## TED SAVAGE

This conversation between Ted Savage and Walter Langford is being taped in Ted's office at Harris Stowe College in St. Louis on July 22, 1987.

WL: Ted, where is Venice, Illinois? In southern Illinois?

TS: No, Venice is right across the river. You go across the McKinley Bridge, that's it.

WL: So this is your bailiwick.

TS: Right.

WL: Tell me how you got started in baseball.

TS: Well, I guess it's the usual story. I played baseball all my life.

I started out playing in Venice. Then my parents moved to East St. Louis.

That's where I finished my grade school and my high school. And naturally

I played baseball in high school. And from there I guess I went into college,

at Lincoln College in Jeffers, Missouri. We did not have a baseball team.

Actually, I signed to play professional baseball after I went into the Service.

I had spent two years in college and two years in the service, and then I signed out of the service to play baseball. And so that meant that for two years I didn't play baseball while I was in college. Philadelphia came along and offered me a modest bonus and I signed as soon as I got out of the Service.

WL: Where did you go in the minors?

TS: My first stop was Williamsport, PA, and then Buffalo. And then Philadelphia.

WL: Those were Philadelphia farm teams?

TS: Yeah.

WL: So, what average did you hit in Buffalo?

TS: I think it was around .325 or .326 or something like that. In Buffalo, that's where I led the league in six departments that year.

WL: Gee whiz! What were they? Some of them, anyway.

TS: Stolen bases, total base hits, runs scored, and I led the league in batting average. And maybe double and triples. And I think as the leadoff man I hit 20-some home runs.

WL: Well, that was mighty cause for the Phillies looking forward to having you up there with them.

TS: Yes, I thought I had a good shot, but John Quinn, I think, was the General Manager there and ....

WL: Mauch was the manager?

TS: Yeah, Mauch was the manager. Mr. Quinn and I didn't get along very well, because in A ball he had promised me that I would get a raise if I had a good year. I hit .280 or something in A ball my first year, and I called him and asked for a modest raise, and he would not give it to me. And he told me that if I made the Triple A team I would get a raise. I made the team and called him again and asked him for it, and he wouldn't give it to me. Then, he told me that if I was doing well by the middle of that year with Buffalo I would get a raise. About the middle at Buffalo I was hitting about .340, and I didn't get it. Then he said if I finished up well, I would get a raise and that he would call me to the Big Leagues. So after the minor league was over he's call me up. Well, like I said, I wound up leading the league in six departments. I called him and asked him for a modest raise again and he said no. And then didn't he wantant call me up, either. And then I remember that in the winter time he called and asked why I would not sign my contract. And I told him it was because he had made me some promises. So we argued and bickered back and forth, and eventually I got a good contract. But apparently he didn't like

about .279.

June, and Mauch came to me and put me on the bench and said I looked tired.

And I just played against lefthanders from then on. And I wound up hitting

that. I remember that in my first year with Philly I was third in hitting in

WL: Meah, you had a pretty good year. .266 it says here.

TS: .266? And then they traded me the next year to Pittsburgh.

WL: Uh, huh. You went over there with Pancho Herrera for Don Hoak. And found Danny Murtaugh as manager. How was he?

TS: I think Danny was one of the best and fairest managers I ever played for.

WL: Everybody tells me that.

TS: Right, and he was one heck of a goy.

WL: Who were some of the teammates you found there in Pittsburgh?

TS: Pittsburgh? Oh, everybody was there in those days, like Roberto Peña - not Peña, Clemente. I think Bill Virdon was there, Al McBean, Bob Veale. Bailey was playing third base. I think Skinner was even still there at the time. This was a beautiful bunch of guys and we had a good time.

WL: Mazeroski was still there.

WL:

TS: Yeah, Bill Mazeroski was still there. Virdon was, Stargell was there.

TS: Stargell, yeah. He was just coming up.

WL: Bob Friend was pitching, and Al McBean had a good year, about his only good year somehow.

TS: Yeah, I remember that year very well, because when Philly traded me I went to Puerto Rico to play that winter, and I had a good year down there. But in the process of having the good year down there I contracted the illness called undulant fever. It came from drinking unpasteurized milk. It didn't really get me down until about the second month of the season. I was just tremendously sick and lost about 35-40 pounds. Finally they put me in the hospital and there they didn't know what I had. I stayed in the hospital a long, long time because they didn't know what I had. The outlook was very bleak at the time, and the reason they said it took so long to find out what I had because they hadn't had a case of undulant fever coming from drinking unpasteurized milk in the States for such a long time. So, by the time I got my strength back, the season was over. I didn't have a good year there at all.

WL: Then in '64 you came over to the Cardinals.

TS: Yeah, I came up to them. I think I went back to the minors ...

WL: Yeah, '64 was a year off. You went back to the minors with what team?

TS: I think that was Tulsa. And I had a good year with Tulsa and got called up by the Cardinals. And I just played sparingly, part-time, and then they got rid of me next year also. I got traded quite a bit.

WL: Well, that happends to a lot of people. Then that's when you went to the Cubs.

TS: Right. The great Leo Durocher.

WL: How was Leo?

TS: Leo and I didn't get along at all.

WL: Leo and a lot of people flidn't get along at all.

TS: I don't know why we didn't get along, bur we just didn't hit it off.

\*\*\* I played quite a bit for the Cubs. I think my best performance was pinch hitting. When I look back on that year with Leo, it was a year that was total confusion, as far as I was concerned. And it seems that everything I did for Leo was wrong. Nothing I could do right. And so it was just a bad experience altogether.

WL: You stayed in Chicago part of the next season, but after a few games you went to the Dodgers.

TS: Yes, they traded me to the Dodgers.

WL: And Alston was probably the reverse of Durocher.

TS: Right. Completely the opposite, and one of the greatest managers that has ever been in the game, as far as I'm concerned. Quiet, soft-spoken. Let you do your job. He told me when I first got there that I wasn't going to play that much, but to look forward to playing the next season. And at that time Al Campanis came in as general manager. From all indications, I guess he had his own ideas of what he wanted, and I wasn't in the shceme of things. And so, and so he told me he was going to trade me off.

WL: Yeah, you went to Cincinnati, under Dave Bristol.

TS: Dave Bristol, who I thought was one heck of a manager. He gave me a chance to play. I didn't play much in Cincinnati, but eventually it worked out for me, because he went over to manage Milwaukee and got me over there. At Cincinnati, that's where I ran into Pete Rose, Jim Maloney, Tommy Helms, all those guys.

WL: You had some great teammates there.

TS: Some super teammates there. Lee May, Tony Perez, Bobby Tolan. That was one team that was just beginning to come up. The next year they became the Big Red Machine. And I think they went all the way that year.

WL: In '70 they won the West Division, beat Pittsburgh in the playoffs, and lost to Baltimore in the Series. All right. You went over to Milwaukee and found Bristol again.

TS: I found Brostal and he gave me a chance to play. And I had a pretty good year for Bristol. I think I hit - what? .279?

WL: Yep. .279.

TS: Once again I ran into a general manager that .. I'm not going to say he didn't like me, for I don't think that was the case, but I ran into Frank "Trader" Lane. I'll never forget, I saw him in the airport the first day I got there, and he said, "I remember you playing basketball." And he said, "I wanted to get you then." I didn't know him then, I didn't know he had anything to do with basektball.

WL: He was a referee, a famous referee.

TS: Right. He said, "I wanted to get you then, and I liked your style, but I always wanted to trade for you," and he said "I always wanted to trade you." And I said, "Yeah?" And the next year he commenced cleaning out the whole ball club. Although I'd had a good year and I thought I would have a good chance to stick with them and to play that next year. But he had other ideas. He cleaned out the wole ball club, and he traded me to Kansas City, which was the last team. That was a unique story, also, because I went over

and I was going to play there, and I finally got to Bob Lemon (who was the manager) to give me a chance to play. I went in and asked him for a chance to play, and I went out - and Vida Blue was pitching - and I think I got two hits off Vida Blue that night. I hit a home run and a single, and in about the fifth inning I broke my finger. So they told me to hurry up and get well, that I was going to play. When I got well they told me to go down to the minor leagues, that they were going to call me back. I didn't want to go and I balked on it for about a week, but finally I decided to go. I went to Omaha, and one Saturday they called me and told me xhax to come on back to the big leagues. hours later they called and changed their mind, and said they didn't know that I had used up all my options and that I would have to sit out the rest of the season. In fact, they were going to release me. I had asked for a release right after my finger got well, and they wouldn't do it because there were a couple of ball clubs I could have signed with. They wouldn't give it to me then but later they called and told me that big lie about not knowing my options were all used up and so I couldn't come back to the big leagues / So they released me, and that's when I decided to give it up.

WL: Let's go back to Philadelphia for a moment, to that first year. Aside from your differences with Quinn, do you have any notion why you didn't quite live up to their expectations? You didn't do bad but ....

TS: I think the reason I didn't was because I didn't play. I know that in June I was third in the league in hitting. Why I didn't play, I can only assume that the word came down from upstairs not to play me. I was leading the team at that time in all departments, around June. I was getting on base, I was hitting the ball well, I was playing good outfield. Then he started plattooning me with Wes Covington and Tony Gonzalez and somebody else in the outfield. And for no reason, because I remember we

went on a big swing out to the west coast and I was hitting against all the top pitchers - guys like Koufax, Marichal, and others. And I held my own and got back, like I say, hitting way over .300, and Gene told me one day before a doubleheader that he was going to rest me. He did. He gave me a rest during one of the games. I didn't play. I didn't play that much the rest of the season.

WL: Callison was a fixture out there and Gonzalez played a little more - well, he didn't get into as many games as you did....

TS: He was platooning me and Gonzalez there.

WI: Yes, the it shows here that each of you got in about the same number of games. ..... Anyway, did you feel sorry about leaving Philadelphia?

about getting
TS: Yes, you always feel sorry whenever traded when you're that young.
I was young and that was my first team, and I wound up hitting .266.
I was sure that I could do better and I was kind off disaappointed that I didn't get a chance to play (more). And I was displeased that I didn't get along well with the general manager. Gene Mauch and I got along pretty good; there was no problem there. I was surprised that I got traded, really surprised.

WL: Don Demeter played some in the outfield too that year. He was mostly at TXXXX third base but played some outfield. How was Roy Sievers?

TS? He played a little bit.

WL: Yeah, he played first base but was in the outfield for a few games.

TS: Roy did all right, I guess. I don't really know how he did. In fact, I saw Roy the other day. This year I started a baseball camp.

WL: I know. I want to talk about that later. Tony Taylor was at second

base, Ruben Amaro at short and Bobby Wine too. Anyway, Demeter was the main RBI man that year. He had 107, but Callison, Gonzalez, and Sievers all had 80 or more. You stole 16 bases, had 7 home runs, 39 RBIs. That wasn't a bad forst season.

TS: No, I thought it was good. I wish I could have played more. Because

I think that year kind of set the tone for the rest of my limited career that I had. I didn't play much with anybody until I got to Milwaukee.

And then I had another pretty good year.

TS: One heck of a pitcher.

WL: Yeah. He won 19, and old Cal McLish, Jack Baldschun.

TS: Baldschun was a good pitcher. Screwball pitcher.

WL: Chris Short was probably just starting.

TS: Right. Chris was just starting and beginning to come around.

WL: And, of all things, Dallas Green was there as a pitcher.

TS: Yeah, Dallas Green, now general manager at Chicago. We had a pretty good pitching staff. We didn't win very many ball games.

WL: Well, you were one game over .500. 81-80. And it was leading up to '64, when they should have won it. Blew it. All right, now. After you left the majors, when you decided that it just wasn't worth the hassle?

TS: I went to Mexico for two years. I went down and played for Guadalajara. I had two good years down there. At the same time I was hoping I'd get a call back to the big leagues, but it didn't happen. So that's when I just decided to give it up and say goodbye.

WL: I spent a lot of my life in Mexico. I traveled over about every inch of Mexico, starting in 1933. In a way it was better then than in later years. Ina way, somewhat like our country. Crime and congestion and pollution, and everything.

TS: I didn't think there was much crime in Mexico.

WL: Pretty much. More small crime. Anyway, Guadalajara was then a

delightful city, and still is as far as I'm concerned. Mexico City has gotten too big, too congested, too polluted, and you just can't get around.

TS: Well, when I was there I enjoyed Guadalajara, like I said. The city itself was very nice. It was clean, still a little on the quiet side. I enjoyed it. But being married and away from home, and getting up in age .... WL: That's one of the hardest parts of being a big league ball player. All of them tell me that absence from home and family .... The wives are the unsung heroes.

TS: Yeah. I had one opportunity to go to Japan. As I was leaving Milwaukee, a manager from over there asked Bristol if he'd talk to me. But I'd just had a good season with Milwaukee and I knew I had a good shot to make the team the next year. I was quite surprised when they said, "Hey, that's it." And they let me go to Kansas City.

WL: All right. So you turned to other things.

TS: When I retired I already had my B.S. degree in physical education with a minor in biology. I decided to go back to school, and I got my Master's at Southern Illinois at Edwardsville. And then I decided to keep going and got my doctorate at St. Louis University. And that's when I got back into education, and that's what I've been doing ever since.

WL: What were was your doctorate in?

TS: My doctorate was in urban education.

WL: And then you came right here to Harris Stowe?

TS: No, from there I was admissions director and registrar at a small college in East St. Louis - a state community college. From there I came over here.

WL: You've been here how many years?

TS: Nine years. I was an assistant principal in the school system first, and then this job came up and I applied for it and got it.

WL: What's your title?

TS: Director of Athletics.

WL: How many sports do you have?

TS: We have six - baseball for men, soccer for men, and baseketball for

men. Basketball for women, volleyball for women, and track for women.

WL: What's the enrollment here?

TS: The enrollment is about 1300.

WL: What's the division between men and women?

TS: There are more women than men, like we might have 800 women and 500 men. It could be even more than that. This is strictly a teacher education institution. Basically, we give two degrees, but the main degree is teaching. And that makes it a little bit hard for me to recruit athletes, because a lot of kids these days don't want to be teachers. They've got these big ideas they want to be doctors, lawyers, what have you. Engineers and all that kind of stuff, and we don't prepare them for that.

WL: Tell me now about your baseball clinics. When did they start?

TS: Last winter we were all sitting down and thinking that I had talked to a lot of the old-timers. Every time we have an old-timers game, I go. And a lot of the guys said they would like to get back into something involving baseball. I thought about it all winter and I told them, "Let's try a clinic." And so we began to think about it and put it together, and so we had our first clinic two weeks ago Satusrday in Belleville, Illinois, and we drew about 110-115 kids. And the guys that were in that clinic were Roy Sievers, Frank Bauman, Phil Gagliano, Tony Buchek, and a fellow named Don Putsey(?), and a couple of other guys.

WL: It mentions in the paper Curt Ford and Tom Lawless.

TS: Yeah, they came over and Hraboski. They came over

TS: Yeah, they came over and Hraboski. They came over to help us out. Then we went down to Little Rock, Arkansas and did one there and then

over to Memphis for another one. Now we've got about three more left to do. Hopefully, we're just getting started and next time we won't make a lot of mistakes we're making this time. We're going to try to have one every other week somewhere in the area. It should work out pretty good. WL: Well, it sounds wonderful to me, and it's a contribution to the sport and to the whole area.

TS: I was surprised that a lot of the kids still remember some of us.

I know the parents remember. We try to make our camp a little bit unique in that we allow the parents to come down on the field and talk with us while we're instructing and to take part in the camp. A lot of them got Al a kick out of it and wanted to bat against/Hrabosky. They got up there and he just blew it right past them. But they really enjoyed it.

WL: He's a character.

TS: Oh, yes, he is. A very nice guy.

WL: I didn't realize he lived right around here.

TS: Well, you know he does some broadcasting for the Cardinals. So he's here.

WL: That's good. You're gonna try to have every other week or so.

TS: Report. We figure that a lot of the small cities don't really get really a chance to/meet and socialize and talk with pro athletes. We know that the superstars are always getting the exposure, but the so-called non-superstar - the good ball player, the average ball player - well, people remember those guys too. And to be able to sit down and talk with them, laugh and joke with them, and at the same time we're helping their kids, teaching their kids some of the things that we learned in baseball, that can only help. They enjoy it and we enjoy it.

WL: And the real baseball fan remembers all ball players, they don't remember just the big shots. Are you going to have a clinic in St. Louis itself?

TS: We're thinking about it. We're going to try to get Busch Stadium one time next year and just see how it goes.

WL: I would think that Busch would jump at that chance.

TS: I hope so. You know, they have so many things going on in the ball park these days ....

WL: That's right. And that don't have anything to do with baseball.

TS: Randy Hundley brings his camp in here. In fact, I heard on the radio that he's going to have two camps here, one at the end of July and the other in the first days of August. Amd then he's coming back for two days in the middle of August. So, they do have some things in there that involve baseball. And then they have circus stuff in there, and football. It could be used a lot more. I don't know whether they want it to be used a lot more.

WL: Your clinic wouldn't tear it up as much as circus and a lot of other things they have. Mickey Owen also runs one - or did - down around the Rolla area too.

TS: I heard about that.

WL: Have you ever been to anybody's else's camps before you put yours on?

TS: No more than Randy Hundley's Fantasy Camp.

WL: Well, that's a little different.

TS: A little different, but basically the same.

WI: all right. Great. And I think you've got hold of something there that will grow.

TS: I hope so.

WL: What are your best memories out of your career? Got any special moments of highlights?

TS: I would say that the one thing was coming to play for St. Louis.

Growing up right across the river and coming to the ball park as a youngster,
and saying to yourself, "One of these days I wish I could play major league

bsll for the St. Louis Cardinals, the home team. And the to fulfill that dream was one of the accomplishments I think was great. And to me, just getting to the big leagues was great. Another thing is I got the chance to meet and talk and be with Jackie Robinson. He was my favorite ball player.

WL: Natch.

TS: He came here for something, I think it had to do with politics.

I got the chance to meet him. I rode with him all day and talked with him.

Found out a lot of things, a lot of ideas he had about sports and his life

in general. And I always thought to pattern myself after him. So when I

WL: You have acertain resemblance - facially - to Jackie.

TS: I never heard that before.

got the chance to meet him it was great.

WL: Well, I think you do. I never saw him in person, but from the photos give me the impression that you are similar.

TS: I was talking to some of the guys the other day when we were down in Memphis for the old-timers, and they tell me - I just thought of this ball players name. Sullivan, a big, tall 6'7" pitcher. Remember him? He pitched for Philadelphia when I was there.

WL: Older than you or younger:

TS: Maybe a little bit older. Frank Sullivan.

WL: Yeah, I remember Frank Sullivan.

TS: They're telling me that he's in Hawaii as a golf pro over there.

I got a kick out of some of those names that yhey throw out that you've just forgotten, and then it all came back.

WL: That's right. Frank Sullivan, played '53 to '60 with the Boston Red Sox and '61 and '62 with Philadelphia.

TS: Right. He was there when I was there.

WL: Then he went over to Minnesota. He wound up winning 87 and lossing 100,

so he was pretty close to being a .500 pitcher anyway. Any meally amusing incidents or anecdotes that you can think of about any of your teammates?

TS: I can't remember anything offhand. I had so much fun, now that I look back over it. It wasn't so much fun then, because it seemed that all my getting traded I was always trying to make a club or stay with a club. Now that I look back on it, getting traded to all those clubs gave me a chance to meet a hell of a lot of guys. And I'll treasure that for the rest of my life. Just to be able to say that I played with Pete Rose or Hank Aaron, you know, Bob Gibson, Lou Brock. Just about every team I able to meet played with had a star. It was a good thing to be/xiik those guys.

Good thing just to be in the big leagues. To travel and meet people.

I'll always treasure that.

WL: I can believe that. And I don't blame you. Did you notice any difference between the National League and the American League in any sense when you were going back and forth there - strike zone, the umpires ... TS: No, I thought it was about the same. I think the National League had been around longer. I don't think the American League teams in depth could compare with the National League overall. But it was about even. But what I noticed today is that the knockdown pitch has been taken away. I think the guys in my day could have added five to ten points in their batting average if they hadn't been knocked down. In those days, if the first three or f four guys got a hit, the next guy was going down automatically. Now, these days, if you come inside, the umpires warn them and throw them out, and all that kind of stuff. And you see guys digging in at the plate. Last night I was watching this guy from Minnesota - Puckett - he called time out and dug his hole and said okay. In my day if you did that they would drop you so fast. I think the Astroturf adds another five or six points. So I think a guy like me that hit .230 lifetime could hit .260 today. And then the money these guys make today amazes me.

WL: It amazes everyone, even them. Especially reserves sitting on the bench making three or four hundred thousand.

TS: I had to fight like the devil to get a two thousand dollar raise. I wasn't making but about five or six. And these guys, what's the basic salary now - \$60,000?

WL: The minimum is \$60,000.

TS: I can live off of that.

WL: When you came in, they had batting helmets, didn't they?

TS: No, we were wearing those inserts. Then, later on, I think about 164 or 165, they got the helmets.

WL: Well, I'm amazed, when talking with real old-timers, they didn't have any batting helmets or anything, and those knockdown pitches were just about every other pitch. All of them have talked to me about knockdown pitches. It was a muc bigger part of the sport. Now, tell me what sports you coach here.

TS: I don't coach.

WL: Don't you? Full-time work right here. Organizing and managing, directing.

TS: Putting it toether, hiring and firing coaches, directing athletics.

WL: You did say you have baseball as one of your sports.

TS: Yeah, I go out and help the kids. Our coach's name is Bob Cooksey, who played in \_\_\_\_? ; he got as high as ??? He does my coaching for me.

WL: Have you come up with photos of your clinic?

TS: Oh, yeah. All the newspapers came out, and we take pictures ourselves.

We also did tapes. The kids that want 'em, we're gonna sell 'em to them.

WL: Your overall feelings about baseball, even though you didn't do what you wanted to because you didn't think you had a full chance?

TS: I wouldn't trade those experiences for anything in the world. I'm not bitter at all. I think I had an ample chance, even though I - well, everybody wants to play every day and all day, but at the same time I had the opportunity and a few times I guess it slipped right through my fingers.

A lot of times you can't do what you want to do when you want to do it.
WL: That's so true of everybody and everything.

TS: But if you got a guy, like I hear all this talk about how long Leo

Durocher stuck with Willie Mays, and he did such a good job. Mays went

O-for-something, maybe about 25, before he got his first hit. I wish

some managers would have given me that kind of time. But it didn't happen

and I'm not bitter. I appreciate the chance that they did give me.

WL: All of the older players tell me that they had so much more fun than

the present-day players seem to have. They were more together and they weren't won

the present-day players seem to have. They were more together and they we worried about the big bucks and all the business ventures they were into, because they didn't have any big bucks.

TS:: Well, I imagine that could be true. Like I say, I don't talk to the younger players that much, so I wouldn't know. But I do know that the camaraderie that we hadwas super. Everybody pulling for everybody else, everybody loved everybody else.

WL: What do you think avout free agency?

Is: I think it's good. I really think that it should have been in sooner. I think that one club should not have a monopoly on ball players like they did in my day. I think there should be am opportunity at some time in his career for a guy to try is another team. Just think about how many guys got buried. In the minor leagues because of it. I'll tell you what I wish. I wish that in some way, fashion, shape, or form something could be done with Curt Flood. Because all these guys know how much they owe to him. And what a tremendous loss moneywise he took when he started fighting this thing. I wish I had the ability or the connections to get people together to do something for Curt. Not that he's sufferingor hurting, but even so he was the catalyst, and he did a lot for baseball.

WL: Yep. Becasue he had the guts to stand up for what he believed in.

TS: Even if all the ball players today got together and would say, "Hey,

we'll give him \$100 apiece or \$500 apiece, or whatever. But I know it's not going to happen. But I'll bet if you polled each individual ball player they would say yes, but it seems to be something that when they get together as a team, they just say no.

WL: You like the artificial surface?

TS: Yes, overall, from the standpoint that I think it makes the game more exciting, 'cause we have more base hits. This is from the fans' standpoint. You don't have to worry so much about rainouts. I think I would have liked to play  $\pm$  on it on a regular basis. We had a few artificial surfaces when I was p playing.

WL: Yeah. You get true bounces and you don't get as many rainouts. The owners benefit even more than the fans, I think. What do you think about the designated hitter?

TS: It makes the game more exciting. But I really think that, for strategic busing purposes, I'd like to see the pitcher up there.

WL: Yes. Whitey Herzog wouldn't be known as such a great manager if he had the DH, although I think he favors the DH.

TS: Well, one thing they should do is have it in both leagues or not at all.