

# Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Taylor Bell

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library  
*Sports Stories-IHSA* Oral History project

Interview # SIH-A-L-2017-005

Taylor Bell, a career sports writer who covered Illinois high school sports, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Sports Stories-IHSA* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: Feb 1, 2017 Location: Chicago, IL

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Philip Pogue, ALPL volunteer

Transcription by: \_\_\_\_\_

Edited by: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Pages: \_\_\_\_\_ Total Time: 2:03 / 2.05 hrs.

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on July 24, 2017.

The interview is archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

Transcript  
being processed

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## Abstract

### Taylor Bell, *Sports Stories-IHSA, SIH-A-L-2017-005*

**Biographical Information Overview of Interview:** Taylor Bell born in Blue Island, Illinois on September 2, 1940, and grew up there, graduating from Blue Island Community High School in 1958. Taylor graduated from the University of Illinois in 1962, majoring in English. While at the University of Illinois he worked at the *Daily Illini*, covering sporting events. After graduation, Taylor spent four years at the Champaign-Urbana *Gazette* (1962-66), two years at the St. Louis *Globe Democrat* (1966-68), ten years at the Chicago *Daily News* (1968-78), and twenty-three years at the Chicago *Sun Times* (1978-2001). Taylor became a prominent sports writer and editor covering the high school scene. Along the way, Taylor found time to author four books on Illinois sports, *Sweet Charlie, Dike, Cazzie and Bobby Joe* (2004), *Dusty, Deek and Mr. Do-Right* (2011), *Football's Second Season* (2007) co-authored with Tom Lemming, and *Glory Days in Illinois* (2006). These books explored the history of Illinois High School basketball and football as well as the art of scouting high school football games. Taylor has received numerous awards for his writing and investigative reporting, including the Illinois Basketball Coaches Hall of Fame, the Buzzy O'Conner Award, Chicago Journalism Hall of Fame, Chicagoland Sports Hall of Fame, Ring Lardner Award for Excellence, Illinois Authors Award, AP and UPI investigative awards, UPI Illinois Sports Writer of the Year, Notre Dame Club of Chicago's Warren Brown/Arch Ward award for sports journalism excellence, the Red Smith award for excellence, the Jacob Scher Award and the National Federation of Interscholastic Coaches Association's distinguished service award.

This interview covers Bell's entire forty year career as a sports journalist and editor. He includes stories and insights on many of the coaches, players and schools he's reported on. Bell also discusses the role of an investigative reporter, publishing requirements and the competition between high school reporting and reporting for college and professional sports. Taylor highlights the earlier history of Illinois football and basketball while discussing his several books. He also discussed competition between public and private schools, the private school multiplier, football playoffs, Chicago Public School participation and a multitude of other topics.

**Subject Headings/Key Words:** high school sports reporting and editing; expansion of basketball championship classes; residency/transfer/recruiting/scholarships for student athletes; Illinois high school sports stars; Illinois's famous high school coaches; evolution of Illinois high school sports over the past 75 years

**Note to the Reader:** Readers of the oral history memoir should bear in mind that this is a transcript of the spoken word, and that the interviewer, interviewee and editor sought to preserve the informal, conversational style that is inherent in such historical sources. The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir, nor for the views expressed therein. We leave these for the reader to judge.

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