

Interviewee: Jackie Walsh

Interviewer: Brooke Arnold

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Start of Interview:

(Brooke Arnold) This is Brook Arnold interviewing Jackie Walsh. Jackie what is your date of birth?

(Jackie Walsh) March 25<sup>th</sup> 1989.

(BA) And where are you from?

(JW) Riverside, Illinois it's a suburb of Chicago.

(BA) Why did you decide to come to Northern?

(JW) Well when I was sixteen or seventeen I was kind of picking my schools based more on what I could do for fun in the area as opposed to just the school its self. And uh I knew I wanted to study either athletic training or architecture so I made a list of schools that had both of those majors. And then I started out looking for places that I could surf, so I went on a business trip with my dad to San Diego and checked out some places there and then we took the train up to LA to visit my uncle and went to some places like UCLA and Pepperdine and then Southern Cal and then that summer there was a convention for the American Bar Association in Honolulu and my dad's a corporate attorney so his company had sent him there on business for free. And he actually really didn't want to go because he wanted to be off that week instead of going on a business trip but I begged him to take me to see the University of Hawaii at Manoa. And he said if I paid for my own air fare I could go so I did and it was really expensive but it was a lot of fun because I got to surf every single day on the trip and one day I went to visit the university which actually really did not impress me at all. So that ruled out Hawaii and my experiences in southern California pretty much lead me to the knowledge that I like visiting there but it's just kind of weirdly different and I really didn't think I wanted to live there for four years. So then I decided since whenever I am surfing I always think of snowboarding I'd rather go somewhere where I could snowboard all the time. But I was kind of out funding for being able to check out places out west and I had no idea where I wanted to go to school anymore. So when it was time at the beginning of senior year when it was time to start apply to places I applied to like six schools and some of them were big and some of them were small, I just didn't know where I wanted to go. So I just applied to a bunch of places figuring I'll decide after I find out where I get accepted. And I was talking about snowboarding with my friends on the swim team in the locker room one morning and one of my friends said oh you should check out Northern Michigan my brother really wants to go there. So I looked into it and I applied and I got in and they offered me a spot in a scholarship competition. So in January my family and I drove up here to visit and checked out the school and I ended up not getting a full ride but that was ok because I had some other smaller academic scholarships already and I really loved the school. It was my favorite because it like had the biggest dorm rooms out of all the places I had gone to see. And I loved the Marquette area, it's just beautiful up here and obviously Marquette Mountain was nice and close.

So I... just this was my favorite it was my number one choice and it was also probably one of the most economical out all the schools that I had applied to because it is cheaper for me to go here um even without my scholarships than it would be for me to go to the University of Illinois. So this was my pick.

(BA) Cool and you eventually decided on what major?

(JW) Athletic training um I don't know if we actually have the architecture I kind of decided against architecture somewhere along the line before I made my final decisions for colleges. And I really love the athletic training, it's a lot of fun.

(BA) That's cool why did you choose this major?

(JW) When I was a little girl I got sick a lot and my doctor was kind of a drive away depending on the traffic and then once you got there, there was always a ton of patients so you would be in the waiting room forever. And then you would be in the exam room and it would be even longer and I just could not understand why my mom wasn't a doctor so that she could just wake me up in the morning for school and be like oh you are sick let me give you a checkup and write me a prescription and go to Walgreen's and get it. So I guess I've always figured that was the most practical thing for a mother to do and at the time I wanted to grow up and be a stay at home mom just like my mom. So I don't know I always kind of wanted a medical background, and I always liked science a lot and by the time I fourteen or fifteen I really didn't think I could pull off med school because it just sounds gruesome. But I took a sports medicine class as an elective in high school because I thought it would be a good idea to know First Aid better and I really enjoyed the class. The teacher had an athletic training major in college and she was basically just teaching us an intro to athletic training class. So we learned a lot of tape jobs and some other stuff more advanced than antimony and I enjoyed it a lot. So then she recommended that I go this week for high school students over the summer at Northern Illinois University there is stuff about athletic training. So I picked that major and then I really enjoy it, it's a lot of work we have a lot of clinical hours but it's fun being able to meet all the athletes and work with them and um I don't know it's just really cool. I was pretty mad for a while when I first got here and I found out that it was every bit as gruesome as I thought it would be and the thing that I would probably like most about the athletic training major is that it's just like pre PT or something because a lot of thought of going to physical therapy school after this is that. Like my friends right now that are pre PT majors they are taking all of these sciences classes that they need as prerequisites for PT school and they are learning a lot of stuff but they are just kind of learning general chemistry and all kinds of bio and I can go in and take a couple of those extra classes that I need. But my core classes are all the stuff that they are actually going to be doing so I have already got a lot of experience, I know how to evaluate an injury I know how to manual muscle test, I am learning about the ---- and physical rehabilitations and like I think for to be able to apply to PT school they need to have like 80 hours of observation hours or something for like the hardest schools to get into. And that is just like watching what goes on at a PT clinic. I do that many hours in about half of a semester but I actually get to physically get to get involved and do things that the physical therapist and athletic trainers are doing. It's pretty cool, I really enjoy it.

(BA) Are you involved in any sort of groups on campus?

(JW) Yeah um probably the biggest time consumer is swimming. I swam in high school um before then and it was my life. I loved it a lot but I kind of felt burnt out by the end cause all throughout high school I had only taken two weeks off every year and it just got to be a lot. So my freshman year I was just a normal college student and that was really fun but I am just athletic and I like to exercise and stay in shape, and I had tried running to stay skinny because I am use to being able to eat a lot from working out so much. I have a pretty bad sweet tooth and I just... you know it's no fun if you can't eat at least 200, I mean like 2500 calories a day! And someone my size probably only needs like 1800 if they are not working out that much. So I can eat a lot more if I can swim but I tried running and I like it ok but it's just not the same I don't want to do it every single day like I do with swimming. So my sophomore year I emailed the coach and let me walk onto the team and I don't think that I'm like one of our best swimmers by any means but I still really enjoy doing it. The girls on the team are awesome, the first time I met them it was team picture day and I haven't even been to a practice yet but the coach was like come on and be in the picture because you are going to be on the team. My friend who works at a swimming pool had asked me to be in a run way show for Jessica and Company at the Metrixs before I joined the swim team and the run way show happened to be that night so that morning I had gotten this big fancy updo with blue extensions to match the dress I was borrowing from the White Gown-Black Dress, that boutique on Washington. And I had my hair done crazy and I show up to picture day with this team that I just about to join and I was just so nervous because I was thinking these girls are all going to think that I am completely insane! But they were very nice and they always have been very nice and I just love hanging out with them, they are a great group of people. We have a lot of fun, we had a pretty long season and our practices are at 5:30 in the morning so that can get pretty miserable but we have a lot of fun together and we all enjoy it. The only thing that I really don't like about it is training trip over Christmas break is always the same week as Skate and Snow clubs trip out west which is my second favorite group that I am in on campus. And there is nothing I'd would have loved more than to be able to go to Big Sky for 700 hundred dollars last Christmas break but I had to go to Coco Beach instead. And now this year they are going to Winter Park without me and I am going back to Coco Beach. But it is worth it to swim and I still get to do other stuff with Skate and Snow club because like I can go watch the movie premier and last year we had a surf day that I got to go to. Which it was totally flat that day and that kind of sucked because no one could actually surf but we had paddle races and I won so I got a free t-shirt. That was pretty cool [Laughs]. I don't know it is so fun dude it's pretty loose and like nobody is that really intensely involved other than going on the trips and stuff but I have a good time, I like the surf days. It's cool. I wish I was able to go to more of the events but it is fun. And then um... we have a Student Athletic training organization that I am involved in and that uh... we mostly just do the fundraisers for our club and like sell raffle tickets at hockey games and we do volunteer work and we raise money for organizations and we help out with people in need. We try to promote the awareness of athletic training because a lot of people ask me what my major is and I'll be like athletic training and they will kind of be like ok?... what's that? [Laughs] Um so I think that really is the kind of foundation of ...of the club is to not get asked that question any more. [Laughs] um but it is fun um I did some of the volunteer work with them last year because with swimming I also have to miss events for that too. But they go to a lot of conferences for finishing Athletic Trainers Association and the Great Lakes Athletic Trainers Association so you can do a lot of networking at stuff like that and try to get internships and you can also learn things in seminars that we don't necessarily go over in class. Like more advanced

massage therapy technics or how to use some kind of therapeutic --- that is more up and coming then that maybe that Northern has purchased yet for our trainers. So it is pretty educational and it's a it is a good group to we get to do some fun stuff together. We have a pretty cool banquet at the end of the year at the ---- and right now our treasurer is trying to promote a tubing event, we are all going to go tubing on the Au Train River I guess. A lot of people want to chicken out of that because they say it is too cold but I am all for it. If they can get a boat I will go. [Laughs] So um I think that is all of my student organizations pretty much.... Um... yeah.

(BA) Ok how did you originally get involved in swimming?

(JW) In swimming as a child or here?

(BA) As a child.

(JW) I actually hated it [Laughs] my parents are both have taken swim lessons and have swam on a team as kids for at least a year or two so they just thought that it was just very important for my younger sisters and brother and I to learn how to swim because they wanted to be confident that if they brought us to the beach or we went over for a sleep over at some friend's lake house or something that we weren't going to fall in the water and drown. So they made me take swim lessons when I was seven in the winter and then start on the swim team that summer at our swim club in town. And I don't know with my parents swim lessons aren't good enough you have to be on a team until you can beat dad in every stroke. [Giggles] and at the time I thought this is ridiculous in the morning when it is freezing cold and I hate you people for this. Which now that I think about it the little kid practice is at like 9 am and that is like nothing. I could be up every day for the rest of my life at 9am and not complain about it after continuing with swimming as I got older. I...I don't know it took me a lot of years to get to the point where I finally had a shot at being able to beat my dad at 100 IM and when I was 11 I started really practicing that 100 IM outside of practice going to the pool in the afternoon to work on it a little bit extra and timing myself so I could get it down. And I was going to race him at the end of the summer and the funny thing was that was the year that I started to like it [Laughs]. So that summer I didn't race him that summer and figured eh if I feel like doing it next summer ill race him then. And so that winter my two little sisters who had to begin swimming for the same reasons, well they would have to being swimming for the same reason I had except they always wanted to be just like me growing up because I was the biggest. So I started at seven and Clair wanted to do it too so she started at six and then both of us were doing it and then Kate wanted to do it so she started at four and I didn't even think she could make it across the pool on the first day but she is bounded determined she is going to be on the team with us that year. So by the end of the week she is keeping up ok with the other little six year old kids in lane one and they loved it so much so that year when I was eleven and started to like it they wanted to start doing year round swimming and my parents were like well do you want to do it too? And I was like you know I like this better but I don't think I need to do it in the winter so Clair and Kate started swimming and I would have to ride with to drop them off and pick them up from practice because I was still a kid and I had to be with my mom. And I had to go watch all their meets and the funny thing was it wasn't like ugh annoying I have to be here, it was kind of like if I am going to be here I want to be in the pool. So I started about a month after them with the winter swimming and I have been swimming year

round ever since, I really loved that team I made a lot of really good friends on it that I still talk to today even though they are hundreds of miles away right now but like some of my life time best friends are from that winter swim team. And they really, well by the time I was twelve I was obsessed with it, like everything like every creative writing piece with school, something you are successful at something that has been important to you like all of them were about swimming. Like even my best speech when I took speech sophomore year of high school was about swimming. So it was my life.

(BA) How did you get involved in surfing and snowboarding?

(JW) Um well my parents skied when they were in their twenties and they liked it a lot but it was kind of an expensive hobby so they didn't take us when we were little especially since growing up in Chicago you know our closest ski resorts are all land filled with a snow machine blowing on it when the weather is cold enough. And half of them don't even have chair lifts because they are literally that small. But they thought it would be fun to give it a shot to take us to do that. So when I was like eleven or twelve they took us to this little basically all bunny hills ski resort and rented us skis one Saturday and we learned how to do it. And it was fun we all liked it, so then the next year there were trips that my community center had for junior high kids and that was actually the reason they thought of it the year before because I was finally old enough to be able to go on those trips but I didn't know how to ski so they didn't put me in it that year. But now that I had tried it and I had liked it when I was twelve I started going and a couple of my friends did and we made some more friends that did and it was five Fridays in a row in January and February every winter. They'd the bus out to this resort about an hour away from home and you would ski for like 5pm to midnight basically and then they would take us home. It was a small place it only had like one chair lift but it was fun to learn on and it... I really enjoyed it so I did that for like two years in junior high. And then the last year we were allowed to do it with freshmen year of high school and all the boys of course snowboarded and in junior high everyone, me and my friends were all kind of a little crazy we need to learn how to snowboard so we can meet the hot snowboarder guys. Um but we were kind of you know insecure and shy and didn't want to be falling in front of the cute boys so we keep putting it off until next year. And finally freshman year of high school I was just like I really want to do this so I signed up last minute and got on the waiting list, two of my friends signed up with me only one of us ended up getting a spot and I was the first one on the waiting list. So I ended having to do it all five weeks, all by myself and I actually kind of think that made a big difference because would get a free lesson from the instructor every time that they would let me because it wasn't like I was missing out on hanging out with my friends. And when I wasn't in the lesson I was just working really hard on my skills because that's all there was for me to do for the most part. So I you know at the beginning it was rough but I learned it and worked hard at it and I really liked it a lot. And the next Christmas I begged and pleaded for a snowboard so that I wouldn't have to ride the rental boards anymore and my mom really didn't want to do it because they were so expensive and she felt bad that I couldn't have as many presents as my brothers and sisters but my dad was like no she is fifteen she understands how much money is spent and stuff. Like if this is the only thing she wants then that's the only thing she gets then that's ok with her. So they got me the snowboard and I was so excited because I really didn't think they were going to get it and uh that year my high school also had a Ski and Snowboard club and my freshman year I had just skied on those trips because I didn't want fall in front

of the hot older guys. But that year I uh I think I... I think I just snowboarded every time because I was like I have this new board so now I have to use it. And then one of my friends who knew how to snowboard and had one but skied because she was better at it, like no I am going to work on this with you. And I really didn't know her that well when we first started but we wound up sitting together on the bus together all the way out to Chestnut and it was like a three hour long ride and we talked the whole way and ever since then we have been really tight. She gives me my guts with snowboarding because will always be the one who will be on the chair lift and is like we got to hit the training park. And I'll be like uhh that looks pretty gnarly I don't want to hurt myself here and she'll be like no no we will just do the small ones we will give it a shot, so if she does it I got to do it and I get out there and then after I go over a little one I'm like alright let's try the next one. And next thing you know she is trying to pull back on my rings like ok let's not do the big big ones until next time you come down. But we made each other a lot better and then my other best friend from high school that I hung out with a lot on the weekends was like this is really cool I want to try it with you guys. So the three of us are like this dynamic trio and by my senior year my dad didn't use his car much so he'd let me take it and so we would drive up to Wisconsin to all the resorts in Madison three hours away and make a day out of that. We would stay at my grandparent's place one place at Alpine Valley and spend the whole weekend snowboarding together. It was a great time. The funny thing about it is that I think senior year when I had that car even though the closest resort that I went to was a two hour drive from my house, I went snowboarding probably more times that I have been in Marquette the last two years that I have been here. But I don't have a car up here so I can't get to Marquette Mountain by myself. Probably if I went by myself it would be kind of dangerous anyway so I don't know this year I think I am going to snowboard more though, I have a lot of friends that do it now my freshman year I didn't really meet that many people that did ironically. But my sophomore year I met a lot of guys who snowboarded and they of ours have better class schedules than me because they don't have clinical hours and stuff but I can still go with them on the weekends, that's the plan. Ok how I got into surfing was, you know how it is always in the movies and on TV as this really glorified Californian surfing like there is nothing cooler in the world and it just kind of that whole cultural influence that you get from TV I think is what made me want to try it. So um it was just this kind of dream that I had to attempt surfing and when I was seventeen and I wanted to go look at those schools out west that was the first time I got to go visit my uncle in LA and he has a board and so he said we can go surfing that weekend and actually he was very busy that day because he had other plans so he pretty much just dropped my two sisters and my dad and I off at the beach with rental wet suits and his fiber glass board and his wife's foam board. And was just like ok your dad did this with me once or twice way back when you know before you were born so he knows how to do it. I don't think he can get up but he has got the idea so basically you get on the board you paddle out there and then you turn around and then you have to wait for the wave to face and that means that it is going to be straight and be about to break. And then you are going to have to paddle really hard so that you catch it right when it faces and then when you catch it get up! Ok good luck guys! [Laughs] and then he pretty much just left us there and that was the end of Sunset strip and I did manage to get up that day because I was bounded determined to do it so uh I don't think I was up for very long but I accomplished it I was pretty happy. And then he was like oh do you want to come back here and visit me sometime? And I was like I would love to and he was like alright well why don't you come for a week this summer and babysit my kids for me? So I was like ok I guess and he flew me

out to LA that summer for a week and he actually had his board in storage because he just moved from a condo into a new house that he had built. But he had a business trip in Huntington beach so he brought me down there for one night and that one night while that morning while he was in his like conferences and stuff he got me a surfing instructor and a rental board and stuff and I got to surf Huntington Beach for about two hours and then they blacked all the beach which sucked but my lesson was over anyway. So that made it a little bit better because I got a lot more instruction and then about a month later was the Hawaii trip to check out University of Hawaii at Manoa and my dad's company is like sweet, they put him up in the --- at Waikiki right on the beach. And like we weren't in like the most epic suit or anything but we had a -- and a really small partial ocean view but that is still like the most amazing place I have ever been because I don't go on vacations like that. So um I went there and the first day my dad really wanted to surf so we walked down to the beach and talked to a couple beach surfing instructors and most of them just want to take your money so they are like alright its thirty five bucks for an hour and then it's another thirty five for the board and yada yada and its really expensive. But we kept walking and stopped at this one local guy who worked at one of the booths and his nickname was Mombee [Spelled Phonetically] and he was just really Hawaiian looking and he was a great guy. And he was just like alright I can rent you a board for like thirty five dollars a day or you could walk about two blocks this way and he showed us how to get there and there is this little surf shop. And it's about hundred dollars to rent a board for a whole week and then just call me when you want a lesson. So my dad rented me a board for the week and they stuck me on a long six which was by far the longest board that I have ever been given and I thought this is ridiculous I am going to look like a total schnooby. But it was actually fantastic because I am only like five three and I am so light and on that big long board I don't even have to paddle to catch a wave. It just like I actually caught them backwards sometimes because I was trying to paddle into them and they would turn me around and I would just manage to get up and ride off of that. So it was pretty sweet riding a lot easier when you don't have to paddle very hard. And I had two lessons with Mombee, maybe three and then I just kind of practiced on my own the rest of the week. Which was cool because when you have the surfing instructors they always take you to where the waves are big and pretty close to the beach and they are smaller there. But if you willing to paddle a good three or four hundred yards out, maybe more in front of one of the --- the waves are pretty sweet start coming in. and that one probably had like at least three or four foot waves which you measure the waves by like half of what it really looks like. So that is like six or eight feet in my face. And um I was riding those ones, those were fun. Ok that is my story of extreme sports and Northern Michigan University.

(BA) Alright thank you Jackie, this concludes the interview with Jackie Walsh,

**End of interview**