



Center for the Study of the Southwest Texas State University San Marcos

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John Mckiernan: Hi, my name is John Mckiernan-Gonzalez. I'm with the Center for the Study of the South West and I'm here interviewing...

Hervee Jaar: Hervee Jaar from the Ivory Coast, West Africa.

John Mckiernan: Cote d'Ivoire in other words?

Hervee Jaar: That's correct, the French for d'Ivoire.

John Mckiernan: Well this is a project about soccer, local stories, global history. So the first question for you is Mr. Jaar when did you first become aware of soccer?

Hervee Jaar: When I was little, age 3 or 4 I picked up my first soccer ball. Playing in the neighborhood, soccer. The only thing I knew was soccer. We were all introduced to soccer as kids. Growing up I saw my Uncle play I league a little bit, so that got me little bit involved. So soccer, I was not that good. Wasn't that good. That was just ...

John Mckiernan: Was your uncle?

Hervee Jaar: Yeah.

John Mckiernan: His name was?

Hervee Jaar: Oh well he played in Italy in the second division, not the first. Not the first division. The second division. Every time he was coming for the summer, we'd play him. Challenge him a little bit. [crosstalk 00:01:06]

John Mckiernan: When did you first start playing organized soccer?

Hervee Jaar: Organized soccer. Never really played organized soccer. After that I switched into a different sport, basketball. So soccer remains part of my life that's the first ball I picked up, and that's what I was using to make friends actually in the neighborhood, at school, that's where we played in school. Organized, played a little bit at school at age nine or ten.

John Mckiernan: And you stopped playing organized or school soccer when you graduated?

Hervee Jaar: When I graduated, organized soccer, no. I was just doing that for fun because I had a lot of things to concentrate on. But just doing that for fun because it's a part of me. I still worked on the weekends. The camaradery that comes, it was second nature for me.

John Mckiernan: What got you playing basketball?

Hervee Jaar: Basketball? Michael Jordan. Michael Jordan got me playing basketball. You see that guy doing different things and you wish you could do the same things, so picked up my ball was 12, started playing basketball and soccer, depending on what was the available, but I was more into basketball. And after a certain age, around 38, 39, couldn't jump that high, so running beyond that was ...

John Mckiernan: Easier?

Hervee Jaar: Easier for me

John Mckiernan: (laughing)

Hervee Jaar: Say defensive reads. Let the other ones do the work.

John Mckiernan: Great. When did you decide to become a ref?

Hervee Jaar: I decided to become a ref last year after actually watching a friend reffing a game. So he gave me a different perspective on the game that I was not aware of. You know when you play a side, the referee to you is always the guy you're going against, but he's running the game, the manager of the game, and it was challenging. I was looking for a different challenge. Soccer, running, figure out how to run, at the same time trying to see a different side of soccer that I had never experienced before.

John Mckiernan: Curiosity, how did you end up in Austin?

Hervee Jaar: I moved from Dallas to Austin and to the US, attended school. That's how I got here to the US.

John Mckiernan: And that's how you make friends, basketball, soccer, school. Yeah. Well, any other thoughts on soccer in Austin?

Hervee Jaar: Soccer in Austin is growing. The sport is growing. I'm very excited for the sport. Because the [inaudible 00:04:01] makes you look good. The ten days adjustment. Back in the day, soccer was considered a game just for ladies. Soccer moms. I'm glad that the world of soccer came before I came to the US, painted a different picture of soccer and I'm so happy to see everybody playing soccer. It brings everybody together. I mean when you are in the stadium and you hear the cheers. Here, when you're playing together there's nothing better than soccer.

John Mckiernan: Thank you very much, Mr. Saar. Can we take a picture of you?

Hervee Jaar:

[inaudible 00:04:41]