

Interview with Lynne Sears Slouber

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Interviewer: Ellyn Bartges

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Bartges: It is January 1, 2005. We are in Oakbrook Terrace or Westchester, Illinois, and I'm interviewing Lynne Slouber, who resides in Ephrata, Washington. Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed. I appreciate it, and it's good to see you.

Slouber: I'm so glad we can connect.

Bartges: Me too. I'm not going to waste any time. I'll jump right in here. Where did you go to high school?

Slouber: I went to high school at Walther Lutheran High School in Melrose Park, and I eventually wound up teaching PE [physical education] there.

Bartges: In what park?

Slouber: Melrose Park.

Bartges: Melrose Park. Are you from Illinois?

Slouber: Um-hmm, originally. Um-hmm.

Bartges: Did you play sports in high school?

Slouber: In high school, back in those days—I graduated in 1967—we certainly didn't have sports. We had GAA, which stood for Girls' Athletic Association, and that amounted to intramurals after school, and that was about it. And yes, I did that. And I did volleyball. I can remember that was a big one for me, basically because it was coed even then.

Bartges: Really?

Slouber: It was coed volleyball after school. But Walther was a very small school, and so we just played coed volleyball. It was a good place to meet boys, and plus, we loved volleyball.

Bartges: Did you play other sports besides volleyball?

Slouber: I can't remember that there were any to play. I mean back—1967, it was Girls' Athletic Association. If there were, I wasn't involved in it.

Bartges: But like Lutheran didn't offer basketball and softball or track and field or archery or tennis or any of those other sports?

Slouber: When I was in high school, unh-uh. It was Girls' Athletic Association.

Bartges: How big was your school at that time, if you remember?

Slouber: Well, maybe four hundred. There was probably less than one hundred in my graduating class. I would say maybe seventy-five to eighty, and that was—it was very small.

Bartges: Was that nine through twelve?

Slouber: Yeah.

Bartges: And you said that was a private school. Was that religious affiliation?

Slouber: Um-hmm, Lutheran.

Bartges: Okay. How many GAA days a year did you have?

Slouber: GAA days? Oh my gosh.

Bartges: Or GAA events?

Slouber: You know, it was always after school. I mean they had—oh, badminton was another one now that I think about it. We had badminton, and we had volleyball. Badminton was just with the girls though, because I can remember doing that, and volleyball was with the boys. And I think it was two days after school because there was so much other things—being a Lutheran affiliation, there was a big emphasis on choir. And the boys had football at that time, I can remember, and basketball. There was cheerleaders, and if you were a cheerleader, you were really, really hot stuff. And I can remember when you tried out for that, you had to do a cartwheel. That was the biggest—I mean, that was the hard thing that you had to do was a full cartwheel and a round off and—but other than that there weren't any that I can remember.

Bartges: When you said it was after school, was it after school two days a week or three days a week?

Slouber: Two days a week.

Bartges: And how long did it go—hour, hour-and-a-half?

Slouber: Probably an hour-and-a-half, um-hmm, because we took the bus home and sometimes it was dark. I think we were done by 4:30.

Bartges: And you had a GAA leader, one of the PE teachers or—

Slouber: There was only one girl PE teacher and one boy PE teacher in that school.

Bartges: So you never played basketball in high school?

Slouber: Never.

Bartges: You said you graduated from high school in 1967. What is the highest level of education you have?

Slouber: A master's degree.

Bartges: Probably an MS.

Slouber: M.Ed.

Bartges: M.Ed.?

Slouber: M.Ed. in counseling, mental health.

Bartges: Where did you go to undergraduate school?

Slouber: U of I Champaign-Urbana [University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign].

Bartges: And your undergraduate degree is in?

Slouber: Physical education and health.

Bartges: And your M.Ed. is from?

Slouber: Heritage University in Toppenish, Washington.

Bartges: Did you play sports? I'm going to focus on your undergraduate at U of I. Did you play sports in college?

Slouber: No.

Bartges: Not at all?

Slouber: Not at all.

Bartges: Okay. Are you familiar with the Postal Tournament?

Slouber: You know, no. Absolutely I really am not. I have no idea of what that was about.

Bartges: That's okay. Only one person (laughs) I've interviewed has known.

Slouber: Oh, really? You'll have to tell me what that's about.

Bartges: Did you have any experience playing in industrial leagues, basketball, AAU [Amateur Athletic Union] ball, softball, anything like that outside, extracurricular to school?

Slouber: No.

Bartges: How about in college?

Slouber: In college U of I, hmm.

Bartges: Did you play intramurals?

Slouber: You know, that's so long ago. I think I played intramurals. You had to. If you were a physical education major, you had to do something. I can't remember exactly what it was. I almost want to say it was field hockey that I did, if you can believe that.

Bartges: Okay.

Slouber: But that was just that—no. Because at U of I, there was the really jock people, and I think there was a couple teams there. There might have been three or four at that time. And then there were just people that wanted a degree in physical education; I was one of those people.

Bartges: And what was your intent with physical education degree, just go and teach?

Slouber: Yeah. I wanted to be a PE teacher. And truthfully, I thought, What a great job, you know. You play games—because I always loved physical education. I thought, Have a great—have a good time all year long, and then you had your summers off and, you know. It was just—it was the only thing I ever wanted to do aside from being a nurse, and that—I kind of quit on that because I was a candy stripper there for a while at MacNeal Memorial Hospital, and I fainted at the sight of blood, and I said, "Well, that's that."

Bartges: Your career's over. (laughs) Did you ever serve in the military or National Guard?

Slouber: Nope.

Bartges: Did you teach or coach in a secondary school system?

Slouber: In a secondary school—like a high school?

Bartges: High school, yeah.

Slouber: Oh, absolutely. Everywhere I went I had to coach.

Bartges: How many years did you teach?

Slouber: Seven.

Bartges: And where did you teach?

Slouber: My first job was at Urbana High School in Urbana, Illinois.

Bartges: And how long there?

Slouber: I was there for one year. And there I had to coach synchronized swimming, which really wasn't coaching anything. We did a big show at the end of the year and that was that. And I also coached track there as well.

Bartges: And after Urbana where did you go?

Slouber: From there I went to Walther, and I was there two years. And there—as I had mentioned before, there was only one girl PE teacher, one boy PE teacher who also was the athletic director, he was. And there I had to coach everything. I coached gymnastics—but when I say coached, it was just like we did gymnastics after school. We weren't competitive with another school.

Bartges: So you didn't have competitions versus other schools?

Slouber: Not in gymnastics; in basketball we did. In basketball we did, but not gymnastics. I must have done volleyball in there as well. Oh, something else at Urbana High School that I had to run was coed volleyball for adults at night. That was another thing that I had to do.

Bartges: For adults?

Slouber: Um-hmm.

Bartges: So it was like a league, adult league?

Slouber: Um-hmm. I did that in the evenings there. So that was two years at Urbana. And then I wound up going to Hinsdale Junior High School, and I was there for a year. And that was at the middle school level, and so all we did was intramurals after school there. And then there was the opening at the high school, and I really didn't like the middle school level, so that's when I went to Hinsdale.

Bartges: Hinsdale South?

Slouber: Darien, Hinsdale South High School, um-hmm. And there I coached varsity and junior varsity basketball and track.

Bartges: Okay. I'm going to go back through this. What year did you go to Walther Lutheran?

Slouber: Nineteen sixty-seven—nineteen seventy-one. It must have been—Walther Lutheran?

Bartges: Yes.

Slouber: Let's see, 1971-1972 would have been Urbana, so it was probably 1973—1972-1973 or 1973-1974, somewhere in there.

Bartges: That makes sense. So you graduated from college in 1971?

Slouber: 1971.

Bartges: Okay. So fall of 1971 you were at Urbana, and fall of 1972 would have been Lutheran . When did you start at Hinsdale South?

Slouber: It would have been right after two years of Walther.

Bartges: So that was 1975, fall of 1975?

Slouber: Um-hmm.

Bartges: Okay.

Slouber: Nineteen seventy-five—nineteen seventy-six, and then I was at—is that right chronologically?

Bartges: I think so.

Slouber: I think so too.

Bartges: (laughs)

Slouber: I hope so anyway.

Bartges: Nineteen seventy-two—nineteen seventy-three. Yeah, two years there, 1973-1974, 1974-1975, 1975-1976...yes, that's right. (laughs) I'm going to split your high school experiences to your first job and then the job at Hinsdale South. Was your principal at Lutheran male or female?

Slouber: Male.

Bartges: And was he in favor of adding girls' basketball or sports in general?

Slouber: You know, it really wasn't up to him. There was a wonderful athletic director there, Warren Hoyer, who was also the male PE teacher, and he was just a wonderful man. And he—I don't think—I would say he was more in favor of letting girls do whatever they wanted to do, and he really encouraged me. And I know he was a great supporter of me when we won the Private School League, the PSL league. And he was really encouraging and supportive at that time. He was just a really sweet, nice man. I had no problem in practicing. And it was a no-stress thing. I mean, they really didn't demand it did well, maybe because that's the spirit of a private school or that particular religion, but he was very supportive.

Bartges: Do you know if he was from Illinois?

Slouber: Yeah, I think so. He was the longest—I mean, he was at Walther forever.

Bartges: Okay.

Slouber: I mean, he was there when I was—

Bartges: When you were there?

Slouber: Yep. I mean, he was really good. And the girl who was the PE teacher before me, she had kind of some anxiety things and she had left, but the girl prior to her was a girl who graduated four years ahead of me; her sister graduated with me, and once again well liked, really supported girls' sports. And at that time, it was just more having fun. And I would say he really encouraged me in the way I would coach a team. He was very, very helpful. He said, "You know, it has to be fun. It has to be fun, and if it's not fun, it just won't go." And so I think he was a really big influence in that for sure.

Bartges: Was Warren, the athletic director, was he from Illinois, do you know?

Slouber: Um-hmm.

Bartges: Okay. Were you the first girls' basketball coach at Lutheran?

Slouber: Um-hmm.

Bartges: And how was it determined that you were going to be the coach, because you were the female physical education teacher?

Slouber: That's right.

Bartges: Okay. And—

Slouber: I believe when I signed that contract, they said, "You will coach gymnastics, you will coach basketball, you will—" I mean it was—

Bartges: Your teaching contract?

Slouber: Yeah, yeah. That was part of my contract. It wasn't a separate thing.

Bartges: Okay.

Slouber: And if it was—boy, I can't remember, Ellyn.

Bartges: So you didn't—you don't think you got supplemental pay for coaching?

Slouber : Maybe a little bit. Maybe two hundred dollars...maybe.

Bartges: Did you have tryouts that first year, the first year basketball was added?

Slouber: You know, when I think back on that it was—it was such a small school. The girls who really wanted to play basketball, those were the girls that tried out and usually made it. And I think I took everybody that year. There wasn't—I mean, there's just a lot of really talented girls. And everybody in the school knew they were going to be the girls basketball team, and so they were the girls—I mean, it wasn't where I had to cut people, no.

Bartges: Okay. Did they have uniforms?

Slouber: Hmm. I think we had T-shirts and shorts. That's as much as we had. Yeah, we had T-shirts, and it might—it didn't have their names on it. It was just, I think, a number, that was about it.

Bartges: Did you practice after school or did you have to have odd practice times?

Slouber: You know, we didn't. We did practice after school. So many people at that high school lived far away. For example, my husband, Mark, lived in Lowell Springs. And many folks had to take the bus. And so we did practice after school. I can remember that because we were always out of there by five. I can't remember hardly ever practicing in the evening times.

Bartges: Did you practice every day?

Slouber: I don't think so. I think it was just a couple days a week, I think probably three days a week.

Bartges: Do you have any recollection of how many games you played that first year?

Slouber: Yeah. I wish I would have my yearbook. I think it was nine. I think it was nine. It was eight or nine. It was no more than nine.

Bartges: And were you part of a conference or—

Slouber: Private School League.

Bartges: And who made up that league?

Slouber: Luther South, Luther North, Walther Lutheran, and there was probably maybe three others. I can't remember the other names.

Bartges: When did you play your games?

Slouber: We played them after school.

Bartges: Did they charge admission to get in?

Slouber: No. Oh no, no. There was hardly anybody there. I mean there was—

Bartges: That was my next question, What kind of fans?

Slouber: It was just—some of the kids, they'd show up after school. There was no fans there. I mean, we just had a good time. We just played ball and came home and had a good time on the bus and won and—although I do remember we got a trophy or a plaque. You'd have to go to Walther to look at that. But we got

some kind of a big plaque, and it was a big up-te-do that we had won that. I mean that was—and I think we won that two years in a row. I can't remember. But it was a good time.

Bartges: Overall how would you characterize the experience at Walther Lutheran in comparison to your GAA days? Were they similar or did you see a difference in the sense that you were competing against other schools? Was there an added intensity?

Slouber: It was more organized. The feel was way different. I mean after—GAA, you just put on your stuff, and if you showed, you showed, if you didn't—but girls were expected to come, and they were expected to practice, and there were certain rules that were set down; I can't exactly remember what. But it was very much more organized, and that was in part due once again to Warren Hoger. He was the athletic director, and he helped me along the way in that. And it was just a great experience. I can't remember anything being negative about that. It was just a lot of fun. More organized, and that would probably be about it.

Bartges: When you went to Hinsdale South in the fall of 1975-1976, at that point in time, did you know there was going to be a state tournament—

Slouber: No.

Bartges: —added down the pike?

Slouber: No.

Bartges: Okay. When you went to Hinsdale South to teach, did you have the same kind of contract where you signed your teaching contract and it was stipulated that you had to coach A, B, C, and D, and basketball was one of those sports?

Slouber: Um-hmm.

Bartges: Was that program already in existence or did you—

Slouber: It was in existence already. Someone had already come before me.

Bartges: Okay. Do you remember if you had tryouts?

Slouber: Oh, yeah.

Bartges: One other question I forgot to ask about Lutheran when you were there: how big was the school then?

Slouber: Not much more. It was maybe four hundred, I mean four hundred plus, no more than that. It only had two floors. There was probably, let's see, one, two, three, four, one, two, three, four. There was probably sixteen classrooms, that was it, and a music room. No bigger than that.

Bartges: When you went to Hinsdale South in 1975, how big was that school?

Slouber: I can't remember, and that's the truth; I cannot remember. It was way bigger—much bigger than—it was probably the biggest high school that I taught at, although Urbana High School was relatively, probably a little bit smaller than Hinsdale South.

Bartges: Okay. Did you have tryouts?

Slouber: Um-hmm, we sure did. And I believe—and I can't remember—I think it was all one big tryout, and then some folks made JV [junior varsity] and some folks made varsity. I can't remember that.

Bartges: Did you have an assistant coach at Walther?

Slouber: Never. Never.

Bartges: Okay. (laughs)

Slouber: Don't I wish.

Bartges: Did you have a JV?

Slouber: No. I never had a JV coach. I did it both. It was—

Bartges: But you had two teams?

Slouber: I had two teams, and I had to coach them both.

Bartges: At South, once you got there and you had tryouts, did you—you said you had a varsity and a JV and it sort of sorted itself out that way?

Slouber: Yeah.

Bartges: Do you remember if you made cuts?

Slouber: I think I did. I think there were a few people that I made cuts to, although when I think back of who was on that JV team, maybe I didn't. I can't remember, but I think maybe I did.

Bartges: Was the principal at Hinsdale South male or female?

Slouber: Male.

Bartges: Was he in favor of or supportive of girls basketball or sports for girls in general?

Slouber: I think he was somewhat supportive. I really didn't have much to do with him as I, once again, had to do with the athletic director who was there.

Bartges: Was he supportive of girls' sports?

Slouber: To some degree. I think he understood that schools at that time were beginning to participate in interschool kinds of athletics, and I think Hinsdale being a pretty big name in swimming as it had been, they had wanted girls to—and the girls' basketball team that had preceded me was a very excellent team, from what I was told. And it seemed like the girls were all together, and so it seemed very well organized. I kind of stepped into a wonderful situation.

Bartges: When did you practice?

Slouber: Oh, we practiced whenever we could. That was very unfair, very unfair. We practiced late at night, because I can remember going home, and maybe sometimes I didn't even go home—I think it was seven to nine at night. And Lord knows JV was just kind of squished in there somewhere. And I remember getting very upset about that, that we couldn't practice after school because the boys had to practice then, and the boys had to have the gym, and very rarely did we get the gym after school. I can remember practicing before school—free throws. I made everybody do free throws because you can win a game on a free throw. And I can also remember being called on that because I wasn't supposed to practice before school, yet the boys' swim team was swimming laps all the time, and that was just free swim—considered free swim. So there was a big disparity between guys and girls at that time. That was my first—I had real uneasy feelings about that.

- Bartges: You mentioned that the boys' team practiced after school. Was it just the varsity team or were there other levels that—
- Slouber: There were other levels. There were three other levels—freshmen, JV, and varsity.
- Bartges: So all of those levels practiced before the girls?
- Slouber: You bet.
- Bartges: When did you play your games?
- Slouber: Well—
- Bartges: Did you play on Fridays and Saturday nights? Did you play after school? Did you play Tuesdays? You might not know the days, but the time wise—was it after school?
- Slouber: It was in the evening time. It was after school. It was never during a school—it was after school sometime as I can remember.
- Bartges: Would—
- Slouber: Because we would come home and it would be dark.
- Bartges: Would you get on a bus like right after school?
- Slouber: Some of the time, um-hmm.
- Bartges: And sometimes kids had a chance to go home? So you might have played some later games?
- Slouber: Yep, and we also played on Saturday. We'd play tournaments on Saturday.
- Bartges: So you did play in some tournaments?
- Slouber: Um-hmm, we sure did.
- Bartges: What tournaments did you play in, if you remember? You may not remember.

Slouber: If I had my scrapbook here, I could remember all of them, Ellyn. Oh my gosh, the names of them. No, I don't. I can't remember them, but I know we won them hands down.

Bartges: Do you remember how many games your team played in 1975-1976?

Slouber: Nineteen seventy-five—nineteen seventy-six?

Bartges: Or, you know, in the times you were there? Did you see a change in the number of games that your teams played?

Slouber: Well, definitely from—I mean, from one year to the next we—it was building—the momentum was building for girls' basketball from the first year to the second year, and you bet. I would say maybe fifteen, maybe to eighteen, is that close? Maybe.

Bartges: Somewhere in there.

Slouber: I wish I had my scrapbook. I need my scrapbook. I have that all there.

Bartges: (laughs) That's okay. Did you have uniforms?

Slouber: We didn't when I first started. Well, we had little uniforms that were very bad. It was just black pants. And I can remember that was a big deal when I came, that they were finally letting us—I had to choose uniforms for my team, and that was a real big deal; although, I can remember we were looking for socks, and they never came. That was something that the boys had that we didn't have. We pretty much had to fight, although that was a pretty affluent high school, and so the uniforms that we did get were pretty nice ones. I can remember looking in the catalog and saying, "These are the nicer ones." So they did spend a little bit of money on that, I have to say that.

Bartges: Did you have warm ups?

Slouber: We had old sweats, I remember, that were—do you remember, they were sweatshirt material, I remember, that said Hinsdale.

Bartges: Yeah.

Slouber: And I can't remember if we had sweats or not. I don't think so. Well, maybe we had pants. Maybe we had pants and jackets. There were boys—maybe they were the castoffs from the boys, or was that at Walther?

Bartges: Or did the girls all wear the same thing from sport to sport to sport?

Slouber: That could have been it. That's probably what happened.

Bartges: When you had home games, did they charge admission to get in at Hinsdale South?

Slouber: I don't think so. I don't ever remember that happening.

Bartges: What kind of fan base did you have?

Slouber: Parents. Parents and—that was a whole other thing. I can remember my husband and another player's father being yelled at for being too rowdy at a game.

Bartges: (laughs)

Slouber: (unintelligible) Mark, my husband, was almost kicked out because he was yelling so badly at the referees—also with another player's father, also getting yelled at. I can remember that; that was a good time. But it was mostly people that were really interested in the team. I think—the person that is a standout for me is—there was a reporter from the *Chicago Tribune*, western suburb edition. And he was always there, and he was a great supporter who really encouraged us and said, "Hey, you're really good."

Bartges: What was his name?

Slouber: Oh boy, it'd be in the articles. I can't remember. He would always call me on the phone and say, "How are your girls doing?" And one thing I can remember about him, the year we went to state, he wanted to focus on only two players that were going to be seniors that year and always put their name in the paper. And I told him that I would not do that unless he did an article on every single one of the players, a little blip, a highlight, I said, "because we play as a team," and that's when I kind of got a little discouraged with him. But what I was real pleased with was during that time I was fortunate to get the *Chicago Tribune* All-Area Coach-of-the-Year. They gave awards for that, and I thought that was really pretty neat and progressive of that paper to even do that for a girls' sport at that time. I think I was the first—

Bartges: Was that in 1975-1976 or 1976-1977?

Slouber: I got it two years in a row.

Bartges: So it was both of those years?

Slouber: Both of those years. I got a plaque for both of those.

Bartges: Do you still have those?

Slouber: Um-hmm, I sure do.

Bartges: (laughs) Media—this is the first time someone's talked about media coverage. Did you feel like you had decent media coverage?

Slouber: Um-hmm, absolutely.

Bartges: Both from the *Tribune*, which was the large Chicago paper, and this was a suburban school—

Slouber: Um-hmm.

Bartges: —and then local papers?

Slouber: I think so because I have a great scrapbook of—I kept everything. And I think even when we did lose the final tournament, they were very supportive. They knew exactly what had happened, and I really appreciated that, whereas some people may not have gone that direction. I think they helped the girls feel better about themselves because they acknowledged the fact that the refereeing had kind of not been the best.

Bartges: During the regular season—and I'll get to the year that the state tournament was added in a minute—when you first came, and also at Lutheran, did you have male or female officials?

Slouber: At Lutheran we always had male, always male, and at Hinsdale South it was a combo. I think we actually had more males than we did females, as I remember.

Bartges: Do you remember what the women wore?

Slouber: Unh-uh.

Bartges: Okay. Did you ever participate in a National Sports Institute or a National Leadership Conference? It would have been geared towards physical educators, you know, teaching fundamentals or basics. How about any clinics on basketball and how to coach basketball?

Slouber: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. I went to that.

Bartges: When did you go to those?

Slouber: Boy, I can't remember where it was, Ellyn, but—and it was when I was at Hinsdale South they sent me the very first year. And I was kind of shunned. It was a very interesting time. I can remember coming home—and I was one of the few female coaches that were there that was married, and everybody were more athletic, very competitive kinds of folks. And they just—it was like because I was married and because I looked a little bit feminine, I was really an outcast at that. And I came home and I said, "My gosh, what did I do? I just—I was just there, Mark." And he said, "Don't worry about it." And I can remember there was so—the whole clinic was focused on winning and competition, and it wasn't where I was coming from—not the wonderful experience that I had had at Walther. And I thought, Is this what I'm in for? That's what I thought because that isn't where I find my head in sports is. I think you have to have fun first and in that process of having fun, you win—not the other way around.

Bartges: You don't remember where you went to this? Was it a Cathy Rush camp or was it a—was it in Illinois?

Slouber: It was in Illinois, and I want to say it was either at a—I want to say it was at a high school, and I can't even remember—and it was one that I went to. And it was just plain and simple nasty. Everything about it was bad. I spent an entire day there, maybe even two days, and I came away from there fairly negative about women's sports, and if this was the direction it was going to go in.

Bartges: Was it a basketball-only clinic?

Slouber: Um-hmm.

Bartges: Did Hinsdale South have a league or a conference that they participated in?

Slouber: Hinsdale South?

Bartges: Yeah.

Slouber: Um-hmm, they sure did—Glenbard East and all those other schools.

Bartges: That league has changed now.

Slouber: It has changed?

Bartges: Des Plaines Valley League, DPVL.

Slouber: Oh yes, it's all coming back.

Bartges: (laughs)

Slouber: You should be doing this interview.

Bartges: No, no. I'm not being interviewed. I'm (unintelligible).

Slouber: I know, I know.

Bartges: Did you play all of your conference schools?

Slouber: We played all of our conference schools, and then we also played many others aside from that.

Bartges: Did you have conference championships? Had the sport progressed? You got there in the second or the third year of the program at [Hindsdale] South, from the dates, and by that point had they already established the conference championships and things like that?

Slouber: Yeah, they sure had, and we were undefeated both years. See, the things that I remember are not so much the particulars, but I remember more the things that happened, you know. For example, I used to always have my girls warm up to "Sweet Georgia Brown" like the Harlem Globetrotters. And I can remember going to Glenbard East, and I can remember—it was one of those things that I wanted to have fun again and have a great time. It wasn't—I wasn't driven to win because I'm not that competitive a person, although the folks that I had in those years were so very talented. I mean, anything that I ever did was all them, nothing about me. I was just kind of the catalyst to make them happen. And I can remember going there. And we warmed up to "Sweet Georgia Brown", and my athletic director came to me and said that the

school had complained to me because I was grandstanding. And we did beat everyone by almost thirty points each time if not more than that. And I can remember saying, "I wasn't grandstanding; it's just something that we do." But other schools had complained about that because we were so very good. And I can remember that, and I can remember going to a tournament and having my husband go and wash uniforms because they were so ugly sweaty, and the other coach saying, "Why would you be doing that?" It's because I wanted people to feel good and play their best. I was getting to feel that it was all about competing and winning. And for the girls it was competing and winning because they were good and they deserved to win, but for me it was more team. It was more having fun and having a great time. That's the way it's always been for me.

Bartges: Was the level or the increased competitiveness, was that maybe—was that a factor in why you got out of coaching?

Slouber: No, absolutely not. The reason I got out—I lived right next door to the superintendent of schools when I went to Ephrata, and so we became very good friends with them and his wife, who was the teacher. And as soon as he found out that I had coached, they wanted me to coach basketball. And I never—after I lost the state game, whether it be good or whether it be bad, I said I'd never have another—another—

Bartges: That's okay.

Slouber: I'd never have another team like that. I wouldn't ever coach again. That was it. I had hit my high, and that was it. I just couldn't do it. And I was really burnt. I was really burnt. Because I can remember after the state tournament, I was so hurt—not for me, I could care less about me—but I was so hurt for those girls and I knew what the impact of that would be on the rest of their life. And I was so worried about them. I was so worried because I loved them so much and I—I couldn't do it again. It was just not where I wanted to be. That's why I didn't coach. I wouldn't do it again. And I could have coached many, many times. I was asked to coach at our community college and I said, "Nope, I'm not doing that either."

Bartges: All these years?

Slouber: Um-hmm.

Bartges: Did you have an assistant coach at Hinsdale South?

Slouber: No, never. No, never. (telephone ringing)

Bartges: So you had both the varsity and the JV?

Slouber: Yeah.

Bartges: Hold on a second.

(Pause In Recording)

Bartges: To your knowledge, were officials in Illinois concerned with what version of the rules were used?

Slouber: I have no idea.

Bartges: In 1971 when the National Basketball Committee Experimental Rules became official, how do you think that impacted Illinois, if at all, for girls' basketball? What it was is it went from six-player to five-player.

Slouber: You know—and I want to tell you where I came from. I was not privy to much of that. My athletic director at Hinsdale South nor at Walther ever told me much about that, and I was not into that part. I was just coaching, and I can't remember them ever making me privy to that. I'm sure it happened, but it was just, This is what's happening now. It's a very strange thing when you ask me that because I'm sure there are other coaches that were like, wow, into that, but it wasn't like that for me. It was just, This is what we're doing now.

Bartges: You're one of the younger coaches that I'm interviewing.

Slouber: Um-hmm.

Bartges: And you were so freshly out of college that you could have crossed that. Because you didn't play, you wouldn't have noticed a crossover. That's my assessment of it. Did you have methods classes or anything on basketball when you were in?

Slouber: Oh, yeah.

Bartges: And what did they teach? Was it six-player or was it five-player?

Slouber: Six-player.

Bartges: Was it with a rover¹?

Slouber: I can't remember, Ellyn; I'm too old. I think—I want to say no.

Bartges: Okay.

Slouber: I want to say no.

Bartges: So you're—and I didn't get that out of you. Your fundamental background was with six-player, that's what they taught you when you were in college?

Slouber: Um-hmm.

Bartges: But because you didn't play—the people who played ball and were older than you, there was a very clear demarcation there, so you're really on that cusp and you're the—like I say, you're the youngest one.

Slouber: And it's funny because I never played basketball. It seems strange—I mean now if you want to coach basketball, you really kind of have to have some kind of a background in it. I had none, but they said, "This is what you're doing." I mean it was just, "Okay, you're a PE teacher, you coach it," without anything going into it, at least that was my experience. And so it was—it was just something that I was expected to do and I did it, and I did it without any knowledge of rules.

Bartges: Do you think you had a role in getting girls' interscholastic basketball added for girls in Illinois? Your role the way you've defined it here today is that you were the first coach at Walther Lutheran.

Slouber: Um-hmm.

Bartges: So that would be a role for you in getting sports added. What kind of obstacles did you face in this process? From what you've said—

Slouber: At Walther?

Bartges: Um-hmm.

¹ In the 1950s and 1960s women's basketball was often played with two stationary guards, two stationary forwards, and two "rovers" who were allowed to run the entire court.
<http://www.ncweb.com/biz/sherock/history.html>

Slouber: You know, I really—I can't remember that I had any. And I think that just was indicative because it was such a small school. And I had such a great mentor in that regard. And I think he kind of sort of wanted sports to come along. He thought it was fair. What an honest man. And so I would say after I left there and we won the PSL league, you know, it went up from there and things did become more competitive. And I think we set the standard as far as what was to come, let's put it that way.

Bartges: What kind of obstacles did you face at Hinsdale South? You've touched on some of them.

Slouber: Oh, the big disparity between girls' and men's sports. It was horrific. It was a terrible experience. I can cite time after time after time again of things that went wrong or shouldn't have happened.

Bartges: How did you overcome those obstacles?

Slouber: You know, I think I got through it, number one, because of my husband, and I would talk to him about that. I really didn't—wasn't in contact with other coaches. I just—it was a sign of the time, I think, and Title—Title IX² was coming in and, I think, also because I talked to my team, and my team was supportive with me. You know, we all knew what was going on, and I think we got through it together. Does that make sense?

Bartges: Yeah. You mentioned other coaches. Were the other coaches in your league, and we've mentioned the Des Plaines Valley League, were they mostly—the basketball coaches—were they mostly male or female?

Slouber: Female.

Bartges: All of them?

Slouber: As much as I can remember. Not—I wouldn't say all of them; I would say maybe eighty percent.

Bartges: Okay.

Slouber: As much as I can remember.

² Title IX is a portion of the Education Amendments of 1972. It states, in part, "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

Bartges: What motivated you to push for these changes in basketball at the high school level and to be a leader in that?

Slouber: At Walther? I mean, girls were having a great time, and they were showing that they could be as competitive and as athletic as boys. And I think that was true. I remember a girl over at Walther, her name was Stacy Carr, and she was just a fabulous player. She was my star on that team. And guys were starting to look up to Stacy as, Oh, you're okay. You're not just a girl that looks good on the court. She also could play really good ball. And I can remember after practice, the guys were on one side of the gym and the girls were on another, and the guys would come over and we would play with each other at Walther. And they respected the girls' team because they were good. And I can remember even back then at Walther, some guys were starting to come to watch our games.

Bartges: Did you have that same experience at South? Was there that sort of crossover or camaraderie between the male and female athletes?

Slouber: It was really, really divisive. Never felt that at all. And you asked about did you ever have an assistant coach. When we got to the state level and we had passed the semifinals, then I was told by my athletic director that I had to have the male varsity coach sit on the bench with me.

Bartges: Did he say why?

Slouber: No, he just said that I might need a little help. And I thought, Well, I've gotten this far coaching two teams all by myself. What is he going to add? What could he—and I can even remember, he came in and tried to teach the girls some things at one point, and that kind of irritated me. But you know, you had to be a good little soldier because you were the girl coach, and so you had to do what you were told.

Bartges: How did your team respond to that, to an outsider coming in?

Slouber: We were pretty close, and I think they did their best. And then they'd come to me afterwards and say, "Do we have to do that?" And I go, "No, we're just going to do what we're going to do. We're going to win. We're just going to win, so just do your best." We were so close, so close.

Bartges: So you had no assistant coach, and then when you were successful, the athletic director came and said, "At this point in time, the boys' varsity coach is going to sit on your bench at the state tournament?"

Slouber: And he did. And actually he sat at the semifinals as well.

Bartges: Would that have been super-sectionals?

Slouber: Yes, super-sectionals. And he came to me, and he said to me, he goes, "Lynne," he goes, "I'm just going to sit here." He goes, "I'm not—" He was a very nice man—once again, a very nice man, and he understood that it was all political—that he had to be there. It had nothing to do with he was going to help, and so that was good. Nice man.

Bartges: What was his name?

Slouber: Mr. Arnold.

Bartges: Do you think that of both your schools, at Lutheran and at Hinsdale South—would you deem those programs as leaders in girls' athletics in the state?

Slouber: Absolutely. Absolutely.

Bartges: Not followers?

Slouber: No. unh-uh, especially Walther.

Bartges: You mentioned the organization in the sport and the difference. Was it too organized for you? Did it get too organized for you?

Slouber: No, I don't think so. Anything that's structured and organized is good. I think it was grand the way it was. I wouldn't say that that was bad at all.

Bartges: Did you belong to any group or groups who were active in the civil rights movement?

Slouber: Oh, yeah.

Bartges: You did?

Slouber: Oh, yeah.

Bartges: What?

Slouber: I can't remember, but I can remember when I was in college, I marched on the War on Vietnam. I mean, that was one thing. That isn't civil rights, but I can remember that, and—I wouldn't say that it was really organized. There was a group at U of I and it was—it had a lot to do with even diversity at that time. And that was the day that Martin Luther King and—I can remember we would sit in a coffee shop, and we would talk, and I signed my name to a bunch of things. Lord knows what those were, but—

Bartges: Nobody's come to carry you away yet?

Slouber: No, not yet. I wasn't a vigilante, and my mother would have killed me if—had I been in any kind of a riot, so that kind of tempered what I did, but I was pretty big into that.

Bartges: Was U of I integrated by this time?

Slouber: Oh, yes.

Bartges: Were you a Girl Scout?

Slouber: Yeah. Absolutely. I almost got to be an Eagle Scout or whatever you want to call that, the highest rank, you bet.

Bartges: Gold award.

Slouber: Gold award, is that it?

Bartges: Billie Jean King³ says that she hates labels and being labeled. However, for the purpose of this interview, how did you or would you characterize yourself during this period of your life?

Slouber: How would I characterize myself? In one word?

Bartges: Or a sentence.

Slouber: I would say that I—boy, that's a tough question, Ellyn. How would I label myself? I would just say I was a mentor, and I hope I mentored people not so much in basketball but in camaraderie. And that's what I think I've always done. I've just wanted to be there for people and mentor them in whatever I could do to help them achieve. And that was my—my whole goal in

³ Billie Jean King is a former American professional tennis player. A strong advocate for sexual equality, King participated in and won the Battle of the Sexes tennis match of 1973 against Bobby Riggs.

basketball is I wanted folks to achieve their highest aspirations. And that goes back to the question you originally asked me: why did you never coach basketball again? I felt after the state tournament that vicariously because I wasn't a fabulous basketball coach, that I had in some way not done enough to help those girls win, and I felt bad about that. I just—that was the end of it for me. I also made a grave error at the state team too which still haunts me to this day, and that is I had a varsity player that inadvertently I did not put in and I should have. And everything was happening too quick, and I—that's another thing, so—

Bartges: I think most coaches have things that they go back on and they have regrets.

Slouber: Absolutely, but for me, that impacted somebody greatly. And it was just—I took that personally on my front. So I would just say I tried to mentor people to be good people and to have fun. And it wasn't that they had to win. Remember, I always want to have fun first and win second, and I don't think in those days there was a lot of coaches that you had to win first and have fun later. That's just me.

Bartges: Okay. I'm going to list a collection of states that surround or border Illinois and the years that they implemented a state tournament for girls' basketball. Iowa started in 1926; Indiana 1975; Michigan 1973; Wisconsin 1976 and they started with three classes of state tournament; Minnesota in 1974; Ohio 1976; Kentucky 1920 to 1932 and then again in 1975; Tennessee 1965; Missouri 1973, and then Illinois in 1977. As an educator and a coach, how did you feel, if you were aware of it at all, when you saw the states that surrounded Illinois competing in a competitive state tournament and Illinois didn't have one?

Slouber: Well, I think—what I knew is that we were coming up. I mean, we were kind of one of the last ones to do that. And I felt, Let's get on the—I mean, let's do this. Let's do this. I couldn't understand why we hadn't. What was the holdup.

Bartges: What were your thoughts on why it hadn't?

Slouber: I just thought we were so stuck on male chauvinist sports that they weren't going to give women a chance in Illinois. And I didn't know why. And it didn't go much further than that, it really didn't, because I was not into that competitive, what's-going-on-around-me thing.

Bartges: Who would they have been? You said that they were chauvinist, they weren't interested in—

Slouber: The others—Illinois, whoever the leaders in the state were as far as sports go. And at that time it was interesting because when you ask me a question like that, I'm thinking, Well, gosh, I should have been more involved in what's going on around me, but I didn't. I graduated in PE, I was a PE teacher, I was told to do this, and I wanted to have a good time. So when I knew that this was the first girls' state basketball tournament, I thought, Wow. And then I looked at other states and thought, Well, why are we the last? And then I wanted it. I wanted it badly. I wanted it not for me, but I wanted it for the girls. And I thought, We can do this. We can do this. And I really didn't think, Well, this is leading up to this; I just did my job.

Bartges: Was that something, when the state tournament was added, that you used as a motivational tool for your team?

Slouber: Oh, they were already there. I didn't need to motivate. No, they were already there. They were going to win. It was ours. No, um-hmm. I might have, had they not been so cocky. (laughs)

Bartges: Based on other things you've said—I'll ask the question, but I think I know the answer. What can you tell me about the process of getting a state tournament added in Illinois, and how were you involved, if at all, in that process? And it seems like you weren't involved in the actual process, the IHSA [Illinois High School Association], the Sports Advisory Committee, and those things. Okay. Did you—and again, this is one of those questions that we talked about earlier—did you attend the first state tournament at Horton Field House in Bloomington?

Slouber: Well, I should sure hope so.

Bartges: (laughs) And in what capacity was that?

Slouber: Well, we were one of the finalists that should have won the state basketball tournament.

Bartges: So you were one of the eight schools that qualified?

Slouber: Absolutely.

Bartges: What super-sectional did you come out of?

Slouber: Oh, that was right where my sister lives. We were in Addison. We played it at Addison, and—I don't remember.

Bartges: One of the other—Niles West.

Slouber: Niles West.

Bartges: I interviewed the coach there a couple weeks ago—Arlene Mulder.

Slouber: Oh, really?

Bartges: Yes. She's the Mayor of Arlington Heights.

Slouber: Oh my God.

Bartges: (laughs) What were your thoughts and your feelings when you walked in the door for the first game?

Slouber: I thought, Wow. I was like, Wow. And my biggest reaction was, This is big time. And it was escalating during that time. Each game got bigger and there were more people. And I could remember at Hinsdale South, we had the first girls' pep rally at the school, and that made everybody so happy and they were so proud. And that, I think, was a big deal because all my players were saying, "Do you know that this is the first? Do you know this is the first?" And I thought, Well, okay, but I didn't realize. Now years later I think, Wow, that was a big deal. And the town sent us off. And we did get as much special treatment as guys for the first time.

Bartges: How did you travel?

Slouber: We traveled in a van that was decorated. And I don't even know whose van it was, but it certainly wasn't a bus, that's a for sure.

Bartges: Did you travel on buses during your regular season?

Slouber: School buses.

Bartges: School buses?

Slouber: Um-hmm.

Bartges: Did you have to drive the bus?

Slouber: No.

Bartges: Okay.

Slouber: No.

Bartges: I should have asked that earlier, I'm sorry.

Slouber: No, that's okay. And I want to get back to your question about the state tournament. I can remember walking in there and going, Wow. And then my next reaction, and this is the God's honest truth, was, These girls deserve this.

Bartges: Was it pretty crowded?

Slouber: Oh. It was—the whole stadium and the noise—it was just like the boys. And I thought, Wow. I mean, that's the only word. I was so happy that this team had gotten—

Bartges: What did you think about the caliber of play at this first girls' state tournament?

Slouber: I thought it was really good, and I was glad to see the girls had come to that level and that there were so many boys and girls cheering these folks on. But as you know from that state tournament, I was really upset about the officiating.

Bartges: What about the officiating?

Slouber: The officiating was—and I do remember this, that they did not want men to officiate that game, and that was absolutely dead wrong. I had no voice in that. My athletic director kept me totally in the dark to any meetings that ever precluded me going to that. He was the person that went. He kept me in the dark.

Bartges: So all the informational meetings—

Slouber: I had no clue. He just said, "Lynne, you're going to go here." He was the guy. Even after we lost the tournament, I was supposed to go to a big meeting and he never told me about it. I knew nothing.

Bartges: When you said they wanted to have all male officials, who would they have been?

Slouber: You know, the folks that were directing the tournament.

Bartges: The IHSA?

Slouber: Um-hmm, absolutely.

Bartges: The Illinois High School Association?

Slouber: And those folks, it was my understanding that they felt that only girls could referee girls. But as it turned out, those women did not have the experience or understand the caliber of play, hence they couldn't keep the game under control.

Bartges: How did that manifest itself, when you talk about keep the game under control?

Slouber: If you look at the tape, many, many times there are so many bad calls.

Bartges: And I don't mean to interrupt. Do you mean the tape of your game?

Slouber: Um-hmm.

Bartges: Who did your team play?

Slouber: Fremd.

Bartges: Okay.

Slouber: And they were a fine team, but if we would have had different officials, the game would have gone a lot different. I had a center who was very tall who had never had hardly any calls, and they specifically fouled her out. There were charging fouls that shouldn't have been made. There were just so many things that went on. The whole game would have been totally different. Too bad we don't have instant replay back then.

Bartges: (laughs)

Slouber: That would have been a nice one.

Bartges: It's funny you mention that because one of the individuals that I interviewed was the commentary from the TV. And she talked about a game where after the game, she was mobbed because the replay screen of the TVs were on the

table, and she didn't realize it, and Hinsdale South's fans were behind her and they saw the replays on the TV, and she was mobbed.

Slouber: That was interesting. And I didn't see that replay. When that happened I was whisked away into the room and I had to talk to the team, and then it was a big blur. Then I wanted to talk to the officials, and I couldn't even—I wasn't allowed to do that. I was not allowed to talk to an official. That was such a sad thing.

Bartges: What exactly happened that—because several people—Ola Bundy and several other people have talked about problems that hurt officials in this state, that it really was—Ola actually deemed it as the thing that made it almost impossible for women officials to succeed in this state.

Slouber: Well, it was getting down to the end and I had a gal, she knew she had to give the ball away, and she shot a free throw—not a free throw. She shot a layup from her hip rather than up here. And she let the ball go, and there were seconds on the clock, and you could even see the ball go through. And the official underneath the basket called it good. The one behind her did not see when she released the ball, called it not a basket, and so they went to the timekeeper, and that was that.

Bartges: Were you aware of the timekeepers? Was there anything—

Slouber: There was some chatter. It was so very confusing after that. It was so very confusing. I can remember just—everybody was kind of in complete pandemonium. We thought we had won, we hadn't won. Everybody was whisking us off the court. Now I'm in the locker room, and everyone is devastated, and then they're talking about a timekeeper. I didn't even know what happened. And then all of a sudden it was all gone, and no one said, "You need to talk to this." And I said, "I just want to talk to somebody, I want to talk to somebody," and I was not allowed to do that.

Bartges: And your athletic director didn't permit you to do that?

Slouber: No.

Bartges: Was there a lot of media coverage of this?

Slouber: Oh, yes. And all the newspaper articles said, "Did Hinsdale South lose or did they really not lose?" So many articles about that. Everybody knew. We had the instant replays of when the shot was actually released from her hands and

the basket, and we never really lost. And so that set a very bad tone, I think, for officiating for women. I know I personally wouldn't want women to do that again with the high caliber—maybe they thought that they could handle it, but they sure hadn't. And that was not just indicative of that game. Throughout the year officiating was really, really poor unless you got a man in there who had the experience to keep a game under control. I can remember some real serious injuries to my team specifically because they just couldn't keep it under control. I can remember one at home where people were just—it was—I can even remember the assistant principal coming in and having to step in because it got so rowdy. How sad is that? Set a bad, bad, bad tone.

Bartges: Was there anything after the game? Like, did you guys stay in a hotel that night? Did you go back home that night?

Slouber: I went to that hotel with my husband, and I was in seclusion. I didn't know—and I had no idea where my team was. And then I went to go find them—I think I—actually, I was so exhausted mentally, and I felt so terrible. I was heartbroken. I was heartbroken not for me, but I was heartbroken for the girls because they deserved it. They deserved to have an honest game of ball at this level. That was it. And they'd been robbed, they'd been cheated, and there was nothing I could do. And I felt totally utterly helpless. And going back to the mentor part, I didn't know how to fix it. And I went to sleep. I had to block it all out, and I had to have a moment to regroup. The girls, they went off and, you know, coped with it the best they could in their own way.

Bartges: Did the school district pay for the hotel—

Slouber: I think so—

Bartges: —or was—did the kids pay for their own?

Slouber: I think they did, um-hmm. One thing I should mention too, when we went to this—the one thing that happened too, we were talking about how the school had asked Mr. Arnold to come and sit on my bench. We never had any perks that whole year, hardly any perks at all. And then finally when we were going to go to state, they told my team that they were going to provide them with new gym shoes, I could remember that. Everybody was supposed to pick out a new pair of gym shoes, and they were all supposed to wear these matching gym shoes. And my team came to me and said, "Do we have to wear those?" And I said, "No, you're not going to have to wear them." And then, you know, the athletic director once again came and said, "Do you have all those shoes and are you sure you're going to have them?" And I said, "Sure, we got

them," but we never wore those shoes ever, never. You couldn't do that at that kind of—

Bartges: I mean, did they give you any time to break in the shoes or anything?

Slouber: No. No.

Bartges: Just, Okay, here's shoes for a game?

Slouber: Right.

Bartges: Did you have cheerleaders?

Slouber: Well, our parents were cheerleaders. And actually I think towards the end, some of the girl cheerleaders started to add a little bit more zip. I think at the—I'm sure at the pep rally they were there, as I can remember.

Bartges: Was there any sort of homecoming for you guys?

Slouber: Oh yeah, the community surrounded us. They knew we had been robbed. And we had a wonderful assembly and they gave us a little trophy, Almost First in State, and had all the girls go up there. That was another heartbreak for me because they needed to be acknowledged more than that, but at least—I can remember the whole gym being crowded and the community. Once again the media helped in helping repair what they had been robbed for. And I always thought back then, How is this going to impact these people? How— This has to be a moment that it will be impacted, just like someone in the Olympics who doesn't get the gold medal because they fall or whatever. But this wasn't their fault. They didn't fall. They played their heart out. And I felt totally, utterly responsible for the fact that I couldn't make it better. It was a moment gone, it's water over the dam, I couldn't fix it. And once again, that's truly what led me to be very discouraged about coaching.

Bartges: I'm going to stop here because I have—there's about eight more questions I want to ask you, and this tape's about up so—

Slouber: Yeah, it's blinking at me.

Bartges: Is it?

(End of Tape One, Tape Two Begins)

- Bartges: This is tape number two of the interview with Lynne Slouber on January 1, 2005. In your opinion, given the previous conversation and data that we've talked about, what was the major reason that slowed basketball from being added as an interscholastic sport that the IHSA sanctioned?
- Slouber: You know, I wasn't privy to any of that, so I can't answer that question, Ellyn.
- Bartges: That's fine. What role if any do you think homophobia played in the development and growth of girls' sports at the high school level, particularly for team sports like basketball?
- Slouber: Oh. You know, I don't know, Ellyn. That's a hard question.
- Bartges: And I'm asking for your experience or your opinion.
- Slouber: It's—all I know is that I think girls needed to be looked up to as athletes. They needed to be looked up to because all they were up until that time was a pretty face, and anyone that was athletic was more—it was known that you were going to be around if you were a male. Up until this time, I think girls started to get respect. Okay, they really were respected for—you could be athletic and do other things aside from that. Look at the way sports are today. I mean, I think it just—it truly started to roll where athletics are athletics, and you can be whoever you want to be and be sportsy, and it doesn't take anything away from your role as a person.
- Bartges: So in your experience you didn't think that any particular group was concerned or were vocal about the athletes having mannish behavior? And that's a sociological term that they use in the literature. You weren't aware of anything like that?
- Slouber: No, unh-uh.
- Bartges: Okay. Can you identify any factors that influenced previous decisions against interscholastic competition in the State of Illinois for girls' basketball?
- Slouber: Nope, I wasn't privy to it.
- Bartges: Do you have any opinion on what happened to change the IHSA's stand on adding basketball as an interscholastic sport?
- Slouber: No.

Bartges: Do you think the AMA, the American Medical Association's endorsement for vigorous exercise helped change public educational policy towards interscholastic sport? In about 1971 the AMA came out and reversed the age-old stance that females competing in sports was damaging to their reproductive systems. In 1971 they said that vigorous exercise was not problematic or harmful to those reproductive systems, and they said they endorsed it. Do you think that changed public educational policy?

Slouber: It certainly could have. See, that's another thing that I wasn't privy to, but I would certainly think that would be the case, absolutely.

Bartges: How do you think Title IX affected girls' basketball in Illinois?

Slouber: Well, I would have hoped, especially, that we were the very big start of equality. You know, it'd be nice if we could have practiced when—at least the girls' varsity—practiced the same time that the boys' varsity had practiced. And I think those girls at that time that I had at the state tournament, I think they started to have folks understand that they needed to be respected, and they need to have equality as a team. And I know I pushed and pushed and pushed for that and—

Bartges: What kinds of things did you push?

Slouber: Oh my Lord, gym time was one. That was it, and then practicing in our break. We wanted to practice over Christmas break or Easter break, and that was not allowed, but yet the boys' swimming team could do that, and the boys' basketball team could do that, and we couldn't do that. And uniforms, that was another thing. We got one, but we didn't have home and away. I think practicing was the biggest issue for me because it impeded on my family time. I had a small son at that time, and I never saw him, never. I'd go to school and then I'd be practicing. And that impeded on my family time. And I thought it encroached on your family time as well as far as the team goes. Plus, they were tired. They had to do homework. Who wants to go—you had to be really, really dedicated to do that, and it was just totally, utterly unfair—unfair and—I'll say that I was so mad at that state tournament too that there had to be a crossover there, there had to be, in order for it to be fair.

Bartges: Did you have a vocal group of parents or anyone that helped you advocate for the girls?

Slouber: Absolutely. I think that was another wonderful thing that we had—is all the parents of all these girls. They did everything in their power to contact the

media, to contact the principal of the school, to contact anyone that they could think of that would be an advocate of—in my scrapbook I have many letters from the Town of Darien that said, "We're so proud of you." And in part it had to do with all the parents that wrote those letters.

Bartges: Did you ever get the perception as an advocate for equality for your girls and your team that because you were advocating that Title IX should be followed or adhered to, that you sort of got a deaf ear turned to you, or were they anxious to come into compliance with the law?

Slouber: I think they were starting to, hence the pep rally. I didn't want it to be a political thing. I really didn't want it to, but I kind of felt there towards the end that it was, especially when I got a little bit of acknowledgement from the principal of the high school, where I had never had that before. I mean, I got a few pats on the back, which, I said, had absolutely nothing to do with me; it had to do with my team. And so, I don't know.

Bartges: Based on your experience—I mean obviously you were coaching when Title IX was passed and then you were coaching through this period that the law evolved and that schools were supposed to implement it—do you think you saw changes in funding, travel, schedules, publicity, uniforms, coaching, officiating, and facility usage?

Slouber: The second year I was at Hinsdale South it got a little bit easier, and I think that was just because we were pretty good, and I do think that that *Chicago Tribune* All-Area coaching award had a lot to do with it, and that was once again, I think, political. How could the school not acknowledge something about that? And I think that helped it. And if that was my little itty-bitty part in making girls' basketball an equality and Title IX get a bigger stance, then so be it. That was a good thing.

Bartges: Did the IHSA or the *Tribune*—we talked about publicity earlier—did they have all-state teams and those sorts of things?

Slouber: Not to my knowledge at that time. Yes, they did actually. Boy, once again, I need my scrapbook.

Bartges: I'm sorry.

Slouber: Oh, that's okay. I need my scrapbook, and yes, they did. They had all-state team, didn't they? Yes, they sure did. And we had two players that were

named to that. And that was a good thing. That was another good thing that came out of that tournament, at least they were acknowledged for that.

Bartges: Okay. The late Marianna Trezell in her book *A Century of Women's Basketball* stated that she felt that Title IX forced the issue or the role model for women and girls' sports towards a more competitive male model of sports. Would you agree or disagree, and why?

Slouber: I would agree with that one hundred percent to some degree because it was all about winning. And the state tournament, that was about winning and people deserved to win. And so I would agree one hundred percent with that.

Bartges: I forgot to show you this earlier. I brought it, and it's part of what I've shown the other people that I've interviewed. And it had to do with the question of when you walked into the state tournament in Bloomington.

Slouber: I still have this, and it was great. But look at the stance, look at the picture. There's somebody really playing their heart out. And look at her face, look at her talent. She's in it to win. And that isn't a bad thing; it's not a bad thing. You're just talking to someone who is not one hundred percent competitive. And I mean—it's just a wonderful, wonderful thing that happened. Oh, my goodness sakes.

Bartges: (laughs)

Slouber: And it's funny when I look at this picture, I don't—just brings back wonderful memories, not for me, but for the girls in this picture, and—I get all choked up about it still.

Bartges: Can you recall anything else that might help me to understand the history of girls' basketball in Illinois from this period, from 1968 to 1977, that we haven't touched on or that you would add that I've missed?

Slouber: Well, once again remembering that I was, at U of I, not one of those really competitive athletic girls. I just wanted to be a PE teacher and have a good time. It was very interesting because I was kind of a forgotten PE person. When I won the girls' state basketball tournament, I did get a letter from—and I can't remember who it is—it's in my scrapbook, once again—from someone at University of Illinois, and they told me how proud they were of me, that I had taken my team to state, and that I had gone to U of I, and for all these achievements that I had done. And it just blew me away because who was I? I was not one of those favorite people at University of Illinois. I was just

Lynne who wanted to be a PE teacher, and I thought it bizarre that I get that letter, to be real honest with you, because I was certainly not in that group of people. And I thought, Well, I guess I must have done something good and they really know who I am. And I can see now that they sent me that letter because it was politically motivated to some extent. I was attached to University of Illinois. It had nothing to do with Lynne winning, it was—that's where I just happened to get my undergraduate degree.

Bartges: U of I grad?

Slouber: Yeah, I was a U of I graduate, and that made them proud. Because I think the flavor of University of Illinois was very, very, very competitive. That was the start of girls really getting in there. And I think there was only three or four teams when I was there. So it's interesting that they would have sent me that letter. It was interesting too that it wasn't until we really started winning and the girls' state basketball tournament came that my principal really acknowledged our team and how good we were doing. And then finally he got his name in that book you just showed me and his picture. All of a sudden when there became notoriety that we were pretty good, then all of a sudden we were acknowledged, and that made me very mad. Very, very, very mad.

Bartges: Did you feel that they were using your efforts or your team's efforts to further their own causes, or for boys' sports or just—you talk about it being political?

Slouber: No, just to make a name for themselves. I wanted these girls to be acknowledged from the start that they were very good, and it wasn't until we went to state or we won this and we won that that they were—I mean, these are people that are good people. And it really frosted me. And when I found out after the girls' state tournament that there was a meeting that I should have gone to and I was never even told about it, that made me spitting mad. And I can remember going up and asking him about that, and he said, "Well, I didn't know you had to go." Oh, come on. And then the other coaches asked me, "Well, why weren't you there Lynne?" That was the part that burned me so—I don't know. I just think we were at a moment in time that when it was happening, I didn't realize it. I didn't realize what impact we were having on girls' sports, but we did. And I would think that after that team and after we went to state, from then on it only could have gotten better because of those girls that were on that team, because they set the standard for that school.

Bartges: Yeah, and it was a very successful program. Well, thank you very much for your time and thoughts on these. I appreciate it, and your contribution to my project. Thank you.

Lynne Slouber

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-(End of Interview)