

Twenty-Seven IFs in Life on My Path to Becoming a Teacher Senior Year – Brother Bill, The School Bus and The Stars Aligning - Seven IFs

Water Polo and the New Coach

Tom Haynie's replacement coach was Jim Gaughran. In [The Olympic Club](#) sub-section of the [High School - Senior Year – The Best Year](#) section of this chapter, I mentioned being invited to the San Francisco Olympic Club to try out for its water polo team. I also listed three names of note of people I met there who would play a role in my future water polo life. Jim Gaughran was one of the three names I mentioned.

Jim was on both the swimming and water polo teams while he was at Stanford. He was a champion swimmer and captained the 1953 water polo team. He was also on the USA Water Polo team at the 1956 Olympics. Jim attended Stanford Law School after graduation. He was working in Sacramento as the Deputy Attorney General for the State of California when Stanford offered him Tom Haynie's position as Stanford's swimming and water polo coach.

All our lives are filled with IFs. In this case, Jim's IF was, IF Stanford hadn't thought to ask him, then it never would have occurred to him to become a water polo coach. Jim had never even thought of coaching. His three years in Law School, followed by his career as a lawyer, were evidence of that. Jim's water polo IF turned out to be just as big a career-switching IF for him as it would be for me.

Coincidentally, Jim's brother Bob (who I also knew from my earlier Olympic Club experience) was now the swimming and water polo coach for my alma mater, Menlo-Atherton High School. My brother Bill, who would be a Freshman at Stanford in Jim's first year, had been a standout player on Bob's league champion water polo team.

No Longer Invisible

Because Jim and I already knew each other, it was easy for me to get permission from him to do the things I felt would end the water polo team's past invisibility. The first thing I did was make sure Jim had the water polo team's games posted on the Fall Quarter Calendar of Events distributed to all students.

In future years, the Freshmen on the team would be there because they had been recruited while in high school. For my brother's Freshman year, there had been no recruiting. I received Jim's permission to post Freshman Team Tryout notices for water polo in all eight of the Freshmen men's dorms. The year before, there hadn't even been a

Freshman team. This year, there were between thirty and forty Freshman at team tryouts.

At that time, water polo was pretty much just a California sport. Many of the Freshmen who showed up for tryouts had no clear idea of exactly what they were trying out for. A couple of the players at the tryouts who were selected and who turned out to be naturals at water polo were excellent swimmers but had never played water polo. One of these players in particular will be mentioned in the following section.

Al Masters, the athletic director who had hired Jim, had now been replaced as athletic director by Chuck Taylor, my Atherton next-door neighbor. The “only seven letters allotted” problem mentioned in the previous section was taken care of with an afternoon chat when Chuck and his wife Margaret were over for a swim that summer.

I had turned down my initial offer to play water polo for the Olympic Club when I was a high school Senior. Now, however, I reconnected with the Olympic Club team through Jim and added Monday night practices at the Club’s facility in San Francisco to my Stanford training.

Our Team – Our Season

This year, we made it into the yearbook. I’m standing next to Coach Jim, next is Bob Spencer, then Brother Jack.



With no last year’s Freshman team to replace our last year’s graduating Seniors and not a single person recruited from anywhere to be on our

team, we were not exactly a group of all-stars. However, we now had much better coaching.

As an example of how our season went, when we played USC near the start of the season, we lost 20 - 2. We still lost when we played them again at Stanford later in the season, but this time the score was 8 - 7. The second time we played both UCLA and San Jose State, each of which had soundly defeated us in our first encounters, we won the rematches by identical scores: 8 - 7.

This year, we also managed to get the Stanford Daily newspaper to report on our games. An example of the coverage:

Stanford Water Poloists Go All Out to Trip UCLA, San Jose State by 8-7 Margins

BY ART ROBINSON

Stanford's varsity water polo squad came up with their two greatest efforts of the season as they edged UCLA, 8-7, and San Jose State, likewise 8-7, in action over the weekend.

The two wins brought the Indians' season record to three wins and seven losses.

Friday against the Bruins, the Indians' Bob Lorton practically won the game by himself, pouring in a total of six goals.

LORTON scored the Indians' only goal in the first period as the two teams played to a 1-1 draw for the first seven minutes.

Stanford moved out to a 4-3 lead in the second stanza on goals by Lorton, Bob Spence, and Rich Rosenberger, and maintained the one-point margin in the third period as each team scored once.

Trailing 4-5 going into the final frame, the Bruins put on the pressure as they tied up the contest on a goal by Bob Douglas.

But Lorton moved the Indians back into the lead as he rifled a shot past the Bruin goalie.

THE BRUINS, not to be outdone, then moved out in front by a single digit on scores by Douglas and Fickerson and seemed to have the contest wrapped up.

But the Tribe roared back as Lorton again slipped a shot into the Bruin goal and then tipped in a teammate's pass for the winning goal.

Along with Lorton's outstanding performance, plaudits must be given to Stanford goalie John Bates.

In addition to his usual steady job, Bates frustrated the Uclans no end as he blocked shot after shot and was instrumental in the Indian victory.

SATURDAY, the San Jose State Spartans found a team vastly improved over the one they had earlier walloped by a 17-6 score.

The Spartans moved to a quick 2-0 lead on goals by Len Christiansen, but Stanford retorted with scores by Spence and Lorton, and the first period ended with the San Joseans holding a 3-2 margin.

Stanford asserted itself in the second quarter, scoring three goals to the Spartans' one, and held a 5-4 lead which they never relinquished.

IN THE THIRD stanza Stanford moved into a seemingly insurmountable 8-4 lead as Spence and Lorton again lent their talents to the Indian cause.

But in the last seven-minute period San Jose made a determined assault on the Card goal, as Christiansen, Roger Scaife, and Jim Monassee combined to score three times and nearly a fourth but for Indian goalie Bates' impossible save on a Christiansen shot.

This was probably the Tribe's best game of the season as they outfought and outplayed the Spartans all the way despite some erratic passing at times.

SPENCE topped the Indian scorers with four goals while Lorton and Roger Johnson followed with three and one respectively.

Credit should also be given to Jack Lorton, Mike Conn, Rosenberger, Johnson and Grant Giske, who along with Bates, combined to turn in outstanding games against a tough opponent.

The frosh split a twin bill over the weekend, defeating Carlmont High School, 16-10, and losing to a surprisingly tough San Jose State frosh aggregation, 4-3, to run their season's record to 6-3.

Against Carlmont, the Papooses had it pretty much their own way as Coach Jim Gaughran was able to substitute freely the full time.

PETE PETTIGREW was the top frosh scorer with four goals. Bill Lorton had three, and Dave Fielding, Bob Farrell, and Don Buehler all had two each.

Against the Spartababes, it was the Papooses who were surprised as the San Jose team looked anything like the squad that bowed to the frosh by a 17-6 score in their first meeting.

The frosh held a 4-2 lead at the end of the first half, but were held scoreless in the second while the Spartababes were scoring three times to account for the frosh's third loss this campaign.

Farrell was the leading Papoose scorer with three markers, and Pettigrew added one.

THE INDIAN water poloists resume action tomorrow when they meet the College of the Pacific Tigers here at 3:30.

COP should provide the Cards with all the competition they can handle as the Tigers have defeated San Jose State, a team with which Stanford has split in two contests.

The frosh will take on Sequoia High School here tomorrow right after the varsity encounter.

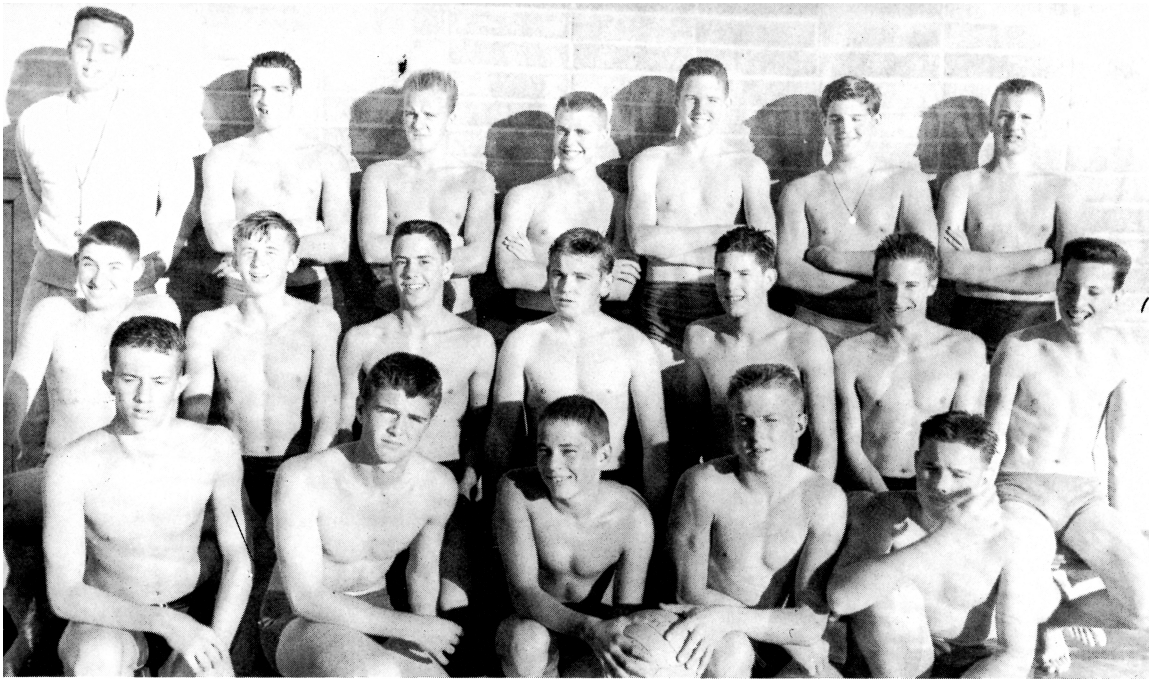
The Cherokees have one of the strongest prep teams on the Peninsula and should rate as slight favorites to hand the Papooses in their fourth loss of the campaign.

My favorite boastful line in the article above is, "Friday against the Bruins, Bob Lorton practically won the game by himself, pouring in a total of six goals." Jack Lorton is mentioned as having had two outstanding games against tough opponents. The Freshman games were also covered, and Bill Lorton's three goals against the San Jose Freshman are also mentioned above.

I finished the year as our team's leading scorer and managed to be named second team All-League as a center forward, behind first team All-League USC's Charlie Bittick. Charlie Bittick's name will pop up again in the next section of this chapter and in [Chapter 3 – The Four Years In-Between](#). Brother Bill finished as the leading scorer for the Freshman team and was also the team's captain.

Brother Bill

My brother Bill was a Freshman at M-A when I was a Senior. He is the smaller of the two players touching the water polo ball in his first M-A team picture.



When Bill was a Freshman at Stanford, I was a Senior there, as well. At that point in time, Freshman could not play on varsity teams. However, when Bill was a Sophomore, I would still have one year of my three-year college eligibility left to use. If I delayed my June graduation, then the following Fall, I could play on the Stanford Varsity Water Polo team with Sophomore Bill and Senior Jack. The opportunity to have the three of us playing on the same team together for the first time in our lives was far more important to me than graduating with my class.

How common is it for there to be three members from the same family on the same college varsity team at the same time, particularly when there are no twins or triplets in the mix? And, how common is it to have all three be in the starting lineup? If I missed this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, I knew I would regret having done so for the rest of my life.

CIF and A First-String Sophomore

There are seven players on a water polo team. Jack and I had both been starters my Senior year. Question asked: Why I would assume that Bill would join us in the starting line-up when he was just a Sophomore? Question answered: Because he was Bill Lorton.

The California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) is the governing body for all high school sports in California. CIF membership includes both public and private high schools. Each year the CIF selects one athlete to be designated as the CIF's Athlete of the Year. That one athlete is picked as the best athlete in the State, regardless of that athlete's sport. During 2014-2015 school year the CIF celebrated its 100th Anniversary by publishing a 100th Anniversary Fall and Spring All-Century Team list. The early years on the Fall list were dominated by football players. However, in 1958, the first water polo player ever named California State Athlete of the Year was Bill Lorton from Menlo-Atherton High school.

Below is a selection of names from the CIF Fall All-Century Team to give you an indication of the caliber of the athletes on the list. The first woman to make the list was Billie Jean Moffitt in 1968, soon to be better known as Billie Jean King.

CIF 100 th Anniversary	All-Century Team
1920 - Ernie Nevers, Santa Rosa (Football)	1958 - Bill Lorton, Menlo-Atherton (Water Polo)
1938 - Bob Waterfield, Van Nuys (Football)	1961 - Billie Jean Moffitt, Long Beach Poly (Tennis)
1942 - Norm Van Brocklin, Acalanes (Football)	1968 - Dan Fouts, St. Ignatius (Football)
1944 - Pete Rozelle, Compton (Football)	1968 - Jim Plunkett, James Lick (Football)
1947 - Hugh McElhenny, L.A. Washington (Football)	1970 - Lynn Swann, San Mateo Serra (Football)
1948 - Frank Gifford, Bakersfield (Football)	1973 - James Lofton, Washington Prep (Football)
1951 - Bill Walsh, Hayward (Football)	1995 - Tom Brady, San Mateo Serra (Football)
1954 - John Madden, Daly City Jefferson (Football)	
1956 - Jimmy Johnson, Kingsburg (Football)	

Jim Gaughran's IFs for Me

Jim Gaughran brought with him a series of IFs in my life that, like almost every other IF, I would not recognize until much later.

As I said earlier, Jim was one of the people I met when I visited the Olympic Club in my Senior year in high school. Jim was now the coach of Stanford's water polo team. He was also still actively involved with the Olympic Club water polo team. That team's focus then was preparing for the 1964 Olympic Games. College coaching and Olympic Club coaching were not mutually exclusive. Because Jim was now our coach, our Stanford team also became the Olympic Club's Olympics-bound team.

When I was in high school, the Olympic Club team was composed primarily of players who were either still competing for their colleges or had completed their college eligibility. Now, however, everyone on the current team was out of college. That out-of-college Olympic Club team was added to our Fall schedule as a team for us to compete against.

In the Summer, that team of older players became the Olympic Club's B team. The Stanford team then became the Olympic Club's A team. The advantage of Stanford's team being the A team was twofold. First, players like me who would no longer be eligible to play for Stanford once we graduated could continue to be a part of the team as it prepared itself for the 1964 Olympic Trials. Second, top players from other colleges in the area could now be added to our roster. The top local talent from our Fall competitors could now be our teammates in our efforts to qualify for the Olympics.

The Olympic Club that Jim brought with him to Stanford insured a water polo life for me long after graduation. That water polo life would, in turn, be directly responsible for events in Mary's and my lives, like my Naval assignment to the USS Midway, Mary's book *Workjobs*, and much more.

Castilleja School

Just before Thanksgiving, my friend Keith asked me if I wanted to take over a school bus driving job he had grown tired of. The job required him to report to the school by 7:00 AM each morning, pick up his "bus" and then drive to the homes of the students on his assigned route, pick them up, and transport them to the school. The worst part of the job for Keith was how early he had to get up to be at the school by 7:00 AM.

I accepted his offer, obtained the required chauffeur's license at the DMV, and went to the school with Keith to get approval for the change of drivers. Right after Thanksgiving, I became a Castilleja School bus driver. The "bus" was one of a fleet of station wagons the school used for students whose parents paid extra for these daily pickups. When I showed up each morning to get my bus, I could see that all the other drivers were college guys just like me.

Castilleja School is the only non-sectarian all-girls middle and high school (grades six through twelve) in the San Francisco Bay Area. Over the years I served as a bus driver, its students were a mix of day students and boarders. The school itself is quite close to Stanford. Palo Alto High School is directly across the street from the Stanford Campus, while Castilleja is just two blocks farther away.

The girls on my route lived in the Los Altos Hills residential community and the neighboring town of Los Altos. The drive to the home of the first girl on my route took about fifteen minutes. The seven girls on my route were always ready and waiting each morning. I would drive up in front of each girl's home, and she would simply walk right out on my arrival.

What I noticed in my first week as a driver was that a couple of the older girls were picking on the first girl I picked up each morning. They were saying rude things to her, and she responded just as rudely. This was happening every day. And if it were happening every day now, then it would certainly have been happening all the weeks before when Keith had been the driver.

Starting with the [Sigmund Freud](#) section of [Chapter 4 - Working with Children](#) and extending through the [Child Discipline Excerpts](#) and [Examples of Behavior Modification](#) sections of that same chapter, I describe the seventeen-page research paper on child discipline and behavior modification that I wrote for my Senior English class in high school. I state there that the first time I had the opportunity to make practical use of the methods I wrote about was when I became a bus driver for Castilleja School for Girls. This was that opportunity.

Since the girl being picked on was the first girl I picked up each morning, it was easy for her and me to have private conversations. At the beginning of my second week, I asked her if she wanted the other girls to stop picking on her. Her obvious answer was "Yes!" I then told her how to respond and not respond to what they were saying.

Even though I had written that paper when I was a high school Senior, I had reviewed its contents several times while I was in college, so I was quite familiar with its contents. I knew what I thought might work, but this was my first try at changing anyone's behavior.

The girl was an excellent pupil. She did exactly what I told her to do and not to do. Each morning before any other girls got on the bus, we could review what had or had not happened on the previous morning's ride and make any modifications needed. By the third week, the picking on had stopped. By the end of that same week, the conversations on the bus

had become just seven girls chatting pleasantly with one another and their bus driver about whatever.

When I arrived at my 7:00 AM bus pickup time several weeks later, every other male bus driver was gone. I was the only male driver still working. Now, all the other drivers were a bunch of older women. I remained the only male driver for the two and a half years I worked there. That half-year was the year I started my Naval career. I drove the bus until I left for Naval Officer Candidate School in January.

I had no idea that what I was doing on my bus would be known to anyone besides my passengers. Obviously, somebody was telling somebody. The girls on my bus told me that I was sometimes talked about by the school staff at the morning pre-class assembly for all the students. I never asked what was being said about me because it would have made me self-conscious. However, it was obviously not bad because I was still working there.

I can only speculate as to why all the other male drivers were terminated. The girl being picked on in my bus had endured the harassment from the start of school until I took over at the end of November. I doubt she told her parents what was going on. She was a Sophomore. She may have had the same problem when she was a Freshman. She most likely thought that her being harassed was just how things were, and there was nothing she could do about it.

I also have no doubt that when she told her parents that the bus driver had ended her harassment, her parents then knew the harassment had existed. This is still just speculation, but it is reasonable to assume that her parents passed on to the school that the harassment they never knew existed had now ended. The question then would be, why hadn't it ended earlier? Why had it taken a different bus driver to fix the problem? And, if it had happened for so long on this one bus with no one at school knowing, what was happening on every other bus with no one knowing?

One Benefit and Then Judy

I benefited a great deal from my time as the bus driver. One thing in particular helped me when I eventually became a teacher. I found one of the girls on the bus that first year to be particularly annoying. Not because of how she was treating others. Simply because of how she was as a person. What I decided was that if I were annoyed by this person, then I would never really enjoy my bus driving experience. So, I would simply choose not to be annoyed. It was very handy for me when I became a teacher to not find any of my students to be annoying when, if they were not my students, I really would find them to be annoying.

Judy was a girl on my bus that first year that I could tell was not going to make it through the year. She was not suicidal or anything like that. She was just really not happy with either her school life or her family.

Once the girls and I were comfortable with each other and we could just talk about anything, I could hear in her conversations a real discontent with the life she was leading. I had survived my clinical depression ([College - Sophomore – Clinical Depression](#) section of this chapter), and I had learned a lot about myself in the process. I could see a lot of how I had been in Judy. My assessment of Judy was correct. She dropped out of school in the early Spring and ended up hanging out at a locally famous bookstore with a female folk singer whose name you would recognize from that era.

I liked that I was good at changing the behavior of the girls on the bus, so that we all had no problem getting along with each other. I found it frustrating, though, that there was nothing I could do for Judy. It wasn't that I couldn't think of ways to help her. I knew I could help if I were given the chance, but there was no way for that chance to be given. I was just her bus driver. I had no idea at this point in time that I would ever become a teacher. However, when I did become one, I made sure I helped every "Judy" I found among my students in the ways I wished I could have helped my very first Judy.

Spring Quarter Dropout

For a second time, I delayed my admission to Law School. I didn't know what the rules were for remaining eligible to play water polo once my class had graduated, so I simply dropped out of Stanford for Spring Quarter to make sure I didn't accidentally graduate.

I was still the Castilleja School bus driver, but the rest of my day was now open. The job I found to keep myself occupied while everyone else was in school was as a swim instructor for Chuck Thompson's Swim School. I would be teaching non-swimmers to be swimmers.

I mentioned in the [College - Junior Year – The Invisible Team](#) section of this chapter that in [Chapter 4 - Working with Children](#), I said that I had only one job from 1955 through 1964 that did not involve interacting with children. I also mentioned in that same [Junior Year](#) section that I was completely unaware of any actual interest I might have in educating children. For my Spring Quarter job, I could have picked anything as my money-maker. The kind of jobs my friends had: working at McDonald's or Dairy Queen or other nearby fast-food places, pumping gas - like my brother Paul had done one summer in Yosemite, stocking shelves at a Purity Grocery Store - I had connections there. The possibilities for part-time work for college kids were endless.

Regardless of all the possibilities, I was drawn to picking a job that involved working with children. In retrospect, I can see a pattern that I could not see at the time. I enjoyed working with children, and I favored jobs that involved either watching over or working with them.



Summer Quarter

I had dropped out of Stanford for Spring Quarter. I could have waited for Fall Quarter before starting classes again. However, I was offered a lifeguard position at the Stanford Men's Swimming Pool for the Summer. The pool was open in the afternoons to all ages of Stanford staff families. I decided to take a few classes at Stanford in the mornings to fill my time.

I picked three classes I was interested in. The first was a Political Science class. My friend who had applied to Stanford Law School with me when we were both Juniors was a Poli Sci major. He gave me the impression that Poli Sci was a preferred major for future lawyers. I hadn't taken any Poli Sci classes at all previously. I figured I should take at least one before I entered law school.

The other two classes I took were Health Foundations of Education and Psychological Foundations of Education. In [Chapter 5 - Working with Children](#), I mention that I took five courses at Stanford related specifically to child education simply because I was interested in them. I took four in my Senior year. One in the Fall, one in the Winter, and two in the Summer. I took the fifth class in the Fall Quarter of my fifth year.

One Poli Sci class in preparation for law school attendance. Five Education Department classes that did not meet any of the requirements for my major in economics. Classes I took simply because I was interested. Years and years of my parents saying, "Those who can, do. Those who can't, teach," gave me a very negative view of teachers and the teaching profession. So negative, in fact, that despite my obvious interest in education, it never once crossed my mind that I might want to be an educator.

The IFs of The Stars Aligning

IF Jim Gaughran had not become the Stanford Water Polo Coach and brought with him the Olympic Club water polo coaching position. Then my water polo career would have ended with my graduation, and the following five events in Mary's and my lives (all of which are described in later chapters) would never have happened.

- 1 - My assignment to the USS Midway CVA-41
- 2 - My participation in the CISM games (Military Olympics) in Barcelona
- 3 - Mary's writing *Workjobs*
- 4 - Our selection as Miller Math Instructors
- 5 - Writing our *Math Their Way* and *Math a Way of Thinking* books, which were a direct result of our being Miller Math Instructors

IF Stanford had not discontinued water polo as a varsity sport and then not waited to restart it until my Junior year in college, and IF my brother Bill had not become eligible for varsity water polo when I had a year of eligibility left, which caused me to delay my graduation. Then I would have graduated with my Class of '61 and entered Law School right on schedule. As you will see in the next section of this chapter, the delay caused by my playing water polo instead of graduating with my class is what caused me to become a teacher, not a lawyer.

IF I had not become a Castilleja School bus driver, and IF the older girls on my bus had not been picking on a younger one, and IF that picked-on girl had not been the first passenger on my bus each morning, and IF I had not been studying behavior modification starting from my Senior year in high school. Then I would not have discovered that what I had learned in theory about changing children's behavior was something I could actually put in practice. For me, the process had seemed simple. I saw a problem and I fixed it. The school's firing of all the other drivers and choosing to occasionally talk about me at the morning pre-class assembly taught me that what I had done was not as commonplace as I had assumed.

At the beginning of the [1970-1971](#) section of [Chapter 9 - The Yearly History of a Change in Plans](#), there are two "Eddie" stories - Eddie Number 1 and Eddie Number 2. Each Eddie was a child that my school's teachers and counselor had trouble handling. In my classroom, neither Eddie had a problem. What I learned as the Castilleja School bus driver was that changing behavior was something I was good at. That "something" is quite useful for a teacher.