

# Great Game of Huddle Notes

July 10, 2018

**GCSO Major Phil Corcoran began by introducing Cinematographer, Director, Producer and Emmy Award winner Tom Cunningham. Also known to some as a director for over 70 well-known television shows, including Live PD, Undercover Boss, Cops, Super Nanny, First 48, Amazing Race, etc., along with documenting stories and working side-by-side with our nation's Military and Law Enforcement, both locally and abroad.**

Today's Huddle consisted of the very entertaining life Tom has lived, which all started with a bet he made with his high school friend, Todd, who was determined to become a police officer and Tom, even more determined to someday work for the television show, Cops. Today, Todd is a Lieutenant for a Sheriff's Office in Florida where they both grew up, and Tom, well, you'll soon learn, followed-through on his end as well. From operating a camera for a local television show in Ft. Myers, Florida and getting paid minimum wage, to winning news photography awards, 2 Emmy's, to ultimately and most recently, directing the television show Live PD.

In 1995, after moving back to Indiana and determining that college was no longer for him, Tom found himself living in his car for several weeks, still determined to someday work on the television show, Cops. And that he did! After moving to Indianapolis and working for a local Fox Affiliate, also the same network that Cops was airing on, he was even more determined to hold true to that college bet. So, he made a proposition with his news director that he would go behind the scenes with the television show, basically making a documentary of how Cops was filmed, produced, edited, etc. After being granted permission by both his news director, as well as the creator of the television show, he cashed in his 401K and financed his travels to both Los Angeles and New York. After meeting with and befriending Cops Producer and Cinematographer Bertram van Munster, Tom completed his documentary, which was ultimately a huge success with both the creator of Cops, as well as Bertram van Munster. Long story short, Tom ultimately ended up working on the show from 1996-2001. Bet fulfilled!

In 2001, while working in Texas, like so many others, he was affected by the attacks on September 11. After working with law enforcement for so long, he understood the type of people that work in such field and how the public perception of such is not always accurate. Therefore, he made a decision to make sure he would be in the field with our American Troops in order to tell their stories. In April 2002, he found himself with a Special Forces unit in Afghanistan and became the first camera operator embedded with troops in Operation Enduring Freedom. In 2012, Tom again found himself back in Afghanistan, this time working with a Marine Corps Working Dog Team, while also shooting and directing (his proudest piece of work to date) the film Glory Hounds, which aired on Animal Planet and can now be found on YouTube.

Tom went on to work on the award winning reality television show, Amazing Race, for 17 seasons, along with producing and directing several episodes of the Undercover Boss.