

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with James (Jim) Flynn

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

Interview # SIH-A-L-2017-003

James Flynn, the Illinois High School Association Assistant Administrator who oversaw six different sports for over thirty years, 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: Jan 23, 2017 Location: Bloomington, Illinois

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Philip Pogue, ALPL volunteer

Transcription by: _____

Edited by: _____

Transcript
being processed

Total Pages: _____ Total Time: 1:32 / 1.53 hrs.

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on May 23, 2017.

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

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Abstract

Jim Flynn, *Sports Stories – IHSA, SIH-A-L-2017-003*

Biographical Information Overview of Interview: James (Jim) Flynn was born in 1944 in Galesburg, Illinois. Jim attended school in Galesburg through ninth grade (Corpus Christi High School) where he played football, basketball, and baseball. The family then moved to Springfield where Jim attended and graduate from Griffin High School, then an all-boys Catholic school. While in high school, Jim worked for the *Journal Register*, the local newspaper. This started his interest in sports journalism. Following high school, he attended Springfield Jr. College and then the University of Illinois, where he earned a BS degree in journalism in 1966. From 1966 to 1968 Jim worked for the *Moline Dispatch* as an assistant sports editor, columnist, and assistant managing editor. In 1968-1970, Flynn returned to Springfield, working again for the Springfield *Journal Register* as a sportswriter and columnist. In 1970, he moved back to the University of Illinois, where he worked as an assistant sports editor. Then in 1973 Flynn took a position with the Illinois High School Association (IHSA) in Bloomington, where he spent his next thirty-one years. He served as the administrator in charge of six sports and assistant for eight others. Flynn helped create ideas such as Pack the Place, Add-a-Tude, the three point King of the Hill competition, the March Madness Experience, the IHSA Sports Radio Network of 100 stations, and the Illinois IHSA broadcast policy, television policy, royalty policy, and merchandise policy. Since retiring from the IHSA, Jim did some work for the Illinois Elementary School Association (IESA) as a special project manager. Outside of the IHSA, Flynn was active with the National Federation of High Schools Association (NFS) chairing their telecommunications committee and being on the national records committee.

This interview also covers Flynn's involvement with the decision to move the state basketball boys championships to Peoria. This led to the creation of the March Madness Experience in an attached building. There, clinics, exhibits, and historical displays were available for participants. In addition, other promotions were discussed, including the three point and slam dunk contests. The interview also goes into the difficult IHSA decisions to add the multiplier to private schools, the challenges of the residency/transfer/eligibility rules, the value of the cooperative school district teams, and the overall governance of the IHSA.

Subject Headings/Key Words: Illinois High School Association; Illinois Boys State Basketball Championship; Illinois's March Madness Experience; IHSA Add a Tude campaign; private school multiplier; residency, transfer and eligibility rules for IL high school sports

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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