

**Oral History Interview of  
Stanley Gwyn**

**Interviewed by: Daniel Sanchez  
October 12, 2017  
Amarillo, Texas**

**Part of the:  
*Sports History Interviews***

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## Interview Series Background:

The Sports History interviews encompass interviews conducted by members of the Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library staff. They hope to document the evolution of sports and the role of sports in the social fabric of this region.

## Transcript Overview:

This interview features Stanley Gwyn as he discusses his involvement with drag racing in Amarillo. In this interview, Stanley describes how he got started in drag racing, his job on the Amarillo track and the drag racers that he encountered throughout his time at the strip.

**Length of Interview:** 02:02:42

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### Keywords

Motorsports, automobiles, drag racing

**Daniel Sanchez (DS):**

My name is Daniel Sanchez. Today's date is October 12, 2017. I'm in Amarillo, Texas at the home of Stanley Gwyn. Stanley Gwyn is a long time motorsports guy. We're going to cover sports history and a little bit of his family history. Stanley, thank you for letting me come into your home.

**Stanley Gwyn (SG):**

I appreciate it.

DS:

Would you please state your complete legal name?

SG:

Stanley Marvin Gwyn. I usually don't put the Marvin in there because that shakes everybody up. [Laughs] I was born and raised here in Amarillo.

DS:

What year?

SG:

Never have left and everything. Never was in the military. Graduated from Amarillo High and everything. Grew up in, kind of, the motorsports world I would say. We all had cars. I went—not the racing part of it—but I went more into the custom part of it. I had a '57 Chevrolet, '54 Chevrolet. Back in those days, '61 and '62, everything was chrome rims and stuff like that. I went more for show than go on it. All of my friends around me—matter of fact, a guy that lived about two blocks from me by the name Jack Fry was an excellent auto-body painter here in Amarillo. Did a lot of fantastic paint jobs on cars. Did a lot of race cars for people and everything. And he was my best buddy. He was in the next block from me. We all went to school together and stuff. So that's kind of how I got into the motorsports part of it. I was into the custom car part of it. He was more into the painting of the custom cars and stuff. He never did drag race or have that type of car that would go drag racing. But there was a bunch of guys I ran around with that were drag racers, that went out there and drag raced. I've got—I'm married. I've got three kids. All of them are grown. I've got grandkids. There'll all spread out. They're not here in Amarillo. Two of them are here in Amarillo. My wife, we've been married for, what, forty-five years. Got married in '71 and everything. And at one time, she was the trophy queen of Amarillo dragway a couple of years there. I don't know how that came about but it happened. That was why we were married and everything. My mother and dad grew up here. My mother graduated from Amarillo high, so did my dad. Matter of fact, my mother was queen of Amarillo High in '34. Both of them bought a business at—oh, I don't know what year it was—and it was a shade shop. They developed it into Gwyn's Shade and Drapery. So I was in the decorating



business. That's hard to kind of pass onto everybody. "What do you do?", "I do draperies." Everybody'll go, "Oh my gosh, I'm not going to talk to him." But me and the wife, we ran that business with my mother and dad for sixty-one years. Mom finally passed away about fifteen, twenty years ago. Dad passed away about five years ago. The business got to where it was—you have to have a good profession—or not profession, I was to say, but a good talent to sew. A lot of those people aren't there no more, so I was having trouble finding help. We just finally closed the business down and went on. I was at the age of retiring so both of us just retired, sold the business and everything. So now, I'm just retired. In the high school year of about probably '62 I would say, maybe '64, I was approached to work at Amarillo Dragway as a time slips hander-outer. In other words, you would write the time slips down—miles per hour—hand that to the race car that would come around. I said, "Yeah, I'll go do that." So, me and—I believe it was Jack Fry that we both went out there and started working. I worked most of the whole complete year. Jack only worked about three or four races. From there, the gentleman that was running the starting line at Amarillo Dragway approached and says, "I need somebody up in starting and staging to help me handicap the racers because they've gone into this big race deal." I said—the handicap racing—I said, "Yeah, I'll go do it." So I got up there and the gentleman's name was Ted Rush that lived—he lived right across the street from where I grew up. Super guy. Very, very, very smart. He was a professor—not a professor—a school teacher at Dumas is where he moved to. He taught me how to handle the starting line, and staging process, and handicap process where you had to take a number from this car, number from this car, subtract it, dial it in and make sure both cars are on the line. You do that in a hurry. Sometimes you can mess up. Those two guys climb out of those cars and come and tell you about it. I finally got that down pretty pat then Mr. Rush quit and turned over—he said, "I'm going to turn this whole thing over to you. You're going to be the one." I thought, Uh-oh. I might not want to be the one. Ernest Walker that started the dragstrip and Dale Ham—Dale Ham was the Division 4 director of this Division which covered New Mexico, Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, up into Kansas, Oklahoma—was a division and he took care of all of that for NHRA [**National Hot Rod Association**]. Ernest Walker put in the dragstrip out there. What year, I'm not real positive. Probably in '59 or '60. He said, "You'll be the one on the starting line and run the staging." I said, "Okay." I said, "If you trust my judgement and my work habits of doing that." He said, "Yeah, we do." So I went ahead—he said, "You're going to need some help out there so find you some two or three guys that could help you run your end of the deal. You'll be the boss of them." I said, "Okay, fine." I found two guys that used to race, and I figured those two guys will be knowledgeable of the racing habits. I said, "I will hire these two guys." One of them was Walter Solomon and the other one was Jerry Hopper. There was three of us. We ran that whole complete starting and staging, just us three, for a couple of years. People couldn't get over how well that it ran when they would come up here and race because we were so organized. We knew what we were doing. Down the line there—when I first took that on of being the head guy, the whole object of drag racing and being a worker at that strip was to make sure you had two cars going down the strip every fifteen, twenty seconds or whatever the next car's going to do. So, I started

looking at cars as bodies and four wheels, not, “That’s my favorite. I’ll let him go first. I know him, I’ll let him go first.” No. They were all equal. So, that’s the way I kind of treated the situation and everybody really appreciated that and understood what I was doing. I wasn’t giving any favoritisms to anybody on it. We’d run so many cars out of the staging lane, run them down the track and I said, “We’ll make sure they just keep right on going. Just keep on going. If we have an accident, we’ll deal with it and stuff,” which you do. Those two guys helped me for a long time, then I hired another one in there by the name of Mike Ertton [00:09:27] which came out of, I believe it was Roswell or—was it Roswell—not Ruidoso—I think it was Roswell over there. He was very knowledgeable in drag racing, so I hired him to help us out in there because we were beginning to pull in more than two-hundred cars. We were beginning to pull in four, five, and six-hundred cars. It takes a lot of dealings to handle that. Then Ernest [came] along and him and Dale Ham got together and decided to start having this Texas versus California meet. Ernest would take three of the hottest California cars, whether they were Top Fuel dragsters, funny cars or—and most time that’s what it was because that’s everybody wanted to see. Then he would pick up the three top racers in this area, which would be like Kenny Bernstein, and Gene Snow. We had Raymond Beadle, which was in the funny car deal. And they would be racing people out of California. Well, boy, that was a big thing. Texas versus California. Boy, I mean, Ernest would pack in tons of people out there. We had tons of racers. Everybody, they would count on that kind of like the Tri-State Fair. Everybody would count on, “Every year they’re going to have that Texas versus—we’re going to go.” And we ran that for—I don’t know how many years that Ernest did that. It was a very, very profitable deal. We saw different racecars. A lot of big time racers that are racing today in certain areas of racing, started right here in Amarillo—or didn’t—I shouldn’t say “started”. They would race in Amarillo. Eddie Hill from Wichita Falls would come up. Gene Snow from Dallas-Fort Worth area would come up. Kenny Bernstein which—I believe he was out of Dallas but he was born and raised I believe in Lubbock—Raymond Beadle and a bunch of those guys that raced here, started here. Some of them are still racing. Now, a lot of them aren’t. We would pull in a lot of cars that would be on the circuit coming through like John Force and a bunch of those guys. Caps. Now, Robert Hight wasn’t because he was down the line. But there was a lot of big ones. Shirley Muldowney, Connie Kalitta, and all of those types. John Wiebe out of Kansas would come down and race. And these were big time racers. They weren’t just little bitty guys. And they would come race with us. It was very, very interesting. I got to see a lot of people that I possibly never would see then I thought, We’ll go on with this deal. Then I ended up seeing them in bigger races. Dale Ham, which was a Division Director, liked how I ran the starting line and ran the staging and said, “Would you be interested in going to—we’re getting ready to have the Cajun Nationals in,” I believe it was, “Houma, Louisiana.”—I’m not real positive on that but it was in Louisiana—“and it’s going to be the inaugural of it. Will you want to go run it? Help us run it?” I said, “Well, yeah. I’ll go do it.” So, I got to go there, which was a big feat. You get to see a lot of the national people you don’t see anymore—or you see in Amarillo—you see them there. I did so well there that then he started opening strips around here. I went to Corpus Christi when they

first opened that one. We ran that one down there for them. That was the inaugural deal. It wasn't a national event but it was a Division race. So we went down there and ran that in Corpus Christi. We went to Tulsa. We ran that one over there in Tulsa for a while. Idalou, Texas, which has a dragstrip outside of Lubbock. We went down there and ran that one for a while, and worked, actually. Didn't run it but worked. Mile High Nationals, I went there. I went to El Paso. Dale Ham opened one over there in El Paso. We went over there and ran that one for him on it. I would take me, my wife—at that time my wife, Claudia, was head of the tower at Amarillo Dragway. So, she was kind of an assistant head of the tower of all these other races and would help out on time slips, announce—she wouldn't announce but she would pull cards and say, "This is so-and-so in that lane, this is so-and-so in that lane." So, she went with us. Everywhere I went, she would go too. Then I would take one or two of my other helpers that could get off—we all worked at jobs and some of us couldn't get off. Some of us could so we would take who we could and everything. Like I said, we went to California one year and worked the Winter Nationals out there in Pomona, California, which is the granddaddy of a lot them. I've been to Indianapolis, ran that and help them run that one up there. Buster Couch that used to be the NHRA official starter always would ask me, "Can you make the next race," which might be California, might be in Florida, might be up in Minnesota, it might be Seattle or something. Some of them I could make, some of them I didn't. But I felt real honored that he would ask me. "I like how you work on the starting line. I like the way that you understand racecars and everything." I said, "Yeah, I'll work as many as I can for you." Another Division director that really liked how I worked in certain areas was Darrell Zimmerman. He's out of the Division 5 directors. There was only seven of those directors. Two of them I really got along with. Well, actually three of them: Dale Ham, Buster Couch and Darrel Zimmerman. I really loved all of them. They were super guys to work for. They understood—they knew that I understood drag racing like they understood it. It's just kind of what you'd call "snowball" into me working, working, and working, out there. How many years I worked, I couldn't tell you. As far as dates, was really not that important to me. Now, I look back on it and wish that I would've saved a bunch of stuff. I was visiting with my brother the other day and he—I told him, I said, "You were"—he was on the NHRA Tech Advisor group. I said, "You were in a position where after you check the cars"—you could sit and do nothing until the end of the race and that's when you checked then. So you got to go around, shoot all these pictures and visit with all these people. At the very first of the race, which would start time trials, possible maybe nine, nine-thirty, ten o'clock. I didn't have a break until the last two went down the strip because it was just constant. Now, we did have a lunch break in there for getting ready for all the final runs. Not final runs but getting ready for the eliminations. But I was busy all the time so I didn't get a chance to go around like my brother did, and collect all this memorabilia stuff, pictures or whatever. It was just a constant deal until you're finally over with it. The electronic system [came] in and I can tell you a cute little story about—I believe—I was still in time slips when this happened. Dale Ham comes down there and he says, "We need somebody to stand out there at the edge of the strip, hold a big flag up, and determine and tell the crowd who wins; left lane or right lane." I



said, "Okay. I can go do that." You can see a race go down the strip and you know that, "That guy over there beat him by five cars." So, you go write "left lane". At that time, there was a great, big culvert of water, low area where after rain it would fill up with water. So in order to get there, you had to go a good ways down and cross over so you wouldn't go through the mud. I was sitting out there in a chair with this flag. Dale told me, he said, "It doesn't make any difference because we got it electronically in the tower. This is basically for the spectators because there's no win-lose light on the far end like there is now." They're big, fancy things now. "And there's no deal that tell us, so it's basically just for the crowd." I said, "Okay." He said, "We'll know who won and who lost. No big deal." So, I'm sitting there and two cars come off the line down there and one of them happened to be a local guy here by the name of Gene O'Tanger. I'll never forget this. He was racing somebody else from down south. Both of them, boy, were just neck and neck. They crossed that finish line and I thought, Oh my god, that's too close. What do I do? Do I go left or right? Dale told me, he said, "If you think it's tied, just stick the flag straight up. It's a tie run." So I thought, Okay. I thought about it for a quite a while before I moved the flag. Finally I just stuck that flag right straight up. "Tie." Boy and he announced, "All right, it seems like it was a tie on the far end," and all this other stuff. Boy, here came Gene O'Tanger. He made the turnaround back there and thank the lord that puddle of water was there or he'd have wrapped that flag around my neck. "I beat that guy by so many things." Poor ole Gene. He was a good size. They called him—I think they called him "Bear" or something like that. He was big. Boy, I mean, he would've wadded me up like a piece of tinfoil and roll me down that strip. "I beat that guy by so many car lengths. It was not a tie." I kept saying, "Gene, they've got who won in the tower. This is just for the crowd.", "I don't care about—[inaudible]" If it wouldn't have been for that patch of water, he'd have been over there. Oh yeah, he'd have been over there on me. Super guy, though. I'll never forget that. I told Ham, I said, "You stuck me down there. You would've likely gotten me killed." That's when electronics came around.

DS:

[speaking at once] Who won?

SG:

Do what?

DS:

Who actually won?

SG:

Huh? Actually, O'Tanger won. Gene O'Tanger won that particular round and everything. So, it was so close. I just thought, Oh my gosh. It didn't—Texas—let's see, [TTA], Texas Timing Association, was a group of drag racers that would get together monthly as kind of like a club

and talk about things. I was sitting there at one of their meetings—hey, hey you. Get out of here. Got to take care of my cat here. I was sitting at once of the meetings and here came Gene O'Tanger walking through the door. I told my—she won't bother you, will she?

DS:

She's fine.

SG:

All right. She'll just sniff because you're new. Get down, Lou. Here came Gene O'Tanger through the door. I leaned over to one of my guys I was with and I said, "That's Gene O'Tanger." I said, "I hope he don't recognize who I am or he's going to come tell me about that race." He didn't. I think a couple of years later, I ran into him and told him about it. He said, "Yeah, I was just kind of hot because"—and he was a super guy. He was a brick layer-concrete man here in Amarillo for years. Ran around with all a bunch of old racers around here like Jack Moss, Linda Wyatt, Don Morgan, a bunch of those old, old, old-time—James Gibson, as a matter of fact—old-time racers. I think he has passed on since then and everything. But that was the one story I definitely remember and won't forget. But that's when the electronics took over. A long time there, Ted Rush was what you'd call a flagger. He would flag the races to start them and everything. And they did have electrical timing on the strip but they didn't have an electrical Christmas tree. Then that—maybe one, two races after I started out there, they put the electric timers in—I mean, the Christmas tree. At that time, we had just kind of a—not a Mickey Mouse deal but it was just three bulbs over here, three bulbs, green over here, and a red bulb. It was kind of jiggy in way but it got things started. Then they finally came up with a full-fledged Christmas tree that would count down. Ernest would always update—Ernest was super to work for. He would update everything. Any time something new would come along, he would get it. He'd say, "Yeah let's do it." That's when he started putting in the big scoreboards at the far end. They put the win-lose lights at the far end so the racers could tell who won and who lost. That's when the electronic timers on the time slips come about. They would just automatically just print out, you'd tear them off and hand them to the racecar driver. Everything was all done in the tower; your timers, your clickers, and stuff. The Christmas tree was already started from the starting line. They still do that. Sometimes at some of your local races now, they don't. They don't have a starter out there. I've always said to a lot of racers, "You need a starter. Whether he's pushing a button or not, you need somebody out there that's controlling or looking at this car and saying, 'Wait a minute, you're leaking oil. You can't run. Wait a minute, your goggles aren't down. Wait a minute, your helmet isn't buckled.'" There's a lot of that that could possibly get by that—"You need a starter out there. You need control"—Chuck Nelson was the Division 4 Tech Director. He told me, he says, "Gwyn," he says, "I'll tell you what, you're law west of line." And that's where the starting line was. Everything that I ran was west of that line. He said, "Now, I'm the law east of the line." I said, "Oh, okay." He was head of Tech. He was a Division 4 Tech Director anyway. So, everything he would say on that end was law. Everything I'd say on this

end was law. He said, "That's what you tell them. You're the one. If you say, 'You're out,' the guy's out." I said, "Okay." But I never did really push that. I tried to be as fair as I could with every racer that showed up on that starting line. I thought, These guys have got tons of money in these cars. Why should I go over there and say, "You can't run because this." I'm going to let that go by. I'm not going to be hard-nosed on it. If somebody complains about it, then we'll deal with it. Other than that, if nobody complains we'll go with it. So, cars just ran and I just kept them going. It's what Ernest told me. He said, "Your job is to keep them cars going down the strip." Another story about the starting deal there. Ernest used to be a—would have this Texas versus California race and would bring the funny cars up in the staging lanes. The lids, the flopbodies, would be up and everything. It'd be ready to go. I'd go back there and Ernest says, "Now, as soon as the last note of the Star Spangled Banner hits, I want you to fire them cars. I want it go [imitates Star Spangled Banner and car engine]." I said, "Okay. We'll get it done." So, I'd go back there and tell two or three—I don't know who it was at that time—two of your big time funny cars, one from California and one from Texas. I'd say, "Guys, as soon as you hear that last beat, I want those cars lit. I'll be standing out there and I'll go like that, just as soon as I want you to fire them.", "Okay." I got out there and I thought, Boy, this better work. This could be a feather in my cap, brownie buttons from Ernest. Those cars come up there, they're sitting there, they're playing the Star Spangled Banner, we all had our hats off on our hearts and all of a sudden I thought, It's getting close, I'll put my hat back on. [imitates sound of a car starting quickly] Boy, I mean, them cars would [imitates car sound]. Just as soon as that quit here they were, they were running. So, I said, "What do you think Ernest?" He said, "That's super." He said, "We're going to do that from now on." I said, "Okay, we'll do that." I said, "If I can get those guys to do it, we'll do it." From then on, everybody kind of knew in that line of funny cars and Fuelers, when that last note hits, you better fire. You weren't going to get thrown out. You weren't going to get dumped on or anything. It's more of a crowd pleaser, really. It was a neat deal. It's just like if you went to a football game and right before the kickoff, they sent up one of them aerial bombs and it goes [imitates exploding sound]. So, that's basically what it was. And it worked out. It worked out real neat. Ernest really liked it. I liked it. I thought it was cool. Then that would start the eliminations, which were just a lot of fun. I enjoyed working at the dragstrip. It was fun and lots of times, it was a two-day race, so I would work all week at our regular business then work Saturday and Sunday then get up Monday morning and work another full week. So, there was work for two full weeks—of work. You didn't get to rest. You didn't get to sleep in. I enjoyed it. I'd come home dirty and come home just worn out and everything. It was just—it was a lot of fun. It was well worth it for me to have that experience of working at the dragstrip. To get to know all of the racers—and some of them now, I'll see them at the car show when they have the Make-A-Wish Car Show here in Amarillo. I'll see James and them have an old-timer drag racing deal down there. Matter of fact, they put together that Motorsports Hall of Fame Inductees and stuff in there. And you get to see those guys. You get to visit with them again. Carroll Caudle, which is one of the big time motor builders and racers out of here that went and won Indy. Now we say, "If you win Indianapolis, you've won a race." They talk about



that today. Even racers that go to Indy, “If you don’t win Indy, you’re not a racer.” Indy’s the big one. We went there and that’s a—at that time, I think that was a five-day event. We’d go up there and work that race and everything. Oh yeah. “Your little fanny was sure dragging when you went back to the motel. It didn’t take you long to eat, drink a few beers and lay down because boy, at five o’clock in the morning, you got to be up and do it again. It’s a big race. All national events are that way. Now, I think they slack off a little bit. Boy, I don’t think they work near as hard as we did then. Going to the mile-high’s would kill you because of the altitude. You’d be down here and you’d be used to it. You’d go up there and [breathes heavily]. You’d have to push a car back off the starting line [breathes heavily], Oh my god, because the air’s thin up there. But it was a good race. I worked a lot of the inaugural races, mile-high’s. I worked two of those, which was the inaugural race before they built the big, fancy tower and everything. So, a lot of these tracks that I went to were the very first runs of them. Which I was honored to do that, that they felt that good about my work ethics with the drag racing and stuff. As it went on, the starting and staging, Ernest said, “I need somebody to start announcing.” I said, “Well, then you’re not looking at me?” He said, “Yes I am.” He said, “I still want you to take care of starting and staging but I also want you to start announcing.” I said, “No, no, I don’t want to do that.” He said, “Yeah you are.” So, I hired another guy by the name of Charles Bickley, one of my real good buddies that was in the motor—world of racecars. He didn’t race but he had a lot neat cars and everything. I hired him to work the starting line, to push the button. I said, “I want you to be the one pushing the buttons on it.” He said, “Okay.” “I’m going to be stuck in the tower,” which I didn’t like. I liked being out, moving around and everything. I finally got into the tower, and grabbed the microphone and started announcing. It was not that bad. You look at a card over here, you look at a card over here then you look at the clickers, the timers and everything. They’ll tell you the miles per hour, the E.T. [**elapsed time**], and you’re talking about who this is and who that is, where they’re coming from and what’s happening. The biggest problem in a lot of the races is downtime, two race down and it was real quiet. There was nothing going on. Then two more come to the line. I kept telling—and Ham helped me out on it because he was a good announcer, but he didn’t have time to do it either. He said, “Just keep talking. Just keep talking. They don’t care what you say but just keep talking.” I said, “Okay.” So, I started making up just all things that I could come up with. We’d have—matter of fact, we had one car that came out of Dumas up here. Guy’s name was Jesse James. I thought, “My gosh, he must be a member of the James Brothers. I remember Jesse James, he robbed banks and all that other stuff.” These two cars are racing at the end as I’m talking and everything. “Yeah, old Jesse James turned and ate so-and-so and so-and-so. I heard ninety-five miles an hour and everything. He’ll be back to be in the eliminations and everything. Oh my gosh, and there’s ole Pat so-and-so over there on the other side. I don’t know where he’s from but I think—it says here on his card he is a student at WT [**West Texas A&M University**] down here.” I said, “Good cow, looks like he’s been a student all his life.” I’d just try to keep talking to keep the crowd listening to something besides dead silence and everything. So, I did that for quite a few years and everything. But, I got to work with my lovely wife up there in the tower. She was the one that would hand out the cards to



me and say, "Here's your next two racers." Then each card has their name and a history of them, of where they're from, what they did and all this. I had a chance to read some of this stuff. Nowadays, it's all on a computer screen. So, those announcers stand there looking at two computer screen. This computer screen tells who's in that lane. This one over here tells who's in that lane. They don't have a card to look at. They can just look at that and say, "Yeah, he won the last race. Did so-and-so and so-and-so." I didn't have that luxury. I had a piece of paper or a card and everything. Then after they'd make the run, the two girls that were writing down the times would put those back in the card catalogue deal area of what their—A-stock, B-stock or whatever they were running at that time and everything. Then they'd be ready for the next round. If it was eliminations, that card would not go back in there. So then it told you who was the next the ones coming up and everything. It was interesting. I enjoyed it. I got to—at that time—actually before that when I got moved to the starting and staging, Ernest gave me a set of keys. He said, "Now, this is front gate, back gate, tower," and I think that was it on the keys. He said, "It's kind of like they keys to the office," and I'm going, "Whoa, I got the keys." I thought, Boy, that's neat. I can go out there any time I want to, just unlock the gate and just drive around while it's quiet. Nothing going on. My two little girls were growing up at that time. They would stay at their parents'—at my parents', grandma and granddad's, while me and Claudia would work and everything. They were getting to age of where it's time to learn how to ride a bicycle. The whole idea of riding a bicycle to me is keep peddling. You can't keep peddling in town. You run out of room. I got the idea, there is a pit area at Amarillo Dragway that is huge. "Load them bicycles up, girls." We loaded them bicycles up in the back of the old car, drove all the way out to the dragstrip, I took the key, unlock the gate, drove out there and I said, "Now, get on your bicycle." We got them on their on their bicycle and got them to peddling. I said, "You just keep going. Keep peddling. Keep peddling." They learned to ride those bicycles at Amarillo Dragway. They still remember it. I had the keys to all of that. They learned to ride out there, learned to turn, stop, no crashes. They didn't have to get in the way of anybody. I told them, "When you get to the far end just kind of come around, come back." This was all in the big pit area. It was three-hundred yards this way and maybe two-hundred, three-hundred yards that way so they couldn't run into anything. Learned how to ride right out there. I learned how to take care of—Ernest used to—we used to all meet before a race at about six o'clock at a restaurant over on Washington Street, eat breakfast and go out there. Ernest would meet us all there and we'd head out to the strip. I was in charge of also putting up all of the flags. Ernest was a big flag person. He loved lots of fru-fru flags. Boy, we'd start out, go down to the very front entrance to Amarillo Dragway, which was on Claude Highway and Dragstrip Road and we'd put these flags out. Six o'clock in the morning we were out putting all these flags and everything. Then we'd go down to—the pit entrance was an altogether different deal. We'd put flags down there then we'd come back to the strip and we'd decorate the finish line with flags and everything. Then he'd come up with flags on the top of the bleacher thing. We put flags on all top of the bleachers, which it made it more of a show type affair than just a bunch of bleachers and cars going down the strip. It was a classy type deal and I always thought that it was. I would mow. I would go out there and get on the ole—I think

at that time it was an International Harvester, old tractor—and fire that up. Ernest said, “We’re going to have a race here Saturday and Sunday. Can you mow Friday?” I said, “Yeah I can go out there after work and mow.” He said, “Yeah, you know—all those—” and I said, “Ernest, those are weeds, so what do we need to mow them for?” He said, “If you mow them real short and you look across them, they’re all green. It looks like grass.” And sure enough after you’d mow it all and everything, boy, you get back and look. I’d mow all the strip. I’d mow the parking lot—[clears throat] excuse me—and mow down the return roads, in between the guard rails, the strip, then into the pit area, mow all that, then the road that came into the dragstrip, would mow twice down one side and twice down the other side. It’d make it all nice and pretty and it’d be ready for Saturday morning. That was Ernest. He was a showman. I learned a lot from—matter of fact, I still talk to him. I go by his house and we still just sit and visit about drag racing. He said, “Boy, howdy. We had fun, didn’t we,” and I said, “Oh yeah we did.” Did a lot of it. He ran the—he operated and managed the Tulsa drag racing strip over there for a couple of years. All of my crew, we’d all go over there every other weekend and run that strip for him. We had a wonderful time over there on it. He said, “Boy, yeah, we did it all, didn’t we?” I said, “Yeah, we sure did.” We saw a lot of history being made. I will never forget the time that Eddie Hill came up here from Wichita Falls. Eddie was a big time boat racer and drag racer. He’d came up from Wichita Falls. I think if—I’m not real positive—I don’t think it was twin-engine car that set the national E.T. record at that race. I believe it was a single-engine car and he ran 8.38. Boy, we thought that was it. Boy, you can’t go no faster than 8.38 seconds. Eight seconds to go a quarter of a mile and now they’re doing it in three’s. You’re going, “Wow.” But that was one of the biggest deals of Eddie Hill coming up here and setting that national record on it. There was a lot of national records set at Amarillo Dragway. Probably could go back through some of the national record things and there could be Amarillo still in there on national records set because if they don’t break them somewhere down the line, that’s still a record that’s still set in there. The first enclosed trailer we saw come through out there at the dragstrip, Frank Bradley I believe it was out of California, pulled in a big trailer—a van, moving van type thing that had his dragstrip—drag racer in it, his drag car. Boy, we thought that was neat. “Oh man, that’s cool. He can sleep up here. His car comes out the back.” There’s only one of them out there. Everybody else is in little trailers and stuff. Here’s this great, big, nice thing. You’re going, “Wow, right here in Amarillo, Texas.” Then TV Tommy Ivo, which was a big, big, big time racer, T-Bar Chassis was located and it was a race chassis builder here in Amarillo. I don’t know a whole lot of history on it. James could tell you more about that than I could—was out on Amarillo Boulevard, northeast of 8<sup>th</sup>, which is on the north part of Amarillo. Tommy Ivo came in there to have some welding done on his drag race—his racecar before the race here. His trailer was an enclosed trailer but it was all glass down the sides. It had lights in the top of it so when you’re going down the highway, you can see his dragster in there. It’s sitting on carpet and it was just—you’re going, “Golly, isn’t that cool?” That was right here in Amarillo. A lot of people never saw that. We got to see it because we were in the drag racing field and everything. It just was there. A lot of the big, fancy racecars, Top Fuelers and funny cars were built in T-bar Chassis. Two of the

world-best at that time was welders and body men out there that were—I would classify them the world's best. They probably weren't. Around Amarillo, yes. If you had T-Bar Chassis do some welding or some building on a front end or something of your racecar, you were somebody. You had it. It got to a point where other people stepped in and people started them other places. That was a shame. It was a neat deal. We'd all meet up there on Friday nights and Thursday nights and we'd watch them work on the racecars and stuff like that. So, it was quite the thing. T-Bar Chassis was a neat place. Brad Cline that used to race a pro-stock was out of Amarillo here. He was a psychiatrist and drag raced. I remember when he played drums in a band. Kind of grew up with Brad and we'd catch him racing out here all the time. There was times he would race Division 5 and everything; and he won. He won quite a bit here in Amarillo. He was a super guy too. I enjoyed it. I really did. It was—I would not change it for anything. We had a lot of fun, and oh yeah, it was just neat. One part that happened that after one of the big races out here—I think it was the world's finals. We had it two years in a row, I believe, here. Winston was sponsoring it. When they come in, they would bring a whole bunch of banners, paint, all kinds of stuff to dress the strip up as Winston Race stuff. So after that race was over, it was going down to a points race. I was out there one afternoon with Ernest, and Dale Ham and a few other guys were out there. They were talking about what we needed to do here and there. Dale said, "I don't know what I'm going to do with all this paint." We're talking five-gallon buckets of red, white, and yellow paint. We're talking twenty-five, thirty of them that Winston sent in here for them to paint the bleachers, paint this or paint that. I made the suggestion to Dale—which it never did really get my name tagged on it anywhere that I know of until right now—and I told Dale, I said, "You know, you look at this starting out here. Those cars run in the same spot every time. They don't run way over here and they don't run way over here. They always run right in the same spot," and that's because of the rubber that has laid down by the other racecars and it's stickier. I said, "Why don't you paint that starting line?" He said, "What?" I said, "Just paint you up to a certain area on the outside edge, guard rail, and guard rail, and back. Just kind of lay it out where you're not interfering with the racecars but it's all painted over and it's all painted over here. "Hmm." Nothing was ever done or said about it after that. I said, "You got the paint. All you got to do is just lay it out, take a big, wide roller and roll it out. Blow off—sweep it or whatever. Take some time to do it, whatever." Two weeks later when we were getting ready to run that points race, that starting line was painted. I can tell you right now that I believe that was the very first starting line painted in the racing world of drag racing, was Amarillo Dragway. Nobody else had—now every race you see, it's either yellow, pink, blue and it's just a certain area that's painted on the sides. The area where the starters stands is all painted and stuff. Yeah, every one of them. I am almost willing to gamble my life on it that it started right here in Amarillo by Dale Ham. Actually, I'm the one that put the bug in Dale's ear of saying, "Go do that," and he did. It was quite the thing and it just went on year after year. It was a maintenance deal after that because you'd have to go out there and touch it up because of the heat, and sun, and the weather would peel it up and stuff like that. That was something that was cool too. I used to drive the water truck out there. At that time, we didn't have a pump that would have water on the water



box where the cars would burn out to clean off their tires. We had a great, big round tank sitting out there and we used to—J. Lee Milligan, I think, paving contractor, would let us borrow their water truck. They'd fill it up with water and then when it was time to refill that big tank, we'd drive it around and fill it up. I was in charge of doing that. I was in charge of quite a bit of stuff out there. Setting up the electronics was a deal where Ernest finally got into a gentleman that was more versed on electronics than me. But, I did know how to set photocells, which is the lights system from the outside. It would shoot across. You would break a beam and everything to start the timers going in the tower. Then at the far end, there was photocells. I had to line them up and look in the thing to make sure that the light's right and in the center of it and everything. I learned how to do that which is very simple, very easy to do. There for a while, funny cars, before they realized that they would take their exhaust system and curve them up to make down force, those just come out straight. Every time a funny car would leave the starting line of our dragstrip, it'd throw everything off because all of this thrust would go out and hit all these light sources and all of these photocells and just rattle them. It'd kick that beam off a little bit. It didn't affect them when they left but it affected the next group coming up so you'd have to run out there, open everything up, look down in there, wind everything up again before the next two came. It's not a deal of, "Hold it guys. I got to line"—you go do it then you keep your fingers crossed. "I hope I got that one right. I hope it's in the right spot." [imitates sound of car] "Lucky that one worked." Finally they said—they finally figured out if they turn those headers up, more down force on the car—now they're slanting them back more like a rocket deal and everything. The guys that do that don't have to worry about the photocells anymore. If it rained, "Go out there and cover them up right quick. That's electronics. You got to cover them all up." It was a thing. Somebody would run over the lights at the far end. There's lights in the center of a dragstrip at the far end. A lot of people don't realize that. Every drag racer but somebody that's just watching goes, "What are those things in the center down there? What are those, photocells?", "Actually, they're lights." Somebody would kind of drift over, hit it with a rear tire, front tire, tears them all up. You got to run down there, replace them because you got two more on the starting line getting ready to head your way and they're not waiting. They're not going to be—they'll burn down. They'll get too hot. So, you run down there right quick in the old truck, you jump out, take those things—take what we called at that time—now it's called duct tape, we called it two-hundred miles an hour tape because at two-hundred miles an hour, it gets stuck to the ground and it wouldn't move. So, we'd go down there with those lights right quick, set them down, run that tape under across them right quick to hold them down, go over and check the photocells on both sides because these were spots, tape the photocells on both sides—"Hope they're right."—get off the track. [imitates car sound] Comes two cars. "Ah, it worked." We'd have to have three or four sets of those lights ready to go because you can't just all of a sudden say, "Well, I'm sorry Ernest. We can't finish the race, we don't have more finish line lights." We always had three or four sets, sometimes five just to make sure that you can get through that race without it—without them tearing them up. There was a lot to run than just go out there and watch two cars go down the strip. You had a lot of concerns about it. I took care of all of the equipment



that was on the starting line; fire extinguishers. We had a floor jack. Anytime that a car would break a rear end or something, you can't push it. Jam up, lock up a transmission, it won't go out of gear so you can't move it. So, I came up with the idea, "Why not a floor jack?" You take a floor jack, run it under the rear end, jack it up, you can roll that car anywhere you want to because the front wheels are going to roll. You got two cars that are sitting back here in the water box ready to run. A guy locks up. "Okay guys, move it. They're coming, move it. Jack it up, move it over to the side, run the next two up there, go." Continuous show. There's sometimes you'd have to go back there and say, "Okay guys, cut it off. We got a bigger problem. Cut it off." The guys would cut it off and they'd have to push back and cool down to get ready to run. Well, that's when it was either a major deal that we couldn't fix quick enough. Very rare that that happened. I was in charge of all of that. "Make sure those go." I told all my workers when I hired them, I said, "We're going to keep it running. If Ernest calls down and chews me out because something's not working right, one of my guys did something wrong. I'm going to come chew on you." They said, "Okay." My guys were perfect. Couldn't have asked for a better group of guys. Turn it off. I'll go get some pictures. I'll show you some pictures. [Pause in recording]

DS:

There we go.

SG:

Walter was the postman—I'll just tell you that again because we didn't catch it—became the postmaster in Dumas. Super guy. [Knew] a lot about cars. Jerry Hopper worked for Safeway in the produce department. Now he's head of produce out of Oklahoma City for Safeway, the whole big unit. I think he's retired now, bless his heart. That's me. I was just—I was a decorator. I put all these guys together to do the racing part of it. Not knowing who this is. I don't know who this was. This was one of the racecars. That was before they had reverse in most of the cars. You had to pull them back. So, that was part of our job, is to run down there, get them cars, pull them back so they can get up to the starting line. Just another picture of me and Jerry standing there. This was a deal—let's see where it is. Here it is. This is Hurst Hemi Under Glass. Bob [Riggle] and Al Somebody. I don't know exactly—anyway, these were the guys that ran this wheel-standing Hurst Hemi Under Glass. So, my crew had the wild idea to throw me in there. Said, "You're going." I said, "No I'm not.", "You're going." It was kind of a tower deal of saying, "I saw Stan in there. Make him go down there with that guy with the wheels up in the air at a hundred and ninety miles an hour, two-hundred miles an hour. So, I did. This was me coming—this is my crawling out after we came back. So, I'd almost be willing to say that I might've been the only one that has ever been a passenger in the Hurst Hemi Under Glass because after that, Ham was with it for that while then all of a sudden it just quit. They said, "We better not do that. Something could happen and you could be in trouble." Because I was just sitting in there no seat, no seatbelt, nothing. There was no seat. There was just a floorboard in that car and everything. I went all the way down to the far end, wheels up in the air. Bob was

driving, we went to the other end, I looked out the window and, boy, he was going by it. He turned around down there on the far end and made two or three more hops up in the air. Then he sat it up in the air, came on back towards the tower then set it down. Boy, then I came crawling out of there. I did have a helmet.

DS:

So what were you holding onto?

SG:

I was hanging onto part of the door and the roll cage in there. I was hanging onto it and part of the door. That was the only thing I could hang onto because there was no seatbelt or nothing. The noise was just unreal because the motor is back here in the back part of the car. Motor's actually right here. That's why they could get such wheel stands because all the weight's back here. There's no weight on the front of these things. But I was probably—I could just almost—what do you say? I would say I was the only that had ever rode in the Hurst Hemi Under Glass. I got pictures of it but that's—it might not be. This is just me on the starting line. This was the Charles Bickley that I hired to work the buttons for me. Actually, that's—it's a pretty good job. It's important because you got to wait until both guys are staged and then push the button. This is the box deal—you can kind of see it in this picture—which had the—when I first went this was open on the inside. It was wide. You can sit in there and that's where the timing device was when you put the handicap in for the tree and everything. That's me kind of looking around kind of like, "What's happening up there in the tower? Are you nuts? Let's go. I got two cars on the starting line and you won't clear the clocks." I couldn't start—you can't push—you can push the button but you don't push it until there's a little light that comes on and says that the clocks have been cleared in the tower. So, when two cars leave, then it starts the timers. Then after it gets to the far end, the girls look at the timers and they write it down and announce it to the people at the far end. Then if they don't reach over and push the resets, it doesn't—you can still start the cars but those two cars won't get a time because the clocks didn't start. So, there's times I'd be going, "Hey, c'mon group, get with it." It was fun. Now they have communications between starter and helpers. They all are wearing mics and everything. I never did like mine, they always got in my way. They just introduced that on the last two races. Buster Couch asked me if I wanted to wear one. He was the official starter for NHRA and I said, "No, I don't want to wear one." He said, "You don't have to if you don't want to," and I said, "No, I don't want to. Gets in my way." I like to move. I like to hear what's going on around. If you got these on, you hear a bunch of gibber-gabber. I want to hear the cars. You can tell when a car comes up between you and you can hear—after so many years of listening to them, you can hear which one sounds like it might not run as good. "This one's not hitting on all eight cylinders like it should be." Because you can tell the difference. You can hear them and everything. And that's what I like to hear. Of course now, I can't hear worth a darn. Everybody tells me, "You didn't wear your earplugs long enough out there," which is true, I didn't. As I got older, I learned to put them earplugs in. Standing

between two funny cars, yeah, it rattles your cage. It'll shake you up. It'll deafen you for sure. Nowadays it would for sure. But that was before electronics came around and I could hear them cars. Like I say, "That one right there just doesn't sound right." And there's lots of times when I was starting—I usually stood right in the center between the two cars. If one of those cars was not sounding good, kind of coughing and sputtering a little bit—to everybody else it sounded good, to me it didn't. I'd take about two steps away to the other side knowing, "That guy could blow up here any minute. There's something wrong with that car." Now, it may make some run and gets to the far end but there's just that one little deal of you saying, "That doesn't sound right." If you had two of them sound that way, you step back about five steps and say, "Whoa, these cars don't sound right." And that's just cute little things that picks up that over the years of working. Another thing that a lot of people don't see on drag racing is the width of these tires, about sixteen, eighteen inches wide. When they do a burnout, those babies come in. They're real soft. They come in to about seven or eight inches and they stretch out. A lot of people don't realize that and don't see it. When you're work in a starting line and you turn around and see two Fuelers getting ready to come at you making a burnout, you can see those tires do that. You can watch them grow up. And they hardly ever mention it. Lots of times, you'll see them on TV at the national events. You'll see the far end and you'll see that tire, looks like it's flat on the backside. Yeah, it's flat. It's wadded up trying to grab the strip, the power. It is flat. These dragsters get up what they calling snaking. At that time we called it snake. Those cars are running so fast and pushing so hard that those frames will coil up like a snake. Then when they're really down there at the far end, they will start stretching their selves out. It's amazing if you just sit there and watch it. Those cars will just snake up. And it'd—not right off the starting line but about halfway down you can see them start flexing. The cars are built that way to do that. Makes them go faster. Which there's a lot of things—a lot of people don't know that. I learned a lot of history from that group out there. The best picture is—I gave it to James, I guess—showed me putting light bulbs in the tree. I used to wear a—I don't have a picture of my old hat. I used to have an old cowboy hat I wore for years out there. That was before I started losing my hair and getting sunburned. I'd wear that old cowboy hat and it put out a lot of carburetor fires. Did a lot of picking hot pieces of strips stuff that'd blow up on the far end. You go down there and pick up a piece of metal that'd come off of a car and it's real hot. If you reach down and pick it up, it's going to burn you so I'd kick it into my hat. I'd take my hat off, kick in my hat, take it over there and throw it over the side instead of picking it up with my hands.

DS:

There's one thing I want to ask you. You were taking about the staging and the things that might go wrong like with the cars. Did you ever have any things like that happen at the starting line?

SG:

We had—I never was in any danger because I was always—I always tried to be alert of what could happen. Funny cars used to—and Fuelers and a lot of—actually, Fuelers and funny cars



would burnout over the starting line, put it in reverse, and come back. One time, a funny car went out there and started back and it got hung in reverse and it didn't stop. I thought, Lord of mercy. Now, I always stood in between them knowing, "This could happen. The guy might not shut it down." This thing, he finally realized what was happening and couldn't get it to stop. He made a turn and it made a turn and went back and clobbered a fence that was on the spectators side over there right under—actually, under this bleacher right here. There used to be a chain-link fence right here and you can kind of see it—but it went down through the staging deal. If you drew it out, this was starting line and this fence was over here like this. This car came back, he finally turned it and it back into that fence. But it could've been—if wouldn't have turned the car—back here is the staging with all these cars lined up and people standing. Could've been a bad deal real quick. I've never had one really—I've had them blow up on me on the starting line, 95 percent of the time, it stays inside the engine. You don't have it—the only thing that you can get really clobbered with would be a blower belt coming off. If it broke and came off and you happened to be standing right beside the car—where's that other picture? If you were standing—here's a blower belt. You can see approximately where we're standing. If you were standing right beside this car and this blower belt came off, yeah, it could slap you upside the head and it could cut you real bad or whatever. I've never had—I've had them blow up before but not hit me. Same situation with a funny car. We had a funny car come up there one time, blow up, and catch on fire. Nitro you cannot see burning, it's just heat. It will not show a flame until all of the alcohols burn out of it then it will show a flame. We had one blow up on the starting line. It was on fire. I could tell he was on fire because I could see him in there and he's trying to hit what they call fire bottles that would extinguish any type of fire inside of the funny car. I had an ole boy run up there and get ready to start moving the funny car on the body side. Well, this whole thing was on fire but you can't see it. He ran right into a fire. It didn't burn him—on the bench for an hour, sunburned. Okay? That was about all it did to him. But I told—I pointed to a guy right quick that was with the car. I pointed him to right quick to grab the—there's a little lever on the front that they unlocked to raise the body. I said, "Grab that lever right there and just pull him out of the fire." And we did this in about two or three seconds. "Grab that lever and pull him out," and he pulled him out of the fire. The fire was back there then. It was all on the ground but then you could see it flame up like if you lit a match to gasoline. You could see it flame up because of all the alcohol burned out of it. We pulled that guy out of the fire. It's just, "Think quick." In drag racing you do have some accidents. You do have some guys bite the guardrail. We had a dragster hit a guardrail, turn over three or four times. There's a way of getting people out of racecars without hurting them. It's a split-second timing. And after this car had rolled two or three times, by that time—it was on the far end—tech had got over there. The guy was sitting in the car. The car was upright and they were getting ready to take him out of the car. I got there before the ambulance got there, climbed out of my official vehicle truck, which was donated by one of the auto places, ran over to him and he was conscious, but he was hurting. I could tell he was hurting in places. They started to reach down and grab him by his hands and pull him. I said, "No, no, no. Wait, wait, wait, wait. Hold it. Pick him up by his fire suit," which would be grabbing the



clothes and lift him out of there and set him down. "Don't grab an arm. This arm could've been—shoulder—could've been broke and you could've just destroyed it more." But if you pick up what he is wearing, it makes it kind of like a saddle type deal. You can just pick him up. Now, this is split-second timing. You do this and you do it in a hurry. "Don't think about it, just do it." I don't know. I guess I was just in that mood all—or mode—all the time and knew kind of what to do. "Hey, wait a minute guys. Don't do that. Pick him up by his fire suit. Hold it. Don't take his helmet off. Pick him up by his fire suit." You take his helmet off, he could have a broke neck and it'd kill him. Picked him up, laid him flat, ambulance got there and put him on there and took him off. He was all right. I think he broke a leg. Those are things that you hope don't happen but they do. You just have to stop and think about it. But you got to think and you got to do it a hurry. You got split-seconds in there that you've got to do that and think about it. It's one of those things. You're dealing with racecars. They're going to blow up. They're going to bite guardrails. They're going to flip over. They're going to crash into each other. They're going to fall off a jack stand over here in the pit area. That is somebody else's concern. Mine was starting, staging and strip, and then into the tower. It was a learning experience. I enjoyed it though. I tried to get back on out here to reopen this one as the announcer but I guess maybe they didn't want me back out there or anything, so I didn't get to go do it. Somebody else owns it now and everything. I quit. I don't know what year I actually quit. Ernest had turned it over to, I think, Dale Ham took it for a while and managed it, then somebody else managed it then a guy from Green Valley came up and managed and was going to buy it. A bunch of just, "Here, here, here." I'm glad they're racing out there now and the guys that own it now are doing some good stuff. The strip is old. It needs to be redone and everything. They'll never have a national event here because the strip's not long enough. We've had two or three cars go off the far end and run across the dirt road down there and into the cotton field—corn field—on the other side. So it's—yeah. Run a Jet Dragster down there and catch a field on fire and say, "Oh my god, we got a dragster that caught the field on fire and it's going to burn that guy's barn down.", "Who's responsible.", "Well, Amarillo Dragway would be. NHRA would be." Yeah, you got to think of a lot of those possibilities.

DS:

Because the thing is, they're going so fast. It takes a lot longer to slow down—

SG:

Yeah it does.

DS:

—Before they come to the stop.

SG:

It sure does. Everybody talks here about the starting line's real kind of rough and bumpy. I'll tell

you what, I'd rather it be bumpy and hard on the starting than on the far end. The far end is where it needs to be just as smooth as you can get it because you're traveling two-hundred miles an hour, three hundred miles an hour. So, you better be smooth. A little roughness and you're liable to get upset.

DS:

I think Marvin—I meant Marvin Clarke—was telling me something about the Oklahoma City track that was the opposite where on the far end is where they had a little glitch in their setup as they were trying to shut down.

SG:

Did they? Yeah. Marvin's a super guy. Know him real well too. That guy could take six-cylinder engines and make them run like crazy. Oh yeah. He had a twin-six dragster when they had two engines together. He had two six-cylinders.

DS:

It was a Rambler.

SG:

Yeah. I tell you, it was just unreal. I think if you really diagnosed all of those engine parts, there was probably Rambler, and Ford parts, and Chevy parts, and everything all modified to make that one engine. Marvin was sharp. He still is. I think he's retired. Last time I saw him he was kind of like everybody else, he's getting old and everything. I saw him at the car show and visited with him a little bit. That's about the only time I see all of the old racers is at the car shows. We'll all get together and stuff.

DS:

And that group and yourself, y'all were kind of like the innovators so y'all did it all. You had to know how to do every aspect of it.

SG:

Right. You had to. In my field, yeah. I had to do just—I had to learn a little bit about this and a little bit about that. When I first started announcing—no, we don't want to put that in there—I picked up the microphone and there's an off and on switch that you can turn it off and say what you want to say and nobody hears you. Or you can turn it on and everybody hears you. So, it was right before time trials and I'd been announcing maybe one, maybe two races. So, we was all sitting there in the tower and I said, "All right guys, let's go to work. It's time to get this ball rolling. Let's open up the staging lanes and get them all in and start time trials." So, I flipped on the microphone, at least I thought it was off. I thought I'd kind of be funny in the tower with everybody. Picked up that microphone and I said, "All right all you S.O.B.'s, let's go racing."

Well, the microphone was on and not off, so everybody out there heard it. Boy, I mean, they all moved though. They all starting filling up the line. I thought, Boy, I sure didn't want to say that, didn't want them to hear that but boy, here they came. They all filled in the staging lanes and we started time trials. Like I say, once time trials start, there's no end. You're going all the time.

DS:

That made for some long days, didn't it?

SG:

Yeah it does, it does. Yeah, especially if you start at six o'clock and you got possibly, five, six-hundred cars to run, um-hm. Five o'clock, six o'clock that afternoon, you're slowly finishing up. Depends on if you've got no downtime in there and you don't have to stop and wait on something. You can finish up probably four o'clock, four thirty real easy. But then after it's all over with, you still got to go around and pick up the fire extinguishers, you got to go run and pick up all the timing equipment and everything. You got to go around and pick up all the flags. You're not through just because they're through racing. Now, after they're through racing you sit around, glorify with everybody, drink a few beers here and there and have fun and everything, then it's back to work. "Okay guys, go out there and get all the fire extinguishers, get the brooms, get the sweepers and everything. Just put it all back in the bottom of the tower. Get all those flags off the bleachers up there and put them back in the tower." So, you got to clean—it's kind of like mowing your yard, you got to clean it up after you're finished on it. You got to edge it, you got to brush it out and everything. Same situation at a dragstrip, any type of work. You got to clean up your mess. We just did it. It was fun. I enjoyed it. My brother Dick has gotten more memorabilia of races because he actually went to almost all the national events in drag racing. At one time there, he said there was maybe one of two years he was gone every weekend at a race. Now, through the racing season part of it. When it got to December and January where they weren't racing, yeah, he didn't go but he said, "Almost every weekend I was at a race somewhere." He 's got—I've visit with him. Like I said, he's in Kerrville. He was on the Division 4 Tech advisory crew so he didn't have to go but he was requested to go. He was with NHRA. A lot of the old time guys are not there anymore. The Division guys I don't think—I can't think of anybody that's really still alive now. I think Dick would probably know who is and who isn't. I know Dale Ham's gone, his wife Glynanna, which she was super in learning how to bracket cars and stuff. Darrel Zimmerman, I think he's gone. There was only seven of them. It was neat back then. Had a lot of fun. That was when everybody stayed at motels that would come into races. So on Saturday night, you would go out to the motel area on Amarillo Boulevard on the north part of town here and everything, drive around and look at all the racecars that'd come in to race. Now they're in their motor homes and they're in their high-baller trailers, they're not in motels. They're all at the strip. You can't go do that. It's—

DS:

Different.

SG:

Yeah it's different. It changed.

DS:

Different world.

SG:

Sure has. Changed a lot.

DS:

You were talking about that first enclosed trailer. That compares nothing to what you get now.

SG:

Oh yeah. Some of them trailers will carry two complete cars in those trailers. They're double deckers and everything. They'll put two cars on top and then their main car on the bottom or main car on the top. It's just like Dick said, when John Force shows up, he has got his Roberts—what's her name—the two girls and they're all big trailers. Then in between all those big trailers are two more trailers that park together. He said, "It's better than any machine shop that you'll find in Amarillo. He said, "If they break a part, they go in there and make it right quick. If they have to turn something down, they got it." He said, "It's amazing. It's just unbelievable the way that drag racing has gone." Used to drive by the seat of pants out here. You used to not tear cars down like they do now to go through them. They changed oil, changed plugs, maybe adjusted the valves and went on. I remember when the surfers out of California came here. A bunch of surf guys, and they were all college graduates with engineering degrees. They were called surfers, came to Amarillo. Ernest had book them in on a show. They came and they ran round robin, which round robin means you run, you turn around, come back and run again. He said, "You can't do that. Your motor will overheat, it'll be too hot.", "Oh yeah, we can do that," and they did. Everybody thought, How in the heck can you get by with doing that. Most of the time, you need to let all those parts cool down." They were running alcohol in their watering system, which kept it cool. It was unbelievable. These guys were so smart. "We'll put alcohol in there and it'll keep that motor real cool," and they did. These guys had engineering degrees, they knew it. They knew what to do. So, a bunch of racers are always trying to outsmart everybody else. I remember when Ken McLellan up here, he was out of Friona, ran the Humping Henry Ford Super Stocker, I believe it was. He's an old farmer. So, his water outlet out of the main block was just a faucet like you have on the outside of your house. Everybody thought that was something. "Man, what's he doing with that faucet? Makes that car go faster or something. He knows something that we don't." Yeah, he knew how to get the water out of his block. But it was just something



that wasn't engine or motor part. It was an old plumbing faucet. Everybody thought, "Hey, we'll go do that.", "What's that? What's that on there for?", "I don't know. I get faster with it on there." So they're all pulling each other's leg. That's what they call bench racing. They'll sit around and lie to each other at the B. I just shake my head. You get a bunch of them together and you can hear them, "Yeah that's why I go so fast. I put a different in mine.", "What do you run?", "I'm not going to tell you," but it's the same one that guy's running. [Laughs]

DS:

Meanwhile the other guy's trying to look for that filter, right?

SG:

Yeah. It's fun though. I enjoyed it. I wouldn't have traded it, like I say, for anything.

DS:

I've been here about an hour and a half I bet.

SG:

Probably so.

DS:

Is there anything you haven't thought of that you'd like to—

SG:

Not really. I'll probably think of a whole lot of things after you leave and go, "Why didn't we talk about that?"

DS:

Jot them down and we'll come back and do it again.

SG:

A lot of my stuff might not be exactly right compared to if you looked it up in a book. I'm just going by what happened to me at all of those races, and things that we did.

DS:

That's the value in what we're doing. It's your accounts, the first person account, that we're interested in. Over the years, our memories change but you can always look up—

SG:

They do.

DS:

That's why someone's going to sit there and tell me every championship their football team won. I'm kind of going like, "That's on the record somewhere. We want what was that season like for the team members."

SG:

There's things that happen at the dragstrip—I can give you another for instance. I was in the tower, and I was controlling the top of the tower for announcing, and who did what up there. The guy from the front gate calls up there—which we had telephones—he said, "I've got a group of motorcycle guys over here that don't want to pay." I said, "What do you mean, 'don't want to pay?'" "Well, they're bringing a guy a part," and I said, "Yeah, I know he said that he had some guys bringing him a part up—" and he was Lubbock—"for his motorcycle because he had broke a part." He said, "I'm having these guys bring it up." So I walked over to—we had a window in the top of the tower that I could see the front gate. So I walked over to that front gate, I looked out there. They brought the whole club. There wasn't one or two guys, there was like twenty-five or thirty of them out there. I said, "Whoa." I don't if they were Hell's Angels, Banditos or whatever. I said, "I'll tell you what, the guy that needs the part is down at the far end," which he was, he was parked way down there, "let them in. Let them all do it. Tell them where he is down there. Let him all in. Don't argue with them." Warren just opened up the gate and there they all went [imitates motorcycle sounds] all down there at the far end. They went down there. They didn't bother a soul. That guy, I don't he won his bracket that day but they all sat down and was drinking beer. I told old Charles Bickley, I said, "Hop in the official truck here. Let's go down there and visit with those guys. You want to? Maybe you'll get a beer." So we drive down there and hop out. "Hey, what are y'all doing?", "Nothing much. Here, have a beer." We sat there on the back of the pickup and visited with all of them. Super guys. Now, they might not be super when it comes club time or, "Hey, you're on my turf." But they were super guys. Boy, that one motorcycle ran like a bat out of hell. Boy, it ran good. But it was just one of those for instances, you don't argue. If you argue, you're liable to have a big riot on your hands out there. "Let them in." So, we just let them all in. Like I say, I bet you there was twenty-five, thirty of them come in there just to bring this one little transmission part up. But they were super guys. They didn't bother us the whole way down there. Didn't bother me. It was just one of those things that happens at the dragstrip that you go with. We used to go out after—Ernest was a big skeet shooter at one time, shot a lot of skeet. He had a couple of skeet guns in the back of his old Cadillac. As we'd drive around, we'd pick up six pack of empty beer bottles and throw it in the back of the pickup. He says, "I'll meet you down there at the trash dump," which we had a big trash dump at the far end that we'd dump everything into and catch it on—burn it. We'd take those bottles as we get down there, sit on the back of the truck, he'd get his skeet guns out and he'd say, "Throw me one up there." I'd throw one up there. [imitates gunshot] We'd sit out there

for maybe thirty, forty minutes shooting beer bottles with skeet guns, which are not going to bother nobody. Nobody's down there, it's quiet, all the racers have gone. A few of them are still in the pits but it was just part of—just kind of relaxing, getting away from everything. Like I say, I wouldn't trade it for anything. I enjoyed every bit of it. Never regretted going to the dragstrip. It did finally get, at the very end, where it was more of a job than fun. When the fun kind of started dwindling out of it, I started thinking, You know, it's about time for me just to get out of it. By the time, that's when they was having a bunch of changes out there. We just went with the flow and got out of it. A lot of my equipment that I've got out here in the shop and everything was paid from the money that I made—and I didn't make very good money out there. I would save the money, and I'd go buy some new equipment. I'm a woodworker. I do a lot of woodworking. I'll take you out here in a minute and show you all of my stuff. I do a lot of that so a lot of my big equipment, I saved my money, my dragstrip money that I made from working out there. I always—somebody asked me, said, "Did you ever race," and I said, "No, never did." I have gone down the track in some cars before back when Pollard and—his name was Hoyt Starr out of Lubbock. He worked for Pollard Friendly Ford down there, [came] up here. He used to come up here in an old—not an old—it was a new Ford Torino or something. He said, "Have you ever raced," and I said, "No." He says, "Here, here's the keys." He had a Super Stocker or something. You can go a hundred and fifty miles an hour or something like that. It scared the crap out of me. He said, "Here, why don't you run it through." I never raced before in my life. Oh yeah, I drove the official truck down the strip once in a while, but not like a racecar and not counting down the tree at go. I ran that car through. I thought, Nah, maybe so. If I had the money it might be fun. If I don't, no. I always put it to the situation of a guy comes up there in his old family car or a car that he had bought and everything, and makes a racecar out of it then he runs down through there, blows the transmission or blows a rear end, does something, he's out that money. When I leave the dragstrip, I had money. I didn't have to worry about going home and fixing anything. I had money in my pocket so I thought, That's a little bit better than drag racing. Now, the fun and the experience of drag racing isn't there but the fun of having my money when I left was good. And like I say, I didn't make that much money, but it was worth my time to keep doing and it was fun. If it wouldn't have been fun, I wouldn't have done it. I enjoyed it. All the shirts and stuff that—at that time, Ernest owned Boots and Jeans and I was a big fan of recognizing things, finding my people. So, I went up to Boot and Jeans one day and I said, "Ernest, I need some new shirts for the dragstrip.", "Why," and I said, "Well, there wearing white shirts. Says 'Amarillo Dragway' on the back, says 'Official' like what we got here and everything. They just kind of blend in with everybody out there. I don't know where they are." He said, "What do you want?" I said, "I want some hot pink shirts." He says, "You want what?" And I said, "Well,"—I saw some as I came in over there so I went over to the shelf and there was these real bright pink Western shirts. "I need those right there." I said, "You pay for having all the stuff put on it?", "Yeah, I'll take care of all of that." I said, "Okay. Here's what I want. Walter wears a medium. I wear an extra-large. Jerry wears a so-and-so. Mike wears a so-and-so. Charles wears a so-and-so." Got them all, put them on there. It was like light bulbs going off in a

dark room. I could look out there from the tower and see every one of my guys, where they were. And if somebody needed something I'd say, "You see that guy in that pink shirt? Go talk to him." Well, how many pink shirts you see over there? There's only one right there in the group but there's nine million white shirts. So, the pink shirts were kind of a, "Here's old Stan throwing pink shirts on us," but it made the point of, "I can see them." I knew where they were, knew what was going on. Ernest said, "That was kind of a neat deal." I said, "Yeah it worked, didn't it?" People still ask me, they say, "You're the one that had the pink shirts weren't you?" I said, "Yeah, I was." I wouldn't have done it any other way. As I was growing up in school, I worked for an amusement park in the six, seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth grade. I worked for a traveling carnival but we always come back here. The guy that owned it lived here and we would go work Hereford, Dimmitt Hail Center, Olton when they'd have their big festivals and stuff, Dalhart, Dumas, Phillips, Borger, Pampa and stuff. That's where I learned a lot of my what you'd call carnie life of doing showmanship, I would think. I learned it from that guy of taking care of stuff. "You need to repaint that," or, "don't do that, it looks bad." So everything that I kind of put together, I tried to do that as I grew up. And I just kind of waterfalled into the drag racing deal of the flags and paint starting line, that was kind of kicking around, helping out or something. And I've always tried to do that, but I enjoyed working the carnie life too. [Singing] Three shots for a quarter. One thin dime. They're always ready, and they're all red hot. Pickle in the middle and an onion on top [?] [01:42:38]. [Laughter] It was a fun life there. Gosh, I've been around a lot of stuff. As I grew up I played hockey. I was a hockey player for about two, two and a half years.

DS:

Where at?

SG:

Here in Amarillo. We played for the—it was a bunch of guys after the hockey team the Wranglers quit. I learned to skate out here at the Fairgrounds. We played hockey out there just pucking around and everything. Then when the new rink was built, the Wranglers played for a couple years then they quit and there was nobody else playing. So, a bunch of the old, old hockey players, the Wranglers, were still here in town. A bunch of them were from Clovis over at the air base because they're from back east and they come down at the air base—it's airmen. So, we put together kind of a semi—not semi-pro, I can't say semi-pro—it was just a recreational hockey I guess you could put it. We got together and started playing, then we found out there was a team over in Albuquerque that played. "Let's go over there and play," so we go to Albuquerque to play a game and they'd come over here and play a game. Then we found there's also one in Oklahoma City, there's one in Tulsa. There's one down in Houston. There's one in Dallas. So, we all kind of just made it kind of a group. "Okay, there's nothing happening this weekend. Why don't y'all bring the team down and we'll play." So, that's where I got to playing hockey. We were called the Amarillo Broncos at that time. I got a bunch of pictures of us playing hockey.



DS:

What years were those?

SG:

That had to be in the eighties, in the seventies. I don't know exactly. Like I say, I'm not worth a hoot on years.

DS:

Because when Lubbock did have that hockey league that was in this area and Amarillo—had the Cotton Kings—that was '90-ish, somewhere there wasn't it? Or maybe even later, maybe 2000.

SG:

And I couldn't believe—as a matter of fact, I drank coffee out of a coffee cup this morning that says "Lubbock Cotton Kings" on it. I've got one of their coffee cups.

DS:

So y'all were the precursors to all of that.

SG:

We were before that, way before that. Oh yeah.

DS:

Lost history there.

SG:

Yeah. Matter of fact, the very, very first Wrangler hockey team that played out here, all of those guys went to AC [**Amarillo College**] and they were good ones. They were good players. Matter of fact, I can tell you the Russian Olympic team in an exhibition came through Amarillo and our Wranglers beat them.

DS:

Wow.

SG:

And it was an exhibition, it didn't mean a hell of beans, but it happened right out there at the Fairgrounds in the old bull barn. That's when it was.

DS:

Just to clarify, and by "AC" he means Amarillo College.

SG:

Yeah, Amarillo College. That's right. And all them guys, they came up here and that was the whole kicker of those guys coming here was if you come to Amarillo, you got to go to AC. You got to be in college then you can play hockey with us. I can remember all those guy's name. Harley Patterson was the coach. Lyle Hannah was one of the defensemen. Tony DeLicio was the goalie. I can remember those names better than I can remember half of my relatives. Ray Morton. And they were all good players and they taught us a lot. We would go down and play with them—not go down but go out there and play with them when they would practice. We'd give them something to practice against. We weren't that good. There was no way we could beat them guys but they taught us a lot of things. They'd come up and say, "Stan, while your skating have your head down but have your eyes up. It makes you look like you don't know what's coming then you can move and not get hit." I said, "Good thought." But back then I was just—actually, right in the middle of high school. I think I was a senior. So that had to be about '63 or '64. I graduated in '64.

DS:

That's really early.

SG:

Then they moved down and they built the new rink downtown. They didn't have plexiglass walls. They had a chain-link fence. People said, "What?" I said, "Yeah it was chain-link." So, yeah. Hockey's come a long ways in Amarillo. I still go to every game. I enjoy—matter of fact, I was watching it on TV last night. Pittsburgh and Washington Capitals late last night. It was a good game. I enjoyed hockey so I played hockey. Coached a lot of hardball—not hardball—softball. I had two girls and a boy. I coached all of them through t-ball and softball all the way up. One year we won the city championship softball team here, the girls did. And then I played a lot of softball. So, I've been there. I pitch a lot of washers. You pitch washers?

DS:

No, but I know what you're talking about.

SG:

I've got a son-in-law that just won the state championship washer pitching down at San Angelo. They had just the Texas State Championship Washer Pitching deal down there. Sixty-eight teams showed up to pitch down there and Rick, which is my son-in-law, and his partner, Bob, which works for my daughter—she's head of the post office here—works for my daughter there at the post office, both of them went down there and won that sucker. The came out tops and that was the Texas State Washer Pitching Championship. I thought, Oh man, I know somebody. "Gee whiz, I know them," which was good. My brother, Dick, just got through—he collects Crayola's.

People say, "Collects Crayola's?" Well, everybody collects something and he collects Crayola's. So, I told him, I said, "You know—" he's got tons and tons. They're old Crayola's in old boxes, 1920s, 1930s. He's got a big collection of them. I told him, I said, "One of these days you need—somebody needs to know about you." He says, "Oh yeah," and I said, "Yeah." So I got a hold of Texas Country Reporter two years ago. I said—no, first it was something else. First it was the—trying to think back—it was the Houston Chronicle, wrote an article about him on collecting Crayola's. I said, "Dick, you need to—somebody needs to know more about that than just him." So I tried two years to get Texas Country Reporter to do a story on him and I finally got it done, and I didn't tell him. That was the bad part about it. It wasn't bad. I didn't tell him that they were going to do it. He called me one day—which I visit with him at least once a week—he called me one day and he says, "I got a bone to pick with you." I said, "Oh yeah, what?" He said, "Somebody from Texas Country Reporter called me. You know anything about that?", "Uhn-um. I don't know a thing about that. Why?", "Well, they're going to come down and they're going to do a big story on me and they're going to put it on Texas Country Reporter.", "No. Really?" He said, "Yeah. Now, turn around, grab your bible, and put your hand on it and tell me you don't know nothing about it." I said, "Yup, I've been trying for two years to get them to do that." He says, "You're the culprit. You're the one. You know is payback is hell?" I said, "Yeah you're right." But Texas Country Reporter did a big interview with him, and he was on—he's been on it two or three times now. What he was at, RND or something like that, it's another country station. They ran it for quite a few times on their station as kind of a reporter. Then they did a big article here in the newspaper. He was on the front page of the newspaper and everything. I said, "See, you're important now." He says, "Yeah." Down there in Kerrville it's not very big anyway. He said, "Everybody knows me as the Crayola Man, and I said, "That's good." He says, "Yeah everywhere I go people say, 'You're the Crayola Man.'" I said, "Yeah. You know what I'm going to do? I'm going to call him and tell him, 'I know who the next mayor of Kerrville's going to be.'" He says, "You better not," and I said, "Yeah, I think Dick Gwyn ought to be the mayor of Kerrville."

DS:

I'm trying to think, somebody at work forwarded me that information. That's the serendipity of all of this. You're telling me this thing like, somebody at work forwarded me this information not knowing the tie to you. So there's two reasons for me to go touch base with your brother, Dick. You got to put in a good word and get me—

SG:

I'm not going to tell him you're coming. [Laughter] I'm not going to tell him. I don't know, you might have his number. Did James mention anything to you about it?

DS:

I don't know. I don't recall.

SG:

Because I wrote down everything that James told me about you. I got your phone number and stuff. He said he's going to come give you an interview. Now, I haven't made the whole thing here yet. James say, "You might accidentally make the Hall of Fame but you need to write your autobiography about drag racing." I had a tough time getting through English and I can't spell worth a crap. I can talk like crazy. I'm not very good at writing either. I can't write very good so I'd have to get somebody to do all that for me. My wife, she can do it but there's times that she's not in that good of health to do it and everything. So James keeps telling me, "You got that done yet?" Dick calls me, "You got that done yet?", "No I don't." Dick will call me all the time, "Who was so-and-so so-and-so that—you know who he is. You ran that certain certain car." I'm going, "That's Fenner Tubbs, I think, out of Lubbock.", "Yeah that's who it was. That's who it was, I know it is. I'll write that down." We had a lot of people come up here and race from Lubbock and Plainview. Who was it that used to come up here and race? He was an old man. What was his name? Race day came up here first in a '57 Model Ford Station wagon. James Butler, I think is his name. Just an old cotton farmer down there somewhere. I don't know where he's actually from. His wife was—[whispering] boy, she was big. That car would come up here and take all of the money. It was just an old, grubby car, had the exhaust coming out the fenders on the top side of it, and you'd never guess that car would run like it did. Yeah, James Butler. Then he came back and raced a Ford—not Ford but a Willis, had an old Willis Coupe. He had to get it high enough so his wife could crawl under there and change—it had a Halliburton rear end in it where you can pop off the—undo the cap and you could change gears in it. Real neat deal. He would make her crawl under there and change the gears. He had to have the—she said, "You're going to have to get a car"—they had the car up high enough to where she could climb under there. I don't think they're alive either. They were old then. So, it was cool. Vance Hunt that used to come out of Dallas-Fort Worth area. Bobby Langley. They'd all come up here and race. Vance Hunt would just blow the doors off of everybody. Vance Hunt was coming, everybody'd go watch him. Bobby Langley would come up here. Benny Osbourne out of Tulsa would come over here and race. And this was back when those guys were top in their field. I've seen a lot of them and didn't know them personally, but just knew them. I could walk up and say, "I'm Stanley Gwyn from Amarillo Dragway.", "You sure are. I remember you up there doing all the—yeah, I remember you. Yeah, you're the one that cut me off because the gas was leaking." I said, "Yeah, you're right." It's just one of those—I can remember just tons of things that just keep rolling back of the memories of all of the stuff that we did and everything. It was fun. We used to—after a race we used to go out to the Big Texas and eat. All the racers would end up at the Big Texan to eat. I think it was Gene Snow and Kenny Bernstein would flip to see who paid the bill for everybody. They'd take silver dollars—they give away silver dollars out there at the big Texas. The would give those silver dollars—they'd get two silver dollars then they'd flip, "Odd or even?" They'd flip to see who paid for everybody's meal that was with the group. That might be five or six hundred dollars, but to them guys, that was nothing. Kenny Bernstein, I remember



going to Austin and watching him race. Caught fire one time in a track down there. You have a break on a Fuel car—it's a rod that sticks up, you pull it and it will start stopping you. His car was on fire and he couldn't stop. He had to grab that handle and it just burned the heck out of his hand. By the time we got down there to him, he was out of the car. They said, "Are you all right?" and he said, "Only thing that's hurting is this hand, this arm." They took and they pulled that glove off and it just pulled all his skin off. I thought, It's just like a baked potato basically. I mean, he had a fireproof glove on, but it just cooked it inside. It was just the top layer of skin. It didn't pull it off to the bone. I wouldn't be surprised if he can't show you that hand and see that it's got scars on it from that fire. Boy, that was a long time ago.

DS:

Hopefully I'll get an interview with him. James is working on that.

SG:

With Kenny?

DS:

Um-hm.

SG:

He's a super guy. He was a lot of fun. He's the one—he started out in owning bars.

DS:

I didn't know that. I used to go to the—

SG:

The Chelsea Street Pub.

DS:

That was in the mall. We all went to that pub. Had no idea.

SG:

He's the one that started that. What was it—I'm trying to—this might not be true to fact either—there's a lot of stuff you might need to edit out and find out the truth about it. At one time, he sold pantyhose. Yeah, he was a salesman for some pantyhose company. And a good one. I mean, he sold tons of it. But he's been around. He's a super guy. Matter of fact, I think—I don't know if it's his first wife—I shouldn't be telling all that. His first wife, I think, was from here. She might still be from here. I think her name was Holly, I believe. I'm not real sure. But that's just hearsay down the line. But yeah, he came up here and raced a lot. Roger Kester and Grady Bryan were funny car racers out of Weatherford, Texas. They told me a story one time, after you get it

tuned up—Weatherford wasn't very big. The town Sonic was at the other end of town. They'd get that funny car tuned up, ready to go and everything. They wanted to make sure it ran good so they'd all hold up in it, fire it up, run down Main Street, hot lap the Sonic, pick up a couple of Cokes and run back to meet the sheriff at their building, at their office or their mechanic shop where the funny car was. He said they did that lots of times. He said, "Every time we get back, there would be there sheriff waiting on us going, 'Hey guys, you don't need to be doing that.'" So, it's another one of those drag racing funnies. A lot of fun.

DS:

I've really enjoyed this morning but I need to go get something to eat then I'm going to talk to Carroll Caudle.

SG:

Caudle?

DS:

Caudle.

SG:

Carroll Caudle. You'll like him. He is sharp. He is one of the number one engine builders in this area at the time. Him and James Gibson were—have you interviewed James?

DS:

Um-hm.

SG:

Boy, he's got a lot of nostalgia stuff. Super guy. Carroll Caudle is just as good. He's neat too. He just likes to go fast, he said. C'mon, I'll get—turn that—

DS:

Here, mind putting your brother's—

*[End of Recording]*