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Jon Saaris interview with Milton Hakkorainen



Me: My name is Jonathon Saari. Today's date is Dec. 4 1993. I am interviewing Milton Hakkorainen, my Grandfather, At his house in Ishpemingon U.S. 41. Type of interview is topical.

When and where were you born?

Gramp: I was born in nequance Michigan, Oct. 11, 1930.

me: what are the names of your parents?

Gramp: my fathers name was Anard, my mothers name was Martha.

me: what did your parents do for a living?

Gramp: My dad had different jobs, he worked in the mine, worked in the city of Detroit in an auto plant ore factory and Denver Colorado as a toolroom clerk. My mother she did some work in detroit and some work in the Denver Public schoolroom system.

me: what are the names of your brothers and sisters?

Gramp: I got a brother named Paul he lives in Westminister Colorado and a sister named Mary and she lives in Denver Colorado.

me: Are you currently married?

Gramp: Yes!

me: If so what is your spouses name?

Gramp: my spouses name is Patricia

me: what are the names of your children?

Gramp: I have four children from my first marriage their names are Milton Jr, Bonny Gary, and Gene.

me: How long have you been working in the iron industries?

Gramp: All together I have 38 1/2 years

me: why did you choose in the iron industry?

Gramp: I like living in this ~~U.S.~~ part of the country and I feel like the CCI is as good place to work its as good as any place to work in this area if your gonna live in this part of the country.

Include

ME, PLEASE NAME those relatives who have worked in the iron industry?

Gramp: I had my dad work in the mine for 15-20 years. my Uncle ^{Elmer} worked in the mine for 15-20 years my uncle ~~with~~ willis work for 6

Gramp: for 10 years I have a son-in-law Paul Saari that works in the mine. I have a ex-son-in-law ^{Roy Diamond} that worked in the mine. ~~for CCI~~ I had a uncle ~~at~~ Moddy that worked for CCI for 40 years.

me: what are the various mines or buildings you have worked in?

Grp: I started working in the mass mine in 1950 I was transferred ^B over there to the Banker Hill mine I transferred to the Murphy ~~mine~~ ^{mine} And Presently I am working at the Tilden mine. ^{include}

me: over the years what kinds of duties have you performed for CCI?

Grp: 1950 I started off as a ^{underground} ~~general~~ laborer I was ^{shoveling} ~~working~~ ^{mucking benches,} ditches and loading trains. I got a brakeman's job, brakeman's job motorman's job. I also did some stemming, underground I was a basic operator underground and at the Tilden over day I was the first one over there 1979 I was a ~~one~~ the fan floor attendant then I transferred over to the pit and I've been driving production trucks ever since.

me: could you explain what you did in each of those jobs.

Grp: You mean underground?

me: Yes! in the diff, jobs you had.

Grp: Well underground I worked with ^{the hoists} ~~the hoists~~ ~~we were changing rails~~ and putting up track. I worked with the mines we were putting up steel and ^{repairing} drifts. My present job I am hauling ^{ore} ~~ore~~ to the crusher & rock dumps with the production trucks. ^{include}

me: in as much detail as possible can you describe the main duties of your current job.

Grp: My current job is to go to what shovel I am directed to go to

the crusher or to the rock dumps ^{include}

me: mmm: Did this job require any special training or higher education. If so please describe it.

Group: It ahh requires some training ^{at first} you have to be brocker in by someone else learn how to operate the truck and check it out and make sure everything is working properly on the truck. It takes two three shifts of practice before you want drive it by yourself.

on the job training

Me: How Big are those trucks?

Group: Aah the new trucks we got are 190 ton terricks, 170 ton wax roads,

me when you started how big were the trucks!

Group: When I first started they were only 85 ton trucks. ^{include}

me. Can you describe any special machinery or special equipment that you use on the job?

Group: Well the ~~only~~ only thing I can describe is these big trucks that we drive

me or in the past:

Group: Well underground I was a become operator I s h. driving out ties or lowering tracks or putting up steel with it I used it

for cleaning were the trains would load ^{also} the spittie

③ Aah the production trucks are used for hauling stuff hauling ore and rock.

me: What is the most difficult part of your job? ^{include}

Group: Well I would say its drive in all different kinds of weather. we gotta drive in snow sleet slipping roads. ^{include} so I would say

that the most difficult part of ^{our} job.

Me: ~~do~~ you ever get tired on our days?
Group: Oh yes.

me like maybe fall asleep when driving or that
but I get tired ^{on midnights} just like every one else.

me. thinking back over the years, what was the most.

challenge/difficult ~~part~~ duty you had to perform
and explain why?

Group: I, I can't really say what ^{the most challenging part} ~~is~~ is or other years I would

say driving these big production trucks was the most
challenging duty over the years. It takes sometimes

to perform with these big trucks work every
3 diff. shifts with ^{0 0 0 0 25} ~~em~~ I would say that would

be the biggest challenge. include

me. ^{Am I} Over the years what have you enjoyed the most
of your job?

Group: I think the best job I've had is the job
of driving for CC.I... I've enjoyed driving trucks
for CC.I. The money is good and you get a payday every week and
I guess that's the most enjoyable part of it.

Me: What are the most biggest responsibilities of your job? include

The biggest responsibilities of my job is you have to
keep your eyes open all the time, you can't be lolly gaging. quite part
You gotta know what you are doing because there's many trucks out out

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you go to keep your
eyes open.

running around out there and ah and I guess that is
the biggest responsibility of your job is to be there
everyday and try to do the best job every day and
you are rewarded in the end by doing a good
job.


Me: ^{Um.} If it applies to you describe the most
dangerous situations that you have been in.

Greg: I was in one situation one time I didn't
know how dangerous it was at the time I
tore down one of those power cables out
there and it was wrapped around the truck
I was in and if I would have got
off of that truck I possibly could
have gotten electricuted because it would
have grounded right through me. ^{in check}

New hen was that.

Greg: What year? That was back in one of the 35 ton
I don't know what year.

Me: Do you know how it happened?

Guy: well I drove away from dumping a load and I drove away and the power cable was on top and the Boy came down and hooked the cables:  and pulled it down.

me: ummm

Guy: I would say that's the most dangerous situation I was in.

me: Have you been involved or witnessed any accidents? If so, can you describe them?

Guy: Well that was one accident I was involved in with the power cable, and I was also involved in a collision with another truck, I was driving small 85 ton CAT and I hit the back of another truck I broke the windshield and I bent the rail of the cab of the 85 ton cat and I was lucky that I stopped in time or I would have been killed. *include*

* SOMETHING ADDITIONAL THAT WAS SAID AFTER THE INTERVIEW!

include EVER SINCE THAT INCIDENT THEY WERE REQUIRED TO WEAR SEAT BELTS. UP TILL THEN YOU WEREN'T REQUIRED TO WEAR SEAT BELTS BUT EVER SINCE THEN THEY REQUIRED YOU TO DO THAT. SO THAT WAS SOMETHING THAT CHANGED THEIR SAFETY STANDARDS.

me: AND THEN CAN YOU DESCRIBE ANY WAYS THAT FRIENDS OR RELATIVES HAVE GOTTEN HURT?

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GUY: AN? NO I REALLY DON'T I DON'T KNOW OF ANY INSTANCES. EXCEPT A FEW WHEN MAJORS SLIPPED AND FELL, ONLY MINOR ACCIDENTS.

ME: OK; COULD YOU DESCRIBE EITHER THE MOST UNIQUE OR HUMOROUS SITUATIONS YOU HAVE SEEN OVER THE YEARS,

GRAMP: (LAUGHING) THATS ONE THING JON I TRIED TO THINK OF SOMETHING HUMOROUS THE ONLY THING I COULD THINK OF WAS WHEN I WAS MAULING OUT TO THE B-DUMP IT WAS ABOUT 6:00 AM ALL OF A SUDEN THAT BLOODY FOG SET IN I COULDN'T SEE IT WAS PEA-SOUP FOG AND HERE I WAS TRYING TO GET OFF THAT B-DUMP AND I LOOK BEHIND ME AND SOMEONE WAS FOLLOWING AND HE WAS FOLLOWING ME AND HE WAS LOST TO TRYING TO GET OFF FOLLOWING ME OFF THAT GODDAMN (LAUGHING) DUMP AND I COULDN'T FIND THE ROAD (LAUGH) SO HERE WE WERE WANDERING AROUND ON THAT B-DUMP TRYING TO FIND THE ROADS TO GET OFF OF HERE. (LAUGHING)

include

BACKGROUND GRANDM: WHAT ABOUT THAT TIME YOU RAN OVER YOUR LUNCH BOX WITH YOUR TRUCK

GRAMP: (LAUGHING) OH YEA THEN ONE TIME I PUT MY DIAL ON THE GROUND I FORGOT IT AND I RAN RIGHT OVER IT WITH MY RADIO AND EVERYTHING IN THERE SO I HAD A COUPLE HUMEROUS ACCIDENTS THERE,

include

ME: WHAT'S A B-DUMP?

GRAMP: THATS WHERE YOU DUMP ROCK THEY CALL IT ABC DUMP AND I WAS UP THERE LOST IN THE FOG. ONE DAY (LAUGHING)

ME: CAN YOU DESCRIBE YOUR WORKING CONDITIONS LIKE UNDERGROUND AND SURFACE?

Group: Well are working conditions underground weren't the best there
was lot of gas and smoke underground. It got worse at the
mather Bee, they blasted any time of day and when I first started
at the mine they used to blast at dinnertime and quitting time,
AT the moss and bunker hill, but at the mather Bee they used
to blast at any time the drifts were full of smoke, gassy and the
drifts were muddy and dirty.

me: (What are the drifts?)

Group: That's where they haul the ore out of underground diff places
where they go in and they haul the ore out of the drifts
and hah, what did you say now?

me: (working conditions?)

Group: My working cond. at the tilden mine, well like I
said before your working cond. are good on clear days,
and on rainy, snowy, and fussy days your working
cond. are all together drifts you gotta drive in the
fog you gotta drive in a snow storm, you gotta
drive in a rain storm

me: Can you describe what the pit looks like? Monday on tilted

Group: Well the pit is made up of drift, benches, and
the shovels are placed on drift, benches, you gotta
dispatcher system in your truck they tell you
where to go to that shovel and get loaded
whether it is if its ore they tell you gotta the
crusher and you dump it after you loaded if its
rock they tell you to go to that rock and dump
it.

me: how do they tell you?

Group: ON a screen on your computer on your truck.

me: How did they do it back in the older days?

Group: they never had computers till 5 years ago, before that

#8 they would just ask you to go shovel and
you would stay there all day and run back and forth to that
shovel all day long

include
GREEN

include

me: How have safety standards changed and what improvements do you see are yet to be made?

Group: the safety standards for CEI have improved 100% 500% over the last 5 years. Things are getting better out there all the time we have ⁱⁿ safety meetings every ~~week~~ we have to wear safety hats, glasses with side shields we have safety classes once a month, we have to wear seat belts in truck I would say CEI is going ^{ahead} very well with there safety program out there all the time, and there injuries are going down all the time.

include + quote

me: What improvements do you see are yet to be made?

Group: There is still lots of imp. to yet to be made everyone don't follow the safety rules, that's one of the main things out there if you don't follow the safety rules you're going to get hurt people just have to make up there mind to follow the safety rules.

me: ~~me~~ how have you seen the duties of your job ~~to~~ change over the years?

Grampa: Things have changed so much out there in the last 40 years it's unbelievable with the big equip ment we run this is compared to what used to be were hauling less loads a shift but were getting more production done because of the big equip ment we got.

Me: Can you describe what your co-workers are like?

Grampa: Well there are all excellent workers to great hidden mine every one has to pitch in and do there jobs and that's one thing all the people out the hidden do an excellent job out there. *in chad*

Me: Do you remember any stories that stand out about them?

Grampa: Ah no I have no stories.

Me: Oh during your career, were you involved in any special projects or implemented any new programs? If so please describe them.

Grampa: No special projects with my seniority, one project we had to bring back some trucks to the hidden down 581 highway we went down with the electricians and they put up all the wires for us we got down to as far as the creek at 581 and we cut through the woods and brought the trucks back to Republic.

Me: Have you ever won any awards or been recognized in any way for your job performance?

#10 Grampa: The only awards I have got was a 25 year award for Republic and a 35 year pin that I got.

Me: At any time have you felt like changing jobs or your career? Why or why not?

Group: At times I thought of getting off of tracks and trying some thing else because at times they get boring and I thought of it and every job gets boring jobs - that's why I stayed on the tracks.

me: OK (clearing throat) umphumph! What do you think the future holds for the tilden and the Empire?

Group: I think the tilden and empire are going good and I think the future looks good, I think the tilden has a new shore / they call it the "Yoooper scooper" I think they are going to get rid of all that rock out there I think it looks very good for the tilden and empire for the future.

me: How long do you think the ore will last?

Group: well they got about 20-25 years of ore and on the other side of the Empire they got another body of ore called the cascade and eventually that will be opened up. in 4 years to come and the Republic may not open up.

me: I thought it was?

Group: Yeah there talking about it.

me: What is your opinion on it opening back up?

Group: The republic?

me: yeah.

Group: Goot Goot I'd like to see many people so to come to work. (Laughing)

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ME: WHAT DO YOU FEEL MUST BE DONE IN THE FUTURE FOR CCI TO REMAIN COMPETITIVE?

GRAMP: WELL CCI IS GETTING THEY GOT A PROGRAM GOING NOW THAT CUTS BACK ON COSTS THAT'S THE MAIN THING IF THEY CAN CUT BACK ON THEIR COST AND THEY GOT GOOD PRODUCTION OUT OF THE PEOPLE THEY GOT WORKING FOR THEM THEY'LL BE COMPETITIVE AS LONG AS THEY'RE IN OPERATION.

ME: WHAT DO YOU THINK HAS BEEN THE KEY TO SUCCESS OF CCI WHERE OTHER COMPANIES HAVE FAILED?

GRAMP: WHAT I THINK THE BIGGEST REASON THAT CCI HAS BEEN SO GOOD ALL THESE 100 YEARS OR SO IS THAT THE WORK FORCE THAT THEY HAVE THE PEOPLE THAT WORK FOR THEM I DON'T THINK YOU WILL FIND A BETTER WORK FORCE THAN THE PEOPLE IN THE U.P. THEY DO. 100% EVERY DAY AND THAT'S WHY THE CCI HAS GOT SO GOOD PRODUCTION BECAUSE THE MEN WORK SO HARD FOR THEM.

ME: OH BU. I FORGOT TO ASK THIS EARLIER, WHAT WAS YOUR PARENTS REACTION TO YOU WORKING IN THE MINE? WHAT DID THEY THINK OF YOU...

GRAMP: THEY, THEY. I DON'T RECALL THEM SAYING ANYTHING ABOUT NOT GOING INTO THE MINE I OH WORKED IN THE MINE FOR 8 YEARS. 1950 I STARTED, IN '58 I GOT LAID OFF I WENT AND WORKED FOR THE STATE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT FOR 6 YEARS. I REALLY LIKED THAT JOB I HAD A CHANCE TO COME BACK TO THE MINING COY. I DEBATED THAT IDEAS, IT WENT THROUGH MY MIND.

many times I thought should I go back or stay with the highway department. If I would have stayed with the highway department I could have retired at 54 years old. So I came back with CCI but I don't regret it now.

me: Looking into the future how do you think history will remember CCI and its workers?

Gramp: well, you have to look at CCI as one of the big producers of iron ore for all the years they have been producing iron ore all they're one of the tops and right now they are probably one of the top producers of pellets in the United States if not the world right now. So people have to go back and look at them as a one of the big producers of pellets of iron ore.

me: ~~mirph...mph~~! Let's see!

Gramp: and it's workers. Like I said they got the best workers here in the U.P.

me: How has the role of women changed in the iron industry, and what direction do you think it will take in the future?

Gramp: The role of a woman that's something that's coming in to the iron industry, they are fisheries women these women are doing a good job out there. They driving production trucks here doing other jobs here. Their working in the pellet plant. There working in the concentrator there doing ~~other~~ jobs. There doing good jobs the women that I see working there. They are doing good jobs.

They try to do there best job everyday and there goes to hire more women and the future there there will be more women there.

Me: What skills do the people of today need to develop if they plan to work for CCT some day?

Grant: If you plan on working for the CCT now the first thing you have to do is graduate from high school and if you want to go to college and take up something like typing book keeping you don't get a job for CCT in the office. But you gotta have a high high school education to get any kind of job in, they will be higher like learn your self. If you want to work for CCT they will be higher yourself there ~~it~~ will be work ~~any~~ openings for yourself than what skills do you need you gotta use your head + a high school education.

include + sure

Me: In a related question what advice could you give in general to the students of today

Grant: I would say that the best advice I could give to students of today is stay away from drugs. Because if you get hooked on drugs your future is (laugh) no good at all. You get a good future if you stay away from drugs if you use your head you can go to college you don't have

if you go to college you can get a job from CCI after you graduate from high school up here to stay away from drugs.

Me: mhmhm Let's see

Group: Or they'll ruin you

Me: I was just going to ask a different question, I forgot it now I'll try to remember it. Please describe what you enjoy doing in your spare time.

Group: I like to watch sports on TV. Play bingo Do a little gambling up at the casino (laugh) Gup there once in a while like to hunt like to fish I like to do a little of everything.

Me: How often do you win at bingo?

Group: We win once in a while, once in a while (laughing)

Grandma (Background): None of your business don't have to answer that question.

Me: If I had to do it all over again, would you make the same career choice? why or why not?

Group: well I tell you if I had to do it all over again I was in high school of detroit to get a good job in a bank in the city of detroit if I had the opportunity to do it all over again I would take that job in detroit in the banking. That's what I would do if I had my choice I had that choice.

Me: Looking back over the years what impressions stand out most in your mind concerning your association with CCI?

Group: Well I worked 3 1/2 years with CCI all those years look's back over them years I would say that the CCI has

(15) treated me right they have never done anything to offend me. They never stalked me if I did anything wrong I say my association with CCI over these years is

was very good and Al I like working for CCI Like I said if ~~you~~ lived around here its as good a place to work as any, I rather work for CCI than for construction.

me: You remember this or what other kind jobs is there that you can get at CCI.

Gr: You can get

Over in the pit there is
greater operators than shovel operators than track down
mechanics jobs office jobs Ordnance jobs up on the hill
fuel loader operator small loaders up there just general
labor if they tell you to paint a ladder you do that.
clean up or any

me: what do they have you do when you just start working?

Gr: its a general labor and they tell you what to do as your seniority builds up you post for diff jobs. if you get it you get that job.

me: Before we end the interview is there anything else you would like to add.

Gr: No just that all these years I've been working for CCI and I think
is a great place to work, If you want to live in this area
you cannot find a better place to work than the CCI
The money is good the benefits are there what more can you
ask for

included

me: Are you now or ever been a member of the steelworkers union?

(union)

Group: I belong to 4954 Yes

Me: Have you ever experienced being on strike? If so how many times?

Group: I've been on strike many times since 1950 off hand I don't know how many times Half a dozen or more.

Me: How does a strike actually begin How does it come about.

Group: well the company and the men can't get together on the contract terms if they don't agree on that then the Union will tell them don't go back to work until we can agree on that.

Me: How many employees does a strike involve?

Group: well all the hourly employees, the salary employees work.

Me: What is a purpose of a picket line and describe what happens there.

Group: A picket line is just to let people know your on a strike trying to better your contract. A picket line is just to see that no people try to go in there and take your job cause you're on strike. And to see who goes in and out of there you can't stop them from going in and out of there don't get me wrong now the picket line is just to see watch who's going in and out of there you can't stop them. It's not your right to stop them.

Me: in general what is the most interesting story that you can #

remember from anytime that the workers were on strike?

(united)

Guy: Unique story?

me: huh

Guy: A Unique story?

me: Yes.

Guy: When we were on the end of the road there on strike there there

was two foxes (Coyotes) out there and they were eating out of our hands
now that's a Unique story because they are wild they would eat bread
right out of your hand then there was a skunk and he tamed the
skunk to eat out of our hands. That to me is really something
pred for is a wild animal and it come out there and eat out of
our hands they would eat it. (Laughs)

me: when was that?

Guy: That was not this strike but the strike before in 1950

me: Not too long ago

Guy: No

me: What takes place at union rally?

Guy: At union meets, they give minutes and the secretary will tell
how all the money was spent, what was done. I remember if they
had union duty would get so much money for union duty.

Guy: What else

me: Universally & union meetings.

Guy: They are the same.

H got all toff

me: in your opinion why is the steel workers union so imp. to the
18 workers?

(unio-).

Greg: to do what they want with the men if they didn't like you they would fire you without a union that's why you got to have a union in the steel in 1930 you didn't have a union. You would be working for \$5 an hour and through the years the union has done a hell of a job when I first started in 1930 I was making 90¢ an hour right now I'm making \$14 an hour. So all these years you can see how the union helped us to raise wages.

Me: How much is \$14

Greg: 14 dollars an hour? I was making 90¢ an hour

Me: How much was 90¢ an hour worth (value) today?

Greg: Well in the days in 1950 you could buy 5 lbs of hamburger for \$1.00 Now \$1.20 gets you what 1 lb of hamburger is over \$1.00 (laugh) so you know what I mean

Me: well that's all the questions I got Thank you for letting me interview you

Greg: ~~Thank you~~ ok job.

Me: yes

Greg: was that all right?

Me: yes.

safety - blue
training - red
working conditions - green
equipment - orange
~~future~~ - yellow
~~other things~~
~~responsibilities~~ - purple

or dangerous situations he was in
and black

on the job trainings
safety or dangerous
situations

equipment
working conditions
future of mining

other things (important)
responsibilities
job you are at