

Chelsea Ridley 2002

Q: Testing. Testing, testing, one, two, testing, testing, one, two. Today is April 30th, 2002. All right, Chelsea. Can you please start with your full name and age?

CHELSEA RIDLEY: OK, my name is Chelsea [Maya?] Ridley, and I'm nine years old.

Q: OK. Good start. OK Chelsea, what school do you go to?

CR: Well I'm half home school, and half Washington, the school across the street. I don't homeschool here, I homeschool at somebody else's house.

Q: OK. And so, you're enjoying that?

CR: Yeah.

Q: So you're homeschooled because you're pretty much on the road a lot, touring and things?

CR: Yeah.

Q: OK. And how often do you tour? For how many months out of the year do you tour?

CR: Mostly every month.

Q: Every month?

CR: Or every two months.

Q: Is it in the Chicago area, or is it --

CR: Sometimes in Chicago, sometimes I went to Detroit, Milwaukee. So [all the?] places.

Q: OK, all over the Midwest?

CR: Mm-hmm.

Q: (inaudible) performances in New York, or California, or anything?

CR: I was -- not yet.

Q: Not yet? OK. So pretty much in the Midwest area.

CR: Yeah.

Q: OK. And how long have you been skating?

CR: Skating for four years now.

Q: Four years. Do you practice every day, or?

CR: Mostly, mostly every day except for Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Q: And do you, where do you practice?

CR: (inaudible) Ice Arena, mostly everywhere.

Q: OK, so wherever you get a chance (inaudible) ice rink, you practice there?

CR: Yeah.

Q: Do you have a coach?

CR: Yeah.

Q: Who's your coach?

CR: His name is Hank Green.

Q: OK. Now Hank Green, is he from Evanston?

CR: Yeah.

Q: He's been your coach from the beginning?

CR: Hmm?

Q: Has he --

CR: No.

Q: No? OK. So he's your most recent coach?

CR: Yeah.

Q: OK. And how long have you had him for a coach?

CR: I've just had him for a year.

Q: OK. You enjoy it?

CR: Mm-hmm.

Q: Puts you to work hard?

CR: Yeah. (laughter)

Q: So what kind of things do you perform in?

CR: Lots of shows, I do competitions too.

Q: OK. So like, are the shows like, plays, or like, skate shows, or?

CR: Sometimes skate plays, like the *Nutcracker*, and sometimes Broadway shows.

Q: OK.

CR: And that's mostly it. (laughter)

Q: OK. And then with the competitions, are these statewide competitions, local area competitions?

CR: What do you mean by local area?

Q: Local, like Chicago area.

CR: Yeah.

Q: (inaudible).

CR: Like a little bit.

Q: OK. And so, what kind of awards have you won?

CR: Like [compulsory?], just program skating.

Q: Are they ribbons, and trophies, and medals?

CR: I just got trophies so far.

Q: OK.

CR: I've gotten, yeah, just trophies.

Q: OK. And your mom and dad go to all, most of your stuff?

CR: Mm-hmm.

Q: And watch you?

CR: Yeah.

Q: Yeah, and you enjoy it? Do you get nervous when you go on the rink?

CR: No.

Q: No? Have you ever been nervous?

CR: No.

Q: You just go out there and skate?

CR: Yeah.

Q: Have you ever had any embarrassing moments?

CR: No.

Q: No? So you're just perfect.

CR: Yep. (laughter)

Q: That's what I like to hear. (laughter) With the competitions, I know you're meeting a lot of people,

(inaudible) other skaters and things, do you become friends with those skaters?

CR: Yeah.

Q: You keep in contact with them?

CR: Mm-hmm.

Q: OK. When you meet with friends as you skate, do you still have like a friendly competition, or you just kind of go out there and have fun, and -- or do you have this like different mentality where you're friendly, and then when it's time for competition time, you turn really serious?

CR: Nah, I'm just always friendly, I always make friends wherever I go.

Q: OK. Have you been interviewed on TV or anything?

CR: Interviewed on TV? Yeah, a little bit, yeah.

Q: A little? Do you remember what stations or channels?

CR: I've been not interviewed by myself, but in a group, yeah.

Q: OK. OK. And this is on, in Chicago you were interviewed?

CR: No, mostly in Evanston.

Q: In Evanston you were interviewed? OK. And all right, so --
-- but I remember seeing at Washington School you were in costume --

CR: Yeah.

Q: -- wearing a costume. Does someone make those costumes for you?

CR: Yeah. Mostly some people make them, or I'll buy them, they'll put the rhinestones on there.

Q: OK. [05:00] And who are some of the people that made some of the costumes? Do you know who they are?

CR: I mostly, I have Mary, this lady (inaudible) Mary. And I have, uh, I'll just buy them, yeah. Mary.

Q: OK. What was the most recent competition that you were in? Where was it?

CR: That was at Flossmoor.

Q: And that was a regional thing, or was that, a lot of people were there?

CR: Yeah.

Q: And it was a competition, right?

CR: Mm-hmm.

Q: Did you place? Did you win?

CR: Yeah, I placed -- I placed third.

Q: Third? And that was in what, compulsory?

CR: Compulsory and program.

Q: And before that, what's --

M1: Sorry, she stepped up -- she stepped up (inaudible). [She was skating as a pre-juvenile?].

Q: OK, you can come up here. (laughter) I mean feel free, come on up. So you're saying she stepped up a level? So

there's like certain levels in the program? And so what is this level that she's at now?

F1: This is more competitive, she's, how do you say it? (inaudible).

Q: So it's like an age, is it an age group, or is it by experience, or is it by --

F1: It's by experience.

Q: Experience? OK. So she stepped up to, the first (inaudible) was like, first level, second level, or however levels --

F1: Yeah. It goes up, it goes all -- actually there's seniors, right?

M1: Mm-hmm, (overlapping dialogue; inaudible). Like beginners.

Q: Sure.

F1: (overlapping dialogue; inaudible).

M1: Preliminary --

F1: Pre-juvenile.

M1: -- pre-juvenile, juvenile, intermediate, novice, then juniors, then seniors.

Q: OK. So she's like at preliminary right now, or?

CR: Pre-juvenile.

F1: Pre-juvenile.

Q: Pre-juvenile? OK. That sounds so negative anyway, you know? Pre-juvenile. (laughter)

F1: (overlapping dialogue; inaudible). It sounds what?

Q: It sounds, it sounds, it's -- when I hear juvenile, sometimes it always sounds negative to me.

F1: Yeah.

Q: But it's not that it is, it's not, but just like (inaudible) like kind of socially juvenile, it's juvenile delinquency and all that. That's what, it just makes me feel like it's negative.

F1: Yeah, I know what you're saying.

Q: You know? (laughter) OK. I'm going to ask your mom some questions too.

CR: OK.

Q: And you don't have to really speak up too loud, because the microphone's really sensitive.

CR: OK.

Q: So you can just talk your normal voice. But some of the, I mean you heard most of the questions I was asking, some of the competition that she does, is there like an air of competitiveness that you feel around [her?], or with Chelsea? Or does she kind of [take?] the same stride over and over again?

F1: I think she's real competitive.

Q: OK.

F1: Yeah. Every time she goes on the ice, she's going on the ice to fight. It's not like, you know, she's going to be laid back and cool with it.

Q: She's focused?

F1: She's focused, no nerves, you know? And she's really determined to, first place every time.

Q: All right. All right. I was asking, some of the costumes that were made. So she mentioned her Aunt Mary made one of the costumes for her one time? Does she, are most of them handmade? Or are they store bought, or?

F1: They're mostly made. The rhinestones sometimes, you know, we'll put them on ourselves sometimes. But they're usually made to fit her. You know in the beginning, you can do that, get away with it, but as they go up a level, you know, you've got to kind of compete there, too.

Q: Right. Do you, at this point in Chelsea's career, are you looking for sponsorships?

F1: Yeah, we're hoping someone will, you know, see her and like to help out.

Q: What's necessary for sponsorship? Is it financial? Is it like, [gift?]? (inaudible) making arrangements for other things, or how does -- well what is it that you look for in sponsorship?

F1: You know, if someone can help her with basically, paying for her coach, paying a coach, that's probably the most expensive --

Q: That's a big part? OK.

F1: -- thing. Ice time, you know, that's another thing. And dresses are expensive, but they're, you know, they can use them for, you know, different periods of time, it depends on whatever the music is, the dress goes with the music. So when the music change, dress change.

Q: (inaudible) change. Got you.

F1: Yeah.

Q: OK.

F1: But basically that, for now, because of her level, but you know, I'm sure traveling expenses are going to kick in. That's starting to, you know, hit us a little bit now. You know? But we're trying, right now we can kind of pinpoint what we're going to do from what we're not going to do, but that's soon [10:00] going to fade away. Because her, you know, the demands for her to skate, you know, different people, you know, call, and they'll want her here and there. Rory from *Ebony on Ice* is trying to get her to do *Ebony on Ice* now.

Q: OK.

F1: So it depends on, you know, you just have to say, you know, letting her, if they're going to let her do it or not, because you know, these are professionals, and you know, she's skating amateur, so.

Q: OK.

F1: But it gets like that.

Q: Yeah. (inaudible) put this in the article so that, you never know what might come of it, you might get a phone call (inaudible). It'll be great. (laughter)

F1: Great. She's, you know, she's very entertaining, very entertaining.

Q: I noticed that, she's -- as soon as I walked in, she had this big smile on her face, "Hi!" (laughter) And (overlapping dialogue; inaudible) and it just seems natural, it doesn't seem forced. And that, and that really carries a long way when you present yourself, that you seem relaxed, you're genuine, and I think it's going to be a good draw for you competitive-wise, that you know, presence is a big judging criteria.

F1: Yeah, that's what they say, [there's?] a good, she has a real good presence on the ice. She definitely has a lot of attention out there.

Q: Right.

F1: She did a show last week at [Frederick's?], and they definitely have told me several people, and the director said that she was the star of the show, which they did not expect at all. But people were actually coming to see this little, little girl on the ice. (overlapping dialogue; inaudible).

Q: Now was that a competition, or was that a, a show?

F1: It was a show.

Q: Was there a program for that show?

F1: Yes, there was.

Q: There was? I would like a, (inaudible) signed program. So there's some of those I would like to borrow, so I could scan them into my system, and I'll bring them right back to you --

F1: Yeah, that's fine.

Q: -- once I'm finished with that. I had a question for you, now I'm almost forgetting it here. Oh. (laughter) Your hopes, in the next 10 years, what are your hopes?

CR: I make it to the Olympics.

Q: You make it to the Olympics? Well that would be the '10, the 2010 Olympics?

CR: Yeah.

Q: Is there like a certain criteria you have to meet, or like certain ways of getting into the Olympics, you have to like win a certain amount of competitions, or?

CR: Yeah.

Q: (inaudible).

CR: To get the Olympics, you have to place the top three, mostly in all the competitions you've gone to.

Q: OK. And so from period now to the Olympics, or is it like a certain time gap, like the last four years before the Olympics, or?

F1: All the way up.

Q: All the way up? Wow. You'll do it.

CR: Yeah. (laughter)

F1: (overlapping dialogue; inaudible). You're doing a good job.

Q: I hope to see you at the Olympics. No, I will see you at the Olympics. (laughter)

CR: Yeah.

F1: Yeah. Well you know, after the last show, people were definitely saying, oh she's definitely going to make it.

Q: Yeah.

F1: And that's what I hear when people see her skate, they usually will tell me, or come up and say, she's got something, she's going to, you know, she's going to do it.

(inaudible) I get that all the time. You know, there are other people's kids, but I mean, I'm like, (inaudible) saying, you know? (laughter) What can you say?

Q: I'm going to switch gears a little bit. What's your daily, let's say on the days that you have to practice, what is -- kind of go through your daily routine, what do you have to do?

CR: OK. So Mondays, early in the morning, 5:30 in the morning, I'm doing moves, and then in the afternoon, I'm skating with my coach.

F1: You (inaudible) school in the morning.

CR: Yeah, I have school after moves. (laughter) And then I skate in the afternoon. And then I come home and get ready, then I come home, and I go to bed. And then Tuesdays, I just go to school. Tuesdays is my off day. And Wednesdays, I'm up 5:30 in the morning, moves, and then I go to school, and then I'm skating with my coach. Thursdays, I'm just at school. Fridays, I have moves in the morning, and then in the afternoon, I skate with my coach. Saturdays at 5:30 in the morning, I'm skating with my coach. And in the after-- not, not really in the afternoon, but I have gymnastics. And then I'm finished for that day. And then on Sunday, I, let's see. Sundays,

I am, maybe at night a little bit. I skate with my spin specialist.

Q: OK. So basically it's almost every day except for two days, you're practicing and [15:00] rehearsing.

CR: Yeah.

Q: Doing something towards your training. Do you come, sometimes go to bed and your muscles are sore, or?

CR: (laughter) Yeah.

Q: (laughter) Have you had any really bad falls?

CR: Yeah, just one fall, when I slit the eye open right here.

Q: Wow.

CR: [hat was my bad fall.

Q: So that doesn't scare you though, you're not really afraid of falling?

CR: No.

Q: Good. Well, you said your hope, your coach is Hank Green, and he's been your coach for the last year?

CR: Mm-hmm.

Q: And he's here in Evanston? How do you like him as a coach?

CR: I like him pretty much.

Q: He kind of works you really hard?

CR: Yeah.

Q: Is he really encouraging?

CR: Mm-hmm.

Q: What other coaches have you had in the past?

CR: I've had one coach, his name is Sam. He's from Russia.

Q: OK, how (overlapping dialogue; inaudible) --

CR: When I was a beginner, I had like, not really a coach, but he was -- his name is Mike. He's from Evanston.

Q: OK. (inaudible) questions here. OK, with all the skating, what do you do for fun?

CR: (laughter) What I do for fun? I just come home and play with my sister, or with my dog, or with my pets.

Q: How many sisters do you have?

CR: Four. Well, three. (laughter) I have three.

Q: Three?

CR: Three, including me is four.

Q: OK. What are your sisters' names?

CR: Fallon, that's that one. (laughter) Erin, she's at school, and Ashley.

Q: Ashlynn?

CR: Ashley.

Q: Ashley. And sometimes, does your whole family come and watch you perform?

CR: Mm-hmm.

Q: And they [reach you?] -- can you hear them as they're just rooting you on?

CR: Yup.

Q: (laughter).

F1: (overlapping dialogue; inaudible) you can't hear us with all that noise.

CR: Yes I can.

F1: (inaudible).

Q: That's wonderful. OK, I think that's about it. Thank you so much.

CR: Welcome.

Q: And I wish you much success, and I'll be following your career as it goes along, and I'm sure your mom will keep me informed, right?

F1: Definitely.

Q: OK. (laughter)

F1: (inaudible). That's where we can.

Q: I'm going to keep the microphone on, but just catch any, in case anything else comes up.

CR: OK.

Q: And we can go through this.

F1: (inaudible).

CR: (laughter).

F1: (inaudible). Doing -- oh, these skating competition when you're black, and a lot of times, she does get first place. But it's just because, and she knows it, we know. But like

she said in her letter, you have to do twice as good to be even considered as --

Q: Yeah, considered even. Considered average, yeah.

F1: Even. Yeah, so she's definitely above, but it'll take a while before, you know, they open the door and really just let her do what she can do. That's why, you know, not to say anything, but I'm happy that her coach is black, and he can understand really, you know, what's going on, because he's been there.

Q: OK. How, how did you meet Hank?

F1: She was skating with her coach at (inaudible) --

CR: It was like --

F1: -- he was kind of passing through, really. And he said (overlapping dialogue; inaudible).

CR: It was, it was like a Saturday. No. It was a --

F1: I don't remember what day it was.

CR: It was a Sunday. And I was skating by myself --

F1: She was practicing --

CR: -- and we just saw him, he was just doing all this stuff. (laughter)

F1: He was, was jumping in the air, spinning in the sky, and (overlapping dialogue; inaudible) and she was kind of like, trying to do what he was doing, and you know, but she had the, the coach that she had before, it was kind of like, he

would kind of hold her back because he wanted to keep her kind of low, and then this guy, you know, (inaudible) she has his, just like letting her go out there and do what, you know, he know she can do.

Q: (inaudible).

F1: So, we went through that, and he was just kind of hired for, you know, the beginning, and like yeah, OK, (inaudible). But that's some of the things that we've experienced [trouble?].

Q: OK.

F1: With skating.

Q: I want to borrow some of these, to scan these in, and I'll bring these back to you.

F1: OK.

Q: OK?

F1: That's fine.

Q: And I'm thinking about, [20:00] I'm trying to -- I have an issue coming out right now, it's going to be going to the press actually on Monday, so it's not going to be in this issue, but it'll be configured for the next issue. It would make a nice, it'll be like a spread, that's how I try to do like an article, I try and do spreads, I try and do interesting things with the spreads. So it's not going to be like an average newsletter where you have like this

picture, and a whole lot of copy. I try and make it really interesting looking, I think it'll help. And I'm going to try and construct it in a way that helps, tells of your dreams, plans, and your hard work. And ways to draw people to, if they want to support or sponsor Chelsea, to -- I don't know if there's like a number you want them to call, or you know what, they can call me and I can --

F1: (inaudible).

Q: OK, I'll have them call me.

F1: Did you get one, is there one in there like this one?

Q: Yes, I got one of those [signed?].

F1: (inaudible). Yeah, that's a different dress, and a different trophy now.

Q: Yeah, I know.

F1: OK.

Q: Yeah, it was taken on the same day though, right?

F1: No.

CR: No.

Q: No? Two different days?

F1: Two different days.

Q: Oh. (laughter) Could you tell me which one is this one?

CR: That is the program, and this is the compulsory.

Q: OK.

F1: You can write on the back of them if you want, that might be easier.

Q: I'm kind of familiar with some skating stuff, and (inaudible) like [I don't watch it?] all the time, but I do watch it from time to time, and I understand some of the terminology and what's required of these, so it's kind of, it's really cool to see this.

F1: You should see her skate, that's (overlapping dialogue; inaudible).

Q: Do you have a videotape?

CR: Lots of them.

F1: Yeah.

Q: You've got tons of them?

F1: Yeah. Like one that she just did, I'm going to give that one to you. It should be here in a couple days.

Q: OK.

F1: And then yeah, I can probably put a couple of them together, you know, and then is there any way I can drop them off in your --

Q: Oh yeah, I'll leave my information with you.

F1: And then I'll put, you know, like some of the, her exhibition, and the tour you did for the winter, I'm going to put that on there.

Q: OK. That'd be wonderful. So Chelsea, again, thank you.

CR: Welcome. (laughter)

Q: Man, this is fun. (laughter) And I will stop the tape here.

END OF AUDIO FILE