SCHROEDER INTERVIEW NO. 4

MARCUS E. JOHNSON: Today is July 14, 1998. I’m in the office of Coach Dutch Schroeder, former Baylor Baseball Coach, in room 214 of Marrs McLean Gym. My name is Marcus Johnson, and today is the fourth interview we have had together. Coach, when we ended last tape, we talked about your last several teams at Baylor—your last several baseball teams and how changes in the athletic department moving to more full-time coaches, you have decided to step down and resume a full-time teaching career within the P. E. department. How was that transition? What was it like going from coaching one year—you’ve been coaching for, I believe, most of your adult life and now going into just teaching full-time. What was that like?

E. E. “DUTCH” SCHROEDER: It was different. I had always taught three-fourths of the time in the P.E. Department, but I taught full-time baseball coach. So I guess I had a job and three quarters. There was less for me to do. However, when the year that I was no longer coaching, my son, who was a baseball player, was playing at Southwestern for Jimmy Mallon, whom I’ve spoken about before. And so it freed me up to go watch my son during his freshman year at Southwestern, and they had a good ball club. In fact, if I remember right, they probably won more against Baylor than Baylor won against them.
But it was a time when the other schools had an opportunity to beat Baylor since we were still in that period when it was more advantageous for a good baseball player to go to a junior college or a small college so that they could sign if the opportunity came. But I continued my courses in ball and bat sports and took up more racket sports to complete my schedule with the P. E. Department.

JOHNSON: What was your full-time load considered—four or five classes?

SCHROEDER: Sometimes it was seven or eight. I was always one who felt like if we needed to teach a course and there was nobody available, then one of us had to teach it. But it began to put more emphasis on the physical education role that I had to play at Baylor.

JOHNSON: Did you enjoy that?

SCHROEDER: Oh yes. I had been a leader in the state physical education association from the time that they began to separate themselves from other teachers in the Texas State Teachers Association. Physical education, because of the great numbers of teachers that we had who had various and sundry responsibilities in health, physical education, recreation, dance, driving, safety—felt like we needed a separate convention in order to cover all of the various aspects that we needed covered in a convention. It was in 1956 that the physical education group had their first separate convention. And it was all brought about because of the department at Baylor University. Dr. Lloyd Russell was our chairman then. Dr. Ted Powers was the assistant director of the department. Bill Menefee, who was an assistant basketball coach, and who also taught in the physical education department like I later did when I got him on board. Dr. Russell did not get to go to the meeting that was held in '55, but Dr. Powers and Bill Menefee volunteered for Dr. Russell to be the first chairman or convention manager and to hold the first convention in Waco, Texas.

JOHNSON: They knew he was—wanted to be involved in everything. He might as well
be involved in that.

SCHROEDER: Well, somebody needed to step up and do it. And so Baylor people did it, and Waco got to hold the first state convention. And it was the only one we have ever held because we have not been big enough to hold a convention. But that year, ’56, I came, attended, and was sold that this was going to be a solid organization to help physical education, health, and recreation people in the state. The second year, ’57, is when it was held in Austin. It is always held the first weekend in December. And it was at that particular meeting that—of course, I was working in Austin so it was easy for me to attend that one—that I learned of the death of Jelly SoRelle, the baseball coach, and then I subsequently came on board at Baylor. But it was my work in the physical education meetings that probably helped me to get the job through Dr. Russell because he was happy that I was very interested in those things. So from then on, I was one of the so-called leaders of the association involved in all aspects.

JOHNSON: Dutch, in the 1960s as you come on board at Baylor, what were some of the roles or input in the Texas Association? Also, did Baylor continue to have a big role after it started?

SCHROEDER: We did. Several of our people were presidents. Dr. Russell had been a president. Dr. Kappes, who was a member of our health staff here, was a president. And Dr. Powers became the president in the early seventies, ’71 or it probably was 1970—’70, ’71, ’72. We were all involved. Our entire staff was, and so I, along with the staff, was involved with it. We started one of the very big things that has happened. Dr. Russell was the dreamer. We were workers primarily. He dreamed of a foundation for the association to set money aside in order to accumulate something to fall back on. That money is now—and it is a tremendous amount of money for an association, but not because of the contributions of the members. We started out trying to get twenty-five dollars a piece a year for this, and it built up. That money is all used for scholarships
now for prospective students into the physical education, health, recreation, safety, or driver education fields. But the money that has been really accumulated has come through the Jump Rope for Heart.

JOHNSON: I’ve heard of that.

SCHROEDER: All of the elementary schools get involved, and you get sponsors, and this money has gone into the Texas Foundation for Health, Physical Education, and Recreation.

JOHNSON: One thing I noticed in the 1960s that you were also a part of at Baylor was that you began the Dutch Schroeder Baseball Camps, and also that you held it out at Baylor Camp, which Dr. Russell had helped to get started.

SCHROEDER: As I’ve mentioned before, Dr. Russell was a dreamer. He dreamed of camping. He was able to get some funds from Baylor University through Dr. White, who was then our president, to buy some land on the North Bosque. Each of us had to take a role in this with a lot of rocky land, mesquite trees. But he was a dreamer. He had a shoestring to work off of, but we began to put together a camp in which he wanted to hold general camps but also to have baseball camps. To have a baseball camp, you have to have baseball fields, so we went into the business of building some fields. And we built three Little League size fields and one ninety foot base field to take care of our potential baseball campers. We spent a couple of years working on this, and it took some time to build some nice green infields, and the outfields were fairly green. We opened our camps in ’64. Another member of our staff was Burnie Battles, who ran the regular camps. And I ran the baseball camps. Some summers we would run all summer with various age groups. I was fortunate to use some of my baseball players who were here in Waco to help form a good staff. It was not called the Dutch Schroeder Camp though, but it was called the Baylor Baseball Camps. It was not the way baseball camps are run today when they are called the coaches names, and the coach receives a lot of fringe
benefits from it. At that time, the money all went to Baylor University to offset the expenses at the camp. There was not that much money to go around as there is today. But we did continue to have the camps through 1973. But in 1970, Little League Incorporated out of Williamsport, Pennsylvania, approached Baylor University and Waco, Texas, to be the hub of the Little League program in the state of Texas. We could not be the hub for the entire South because there was already a place in Florida that was available, but Little League felt that with the many programs and the size of Texas, we needed to have some hub that all Little League could look to. And Waco, being the heart, the center of Texas, we were—

JOHNSON: Easy to get to travelwise for tournaments.

SCHROEDER: Uh-huh, that’s right. It brought everybody some equal distances instead of going from Amarillo to Brownsville or some sort El Paso to Port Arthur. The leaders from Williamsport came down. Mr. McGovern, who was the head of the board of directors, and Mr. Creighton Hale—Dr. Creighton Hale—who really ran the program, came and worked out some sort of a situation that would allow them to come here. Dr. Powers and I were selected by Dr. Reynolds, who was then the Chief Operating Officer at Baylor—

JOHNSON: The number two guy.

SCHROEDER: —the number two man, to write a proposal—which we did—that Dr. Reynolds put his approval on. The plans were made so that Baylor University could have a baseball field in this complex that would be used by the Little Leagues in the summer for their over thirteen-year-olds to have camp on. I was to run the Little League camps for them. Now this put me in direct competition with the Baylor Baseball Camp.

JOHNSON: With yourself.

SCHROEDER: But in 1973 when we finally had everything in place, we held both camps, but it was very obvious that the Baylor Camp was on its way out because most
students—most young people came to the one that the Little League held. It was a very successful in terms of numbers. We had to use other fields besides those that were at the Little League complex. We had two fields on Minglewood Bowl at each end. We couldn’t play at but one at a time, but we could practice at another place. We used those and had to use some other fields on what is now the music building, the McCrary—

JOHNSON:  Glennis McCrary.

SCHROEDER:  —Building. We had to put fields all around to cover the number of students that we had. But Little League came in the with the idea that they could—if Baylor would let them use the land—and I think what we wrote into it was a twenty year contract in which there would be no fee for their use of the land. It was land that Baylor had received through the urban renewal programs. But it was going to allow the Little League to have three playoff fields for their summer tournaments. They were sixty-foot bases. Then they were to have a small ninety-foot field with three hundred foot—I’m sorry—yes, three hundred foot outfield fence from center, right, and left, and then were to have a larger field that would be used by Baylor. Unfortunately, the Little League financial program did not bring in the funds that were going to be necessary to do all of the building. The first three had to be the Little League fields so they could hold their state tournament here. The ninety foot fields—the one field that was only going to have a very small grandstand was nothing but clearing the land and putting down the infield and putting out the fence. And so the cost was very small, and it was built. The other field that was going to have to be made into a college field with grandstands and all, there was not enough funds to build it. There became a rupture in the relationships, but most of us understood the problems Little League was having. It came over girls being involved in the Little League program.

JOHNSON:  How?

SCHROEDER:  Little League opted to fight girls on the boys’ teams. There were three
cases in which Little League had to spend lots of their funds to defend that this was a boys’ program. While Little League neither won nor lost, the individuals who challenged the rule were allowed to play, but no others were allowed to come in and play on the boys’ teams. But there were a couple of years where we even had girls on the boys’ teams at our state tournament here. But it was good in that it began the Little League Softball program for girls. So there was a program now developed for—(knock at door) JOHNSON: For that. Okay, let me turn the tape off here. (pause in recording) All right we’re back.

SCHROEDER: So what came out of the lawsuits was good for girls’ athletics, and you know how big it is today when every girl can play like every boy from age six on through their high school days.

JOHNSON: Yeah, yeah.

SCHROEDER: But it meant putting on hold the Baylor baseball field. And I remember those players who came to Baylor, and one of the selling points that Mickey Sullivan used was we’re going to have this brand new field down by the river. And they were finishing up their careers at Baylor, and these were some years that he had some very good teams. And they were not particularly griping over it, but they were dissatisfied that Baylor had not come through with giving them this new field to play on. What happened out of this was that Baylor accepted the challenge to get the money to build the Baylor baseball field. And the Baylor Lettermen’s Association was approached to see what they might do to help raise the money. What did happen was that the Lettermen’s Association put up the first twelve thousand dollars to raise the field. Now as my memory recalls, the fields were only going to cost us between thirty-five and forty thousand, because that’s what Rick Butler had built the McLennan Community College field for—somewhere between thirty and forty thousand. And he had a very nice field. It was not big on grandstands, but the field itself was an exceptionally well-built field. The
Lettermen’s Association then guaranteed that they would give at least one thousand dollars a year to pay off what Baylor was going to have to pay to finish the field in a reasonable length of time. Remembering that the Lettermen’s Association’s funds are only the membership dues that the players—former players pay each year. At that time, each player only paid ten dollars a year to be a member of the Baylor Bear Association. The field was built, and as it was being finished, the president of the Lettermen’s Association was named Ralph Lee, who had played baseball in the middle 1930s. Mr. Lee did not want to saddle the Lettermen’s Association with even this thousand dollars a year if someone else didn’t come forth. Now what the Lettermen had hoped was that the field would be named the Teddy Lyons Field. Teddy Lyons was a member of the only Baylor team to win outright the Southwest Conference in 1924.

JOHNSON: Twenty-four or ’26?
SCHROEDER: Twenty-four.
JOHNSON: Okay, I thought it was ’26.
SCHROEDER: Now I’m confused. I believe it was ’23. Twenty-three now that—it was 1923 because the football teams were champions in ’22 and ’24 and the baseball team in ’23. I know because those three teams were honored at homecoming more than anybody else because they were the only big winners.
JOHNSON: There was nobody else you could honor.
SCHROEDER: There were no other big champions. But Ted Lyons had stepped straight from the Baylor campus to the Chicago White Sox, where he pitched for about twenty-five years. He is in the Baseball Hall of Fame and is the most famous baseball player to ever come through our program. And it was felt fitting that we name the field Lyons Field. But Mr. Lee knew a man named Ferrell, Monroe Ferrell, who had been very fortunate in building concrete pipes in the Houston area. Mr. Ferrell had played freshman athletics at Baylor but had never been a letterman but was very sold on Baylor
University, making nice contributions from time to time. Mr. Lee talked Mr. Ferrell into making a $65,000 contribution to Baylor athletics to finish the field and do some other things that were sorely needed in the midseventies when we were still trying to come out of the doldrums that had occurred during the late sixties and early seventies. And now you know why the field is named Ferrell Field. Later—

JOHNSON: Did they give money for the Ferrell Center, too?

SCHROEDER: —later, we were able to get many millions from the Ferrell—Mr. Ferrell had died, but his family gave some seven to nine million to build the Ferrell Center.

JOHNSON: I’d say his original $65,000 gift wouldn’t even buy the floor at the Ferrell Center.

SCHROEDER: That’s true, but it got Mr. Ferrell and his family interested in doing things for Baylor athletics. So it turned out to be a very, very good thing.

JOHNSON: So when was this gift given, and when was Ferrell Field built?

SCHROEDER: In 1977.

JOHNSON: So right as our teams were going to the College World Series, they were getting a new ballpark.

SCHROEDER: That’s the way it occurred.

JOHNSON: Were there any bigger designs or plans for Ferrell Field, because Baylor has always been known to have a nice playing surface? There is no problem with our turf, but you know, I’ve seen high school baseball stadiums nicer as far as grandstands and locker room facilities. Was there a plan to build a bigger ballpark? Did the money run out or what?

SCHROEDER: No, it was to be a very simple field. It was not a case of money because I’m sure that field didn’t cost more than forty thousand. We were given lots of help over there by the Army National Guard, who did all of the groundwork as a part of their training on weekends.
JOHNSON: Yeah.

SCHROEDER: But as for the field itself, it was all ready in level condition from the preparatory groundwork. It was a matter of going in and building fences, putting in an infield. The first field was not as good as teams really like. We got lots of comments about soft places, hard places, and there had to be a lot of work on it. But in the past great number of years, the field has been one of the better playing surfaces in the country. Our stands were strictly just stands.

JOHNSON: Just aluminum—aluminum stands.

SCHROEDER: No plans to upgrade the park in any way. Most ballparks looked about like ours did. What happened was the University of Texas Interscholastic League is a part of the University of Texas system. They were able to talk the University of Texas Budget Committee into helping build a very, very nice field. Of course, it had Astroturf on it. It had stands for about seven thousand people because the state baseball tournament had begun to look like the state high school basketball tournament, where towns would go to Austin to represent their teams. And there was a great amount of interest in the high school baseball program. Of course Texas University, being one of the premiere baseball programs and universities, always had great crowds. I remember a crowd at the University of Texas when they played at Clark Field in the late 1940s in which the stands were full, and the biggest news of the day was the governor had to sit on the fence in order to see the game.

JOHNSON: Nobody was going to get up and give him their seat.

SCHROEDER: Well, I guess that was it. Plans were not made for him to have a seat. I guess when he got there, it was at a point when they couldn’t do anything.

JOHNSON: So was that where Disch-Falk Field came from—was the 1970s, the need for a varsity field?

SCHROEDER: It came in the early seventies when they built Disch-Falk Field. It was
after—it was about the time ours was finished here.

JOHNSON: Yeah, and, of course, once they—once UT built Disch-Falk, A&M was not
going to let that stand, so they built Olsen Field in competition.

SCHROEDER: Well, it’s unfortunate that Mr. Olsen lives in central Texas, right here in
Clifton. But he was an Aggie who was fortunate enough to go up and play with the New
York Yankees at a time when the salaries were not large, but he made great investments.
And he has been so good to A&M athletics. He is a typical Aggie. He loves A&M. He
gives lots of money. And when Texas had this great artificial surface, A&M, with their
type of school, has got to come in with something that’s live. They put down an
excellent field.

JOHNSON: What about—one thing I saw a little news clipping on is you started the
tradition of batgirls at Baylor. What about that?

SCHROEDER: When you’re not going good, you’ve got to try to find some things to
create an interest. As we talked about earlier, as the sixties ended it was hard to put on a
competitive program when junior colleges could entice the better players because of the
rules that they played under.

JOHNSON: Just one second. Let me flip the tape real fast.

(tape 1, side 1 ends; side 2 begins)

JOHNSON: This is side two of the first tape of the fourth interview with Coach Dutch
Schroeder. When I flipped the tape, we were talking about the batgirls and how you
were—in the late sixties, early seventies, you were looking for something to kind of give
a boost to the program because it was struggling.

SCHROEDER: The first thing I did was look to the new Kansas City owner, Mr. Ewing
Kaufman, who outfitted his team in the greatest colors of all, green and gold. They were
Kansas City at the time. They’re now in Oakland. But he changed the uniform into a
material different from flannel, which had been baseball’s trademark since day one when
Abner Doubleday invented the game, I guess. But he made them bright. He changed the lettering to become artistic instead of having plain block letters. He shortened the pants, and I did the same thing. I copied. I’m not a dreamer. I looked for ideas that have all ready come about. I put ours in green uniforms—solid green. Of course, we were teased when we went out to play because not only did I change the uniform, I changed the shoes. Everybody wore black shoes with metal cleats.

JOHNSON: Before hand, they were white.

SCHROEDER: No. We changed to white. We used the first white shoes in our conference, and, of course, this brought about the hoots and the hollers. But it created an interest when our play did not create interest. I read where some teams were using batgirls on the West Coast. And so in 1972, I put out a call for girls that might be interested in a new program—Baylor Bat Girls. I want to tell you that I didn’t get many takers. No one had ever heard of anything. I think we—the team and I decided we would use four. I think we had only six people to put in applications for it. The players questioned the girls about their knowledge of baseball and why they wanted to be a part of the men’s program. You have to remember there were no girl’s sports at this time. Consequently, when we went places, our girls took a nice teasing also. But the players from the other teams, they were somewhat envious of what was going on. The girls did not go on trips with us on the bus. Sometimes they would get together and get in a car and come and be a part of the program out of the city. The school did not have money for us to do much with the bat girl program. But the second year that we had batgirls—in ’73—we had about fifty applications. So it was catching on, and the players decided we had better double our number. I think we had eight that year. And I let them select them. The girls then took on more duties other than just going to pickup bats. Coach Sullivan continued the use of the bat girls, gave them other names—Diamond Darlings or something.
JOHNSON: Diamond Girls.

SCHROEDER: Diamond Girls. Any—they still use those today, giving them a wide number of duties—they work the concession stands. We didn’t even have a concession stand, so we didn’t have to do that. But they chased the balls and obviously look a lot prettier than our baseball players.

JOHNSON: Wasn’t your daughter one of the first?

SCHROEDER: My daughter was an applicant the first time. It’s a good thing the players selected her. Some of them wouldn’t be playing I guess.

JOHNSON: Wasn’t your son, back in the sixties, a batboy, too?

SCHROEDER: My son was the batboy for a great number of years until he went to high school and became a player. And then he was too old to be a part of our program. That’s why it was easy to have batgirls then.

JOHNSON: Yeah, so you had a daughter who needed to do it.

SCHROEDER: I guess that was it.

JOHNSON: During this time in the early seventies, Congress passed Title IX legislation mandating that there had to be equality between male and female in collegiate—in sports period—high school, collegiate, et cetera. As a coach in the early seventies and also being involved in the physical education department, how did this begin to change what you did or collegiate athletics or physical education?

SCHROEDER: Baylor had had a program for girls through our physical education department. Dr. Russell, while he was alive, made available some funds, not scholarship funds, but some funds for our girls to participate against other universities. Most of the time those were called playdays in which three or four universities would bring somewhere between ten and twenty-five girls to a central sight where they would participate in a great number of sport activities like volleyball and basketball and softball. Perhaps even some individual sports, but there was no team play as such where there was
to be a champion. But it gave girls opportunities to have competitive sports against other college girls. It evolved into Baylor’s having a girls’ basketball team, a girls’ volleyball team, a girls’ softball team, and a girls’ track team. Miss Olga Fallen was given as part of her teaching duties the responsibility of looking after these teams. They began to play some individual games against these other schools who also had teams. Now the big schools did not go for this. Texas and A&M didn’t have them. The outstanding schools were places like Wayland University, Stephen F. Austin, which was probably a private school at the time. They are now a state university. It seems that the private schools were more interested in the girls’ athletics than the state schools. Miss Fallen’s players competed very strongly against the others. North Texas had some teams. Tarleton at the time played. There were several others that they would play. When Miss Fallen’s teams would have Stephen F. Austin or Wayland in here to play, Baylor University students came to watch. We would have McLean Gym full. This holds twenty-five hundred people in the stands at that time. So it was very obvious that we were a school that was interested in girls’ athletics, and a lot of good girl athletes came to us. At the time, North Texas was the only school—I’m sorry, not North Texas—the other school in Denton, Texas Women’s University, had a small program of financial aid for girls who would come and play. The organization AIAW, the—I can’t come up with the name of it right now—Interscholastic Athletics for Women is what it was. AI—American—anyway, that’s what it was—AIAW. And there was a Texas—TAIAW. When this came along, here in the Waco area, we had an outstanding high school athlete named Susie Snider. Susie was an outstanding basketball player and an outstanding track/field person in both the shot put, the discus, and the high jump—three things. Texas Women’s University offered her a scholarship. Her father was a friend of mine. His son had played Little League baseball with my son. Called me and said, “Dutch, what can I do to keep her here where we can watch her?” Of course, Miss Fallen was delighted that she wanted to come out here because it would strengthen her basketball program and track program.
But there was no financial aid available through athletics. A man named Bill Bradley, who was Susie’s high school coach and also the principal of the high school out there—he may even have been the superintendent in the Robinson area—sat down with me, and we worked out a program—(telephone rings). When Mr. Bradley and I were through discussing it, we went to the financial aid officer at Baylor University, who was Mr. Arch Hunt at the time, to tell him of the problem we had: that this girl needed to come to Baylor University. She could live at home if he could find the kind of financial aid, either in the form of grants or loans, for her to come to Baylor University. Mr. Hunt was able to find the means for here to come over here. In fact, he was able to get her a loan that she was going to be able to invest some of it and draw a little interest over the year. Mr. Hunt did a wonderful job in helping to bring this girl to Baylor University. It just happens though that Mr. Ed Horner, who was the head of the faculty athletic committee at the time, overheard Mr. Snider telling at a church function that his daughter was going to come to Baylor, and that she had scholarship aid. So Mr. Horner wanted to know how she was going to get financial aid for athletics. And after Mr. Snider explained it to Mr. Horner how Mr. Hunt had worked it out through his department, Mr. Horner went to the athletic board and talked about the need to put this girl on an athletic scholarship, that her talent was such that she ought to get financial aid not from the general fund but from athletics. After discussions it was decided that she was going to be offered a full athletic scholarship—the very first one at Baylor University.

JOHNSON: And what year was this?

SCHROEDER: This was in the summer of 1973. So it’s in the books. She came over here. She was our first woman athlete, and it was several years before we gave another woman any financial aid. But she certainly proved worth what Baylor could do for her. She was a junior AAU champion in the shot put, the discus, and the high jump. She went to foreign countries to represent the United States. In the Southwest—it wasn’t the
Southwest Conference then because women did not have it, but in our area, she was the outstanding shot-putter and discus-thrower and high-jumper. In basketball she led Baylor to some great seasons.

JOHNSON: As far as in your profession of physical education, how was the change in Title IX in the seventies?

SCHROEDER: We did not see a lot of change in Title IX’s intention to advance women athletics. But it did bring us some girls into our department who wanted to someday be coaches, so it did give us a different kind of population in our program. Previously, girls went out to teach physical education. Now with athletics becoming more prominent, it became a possibility that girls would coach. Up to this time, most of the coaches were men coaches. Miss Fallen was a little exception, but it was because of the way our program developed through our women’s physical education division where Miss Fallen was a teacher. But our girls—when athletes began to see that we had a program to be proud of, we were able to get a number of top women athletes.

JOHNSON: Another thing, I think—were you involved in Parents’ Weekend in any way? Did you have a significant involvement, or was that just something I saw that was mind boggling.

SCHROEDER: Well, I have been fortunate to have lots of people who come back just to see me or who would bring their children back to see me at Parents’ Weekend, especially if they were bringing someone as a part of—to being a freshman at Baylor. I used to be—have a nice part. The Chamber of Commerce is the group that has always put this on, and I have always been a firm supporter of the Chamber of Commerce for the many do-good things that they have done on this campus. They started the athletic hall of fame of which I am a consultant at this time. They also kept the scoreboard for me. We didn’t have an electronic scoreboard at Dutton Street Park. But the Chamber always furnished pledges for me, and when the pledges were through pledging—
JOHNSON: Totally voluntary of course.

SCHROEDER: —yes, very voluntary, but when the pledges were members, they always furnished me people. They also furnished someone who hung up flags over the posts in the outfield, and they looked after—these were flags of the other schools in our conference, and they looked after them. So the Chamber was always tied close to me, and I supported their events as well as them supporting things that I was involved in.

Parents’ Weekend is a big thing at Baylor and has been for many years. It gives the parents an opportunity to meet the teachers. I have reduced those in recent times as my role as the host at the Lettermen’s Lounge took so much of my time on game days, and Parents’ Weekends have always been around a football game.

JOHNSON: Let’s shift over to your current project and love, the Baylor Lettermen’s Association. Tell me how you got involved in that. What were the beginnings of this for you?

SCHROEDER: When I left Baylor, I knew that the Lettermen’s Association, which was called the B Association at the time, met at homecoming and sat around. Often it was just sit around with Cokes. Occasionally, we would have a meal involved with it.

JOHNSON: Of course, now it would be Dr. Pepper.

SCHROEDER: Dr. Pepper. I’m glad you straightened me out on that one. But it was a very loose-knit organization. Usually if a person was the president, they stayed president for four or five years. But it was an opportunity to come back. I know that President McCall sort of poo-pooed them by saying, “Just a bunch of guys who years later became greater players than they ever were when they were here at Baylor.” But it gives them an opportunity to enrich themselves by telling about their athletic feats on field. Mr. Froggy Coleman was the person who kept this together. He had been a part of the athletic department at Baylor. I’m not sure just what mandates he had to keep this group alive and coming back to Baylor at homecoming. In the 1960s, after I had become a member
of this staff, a man named Bennie Strickland, who had been a three or four sport star at Baylor, was a member of the athletic hall of fame, retired, moved back to Waco, did not have a lot to do, began to try to organize the association by setting up some dues each year. As I recall it was ten dollars—(telephone rings)—Mr. Strickland was able to develop what he called The Five Year Plan in which we pledged just ten dollars a year for five years in the hope to develop some sort of a treasury in which we could do something. Now prior to this, the Lettermen’s Association was doing something. A group of local Waco lettermen got together each year and put on what was called Merchants’ Night. Merchants’ Night was the opportunity for Waco merchants to buy at a very economical rate, like twenty-five cents a ticket, to give to their customers to come watch a Baylor freshmen football game. And it would either be the night that we played the Texas team one year or the A&M fish the next year. But this was the opportunity for the lettermen to get out and sell these economical tickets to local merchants. We turned over all of the money that we got to the Baylor Athletic Department. I especially want to point out two people, Stanley Williams, who is with the Kendrick Tire Company, and Agnew Duckworth, who was with Texas—oh, I hope I get this right—Texas Life Insurance Company.

JOHNSON: I think that’s right.

SCHROEDER: Mr. Duckworth was very involved with youth baseball in this town, knew lots of people and sold lots of these tickets, but those two were not the only ones. But they were the primary leaders in making some money for the Baylor athletic department. You have to understand that Baylor had a hard time making enough money through the football program to finance the six sports teams that we had. We did not have women’s athletics. We had football, basketball, baseball, track, tennis, and golf. There were a couple of years when somebody put enough political clout against the president to say we had to have a swimming team and a fencing team, but that was not
very often. The other monies that were given to the athletic department were raised through rodeos in August each year. The rodeo was the project of the Bear Club. Now this is not the B Association. The Bear Club had some former lettermen in it, but it was primarily Waco people who were interested in Baylor and Baylor athletics. They put on a rodeo, and all of the proceeds from the rodeo went to the Baylor athletic department. We did not get enough TV ball games to enhance our budget through TV money. Football college games were still very sparse on the TV, too. But Mr. Strickland’s project of five years-fifty dollars got us off to a start where we began to get a few people to join just to say they were a part of the Lettermen’s Association. But the lettermen had a dreamer. His name was George Berry Graves, Sr. George Berry Graves, Sr. felt that if Baylor lettermen had a special place to come back to, they would all want to be a part, and they would help build the facility. He was not given much encouragement by President McCall, who was not widely known for his great enthusiasm for athletics. But Mr. Graves wanted to try the waters. I was not a particularly good friend of Mr. Graves. I was the baseball coach. I was a former letterman. I did attend the homecoming day meetings that they would have. But Mr. Graves’s good friend Mr. Barney Burch, a local car dealer, asked me to visit with them regarding the possibility of a building on the campus for former lettermen. Mr. Burch and Mr. Graves and myself drove around the Baylor campus, which was much smaller in those days. It did not extend to the river with all of the urban renewal lands that we have. It was finally decided that we would like to put this building next to Penland Hall. Now there is a great big tree that would have been in the way if Dutton Street hadn’t been straightened out and put through to Fourth Street. Today there, the road hooks around the tree. We would have built this building right beside this tree beside Penland Hall. And we did get the permission. That entire building was going to cost seventy-five thousand dollars at the time. It would be an open parlor-type room. There was an intention to build four coaches’ offices where the head coaches of football, basketball, baseball, and track could have an office on campus where athletes
would have access to them. This would be in addition to the office they had under the stadium. A brochure was developed. A picture was—a color picture was made. We were ready to try to raise the seventy-five thousand dollars. What they wanted me to do—

JOHNSON: Just one second, let me flip the tape here.

(tape 1 ends; tape 2 begins)

JOHNSON: This is tape two of the fourth interview with Coach Dutch Schroeder on July 14, 1998. When we flipped the tape, we were talking about the new—a proposed Lettermen’s Association building that’s going to be built next to Penland Hall and holding different coaches’ offices. You had printed brochures. Seventy-five thousand dollars would be the required cost to build it. Then ya’ll are now in the process of raising that money.

SCHROEDER: I went on the road for the Lettermen’s Association that summer and visited some ex lettermen who were pointed out to me could possibly help us raise the money to build this building in a very short length of time. And I met with some good responses. A doctor named Stoney Cotten pledged me ten thousand dollars as the first person I went to see, but I guess that was understood since he was the first one that Mr. Graves knew that he would come through with that. A man named Hank Dickerson, a real estate tycoon, made a nice contribution. And I began to go visit different ones from San Angelo, the Dallas area, and the Houston area.

JOHNSON: This was the midsixties?

SCHROEDER: This was in 1970. Nineteen seventy is when I went on the road to do this. I was able to pickup some money, but what happened then that summer changed the way that things went on. (telephone rings) Mr. Graves called me when I came in from a road trip and said he needed to meet with me because our plans were changing for the better. He had talked to Dr. Reynolds, who was the chief executive officer at Baylor and
just under the president, and he had decided that the lettermen could have space under the stadium to build their room and would make it available before ball games so that the lettermen could come in to visit and then go out to the ball games. So with these new plans, we had to change our plans to raise money because we had to develop some new architectural plans. Mr. Aaron Thomas, a local architect, then went to work on them. When he came back, it looked like it was going to cost us around three hundred thousand. Well, that was a lot more money than I had thought I was going to have to try to raise. But things worked out well. The lettermen in the field were happy that the place would be under the stadium. And it would give them a place to come before the games, at the halves, and meet after the game. I was able to pick up some more thousand dollar pledges, which is what we were trying to get were pledges for a thousand dollars to get started. We were not moving as fast as Mr. Graves thought we ought to, but we were moving forward. By the spring of 1972, everything was in place. The building was being built. Instead of trying to find three hundred thousand, we became our own contractor. We went out to sublet all the jobs—the electrical, the concrete, the plumbing, the tile, the roofing. When we were finished in the summer of ’72, it only cost us a little over a hundred thousand—probably in the neighborhood of $125,000 to $130,000, but not even $150,000. Mr. Graves had been able to get lots of things at very reasonable rates for us. We did not have the building completely pledged, but Dr. Reynolds said that Baylor would take up the slack and that we could pay them back as the money came in. When the building was built and we opened for the first time in the fall of 1972, we had a new coach. His name was Grant Teaff. Mr. Teaff used that facility to its fullest. He used it to show athletes to have his meetings in there. It was a showplace. It was something that all lettermen could be proud—all of Baylor could be proud of. When we opened it, we did not have any idea of serving meals as such. We did have a very small kitchen in there, but we did not have meals before the games. I remember towards the end of the first year somebody wanted to know why we didn’t have at least cookies. So
we began to serve Cokes. Ah sorry, that word is Dr. Pepper. And we served Dr. Peppers and cookies to the people that came in at the half. But it did turn out to be a very interesting situation because we found that Baylor people other than athletes wanted to come and see what was happening behind that door. It caused us to need to have some entrance policies that the board of directors did draw up to carry out. George Berry Graves and Mr. Burch were the primary dreamers to get this going. Mr. Burch died before we ever opened the facility. Mr. Graves lived for many, many years. He has only been dead about five as I recall but lived to see. Well, he’s been dead six years because after he died, we were able to build an extension on, and we named it the George Berry Graves Room. What happened about this time was one of the best things that could have happened for Baylor and the Lettermen’s Association. A man named Bunk Bradley was retired by the Equitable Life Insurance Company in Houston, Texas. He had been the general manager for that area of a very large company, The Equitable. But Mr. Bradley had had a heart problem, and they did not want a man with his heart problem working for them anymore—gave him a good retirement package and he moved back to his hometown of Waco, Texas. He needed something to do, and did we find something for him to do. Because I was a full-time teacher as well as being the baseball coach at the time, I did not have time to go on the road to raise any more money. We asked Mr. Bradley to go on the road and try to raise money. When he would make trips, he would call on lettermen in the area he was in and began to finish—

JOHNSON: Was he a letterman himself?

SCHROEDER: Mr. Bradley was a two sport letterman. He was a basketball player lettering in ’33, ’34, and ’35. I believe those years. He was also a tennis letterman all three years that he was eligible for the varsity. So he has six letters at Baylor University. We’re so fortunate that he came at just that time. Not only did we put him on the road to raise money, we made him the next president of the Lettermen’s Association. Not only
did we make him the next president, we made him the next two presidents. He served
two years in a row because he had the time to get things moving as we began to open this
facility to lettermen. When he was through being the president, we made him the
executive director, and every president since that time has made him the executive
director. He is our permanent executive director, and at age eighty-six, he is still going
strong.

JOHNSON: So how, especially after the 1974 championship season—how did that
change things for the Lettermen’s Association? What has been the development since
then and your continued involvement in that?

SCHROEDER: In ’74, when we came out of nowhere to win the championship, it was
really the time we had to evaluate our attendance policies because we began to have some
people come to the games. And they hear about our room. They want to come in, and
because we had a fairly lax policy at the time, lettermen brought in as many of their
friends as they could bring in. And it was then that we had to make some decisions about
how many guests a letterman could bring in. And we set it at four, and that was a pretty
liberal number.

JOHNSON: And that included family?

SCHROEDER: Well, family—that’s just you. They don’t count. Guests are people
outside your family. At homecoming and against either Texas or A&M, I could expect
the Lettermen’s Lounge to be full. Somewhere between four hundred and five hundred
people would always be there. We’ve had to make one more change in our policy, and
that is that you could only have two guests because we have so many lettermen come in
now. They want to bring their guests to show off what we have in there. We have a big-
screen television that we’ve had for—well, since we went to the Peach Bowl. I guess that
was ’78 or ’79.

JOHNSON: Seventy-nine. Seventy-nine.
SCHROEDER: Seventy-nine, and I saw a giant television in an Atlanta store, came home and said, “That’s what we’ve got to have.” And we’ve had that same one—let me knock on wood—since that time without a minute’s problem. We are now in the process of changing and trying to put in three of those on our front wall so that more people can see the angle of the screen. But we are continuously looking for changes because we now are able to—we have about 725 dues-paying members now. That is not a great percentage since we have about twenty-two hundred lettermen that are still living. So we only have about 33 percent. We live for the day when we can have fifty. I don’t know where I’ll put them all if they come to games.

JOHNSON: I think that raises a bigger point when we talk about lettermen involvement and the growth of Baylor athletics. How do you see—Baylor always generally has been looked at as a small-time athletic program that has big-time aspirations. You know, throughout the eighties and during Grant Teaff’s tenure the football team was really able to kind of carry Baylor athletics along. And, of course, if anyone thinks of lettermen, the first thing they think of is football. In the 1980s, how did the Lettermen’s Association—and even in the 1990s—how is the Lettermen’s Association really changing and looking to help Baylor really boost or augment in its athletic program? Because the more letter—of course, that’s to me a good indication of how healthy an athletic program is that your old lettermen are enthusiastically involved in what’s going on.

SCHROEDER: As I mentioned earlier, in 1991, Mr. Graves died, and we had an opportunity to take in a little more space. There was a renovation of the north end zone in which when doing so, one of the gates into the stadium had to be closed in order for the ramp to be built up for handicapped people. We now had to be handicapped accessible. And with this, some space was left vacant, and the athletic department gave it to the Lettermen’s Association. We developed this space and called it the George Berry Graves Room. This enabled us to have lots more people come in because we were
overflowing at the homecoming and the Texas and the A&M ball games. It’s allowed more lettermen to become comfortable in this situation, become more interested. The lettermen we have now know that for us to succeed in the Big 12, we have got to help in raising money to augment the programs. We were fully dependent upon football getting all the money for the whole program. It obviously cannot do that. We are going to have to have some other funds. This is why the Baylor Bear Club, the financial arm of the athletic department—

JOHNSON: The Baylor Bear Foundation.

SCHROEDER: It is now called the foundation, which reminds me I did not mention earlier—there was a Bear Club and a B Association. Many thought of those as the same thing. They were not. The association was lettermen, and that’s why we changed our name to the Lettermen’s Association. The Bear Club has since changed their name to foundation since they need to be an organization to raise money, hopefully in the amounts that will allow money to be sent back and raise interest to use for Baylor athletics. I hope we get to that point. But our lettermen who are interested, we raised our number of board members from eight to twelve because we now have lots more projects to help with. We have over the years raised our dues in five dollar increments until we got to twenty-five. Then we raised to thirty. We’re now at thirty-five. We would prefer not to raise our dues because we feel like that a lot of our younger people might not join. However, we have a five year program for people as they graduate. The first year is free. The second year is five dollars. The third year is ten dollars. The fourth year is twenty dollars. The fifth year we finally ask you to pay a full due. So we hope that the general increase will help you to help our young people to become a part of this. We do not want to be a financial arm of the department, but we want to help. In the past, we would use the monies that we had accumulated through our membership dues to help the programs with monies that were not in their budget. As I told you earlier, we gave twelve thousand
dollars to start the baseball field. Later, we gave about twelve thousand dollars—ten thousand I believe—to build some facilities around the baseball field—an equipment room. We helped them to buy batting cages and build permanent cages for hitting practice. We helped the track program with the fancy sponge landings for high jumps and pole vaults. We helped the basketball program many years ago to buy photographic equipment—things that are not in their budget. We have never particularly helped the football program because they seem to be able to get the monies they need for their program. We’ve helped the tennis team with many projects. The volleyball team, we built their dressing facilities in McLean Gym for them. But what monies we had available over, we have put into the various sports. Now after the money was raised for covering the costs of the initial building, people kept wanting to be a part of it and continued to make thousand dollar contributions, knowing their name was going to be put on the wall of the original contributors to the building of the room. We raised about seventy-five thousand dollars more than it cost us to build the building. That money was invested through Baylor programs. It grew over a hundred thousand. At one time, to finish off the Ferrell Center, Dr. Reynolds needed fifty thousand dollars. He asked us if he could have fifty thousand of this endowment fund that we had for the Lettermen’s Association. It was one of those things where you had no choice in your answer.

JOHNSON: Yeah, if the president asks, you will do it.

SCHROEDER: He gave. He was the one who gave us the go ahead when we didn’t have a penny to start our room. We were at a position to help him, and it was easy to say Yes, here’s fifty thousand. He was able to get a matching grant. What he needed was the fifty thousand to get a matching grant from a Tulsa foundation.

JOHNSON: Yeah, the Mabee Foundation is what I think it was.

SCHROEDER: That’s what it was—the Mabee Foundation. With it—

JOHNSON: M-a-b-e-e.
SCHROEDER: Right, M-a-b-e-e. With it, he was able to pay off the Ferrell Center when it was built. So we helped to do that. It was unfortunate for our association that we had a bunch of young turks in there at the time who wanted to change the facility. It was now twenty-eight years old. I’m sorry, eighteen years old. And they thought it was time to do some renovating. As the host for the room, I was so happy with what we had. We had long shag carpet, and we had begun to feed barbecue sandwiches and chips and dips. And I could hide lots of Fritos and potato chips in this long shag and didn’t have to just clean it immediately after there were messes. But it had passed its day of being the carpet of the present. It was a carpet of the past, and our young people wanted us to make changes. And the president and the president-elect ran a little campaign to get us to spend some money, and it was agreed that they could spend up to twenty-five thousand dollars of what was left of our now about fifty-five thousand dollars. We felt like we had to keep enough money in case all of the air conditioners would go out at one time, we could quickly make a change. It changed the carpet to a flat carpet. It shows dirt every time you walk on it, but it is pretty. We changed all the coverings of the upholstered material, did some painting, and they spent the twenty-five thousand dollars. It was well worth it. It happened at a time when the next year we got the area where we have the George Berry Graves Room. It meant running another campaign to raise the money. Our bid for the room was ninety thousand. Our goal was a hundred thousand for the ten thousand to buy more chairs and tables to go into the facility. And I can tell you that Baylor Lettermen pledged the money, and we were able to get into the room debt-free when we walked in there. So, knowing that we’ve got to raise money, Baylor Lettermen, when called upon, will help us to raise the money.

JOHNSON: Is there, again, plans to, you know, increase the involvement of lettermen in the athletic department itself? And also, you know, again, you want to have as many members of the association as possible. I’m just thinking, you know, the modern
environment of collegiate athletics, you’ve got to have that.

SCHROEDER: Well, I’m going to say a lot of things here, and I don’t mind being quoted.

JOHNSON: Yeah, well, and also you could use this—how do you evaluate Baylor athletics? What do you see the future? You’ve been part of this for almost fifty years now, and what’s—what are your thoughts on that?

SCHROEDER: Tom Stanton was a Baylor letterman. He was a Baylor letterman in baseball. He played for me.

JOHNSON: So he was baseball and basketball.

SCHROEDER: He was a basketball and baseball player. Tom Stanton is a go-getter. He believes in himself. He believes in Baylor. He believes in Baylor athletics. He has done more now than I would have thought he could do in such a short period of time. We have never had such a building program. We have never had more interest in the program. We have some sports that compete well on the national scene. You may call them minor sports, but we now are able to compete in the minor sports, primarily in the women’s minor sports because as people know, our women’s programs—because of Title IX, we have had to give them more scholarships than we give the men’s programs because women have never been able to accept that football is different. If football was allowed to be completely different and then have equal scholarships, facilities, salaries, then I could see good reason because I have never been against women’s athletics. I have been for them. I just don’t see them getting the emphasis that they’re getting, where men’s sports, which help to build athletics, are being downgraded to help build up something else. But our minor sports, if that’s the name for them, have got a good chance. Our women’s soccer program, our women’s tennis program, I just believe they’ve got good chances. Our men’s tennis program has come along greatly. I just see us competing. I hope that our other sports can come along. Baseball had a good opportunity this year.
Our ex-lettermen are behind these sports. They attend events. They call and find out what’s going on in them. They want to know. Tom Stanton would like more contributions from the Lettermen’s Association. He would like for us to up our dues, take in more money, have more of our monies available to help him with his programs, but he has backed off when he sees that it probably is not a good time to do that. And our goal is to get involvement over high-priced involvement. I see the way he is reorganizing the department, that there may be a time when we will fall under the athletic development division that is headed up by Jim Huey. Jim Huey uses our facility for a lot of things, and our facility is now in more use than it’s ever been before. More teams are using it. More of our support groups are using it, and we are happy that it is there and available. Of course, the north end zone has a big space that is known more for Bear Foundation—the third floor. But it’s—our facility is a little different than that that they have because they have to bring in seating all over the place while we have some upholstery seating in half of our area. We cannot hold quite as many as they do, but I can serve a dinner for about three hundred.

JOHNSON: Real quick, your official role with the Lettermen’s Association is host.
You’re the—

SCHROEDER: I am called a permanent executive vice president, and the description of that role is I am the host.

JOHNSON: And how long have you been a permanent executive vice president?
SCHROEDER: During the term of Judge Charles Barrow—he was the dean of the Baylor School of Law, was a tennis letterman—when he was selected to be our president, he saw that I was—one of my roles was to oversee who comes into the Lettermen’s Lounge, to keep the children from running around and making a general nuisance of what’s going on—that in trying to do so, I had created some animosity with some of the lettermen who felt that their children should be treated different than other people’s
children. And they should be treated differently than other lettermen, but that my role was to follow the policies that had been set down by the board. Mr. Barrow said, “Dutch, you’re not even an officer in this association. We just named you the host. To give you more clout, I’m going to recommend that you be the executive vice president.” Now actually, he talked this over with Bunk Bradley, and the two of them together—

JOHNSON: What year was this?

SCHROEDER: You know, I can’t remember when.

JOHNSON: Seventies, eighties?

SCHROEDER: It was more than ten years ago.

JOHNSON: Yeah. So your duties now on game day are to just kind of watch over everything and make sure everything flows right.

SCHROEDER: I open probably five, six hours before the game starts. I do not solely do it by myself now. We have another permanent vice president named Lee Harrington, and his role is to assist myself and Bunk Bradley in the roles that we carry out. He is a valuable assistant. In fact, he’s not my assistant; he’s my partner. He helps get the room ready. He oversees it. He now oversees the front door and the people that come in. He helps after the game is over. We share the duties there.

JOHNSON: Let me flip the tape over real fast.

(tape 2, side 1 ends; side 2 begins)

JOHNSON: This is side two of the second tape of the fourth interview with Coach Dutch Schroeder on July 14, 1998. We were talking about your official duties with the Lettermen’s Association and also just this general state of Baylor athletics. How, you know, you see in the future maybe the Lettermen’s Association might fall under the arm of the athletic development office. Do you have any other views on Baylor athletics coming up?

SCHROEDER: Yes. I think the Lettermen will resist being put under the development,
but it may be the thing that’s happening in college athletics today. There are some athletic departments who started their lettermen’s associations. Many of them do not call them lettermen’s associations. They are just participants’ groups because the term lettermen designates a specific role that a person reached. They played enough to letter. Many schools are trying to get more out of players who did not letter, and we have that same problem here. If we had a group that didn’t have the word lettermen in it, where we could bring in anybody who ever participated in the sport, we would have a lot more—especially financial aid for athletics. And the group in the foundation must find funds from any place they can get it with the great amounts that they have in their projects. So I see that things are changing, and life is change. Just how much we’re going to change, it’s to be seen. It will probably be a number of years when Bunk and I have moved on from our leadership roles in the association. I don’t—I would be amiss if I did not speak about Gary Luft. Gary Luft became our president—was one of the young turks I was speaking about earlier who is a great idea man—comes up with the neatest ideas for us to follow through with. He has been our treasurer permanent ever since he left our role as the president of the association. It has been some ten, twelve years also. So we’ve been fortunate that I have been working with some great leadership.

JOHNSON: Any other final thoughts on your role as the Lettermen’s Association or involvement in that role in Baylor athletics?

SCHROEDER: One of the things that we encourage is small group get-togethers—groups that had a common cause here at Baylor—something they can cling to, a reason to come back, friends to reminisce with. Gary Luft had one of the first meetings of this type when he wanted to honor his tennis coach. Dr. Herb Schwetman was the tennis coach here from 1960 to 1972. Dr. Schwetman was the chair of the physics department, a full-time job. But because Baylor did not have any other person that they would pay, he was also the tennis coach. In the early 1960s, his prominent role in the Texas State Tennis
Association and their junior program, he was able to encourage a great number of what was then called the Junior Davis Cup players to come play for Baylor. In the sixties, he had very strong teams. One year, ’66 or ’67, he missed out on a championship by one point. He had defeated Texas, but because he had lost some other single games along, Texas was able to beat him by one. He had some outstanding tennis players for that time, Gary Luft being one of them. And Gary wanted to give honor to Dr. Schwetman, who had retired. He brought together a great number of the players who had played for Dr. Schwetman. Many of these were not active in the Lettermen’s Association, but their association with Baylor tennis and Dr. Schwetman caused many students to come back who did not ordinarily come back. Since then, we’ve had a great number come together. This past fall, the freshman team of 1969—a young man named Bobby Henderson—not young anymore, yeah, he’s still young—wanted to get his old freshman team together. We worked hard to help him come up with all the names and addresses of the people that were on that freshman team. And he was able to get together a great number of those players to come back, many of whom had not lettered, who didn’t even finish at Baylor, but came back because that was a place of support that they could have. That turned out good. Three years ago, Bill Bevil, who played baseball for me in the midsixties—was one of the pitchers on our co-championship team in ’66—got all of the players from the 1960s—the baseball players—to come together for an intersquad game and a meal and just a general get-together. He got over seventy baseball players to come back for that sixties reunion. Several times we’ve had individual teams or eras, like a three year era, come together to play. Not to play, but to meet, eat, dine, do something. There’s a group called the Late Forties-Early Fifties. A man named Red Donaldson is a great organizer, and he calls the people from all sports, and on three different occasions he has brought them together, and he’s planning to do one this fall. Now, if they do not come at homecoming—these extra groups cannot come at homecoming because there is no place for them to meet. The Lettermen’s Lounge is taken up with other functions. And I will
talk about honored teams in a few minutes. But there are groups that have talked about coming together. For instance, the 1945 group, the first year Baylor took up athletics after dropping athletics. A man named Ken Hubbard died about eight years ago, but he was in the process of organizing all those who were still living at that time. I don’t know if that one will ever come off. I was pledged to help him, but since he’s dead, it’s kind of hard to push along. But other groups, like small groups from golf or tennis. Track has a champion in David Alexander. David Alexander ran on the 1960 conference championship team, the 1962 conference track championship team. There are times when he gets the ‘60 team together. There are times when he gets the ’62 and ’63 team together. Sometimes he gets all three of them together. When we opened the Patterson-Hart Complex—

JOHNSON: Hart-Patterson.

SCHROEDER: Hart-Patterson, but he calls it the Patterson-Hart because he ran under Patterson.

JOHNSON: Patterson was his coach.

SCHROEDER: He got all of the players who ran for Jack Patterson together. He is a strong organizer. I spent this past weekend with David Alexander in Longview, Texas. He is planning another get together. He just—he has such a love for Baylor and Baylor track that he wants to get his old teammates together again. They visit one another. The night before I was there, David Bennett, from down here at George West, Texas—was a hurdler with David. David was a four forty man. Visited in David’s home. So there is a camaraderie of lettermen that get together from time to time. And these get-togethers help to extend this kind of a situation. I’m often asked, When you’re in my area, Dutch, you’ve got to come spend the night with me. And I fool them. Sometimes I do.

JOHNSON: “Dutch, really wasn’t being serious.”

SCHROEDER: But when he asked me to something, I went to a wedding in Shreveport
this weekend. That is why I stayed in Longview with David. Kathryn Sayle, who played tennis here for us, who I think really helped us to get the girls’ tennis program off. She was a four year number one player for us. Now her record is not great. Who did she have to play every time?

JOHNSON: University of Texas.

SCHROEDER: The number ones from every other school, but it helped our others to pick up victories. It helped Dave Luedtke begin to develop his program. She got married, but people don’t understand why I was close to Kathryn. Her father played baseball for me back in ’58 and ’59. And so I had this opportunity to meet with Richard and a couple of the players that played with him. But I wanted to speak a little bit about the role of the Lettermen’s Association in honoring previous athletic teams at homecoming. The Alumni Association, from time to time, would honor an athletic team at homecoming. In the early days of the Lettermen’s Association, there were not many teams who were outstanding. The ’22 and ’24 football teams had been conference champions. The ’23 baseball team—the ’32 basketball team had won the conference championship.

JOHNSON: The Bill Henderson squad.

SCHROEDER: The basketball teams in ’46, ’48, ’49, and ’50 had won or tied for the conference championship. Nothing during the fifties. In 1960, Patterson won a track championship. He did the same in ’62 and ’63. However, in ’48, the baseball team went to the Final Eight in NCAA baseball. Baylor played in their first bowl game in the fall of ’48. And then we played in several bowl games in the early ’50s. Fifty-one, we played in the Orange Bowl, ’54 in a Gator Bowl. Then we played in several others—the Sugar Bowl—

JOHNSON: The Sugar Bowl was in ’57, wasn’t it?

SCHROEDER: Well, it was the ’56 team in January 1, 1957. So there were some teams
to honor, but the ’22, ’23, ’24 teams were honored and honored and honored because they were about all we could honor. But they did not always have a group to honor like that. One year they honored the homecoming queens, and that’s a neat thing to do also. But because the alumni had not honored anybody in a while, in ’86, the Lettermen’s Association accepted the responsibility for naming a team to be honored. And since ’86, we have done this. We have tried to honor teams who have won championships, who have played in bowl games, those things that have been outstanding. Last year, our honored teams were the ’76 and ’77 girls’ basketball teams who played in the Final Eight of the AIAW Basketball Championships. And we honored the 1957 golf team, which was the champion team in the conference that year.

JOHNSON: And there were some little known, maybe some little known facts of Baylor athletic history that people would not know unless the Lettermen’s Association highlighted that.

SCHROEDER: We had honored the 1966 golf champions. The only two times we’ve won were ’57 and ’66. In 1986, when we honored the baseball ’66 team which had tied for the championship. So we tried to honor them. Usually, after twenty years, we try to bring them back to remind students that there was a good year twenty years ago. This year, 1998, is the fiftieth anniversary of Baylor’s greatest athletic year. The basketball team was number two in the nation, runner-up to Kentucky in the NCAA Finals. The baseball team did not win the conference but was selected to go when Texas opted not to go. The baseball team was runner-up to USC in the Western Playoffs, and USC defeated Yale, who had won the Eastern Playoffs, and so the Baylor team was either third or fourth, where however you look at it. They were the runner-up to the national champion. The football team, the ’48 football team, played in the Dixie Bowl of 1948. Thus, we had three outstanding teams in ’48. And we’re honoring all of those this year. Plus, we’re honoring all of the other athletes who played in ’48. These are the golf, the tennis, the
track, and would you believe it, we also had fencing and swimming.

JOHNSON: Fencing and swimming. You actually honored a fencing team.

SCHROEDER: Yes.

JOHNSON: Well, they were a sport.

SCHROEDER: They were a sport.

JOHNSON: Real quick, we have a little bit of tape left here. How, in the last ten years, has the involvement of women changed in the Lettermen’s Association?

SCHROEDER: There was opposition to women joining as long as they played in the AIAW and were not under the auspices of the athletic department. When the athletic department finally took over the women’s athletic program and moved the coach from her role as a teacher in the physical education department—gave her an office in the athletic department complex—it was then understood that girls were no longer emblem winners but were lettermen, that the association had to accept them. It was no longer to be an all men’s association. The bylaws of the association state that those who are lettered by the faculty athletic council shall be invited to membership in the Lettermen’s Association. So as soon as the first girl’s name went on there and a letter was sent from the faculty athletic council to the association, women were invited to belong. It has been hard for women to become involved because they see themselves surrounded by so many men. But we have a number of women who pay their dues. We have a woman who is on the board at all times. I think that within the next ten years, we’ll see a woman president because more are showing an interest in taking an active role in the Lettermen’s Association.

JOHNSON: Yeah, it is something that just takes time to kind of change the image among women athletes.

SCHROEDER: We have the same problem with blacks. Blacks are prone to not come, not be a part. We’ve been blessed with some real leadership among some blacks. Walter
Abercrombie has been a president. James Jarmon has been a member of our board. Ronnie Allen has been a member of our board several times. These people serviced in a number of ways. We’re real happy with them. But blacks don’t see many blacks when they come into the Letterman’s Lounge. We’re happy as to see them as anybody else, and we have gone out of our way to make them as comfortable as can be because we know that with the number of black athletes, the future of the association needs the black athlete, the woman athlete, and whatever else comes along that are lettermen at Baylor University.

JOHNSON: And also, especially, since new sports have come along in the last ten, fifteen years, you have new types of lettermen that you’ve never had before.

SCHROEDER: Well, we have the soccers. We’ve got a lot of volleyball now because the women’s volleyball has started with that—when they had women to the NCAA. So, we’re getting opportunities for more and more women to be a part, and more are. We have two who have even joined and made them—that’s wrong. We now have four because the two young twins have joined and have lifetime memberships in our association. So there is a greater interest. It’s just going to take more time.

JOHNSON: Yeah, yeah. Anything you would like to rap up with your teaching career? How that has gone.

SCHROEDER: Teaching. That’s what I became—a teacher. And a coach is just the best teacher there is, so I was happy to be a coach also. Teaching’s been a wonderful life, and I’m going to step down from teaching now. I still am going to be a part of Baylor’s full-time staff through May of ’99, but I primarily do field experience work now with my students. And I have about fifty-five to sixty of those a year. That takes all of my time and gives me a full load, but if somebody asks me to come back and teach a baseball or a softball or a badminton or a tennis course, I’d probably jump right back in there.

JOHNSON: Yeah, any final thoughts?
SCHROEDER: Any final thoughts—Baylor has been a great place. I wish everybody could have as wonderful a time at Baylor as I have had. I am hoping that Baylor will continue to be the kind of school I see it: standing for something, keeping some policies that will let us be known as being a special school and not just being any run-of-the-mill school. I hope we will continue to put some emphasis on athletics, and that Baylor will be able to compete and get those kind of students, both in our academic and in our athletic world, that we will be proud of and who will want to come back and be a part of the Baylor family.

JOHNSON: All right. Well, this concludes our lengthy interviews. It’s been a fun process, and I’ve learned a lot just sitting here listening to you. Hopefully this will be a contribution for Baylor history in years to come. Thank you.

SCHROEDER: Thank you.

(end of interview)
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