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EDITORIAL

Origins of windsurfing : HOYLE SCHWEITZER

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AMERICAN WINDSURFER: Give me a summary of what you feel like you contributed to the sport, what Jim [Drake] did, and some of the people that stand out.

HOYLE SCHWEITZER: Well, of course we have a difference of opinion as to how the sport started. I tend to think that it was more of a group of people talking and just two of them acted.

AW: That was you and Jim?

HS: Right. Out of a group of people, only two acted. And we sort of went in partnership on that. Whether he contributed more or less... **DIANE SCHWEITZER:** Let's put it this way, it probably wouldn't have happened without either one of them.

HS: Anyway, I probably had a little aggressiveness that kept things going, in the business, and I like business very much, I like the excitement of it. I guess my aggressiveness may have enabled things to happen, but it's really more the fact that there were literally hundreds of people at that time, just almost immediately, hundreds of people there trying to promote the sport, trying to help, designing their own products, doing whatever. It's not one person's contribution.

AW: Jim was saying that you were the marketing guy...

HS: I'm not a marketing guy.

AW: Then you're saying really, that Diane was?

HS: Well, I think the two of us worked together well. We always have, on everything. In fact, just prior to the Windsurfer we were in our little computer company that has been, I think, very successful.

AW: What makes you two work so well together?

HS: Maybe you oughtta answer that Diane. **DS:** Probably respect.

HS: We also make things fun. I think that's really important. But, whatever you do, if it's not fun, you're not going to do it very long. Certainly with boardsailing, I think we were in it to the very end, we were in it for the long run. We were always looking ahead 10, 20 years. Hoping that our contribution, whatever it was, would have some long-lasting effect. And Diane felt that about the relationship with women in the sport, and about the [Windsurf] magazine, [that she published] and about our employees. I think I tended to be more interested in projects...

DS: We complimented each other well.

AW: Well, from my interview with Jim, it was clear that he basically came up with the idea of the invention, you know, the nuts and bolts. He attributed you as the person who really believed in the thing. You saw the vision, you saw what was possible. He didn't. And without you, it would not have...

HS: I don't know. I have a different view of that.

AW: Tell me.

HS: I have a view that he was involved in something really exciting. I mean really exciting, at that time.

AW: You mean his career?

HS: His work, yes. He was doing things that were high adrenaline stuff, and I wasn't. Diane and I started this computer company, and I'd done what I set out to do, so I had a gap [when windsurfing came along].

DS: The solid truth is that you're a risk taker and love it. He's not a risk taker.

HS: He also had a really exciting career there. That's why these things happen. He shouldn't shortchange his own success. He shouldn't look back and have second thoughts about that, I don't think...

DS: Well, you have to make a choice sometimes. The road goes along, and it splits.

HS: That's part of the reason, in retrospect, he may wish he had had more faith in what was ultimately going to happen. But then, a lot of the things that happened so quickly were the result of other people. A lot of Europeans entered the scene very quickly and took the ball and ran with it. So, I don't know, I did have some, enough faith to buy his share of the patent.

AW: You bought his share for \$36,000?

HS: Yes. At that time it was a lot of money for us. That was like \$360,000 today. Jim was ecstatic about it at the time, but as the

thing took off I can see why anyone would feel bad. But we had no idea ourselves and were just trying to clarify major issues in the company. **AW:** He mentioned that you were quite athletic and you picked it up quite quickly. He also mentioned that you made him famous. [chuckle] **HS:** Well, there was a lot of antagonism there for many, many years. In the early years, there were certain people that should speak for boardsailing. The story of the invention was just overblown. It shouldn't overshadow other aspects of it. Especially in Europe, the focus was too much on Jim Drake and Hoyle Schweitzer and not enough on some of the local people there that had taken right turns with their lives and helped get the sport started.

AW: Tell me the story of how you guys met first, and then...

HS: Yeah, it's sort of sad because it's about the only time in my life where business has ever broken up a friendship. And it wasn't really business, I guess, there was something else going on there. To this day I feel that a lot of our conflicts, between Jim and I, were the result of Uli Stanciu (at the time, publisher of the German SURF magazine) and a lot of the people in Germany sort of creating this... they liked conflict. And they created it in order to sell magazines.

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AW: You know, I've heard about the thing in Germany how the publishers made the battle between Jim and you.

HS: Also between the Windsurfer? and Mistral. It was very big between the Windsurfer? brand and the Mistral brand. They loved that conflict.

AW: My sense of it is that you always came out on the bad side. You're portrayed as the bad person.

HS: [laughing] Well, it's my own fault. That's my response.

AW: How so?

HS: Well, I don't know, I'm just like that. [laughing]

DS: Strangely enough John, you're about the only person in the media that Hoyle's ever been very civil to. Other than his wife!

AW: So, you created this mystique around yourself?

HS: Well that has to be it. Some character actors make their living by being bad guys! [laughing] I don't hold any animosities about that.

DS: He had a tougher skin than I did. **HS:** Yeah, I think Diane would tend to get upset about it, but the things that upset me were different. They had nothing to do with our leaving the sport or anything.

AW: So in the early days, let me take you back a little bit, the whole family was involved?

HS: Oh yeah. That was fun.

AW: You got everybody doing it. Tell me about the trials and tribulations of what you went through as a family to get the product out there.

HS: I don't think we went through any trials and tribulations.

DS: Probably, Matt's been telling you that he had to catch fish for us because we were starving. Has he been giving you that story?

AW: [laughing]

DS: I have to say it was a very overexaggerated story. Although, we were poor sometimes.

HS: Yes we did struggle sometimes, but struggling is fun. When I look back on it, I Didn't think it was especially any hardship.

DS: When you're young, those things are easier to do.

AW: But there's certainly a tremendous level of uncertainty with what you were doing. There was just no guarantee.

DS: There's never a guarantee.

AW: But what kept you going? What drove you to keep plugging at it?

DS: Well, we believed in it.

HS: Not only that, but very quickly, a lot of other people just got very enthused.

DS: People who were able to get involved in it also became very enthusiastic and we could see it wasn't just us. True enough, it was really difficult to get to the point where we were selling very many. I mean it took a long time to be able to ...it's hard to sell something that has never existed before, and I think there was a lot of skepticism.

HS: A lot of people...

DS: A lot of people really thought that we were nuts! I mean they would just look at us with their eyebrows like this. "Hey, you get tired standing up?" and you know these were the comments we'd get. But we knew it was fun, and it was just a little difficult to get people to try it sometimes.

HS: But we also had a lot of success with people. A lot of people really got enthused about it.

DS: And then they discovered it in Holland and Germany,

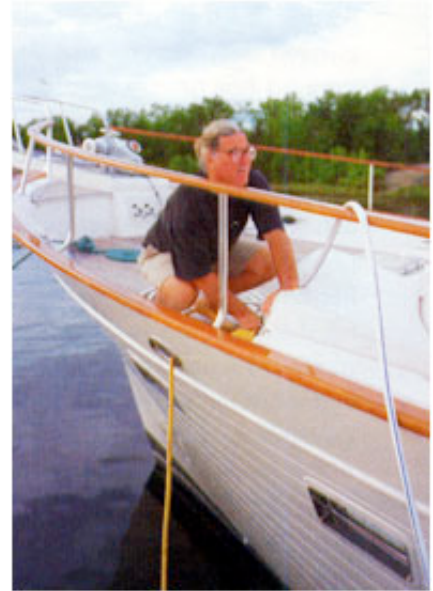
HS: That was early.

DS: That was much earlier than people caught on fire in the United States.

AW: The early boards, you made them?

HS: Well, a few. You mean made out of foam? Yeah.

AW: And the booms? You made the booms?



DS: The booms, yeah.

AW: You made all those teak booms? There was no factory production?

HS: No, we laminated them in our garage. But that was just at the very beginning, and then, later, we had a friend in Taiwan, Ennals Ives, who was a boatbuilder and worked with teak. So we ordered teak booms from him, teak tees and teak daggerboards. Didn't work out too well. Mast bases and mast tips...

AW: What year was it that you began commercially selling them?



DS: We sold our first board in 1969.

AW: It wasn't until 1969? Wow. To whom?

DS: To Bert Salisbury. He was in Seattle, he is a publisher. And he was the one who came up with the name windsurfing.

AW: Oh right. Jim was telling me about a guy who drove by and screeched to a stop when he saw you.

HS: There were a lot of cases like that. You see, it wasn't hard because there was so much enthusiasm, and very quickly we had an order for a container of boards to Holland. So, I mean this...

DS: [interrupting] No, to Sweden.

HS: Yes, you're right. Very quickly a container to Sweden, and then very quickly followed by a container to Holland. So...

DS: That was when we had to move out of the house. This group of three Swedish men, who were just absolutely crazy, wonderful people, they called and said they were coming. We said okay, so they came and we got a hotel room for them and they came and visited us in our home, and Hoyle took them down and gave them lessons in Marina del Rey. Then they said okay we want to buy a container. Well, I mean a container!

AW: How many were in a container?

DS: Forty. So, all of a sudden we had to find someplace other than our garage to get that many together. Our neighbors had already begun to look at us as the freight trucks began to show up every once in a while. So, we couldn't have a container, we couldn't load a container out of our house. That was a big step, to go out and find a place to lease, and that's why we did it, that first order.

RISING ABOVE THE TURBULENT WATERS: Aboard the "Pailolo", the Schweitzers chart their course in search of new challenges and lessons of discovery.

HS: Well, it wasn't very hard. Very natural in fact, everything flowed naturally. One thing followed another.

DS: And we were selling a lot to German pilots who were stopping by our factory in Santa Monica. When they'd fly into L.A., they'd discover where we were and they would come and take boards back with them to Germany, which just amazed us, because they could do it easily, they didn't have to pay duty or freight.

HS: There was a lot of enthusiasm, it wasn't very hard to stay enthused about it.

DS: Per Fjaestad must be in his eighties now. He's still windsurfing.

AW: Per is one of the Swedish guys? **HS:** Yeah.

DS: A wonderful man. He is also in the publishing business, interestingly enough.

AW: Now Per, would be, would you say, the first person that got the thing over to Europe?

HS: I wish I had the ledger, then I could give you an accurate answer. Because there were so few products sold, I think we shipped some earlier ones than that, individually. But, what was so unusual was the fact that he came and bought 40 boards.

AW: And when did you guys start using polyethylene?

HS: Earlier, I had built a few surfboards. So, I knew the pluses and minuses of surfboard construction. And I'm a great enthusiast for surfboard construction. It's probably the best buy that you can make in this world. The best purchase you can make, because it is a custom. 100% custom. The shape, the color, the design, I mean every aspect.

DS: You can have a craftsman, or an artisan, or sometimes an artist doing something specially, just for you.

HS: In many respects it is a much better deal than a painting, because a painting really has zero utility. And, even though old surfboards don't have much utility, they hang on Hobie's shops, or on the walls of bars. They're equally fascinating from a, I hate to use the word craft, because a craft is a bad connotation, but certainly artistic in many respects. Anyway, I really thought that was a plus, but [for a sailboard, surfboard construction] is a minus. So we looked, very early, for alternatives. I ran across a guy who just sort of changed our lives, because he was so enthusiastic. Just tremendously enthusiastic about rotational molding, and his company, Good and Hammond, was building containers for missiles. What it was, is a half a tube, like halves, with a missile in between. And these halves were strapped together. And each half was hollow and foam filled. And the criteria that the defense department had, or whoever he was selling these to, was that they dump a missile out of a plane, and the parachute would fail, and it would still not destroy the missile, so the polyethylene would collapse through the foam and soften the impact enough so the missile would survive. He was really enthusiastic about durability because that's what he was working with. That was the flipside of our Baja product. Baja boards were beautiful, but not very durable. Or less durable than I had anticipated that a molded product would be. So he grabbed this project and ran with it and turned us onto a craftsman who actually handformed the mold out of sheet aluminum.

A lot of people really thought we were nuts! I mean they would just look at us with their eyebrows like this. "Hey, you get tired standing up?" ... But we knew it was fun, and it was] ust a little difficult to get people to try it sometimes.

That was our first mold. We made it pretty much like the old Malibu surfboard that Matt Kivlin had designed, just a classic design that we used for the Baja and also used for the Windsurfer'. If you looked at a Baja and looked at a Windsurfer, they were similar. They weren't identical at all, but they were similar. We molded the product right away, within a few months and gradually developed that process with Elmer Good, who kept producing product for us for years. And then finally, we designed our own equipment and started rotational molding ourselves. In fact, the equipment that we designed, we were able to sell to other people. So it was a big step. I think it was a big step forward in rotational molding equipment.

Just before we closed the plant in Torrance, we made another, I think, giant step forward in rotational molding. It was very unfortunate that we lost that manufacturing process, because this new technology enabled us to do some really outstanding things. When we closed, our rotational molded products were much much better than when we started it. And, not only in durability but we learned how to polish the molds so we had a high gloss and we were able to put decorations right into the polyethylene. We later developed a second skin behind it so that the boards were less likely to have imperfections.

AW: Tell me about some of the early days, about the competitors that came through your doors.

HS: Well of course, the first one tlmr comes to mind is Robby [Naish]. Diane will probably have memories of the...

DS: Which kind of competitors did you mean, do you mean..?

AW: No I mean windsurfing competitors.

HS: I think he was notable from day one. And there's so many stories, which I don't remember, but two stand out in my mind. One of them was in Cancun. I was sailing, but in a different class, and I knew what the conditions were like out there. They were absolutely treacherous conditions, really difficult, extremely difficult. Robby had already won, he did not have to race, he could DNS the last race and still win.

AW: How old was he?

DS: Oh gosh, Cancun. We'd have to look it up. He wasn't a baby then, but he was certainly under twenty.

HS: But in those years he always looked small when you watched him sail, unlike today. He got a good start and I was up in the second or third story [of a building]. We were looking down at the course, so we could see pretty well. And he was first to the weather mark, and on the first reach, he got launched. He just was hammered. Two or three people passed him, and at the reaching mark he was back to first or second. When they got to the leeward mark he was in the lead again. As soon as he rounded that leeward mark, he just got whapped. He came back around and a big cats paw came down and just whammed him right into the water. So other racers pass again, and you can just see him struggling because of the difficult conditions. He did this throughout the whole race. You just saw this desire. But, you know, this was the last race of the championship. He had already won the event and didn't even have to be sailing.

DS: Competitive instinct.

HS: Yeah, competitive instinct. And then the classic of all classics was...

DS: But didn't he win it?

HS: I think he did. I don't remember. But the classic of all classics was the Pan-Am Cup in his backyard. His first wife was giving birth to their first child, and he came from the hospital, late. By the time he'd arrived at the beach, not only had everyone started, but some of the boats were approaching the weather mark, as he crossed the start line. And he won this race. Even though he was far away, you sensed his determination, like he was going to catch everyone. And he did and won. Just hard to believe. Marvelous competitor and I think a lot of the sailors in that era appreciated those lessons, not of words, but of deeds.

DS: Too many sailors to remember.

AW: Tell me about Matt. [Schweitzer's son]

DS: He's a competitor.

HS: He's too close to be rational about. It's hard to...

DS: You know when he seems to do best, is coming from behind.

HS: Yes, he always comes from behind.

DS: He always used to go out and kind of lose a couple of races, and then all he had to do was have a couple of losses, and then boom, he'd kick in and go out there and do it.

HS: He likes to compete, and is very competitive in motorcycle racing, and I think in everything he's competitive with. He's a good competitor.

DS: He's a great skier... And then there's Mike [WaILZe]. Mike is like a third son. He was very close to the family. Michael always seemed to play second fiddle to the other guys, but he's always hung in there, he was very tenacious. And he's come along.

HS: I think people have not given him his just desserts, that's what I feel anyway.

DS: But recently...

HS: Yes, recently it may have changed, but you know he was first to do a lot of things, And certainly, one of the very first to explore Maui and waveriding there. And, he really opened that door to the world.

AW: That's funny because that's what Geoff Bourne was telling me about you.

He says you're one of the most underrated contributors to the sport.

HS: We tried, in fact we did set some world records that were never really given much publicity on Maui. Which was a nice story because the people who helped us set the courses and record the times were the people whose records we were breaking. They were so nice, just completely giving people?RYA observers, Sam Branfield and Neocles Athenasiades.

DS: Probably in the mid seventies, you and Dick got this idea.

HS: Matt and I went to Weymouth [England] and we took all these wild boards that we thought were going to break the world speed record, which was held by Crossbow at that time. You know how they have the course there at Weymouth? Well, you can sail across it at any angle to the wind you choose. But it's set up so you have to go, I forget the number of yards, but whatever it is, they time you and that's essentially the way it's done, unlike today where you have a canal and you can keep the waves down. To make a long story short, it was a very disappointing performance mainly because you can get up on a plane, a full plane but then before you get across the course you're let down someplace. For whatever reason, chop or wind or something. It was very disappointing. So, we

decided we've got better winds in Maui. So we had the the RYA observers come twice to set up this course at Maalea.

DS: We called it the Schweitzer Speed Trial, that was in 1980.

HS: But the reason I mention that, was that Geoff [Bourne] and Barry [Spanier] were involved in building these early speed sails.

DS: People came from all over the Nworld...

HS: Trying to design sails, trying to go fast. And also Tom Morey, [Morey Boogie Boards] among others, were designing boards.

AW: Yeah, I saw that thing.

DS: Did you see some of those boards that were on the side of our house?

AW: Yes.

HS: Tom Morey designed some of those. **AW:** Yes, I saw that one with the steps.

HS: Yes. He was big into sucking air off the deck, having the flow of the water suck the air, so that you were riding on air more than water. **AW:** Was the pro thing subsidized by you guys? The whole one design class? All the race events?.

HS: Oh yeah, just like the Olympics.

DS: Oh, don't even talk about the Olympics! [exasperated]

HS: Talk about subsidies, it's just hard to believe how much money we threw into that, because we thought in the long run it would help the sport. TV crews went to Santa Barbara. They shot all this, in beautiful weather and we never got one second of footage on television. **AW:** In what event?

DS: In the demonstration event for the Olympics. Which was really a lovely event. It was run so beautifully, so perfectly. And you know...we wrote the book on how to run events. We really know how to run events perfectly.

HS: We had beautiful women sailing, slalom, freestyle. We had other aspects, besides racing that should have, in the long run, helped the sport. It was a big gamble and it never paid off.

AW: But that was part of the Olympics, right?

DS: Oh sure. But, it was a demonstration event, and...

HS: And we had to pay for it.

DS: And it was in Santa Barbara, which is a two hour drive away from Los Angeles. We were never even invited to go see the Olympics. Talk about feeling ostracized by the powers that be ... all the investment we had put into getting sailboarding into the Olympics.

AW: You talked about longterm contribution. You feel like that would be in..?

HS: Well, obviously if the [Windsurfer? One Design] class had stayed around that would have been a major thing. We both, especially Diane, but myself to some extent, felt that the class was key, absolutely key. And we gave our blood, we gave our emotions, we did everything we could to try to do what we thought was right. Sometimes it was right, sometimes it was wrong. But, I would say in the majority of times it was right. Diane is a marvelous hostess, and so we threw these great parties, that was always right. She liked doing it. I really just know that there's a lot of people that were brought into the sport in the early years because of things that are no longer done. A lot of regattas, a lot of schools and a lot of things like that that brought people in. And that may come back, I hope.

AW: But how? Look at some of the other sports that have had revivals.

HS: Oh yeah. Boardsailing is going to have a revival, for sure.

AW: What do you think it will take? A new invention that will change things? Or will it be, all of a sudden you will wake up one day, and everybody will say, I want to go windsurfing?

HS: I don't know. Something will happen.

AW: For tennis it's indoor courts, yellow balls, and oversize racquets, and rollerblades just totally revolutionized rollerskating.

HS: Well, surfing, which I've been fairly close to, has had lots of things that have happened to it. Even without product changes, without the longboard coming back, or even without foam instead of balsa wood, or any one of the big things that happened, I think it just had a natural cycle of popularity. It becomes aii "in" sport and a lot of people don't do i i because it's an "in" sport, and it sort of dries up and becomes an obscure sport, or more obscure, and then people enter it because it's obscure. [laughs]

DS: Maybe one Saturday morning, all over the world, in the Spring, young people will go into their parent's basements and find these strange old pieces of equipment.

HS: We're building a log house, and as part of this learning process about log houses, this guy was kind enough to show us a house he'd built. He's walking us through the house, and down in the basement, here's the old wooden booms, and the old wooden tee, a couple of Windsurfers?. And I can visualize a grandchild coming in and saying "hey, what is that?"

AW: Did he know who he was talking to?

DS: No, he had no idea. A builder was just showing us a very nice log house, and as we were walking through we were in his basement, and Hoyle pointed up and here was this ancient piece of equipment. And it was very popular at one time, right here in this whole area, we had a North American Championships in Collingwood, which is not too far from here. And very active dealerships. Since we've been here, I think we've seen two...

HS: Two or three...

DS: Two or three sailboards out, and that's all.

HS: One Windsurfer? though.

DS: That's true.

AW: Matt and Shawneen [Schweitzer] were telling me that maybe they were considering bringing back the old Windsurfer? board. What do you think about that?



HS: The?

AW: The Windsurfer? label into the U.S.

HS: Oh yeah, it would be great.

AW: So how do you feel about all of this? After all, it's your baby.

HS: I don't know, I don't feel that way about it. [laughing] That was part of our life, and we've gone on, I think. And unless, you feel like it's your baby anymore [to Diane]?

DS: No. It was very tough for me in the beginning to sever that portion of my life, but it's beyond me now.

AW: Now did you sever it because it was ,just causing you too much pain?

HS: Oh no. No, I don't think so. You just do your thing and then you move on.

DS: And it was costing us so much money every day we opened the door, we finally had to, you know...

HS: Yeah, but at the same time, we were getting license fees. So, we were involved in the sport, and we could see that the license fees would come to an end when the patents came to an end, so we couldn't afford to keep the doors open anymore. When that became evident, we closed down. And, as I say, I know firsthand that...

DS: And the Class was failing, which was sick. I invested a lot of emotion in the Class. And that was very difficult. And the magazine. That was emotional too. I put out the first issue of that, so to speak, in 1971 I think.

HS: But I don't think that we were ever bitter... gosh.

DS: We had a lot of fun. It was wonderful.

HS: It was just time to go on and do some-thing else. We have a shopping center in Huntington Beach with good tenants, ClothesTime, Gap, Blockbuster and now Big 5.

DS: Know anyone who wants to buy a shopping center?

AW: [laughing] Nooo, but we have a classified section in our magazine!



HS: So, we're going to do a lot of rock work on the property here in Canada, with the local rocks, because that's the way everyone does it. Anyway, we busied ourselves, and I spent a couple of years trying to manage a portfolio where I'd make decisions, and I was fairly successful, but it wasn't enough, as I was telling Will Durant who I was speaking with on the phone when you came in. He had sold his business and restored a couple of boats and built a house and now he's back full tilt, running a business again. And, it's pretty exciting. That's probably the truism that everyone misses, either you're doing something and you don't have time for anything, or you have too much, there's nothing really in between.

AW: Do you ever see yourself coming back into the sport?

HS: No. Into boardsailing? No, absolutely no. I've done my thing.

AW: Diane, do you see yourself coming back?

DS: Oh no. Over my dead body. You'd have to kill me before I'd go back. I'm only kidding, I'd go along with anything Hoyle did.

HS: As long as you keep learning, I think it's a fair substitute for being in

business. Not perfect. We've learned a lot about boating. I think we're going to learn a little bit now about log cabins, about building, about living in the winter.

AW: Is there anything about the sport that you miss?

HS: Well, I wish I were younger. If I were younger I'd sail more in the waves. I love sailing in the waves. If I were younger I might compete if there were regattas, but, I'm sort of an old stick in the mud. I believe in one design and I believe in one design racing whether it's sailboards or boats, or cars.

AW: Tell me about all of the lives that you've probably changed.

HS: We haven't changed, boardsailing has changed. The sport has changed a lot of lives. Gosh, lots of them. You know, I hesitate to begin.

DS: Sometimes I feel maybe it was not for the better [laughing], but generally I'm sure it added some depth to people's lives.

HS: Certainly, Glenn Taylor, his life changed because he was essentially full time after boardsailing came around.

DS: People like Mark Robinson, he was a young person, and it gave him direction. Or Cort [Larned] or Rhonda [SmithSanchez]. I mean these people were at a very impressionable age in their lives, young teenagers, and from middle teenagers probably weren't even thinking about what direction their lives had taken, it just kind of segued into...

HS: Or Mike Waltze. Hundreds. There's just too many for us to mention, and we don't know lots of them.

AW: Millions of people.

HS: Yes, literally.

AW: This sport has a way of just changing your life. Have you ever figured out what it is that changes people's lives? It's just so addicting? Or what is it? It's so terrifying or so exciting?

HS: We were just talking to someone about snowmobiling, and clearly the person with the most enthusiasm is someone who's been doing it from the beginning, when equipment was not as good as it is now. So, I feel, if I understand your question right, that people that are involved that are early adopters are more likely to change their lives than people that come along later. That's all. There's probably a great randomness to it. You have one or two great experiences, and it changes your life. But, it's more likely to happen when you're one of those early people.

AW: I don't know if I agree with that. I have met several people that just recently got into the sport and moved to Maui or are doing something that is just totally different.

HS: But you see, that may be that they consider themselves early adopters.

AW: [laughs]

HS: Seriously, it may be starting back.

DS: Talk about early adopters, I could name people that we have totally lost track of, but the interesting thing was, so many of these early adopters were people with German names. I don't know why. People like Helmut Seufert, who lived in Lomita. It's strange.

HS: Walter Schneppershoff.

DS: Who was the doctor in San Diego? How many German people, I mean in this country. Very interesting. I don't know what to make of this.

AW: Well look at your name, Schweitzer is a German name.

HS: That's true, I don't know if that has anything to do with it, maybe.

DS: In the early years, I could go down a list of boat owners that we had, and it was just, it just jumped out at you that there were so many, in fact just in the United States, that there were so many German names. Germans are great travellers and they're great athletes.

AW: Technically oriented. There's a lot of engineers in the sport, we've discovered.

HS: Yes, yes. A lot of engineers.

DS: It also seems like there are a lot of doctors. We never could figure that out. Except for the fact that they were affluent enough to try something that might be a risk. It might not work out for them, but there were a lot of doctors.

HS: We had one experience that typifies the people that got hooked on the sport. We were at the Newport RI boat show, and a couple of guys kept walking by our booth, and they'd turn around and walk by again.

DS: It was just the two of us working the booth, and either one of us would be in the booth and the other would be on the water demonstrating. So, there was always one wet person in the booth.

HS: But anyway, these guys really felt a little bit shy to say the least, because they thought it probably was a gimmicky thing.

DS: These were establishment people.

HS: Yes, very much sailors. These are heavy duty sailors, Steve Lirakis and Fud Benson. And, they said, "Let's go out after you close down, give us a chance to try this. You show us how to do this."

DS: "But not right here at the show," they said.

HS: It was actually that afternoon. I think we even loaded the stuff on their car, but if not we traipsed a couple boards, or one board, down to this little cove where no one could see them. And it was just like this, except there were gusts coming through. Really nice gusts. I was about this deep in the water, so I just went like this, and got a big gust and went, woosh, like that, big long board, big show off. Their eyes just got this big because they're standing right next to me now, I could just see it. I knew right then that they were hooked. It was that simple. They hadn't even tried it themselves yet. They hadn't of course suffered the frustration, but that one little concept of making it so easy, just standing on it and whoosh. Which isn't always that easy, and they worked at it that afternoon until they were sailing. That simple. And it hooked them. Bang. So I guess, how do you repeat that enough times, so that you get people hooked? I don't have an answer.

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