 or so. I'd been through several athletic directors and had always been working for a pay increase, pay increase for all of our coaches, and talking about gender equity. I mean, that was a huge subject for almost all of my coaching career was gender equity. Well, the story I got every time, and you know, I believed them, was, "Ann, it's just really hard to increase your salary at such a big leap. We just can't do that because your base pay—we just can't give you that big of a raise. We can't do that within our system."
- Well, I believed them for a long time, and I got to noticing that they could really give people what they wanted to give them, that there was no structure so much because I got to noticing male coaches getting a big this or a big bonus or stuff like that, you know, just by watching and listening. And I think it was in '91 or '92, somewhere in there, I'm not sure on the dates. I know exactly when it ended, but I don't know when it began, but OSU hired a new coach of women's tennis for much more than I was making. [He'd] never been a coach, and I think at that time

we'd won twelve Big 8 championships or something like that. This person had never been a coach and was coming in and making six or seven or eight thousand dollars more than I was making, and I'd been there fifteen, sixteen years. Well, that really upset me because I was the lowest paid women's coach, and I'd been there all that time, and our teams had been very successful. So, I went and talked to the athletic director about it. I was told to mind my own business.

Gill *Do you mind sharing who was the athletic director at that time?*

Turner Myron Roderick. And I thought, "Okay." And it kind of bothered me that I wasn't taken serious there, and so I kind of let it go. Then I had a new athletic director, and I worked with him: Jim Garner. Nice, nice man. Understood my situation from the beginning, and every year I went and talked about it and wanted a raise. And he did give me a raise, but I wasn't happy with the raise because I still was the lowest paid coach of female sports. Of all the sports, I was the lowest paid and had been there the longest and had really, in my opinion, the golf team had been the most successful as far as bringing home Big 8 championships, All-American recognition and different things like that.

Gill *You had what, a third-place finish at the NCAA one year?*

Turner Two.

Gill *Two third-place finishes?*

Turner So, I think I had just kind of had it up to my eyeballs, actually, and I don't know what prompted me to do this, but I called a friend of mine that was an attorney and I said, "What can I do?" I said, "I'm just..." And I'll tell you why I got so into this at that point in time, now looking back, was that I was looking towards retiring and wondering what in the world was I going to live on. I was a single woman at this time and I thought, "I've got to take care of my retirement, and I know that our retirement pay is based on our pay." And I was looking at that thinking, how am I going to do this?

So, this was all in my mind. I thought about it a lot. So, I called an attorney friend of mine just to visit about this and I said, "What can I do?" and he said, "Well, get me some information." So, I ran to the library that very day and came over here and went up into the—because everything is public record and I got years. I went back years, and they printed it off for me. I had a big cart full of all of these books with all of the pay of every coach and every person that worked in the athletic department. (Laughs) I had it all right there. I went back several years. I made copies of it and sent it to him. And he got back to me and said,

“Ann, I think you have a case here.” He said, “This is awful.” And I said, “Well, what do I do?” He said, “Well, let me write a letter.”

Gill *What year was this, Ann?*

Turner I’m not sure what year it was. I think it was in early ’93. It might have been in ’92. I think it was in ’92. It was in the summer of ’92. Okay, so he’ll write a letter. Little did I know that once an attorney writes a letter to the university, you’re done.

Gill *All dialog shuts down.*

Turner All dialog with the people that you really want to talk to. You have to talk through your attorney. Well, I was just beside myself. I thought, “Oh, my gosh.” But my attorney is a very good attorney: Stan Ward. He lives in Norman but he grew up in Stillwater and has been a longtime friend of mine, and his wife is a longtime friend of mine. Anyway, he started writing letters back and forth to the attorneys at OSU. He always sent me copies of the letters they sent him and they were just very insulting, telling me why there was no way in the world that I deserved to be paid any more, that I had... And I told my attorney, I said, “These are just very insulting letters they’re writing.” And so it really kind of angered me that they weren’t more appreciative (Laughs) of what I had done for the last sixteen or seventeen years. I can’t remember how long I had worked at that time, maybe fifteen, sixteen years.

And so anyway, it just went on, and we went on, and it went through mediation and that didn’t work, and I had to sit there and listen to athletic directors. By that time, we had no athletic director. We had an interim athletic director, and I had to listen to what they were saying about me. And I’ll tell you, that process opened my eyes because I was legitimate, I felt like, in my complaint, but they were adamant that I was just way off base and that what I was asking and talking about was just not true.

So, through the years we went through all this, and so the summer of ’93, I’ll never forget this, I was at a recruiting tournament and I got a call from my attorney and he said, “Ann, they’ve made their final offer.” And I said, “Well, what is it?” He gave it to me and I said, “That’s not anything!” I said, “That’s awful.” You know, I was just like, “That’s what they’re going to offer me?” So, I said, “What do I do?” And he said, “Well, the only next thing you can do is file a letter to sue.” I don’t know what it is, but, anyway, you file a suit. I said, “Oh, let me think about it.”

And so I left the tournament because I was terribly upset, and I went

home and hunkered down in my house and just thought about it all weekend. I came to the conclusion that, you know, the only thing I had to lose was money fighting it and my reputation, and I felt good about my reputation, so whatever the other people thought about me, I didn't feel that way about me.

So, I called him on Monday and I said, "Okay. File it." And he said, "Now, are you sure this is what you want to do?" and I said, "Yes, but can you wait until the very end of the day to do it?" Because I knew it was going to be front page because he told me, he said, "Ann, there's always a reporter there waiting to see what has been filed." And I said, "Does it have to be in the paper?" and he said, "Well, it will be." Well, the very next day right on the front page was "Pitts Sues to be Paid Like a Man."

Gill *Are those exact words there?*

Turner I might be paraphrasing, and I was just devastated. I mean, I was just devastated, so I didn't go to work that day. I just couldn't go in because I just knew, you know, I mean, it was just—I had to work there all year. So, this was in August of '93, and we tried everything we could to try and settle out of court, working with them. They wouldn't budge on anything, so we went through the process of getting ready for trial, and the trial was in April of '94.

Gill *Can you share what the results of the trial were, Ann?*

Turner Well, I've never been in a trial for anything, and it was just awful. I will tell you this: it was a jury trial. We had eight people on it and in a federal court. This was in federal court, and in federal court it has to be unanimous. I had six men and two women on the jury, and my attorney told me, he said, "Ann, this just does not look good." He said, "If we can settle, we need to settle." And every day they came back with the same thing, and I said, "I just don't feel good about that. I want that jury to tell me I'm wrong." I said, "I'm willing to go all the way. I want that jury to tell me I'm wrong on what I'm thinking here." And so, six redneck men and two women (Laughs) found for me, and it has to be unanimous. It was filed under three laws. Equal pay, I did not win. At the time I sued, it was extremely hard to win an equal pay suit. They've relaxed the standards now. It's much easier and I am so glad for that, but we filed under Title IX and Title VII, and I won both of those. And what I won was a five-year contract after negotiating. I mean, after the trial we had to negotiate this. I got a five-year contract. I had never had a contract in my life working for OSU, but I had to have five years because that was the date of my retirement, and if you don't reach full retirement then you're not going to get your full retirement. So, I knew I had to reach

that. I got retirement, and they had to pay my attorney fees, which was huge. That helped me so much. I got a pay increase that I was satisfied with, I wasn't pleased with, but I was satisfied with, and it was more than they were willing to give me in the settlement. And I got back pay.

Gill *For how many years back?*

Turner Well, I don't know how far back they gave me, but they gave me a sum, and I got some compensatory damages of some kind, a little bit of that. So, that pleased me that that jury of six men and two women found in my favor. Now, the university in the headlines said they won.

Gill *How did they determine that?*

Turner Because I didn't win the equal pay suit. So, it's always pleasing for me to be able to tell the story because it never came out in the paper like it really happened, and it never came out in the paper the reason it happened, and all these kinds of things. But I will say, it was the hardest thing I've ever gone through at that time ever. And you really find out who your real friends are, real quickly. (Laughs)

Gill *I can imagine. Ann, it must have been tough. Now, you won the suit, you got the pay, but now you've got to come back to work.*

Turner Yes, I worked all during it.

Gill *With the administrators that you had been on the other side of the fence with, how did that work for you?*

Turner Well, you know, Jerry, I felt okay because I felt like I was right. And I will tell you this, it took only a phone call for the softball coach to get a substantial raise and only a phone call for the women's basketball coach to get a substantial raise, and that pleased me to no end.

Gill *And you put this into perspective. It wasn't about equal pay. They said you lost the equal pay, but in effect, indirectly, it really did affect equal pay at OSU.*

Turner It affected pay. It didn't become equal, but it increased it.

Gill *Interesting. The softball coach right after that.*

Turner Yes, and I'm tickled to death because one thing I know, if I had filed it in conjunction with other coaches, I don't think they would have gone to the lengths that I went to. They would have opted out earlier because it's very hard. It's very hard to listen to your counterparts say things about

you in depositions. I had to be at every deposition and sit right across the table from the university's witnesses giving depositions, and it was all against me. It was very hard to look at them. I decided early on that I wasn't going to take it personally, that we were fighting for what we felt like was right.

Gill *How did your fellow women's coaches here and women's golf coaches across the country feel about it? Did some call you, and then did you have conversations with your colleagues?*

Turner My coaches here behind closed doors gave me full support.

Gill *Behind closed doors?*

Turner I have to say that, and I can understand. They had to stay out of it. They couldn't—they had to stay out of it. They had to stay away from me, openly supporting me.

Gill *Did this also impact other coaches across the country, do you think?*

Turner Oh, I think it did. I think it did, and it impacted other people at OSU. I cannot tell you. I bet I've had a dozen calls since my lawsuit, since the victory of my lawsuit, of people here, women here at the university wanting to know all about it and telling me their story. And every time, I've told them, I said, "Look, I can't tell you what to do, but you have to be sure you want to do this because it's not easy. It's tough and you're not going to feel good during this process, I'm going to tell you, because they're going to say terrible things about you." And it happened. And it happened here, and it happened in the media, you know. It was just hard. It was hard to listen to that.

Gill *You talked about this protracted legal action, but it was more about equity for women's sports and equal pay for coaches in women's sports than about you, and yet you paid a high emotional price for your beliefs and your values, the price for which you received some compensation, but not near enough for what you had to go through. In retrospect, was it worth it?*

Turner Yes.

Gill *Why?*

Turner Because I got validation from outsiders. I couldn't get people that I worked with to agree that we needed to make some changes and big changes, but this jury that was so stacked against me got it. I think they got it. I think they understood, and that made me feel better because, you

know, they had to listen to all the testimony. And they got it, and that really—I just thought, you know, I felt so much better after that.

Gill *You indicated that you must have felt good too about the raises that coaches of women's sports at OSU got.*

Turner Oh yes.

Gill *Many thereafter.*

Turner Oh, yes. I felt really good about it. I was tickled to death.

Gill *Ann, did it impact in any way your coaching career? You coached in the five years through...*

Turner I coached another six years, and that's another story.

Gill *Okay, well, tell me the story.*

Turner Okay, my contract was for five years.

Gill *Supposedly the five years would have ended in what year?*

Turner Ninety-nine, and that was when I would reach the rule of eighty. I would have been able to retire for full retirement, which I needed. After my trial was over and sometime in late '94 or '95, Terry Don Phillips was hired as our new athletic director. I'm not sure when that happened, but my trial was, I think it was, the fall of '94 when he came in, and I hadn't even settled yet. We settled in November. We hadn't even come to the terms of my contract and pay raise and everything even after the trial until November, and we were getting ready to go back to court to settle this, to have the judge settle it, and OSU finally came with an offer, and I accepted it. They had me down for a four-year contract and I said, "No, I have to have five. I have to have five." Because I knew what would happen. So, I got five and a raise, and so we settled it without going to court, but that was at the last minute, very last minute. I was sitting in my attorney's office and we were preparing for court the next day, and they called.

So, Terry Don Phillips comes in as the new athletic director, and I discuss with him my situation and that it was never against OSU, and he was an attorney. He seems to understand that everything is okay. Well, it gets close to '99 and I'm thinking, you know, everything is going good. We have this new athletic director, and I'd like to work until I'm sixty-two years old when I can get social security. (Laughter) And so I went in and requested an extension and he wouldn't give it to me. So, I was

going to have to retire in '99, and that upset me. I thought, "You know, come on. You're new. You didn't have anything to do..."

Well, anyway, that got out among my fellow coaches out there in the United States and they were outraged by it, which pleased me. I felt like they accepted me and respected me and wanted that not to happen, and so a big huge article came out in *Golf Week*, the magazine of *Golf Week*. This reporter had called me, and I gave her every name of the [OSU] Regents, and she called every one of them. She wrote what they said about it and put it in this big article in *Golf Week*, and she called Terry Don Phillips, and his statement on the top of the article said, "A Deal is a Deal." That spring we had a reunion, and some of my players came back and they went in and talked to Terry Don Phillips and the president, Jim Halligan, and pleaded a case for me for coaching two more years. Three of my former golfers went in there. Three former golfers at OSU that I coached went in there and pleaded a case for me in the spring of 1999, and they gave me one more year. So, I coached until June of 2000.

Fought until the end, didn't they?

Gill

Turner

They're not going to give you everything you want, but anyway. You know, during all this process, as I said, you find out who your real friends are, and I found out who my real friends were here in Stillwater, Oklahoma, because it was coffee shop gossip the whole time this trial was going on. I found out who my real friends were out there in the coaching ranks, and I found out how much respect some of my players had for OSU and the time that they had here and all that kind of stuff, and I really got a lot out of it, more than it hurt.

Ann, if you don't mind me adding, a lot of people got a lot out of it, benefitted greatly from what you did, not just yourself. That's what it's all about.

Gill

Turner

I hope so. I hope so. It bothers me a little bit when I see that there's not any female coaches in the athletic department, but you know what? I did what I could do, and I'm not there, and they're doing what they can do. So, we'll see how it goes. (Laughs) But you know what? Everything turned out. My belief is that things happen for a reason. I retired in 2000, met my husband of today in 2001 and we got married in 2005. If I hadn't retired in 2000, I wouldn't have met him in 2001, and I wouldn't be where I am today. So, things work out for a reason. (Laughter)

I know that was tough for you, Ann, I appreciate you sharing your story with us. Thank you.

Gill

Well, I like to tell it. I like for people to know the real truth of what I

Turner really did because people have written things and that's not what I did. An interesting thing came up. Can I tell this story?
Sure.

Gill

Turner A former player was getting her master's degree in sports administration, taking a class in sports law, and she e-mailed me and she said, "Coach, we're reading about your case in the law book."
(Laughter) She was here during that time, and she wrote a very, very good letter, and the team signed it in support of me staying an extra year. And I thought, "Oh no, I've made the law books."

Gill *I should have asked the question earlier, how did all of this impact your players and your coaching during those couple of years that were really intense?*

Turner Well, I don't think they really understood much about it until it came time for the trial. I was gone every day and they knew it was happening. It was in the paper every day and it was in the *O'Colly* every day. I don't think they really understood. I tried to explain it to them the best I could afterwards, that I wasn't against anything here at the university, that I loved it here and all this kind of stuff, but I think they got it as time went on and especially when it came time for me to be retiring. They understood a little bit more. You know, their parents understood, whether they were in my corner or not is something to be said, and during recruiting in '94 it was tough because it was nationwide. It was in *Golf World*. It was in all the golf magazines. It was written up everywhere.

Gill *Did it impact your career?*

Turner It was in *USA Today*.

Gill *Wow.*

Turner One of my players was reading *USA Today* and she said, "Coach, I read about you in the paper today!" I thought, "Oh, no."

Gill *That can't be good, right?*

Turner Well, you never know how they're going to write it. Because that's what I'm saying. It's nice to be able to tell what really happened and how it came down. It was truthfully by accident that I ever got to this point, but once I got into it, I had to stay to the end. I just felt like I had to go, and I don't know where I got that from because I was by myself making those decisions.

Gill

Looking back on your coaching career, not about the legal part, but in your coaching career, is there anything you would have done differently if you had a chance to do it over again?

Turner

Probably. You know what? I have a lot of contact with former players in their thirties and forties, and what they got out of it is just wonderful. So, I think I would have worried less about winning and success and more about what they're getting out of it and making sure that they got a positive—I wanted them to have a positive feeling from being here, but they have such fond memories and of so many things that I've even forgotten, that they remembered, and that's so pleasing. I love that. I love it that they have good thoughts and want to come back and share it and laugh, and they don't remember the three putts and losing. I think looking back that I would have maybe enjoyed the ride a little more instead of being so intense about things.

Gill

Well, you were intense and you were successful, which kind of leads into my next question, and think about this for a minute. What do you feel is the legacy that you've left in women's intercollegiate golf at Oklahoma State University and nationally, because you've been involved in committees and national organizations?

Turner

Yes.

Gill

I know you don't just want to get up here and say what your legacy is, but as you reflect back on it...

Turner

Well, I think my legacy nationally is better than the one at Oklahoma State. I'm afraid that the legacy at Oklahoma State is going to be the lawsuit, and, unfortunately, it's not a good legacy from the people that tell the story here. It was more like I was a troublemaker or—I don't know. Anyway, I would like for it to be a positive legacy. That we were successful, that we had fifteen championship titles and we participated in nationals, and we finished third twice, and we had a lot of All-Americans, and we had some very successful tour players. Nationally, I loved working for the betterment of women's golf. I loved that. I worked on the NCAA committee for ten years and I loved doing that.

Gill

And we talked about, you were in the AIAW committee before that.

Turner

Yes, yes, and I loved doing that. I love promoting women's golf and helping women's golf succeed and all that kind of thing, so I think I probably have a better legacy outside of Oklahoma State University, to be honest with you. I have a more positive legacy. That's what it is.

But then again, Ann, you may be a little hard on yourself. I mean, you

- Gill** *took a program that just was not there and you really built a national prominence here at Oklahoma State University, and we're still up there nationally because of what you built. Surely you've got to think about that legacy, as well.*
- Turner** I'm pleased that it worked out. I was given an opportunity. I wasn't qualified to be a coach. I was given an opportunity to do something I never dreamed I'd do, and I had a wonderful time. I met so many wonderful people and had so many wonderful players come through here. Oklahoma State ought to be proud of the players that came through here. They have such wonderful memories. So, I loved my coaching. I loved what I got out of it, and I hope that my legacy at Oklahoma State University is a positive one.
- Gill** *Looking back over your twenty-four year career again, are there some special moments that stand out for you, special memories you have? I mean, you gave a lot of good ones, but sift through them a little bit. Are there some special ones?*
- Turner** That is so hard to remember. I've said before, I think winning our Big 8 championship in 1977, that first year, was so exciting. Looking back on it, it is really exciting because it was something that we'd thought we'd do, and we actually did it, and that was exciting. The travel was special. I can't think of special moments right off. I just can't think of them like that.
- Gill** *Are there some milestones in the program that you recall?*
- Turner** I remember winning our first Big 12, and I thought that was very special because it came at a very hard time for me, and that was in '99. I believe it was '99 when we won our Big 12 championship, and that had been a very hard year for me because I was still trying to hang on to coach another year, and that was very emotional for me to win that, and I had a lot of support from the Big 12 coaches. I remember that a lot.
- Gill** *Another question I wanted to ask you, it must have taken an unbelievable commitment and just an incredible amount of energy to build a program from scratch like you did and to build a nationally competitive and respected program and to maintain that level for twenty-four years. How did you do that? What motivated you? What sustained you to put all that energy and drive into it? Where'd the passion come from?*
- Turner** I don't know. I loved it. I loved doing it. I learned a lot from coaches that had been coaching for a while out there. I think I spoke about that much earlier, and I just knew we had to have players. You have to have

players come in. I couldn't teach them how to play golf. I wasn't a teacher, so I had to have players, and it just depended a lot on recruiting and getting the right mix, and I'll tell you. I think all sports depend on chemistry, and so I spent a lot of time trying to get them all to get along and work together and this type of thing. It's very important in coaching females that you have good chemistry. It can destroy a team. Honestly, I've had very talented teams here that had terrible chemistry, so we just weren't very successful, and I've had not such talented teams that had great chemistry, and they just played so hard for each other. So, I don't know what kept me going, but it was very enjoyable and I loved my work, and so it was something I enjoyed.

Gill *Reflecting back on our conversations these last two interviews, all the coaching that you did every day and the recruiting that you did, the administrative activities in the summer when you should have had time off and yet you had a family at this time, two boys, it seems like some folks would hit a plateau or burn out, yet you were able to keep going to sustain that. With the other issues, the legal issues during the '90s, that's just amazing. So, I guess the question I'm asking is what are your genes? What is your background? Where did that drive and energy come from?*

Turner I don't know. That's what is so interesting because I have reflected back on me being a cheerleader, trying out every year in high school and never getting it, and I came to OSU and tried out for cheerleader again and got it, and why did I keep trying? I don't know. I must like the process, (Laughs) and I don't know where that comes from. It must come from my parents. I don't remember getting that drive because I never expected to be a coach. I never expected to even work. That wasn't something that women in my era were encouraged to do. You know, my mother had been a homemaker. I was going to be a homemaker. It just was by accident. All of this was by accident. So many things were by accident, and I've loved it.

Gill *You said earlier, things happen for a reason.*

Turner They happen for a reason, and I just happened to be in the right place at the right time to get this job. I had a lot of support from my family and from people in the HPER Department, so, you know, you don't do it alone. You get support. There's a lot of people out there helping you.

Gill *I'm asking you not to be modest now. Are there some special awards and recognitions that have really been significant and special to you?*

Turner Yes.

Gill *Could you share some of those with us?*

Turner Well, I have received the Gladys Palmer Award twice in coaching. This is for service outside and over and above coaching for women's golf. That's not exactly how it's written, but it's for extra...

Gill *Contribution to society?*

Turner Contribution to women's golf. I got that twice, and there are only two people, I think, that have gotten that twice. I got it early in my career. I think I got it in '87 and then in '99.

Gill *Was some of that maybe recognition of your efforts on behalf of everybody else in the lawsuit, perhaps?*

Turner The second one was. I know it was. The first one was because of the work I had done on the committees and with the computer program and helping run the tournament and that kind of thing. I know that's what that was for. And then the second one was for my stand on gender equity here at OSU. Those two awards, and then I didn't get these awards, but a player did. Stephanie Martin won the Edith Munson Award, which gave the university \$10,000, and she also won NCAA State Female Athlete one year, and that was very exciting because those are very high awards. And then I was inducted to the National Golf Coaches Association Hall of Fame.

Gill *That must have been a great feeling.*

Turner It was great. And then recently I was inducted into the Women's Oklahoma Golf Hall of Fame in 2008 and that was very special for me.

Gill *I recall for the Big 8 and Big 12 you were coach of the year several times.*

Turner Yes, yes.

Gill *Do you remember how many times?*

Turner No, I don't. That was fun.

Gill *National Coach of the Year Award?*

Turner Actually I don't think I was National Coach of the Year. I was Regional Coach of the Year, but I don't think that I was ever National Coach of the Year.

Gill *What a shame.*

Turner That's okay.

Gill *So, after asking all these questions about golf, I've got to back up and ask, is there life after coaching?*

Turner Well, yes. That's what I'm saying. You know, when I retired in 2000 I didn't know what I was going to do, but I decided that I was going to play golf and that I had watched golf for twenty-four years and I had seen players not any bigger than I am play really good golf, so I started taking lessons from a former player. I thought, "I'm going to improve. I'm not going to continue playing this hacky kind of golf." So, I went and took lessons from a former player, really got into golf.

Gill *Do you mind saying who that was?*

Turner Janice Burba Gibson. And by accident, I met my now husband in 2001.

Gill *What was the accident?*

Turner Well, friends of mine wanted me to play in a couple's tournament, and I said, "I don't want to do that. That doesn't sound fun to me. Why would I want to go do that? That just sounds awful," because I had never played with men in that kind of format. I had always just played with women. And they said, "Oh, it's so much fun. Come on, you'll like it." And I said, "I don't know. I have to meet this person first." He lived at Shangri-La [Resort] and they lived up there in Afton, [Oklahoma], so I went to Shangri-La, and all four of us played thirty-six holes that day. You're in a golf cart for a long time when you play thirty-six holes sitting next to the person that I was [supposed to play with] and I really enjoyed him. I thought he was really a neat guy, but I didn't think much of it. He was an Oklahoma Sooner and I thought, "Ahh." (Laughter) Anyway, we started dating, and then we kind of split up for a year and then we got back together, and we got married in 2005, and it has been wonderful.

Gill *Great. Now, you've been involved with the Oklahoma Women's Golf...*

Turner Women's Oklahoma Golf Association. Yes, I served as vice president for two years and president for two years.

Gill *Did you enjoy that?*

Turner I did enjoy that. Now I'm serving on the Women's Golf Hall of Fame Board and that's my passion now. I love it. I love that and we work to support junior girls and honor past individuals who have done so much

for women's golf in Oklahoma.

Gill *I'm going to ask a personal question. How's your golf game going?*
Turner It's much better than it ever was.

Gill *What's your average score? Can you share that with us?*

Turner Well, right now I have a nine handicap, so I can shoot anywhere from seventy-eight, seventy-nine, to eighty-five, and that's a good day.
(Laughter)

Gill *That's good. Ann, how do you hope people remember Ann Pitts? I know the lawsuit, in your mind, might cloud that. Just your life and your career at Oklahoma State and your coaching and all the people that know you and what you've done, the associations you've worked with. How do you hope people remember Ann Pitts Turner now?*

Turner Well, I hope they remember me as being very passionate about women's golf and wanting it to be better and working in it and being exciting and having a great interest, and I don't know what words to put in there, but I want them to remember me as being somebody that cared a lot for the game and for the sport for women and worked to make it better.

Gill *And for the players, obviously, as you said?*

Turner Yes. I want them to know that we made it better for them. I always look back—I didn't maybe pay much attention to this when I was in history class, but I look back on the women's suffrage movement with great, great empathy and sympathy for those women. They worked sixty years to get the right to vote for women, which we take for granted today. I mean, what loyalty, to work every year, and they were really, really banished from society. I mean, they were not well-respected at all in society for wanting to do that. So, I look back on that and I have such appreciation for them, and I'm hoping that in sixty years somebody will look back and have appreciation for Title IX and what it did for women. It's just a wonderful thing.

Gill *And what you did is part of that Title IX.*

Turner Well, I hope so. I was part of it. You know, there have been a lot of women out there who have stood up for their rights. Not just me. A lot of women. And it takes a toll on you. I will tell you that. It takes a toll. It changes you a little bit. I tried not to let it change me. I tried not to let it—I didn't take it personally what people said about me. I didn't want to hold grudges. I wanted to come out of that with it over and not hold grudges. It's hard. I still have a very good memory about it, and so I can

be face-to-face with somebody, visiting with them, but I have a very good memory of what they said about me. So, I don't want it to cloud my view at all because I love Oklahoma State University and I want it to be successful, and I want the women's golf program to be real successful.

Gill *Tagging onto that question, do you help in any way with the women's golf program indirectly? I know you can't as a non-paid person. Do you still support the program in certain ways that you can?*

Turner I haven't been involved with the program since I retired. When I retired, Amy Weeks took over as coach, and she had been my assistant, and I thought, "I'm going to back off. I'm not going to be there. She needs to run the program the way she wants to. If she wants to ask me a question, she'll call me." So, I really backed off, and I had more contact with the program when Amy was in it than I did when the next coach came in because she didn't even know who I was. And so I really haven't had that much contact, and then in 2005 I moved away. So, I came back this year for—they asked some of the alums, whoever could come back and play in their fundraiser, and I came back and did that. It rained all day and it was horrible, but that was fun. So, I'm going to try and support them financially and be more of a support if they want it. I think that once you've coached you just get out and let the next person do it.

Gill *Ann, what have we left out? Over two extensive interviews we have probably wrung you out, but is there anything that you'd like to bring up or talk about?*

Turner I don't know of anything, but, you know, I'm sure I'll think about this all the way home and I'll probably come up with something that was—like you asked me some bright, shiny moments in my career and I can't even remember. I enjoyed all of it. I just don't remember something standing out as being more special than others. I really don't.

----- *End of May 13, 2010 interview* -----