

Living Next Door to Joe Theismann, Taking the Neighbors for Helicopter Rides

RK: Well, the quarterback for the Redskins was my next-door neighbor, there. And he was a character. Anyway -

DS: Joe Theismann.

RK: Joe Theismann, yeah. I had a - at that time, I was doing quite a bit of demonstration flying, for police departments and cities and whatever. So, I had a demonstrator that I kept all the time, I kept it in my back yard.

DS: Helicopter.

RK: Helicopter. What'd I say?

DS: You said demonstrator, but, I mean, just for -

RK: Oh yeah, helicopter, demonstrator, yeah. Anyway, Joe was, their practice-thing was at the airport, there. Right near the airport. So in the mornings when I got ready to go, I'd go over - I'd yell at him and he'd come over and get in the helicopter, and I'd fly over to drop him off at the Redskin practice thing and then go on my way. [Laughs].

DS: He probably liked to commute via helicopter - that was probably a pretty big thrill to show up at training camp..

RK: Oh yeah, well, he was a big ham, anyway, Joe was. Good guy, but, yeah, kind of a ham.

DS: Nobody ever said, "hey, how can you be flying out of your back yard?" back in the early days, right, like the seventies, right?

RK: Well, no, I had no trouble at all, because what I did when I first got here, is I went up and I met with all the neighbors, and I said, "well, I'm gonna be coming and going in a helicopter, and I want you to make sure that you understand that it's safe and it's not gonna hurt you and blah blah blah," so I took the whole neighborhood for a ride. Not all at one time. But I took them all, one family at a time, so they all could see it and see how it worked. And I'd take them down and land in the woods, and land on a rock in the middle of the Potomac River, and blah blah blah. So, they could see that it was very flexible, very flexible machine, you could do anything with it, if you know, of course, how to fly it. But I got, everybody was on my team. And I never got a complaint. I worked out of here for years, out of my back yard.