

3-25-2015

Interview with Ben Paxton

Ben Paxton

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**LOUISE PETTUS ARCHIVES AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS
ORAL HISTORY PROJECT**

**Interview #215
PAXTON, Ben**

PAXTON, Ben

Head Cross Country and Track Coach

Interviewed: March 25, 2015

Interviewer: Jenna Kasmarik

Index by: Michelle Dubert-Bellrichard

Length: 00:10:58

Abstract: In his March 25, 2015 interview with Jenna Kasmarik, Ben Paxton shares his opinions on Title IX's influence on athletics at Winthrop, specifically in track. This interview was conducted for inclusion into the Louise Pettus Archives and Special Collections Oral History Program.

Keywords: Track, Title IX, athletics, sports, football, swimming, recruitment

Interview Session (March 25, 2015): Digital File

Time Keywords

00:00:00 *Start of Interview*/Interviewer's Introduction

00:00:10 *Question:* First year at Winthrop? *Answer:* There was nothing here. BP had to go to the P.E. department to borrow hurdles. BP came here in 1993. Trained on grass the first three years.

00:01:05 *Question:* Recruiting? *Answer:* Without a facility it makes it hard, but Winthrop is a great school. The school sold itself. Came from Old Dominion in Virginia and brought in his top athlete. It was easier to get distant runners early on.

00:02:00 *Question:* You recruited from South Carolina? *Answer:* Yes. South Carolina, Florida, Virginia, and Georgia.

00:02:22 *Question:* What was the program like at first? *Answer:* BP came here in January 1993. BP to continue the cross country team. It was up to BP to create a complete track and field team.

00:03:34 *Question:* How long have you been here and why? *Answer:* 22 years. BP thought about leaving, but realized that the quality of life was better at Winthrop.

- 00:03:55 *Question:* How do you feel about Title IX? *Answer:* Works as a concept, but BP disagrees with it when a men's program is dropped. AIAW existed for women's track when BP first started.
- 00:04:50 *Question:* What else would you change? *Answer:* Track has such a disparity. Track scholarships were set up as a mirror to football. Title IX gives women more opportunities.
- 00:05:55 *Question;* Addition of sports affected track? *Answer:* Addition of soccer and lacrosse. There's not a lot of money. Winthrop is 60% women.
- 00:06:55 *Question:* Title IX responsible for sports added? *Answer:* Yes. Winthrop has to marry student makeup.
- 00:07:35 *Question:* One head coach for both squads? *Answer:* About 1982 when NCAA incorporated women's track, men's coaches said they would do both. BP speculates they offered to do this to save money.
- 00:09:05 *Question:* If you could choose? *Answer:* BP likes coaching both.
- 00:09:25 **[no question]** Title IX has helped a lot of sports. BP could see adding swimming and diving.
- 00:09:50 *Question:* What would be the repercussions of adding football? *Answer:* They would cut men's track. If Winthrop was in another state, BP wouldn't say that.
- 00:10:58 *End of interview*