

# **Sport at Stirling University**

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This is a personal account of the growth of a Department of Sports Studies at a new University. It traces the change from a traditional 1960s student welfare approach into a multi-layered interpretation of the role of a university in contemporary Scottish society. It covers the twenty years of my time as the Director of Physical Recreation from 1969 to 1989 and is coloured by my memories. Doubtless many events have not been given sufficient attention but it may give the flavour of excitement in being in at the beginning of a new university.

As a brief biographical note I started teaching PE at Dalkeith H.S. in 1960 and remained there for three years before operating for a short time as the Adviser for Youth Service for Midlothian. From there I was appointed as a lecturer at the Scottish School of PE, Jordanhill (SSPE, 1964-66) and then took up a similar post at Dunfermline College of PE, Edinburgh from whence I moved to Stirling in 1969. While at Dalkeith I became secretary of the Scottish Association of PE and editor of the Scottish Journal of PE. The Robbins Report on Higher Education, published in 1963 proposed that a new body, the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA) should be set up to validate the awards of institutions which were presenting courses equivalent to university degree courses. Many of the English specialist colleges of PE were successful in gaining CNAA accreditation for their courses. Through the SPEA I campaigned for similar recognition for the awards of the two Scottish specialist colleges. This brought me into conflict firstly with my Head of Department at the SSPE Hugh Brown, and then with the Principal of Jordanhill, Sir Henry Wood. It was not until 1974 that Dunfermline CPE gained CNAA approval for their B.Ed. course by which time I was employed at Stirling.

In December 1966 Sir Henry Wood informed me that my short term post would not be extended. He also counselled me against trying to change the world too fast. I was fortunate in being offered a lecturer post at Dunfermline College but shortly thereafter was invited by the retiring General Secretary of the Scottish Council of Physical Recreation May Brown to apply for her post. I declined on the grounds that I had effectively been rescued by Dunfermline College. It was at this time that Stirling won the race to establish the new University of Stirling. On behalf of an umbrella body of all the PE associations in Scotland submitted a case for a degree course in PE at the University but it was rejected out of hand.

I was appointed as the Director of Physical Recreation at Stirling in April 1969. My impression of university departments of PE was that they inhabited a separate world, divorced from mainstream PE. I held the Directors personally in high regard — Laurie Liddell at Edinburgh, Archie Strachan at St. Andrews, Graham Niven at Glasgow, Henry U'ren at Aberdeen, David Barr at Dundee, and Duncan Mathieson at Strathclyde. As a stranger to their world was brash and critical. Why were they not campaigning for recognition for PE as an academic subject? It would take some time before recognised the strength of the conservative forces opposing the introduction of new 'light weight' subjects such as PE. I did not appreciate how enlightened the Education department at Edinburgh University was to accept me for a M.Sc. degree with only a Diploma in PE and some publications including a McGraw-Hill book for

schools on Leisure to my name. Having been appointed at Stirling I received a written summary of duties similar to those of Directors at the other Scottish universities. It defined physical recreation as primarily a welfare service for students. It was made emphatically clear at interview that there would be no room for academic developments in PE or sport at Stirling. That would become a bone of contention over the next fifteen years.

**Introduction.** In 1960 there were only four universities in Scotland, namely St Andrews, Glasgow, Edinburgh and Aberdeen, all founded between 1411 and 1583. In 1960, following the approval for new universities in Norwich and Warwick, a committee was established in Stirling to raise funds for a campaign for a university in Stirling. Over the next seven years they and successor Appeal Committees raised £2.2 million, The Robbins Report argued for a massive expansion of higher education, and made a specific recommendation that one of the new universities should be in Scotland. Stirling was one of seven towns which competed for the prize of a new university, and in June 1964 it proved to be the winner. Meanwhile, Strathclyde (1964) and Heriot-Watt (1966) had evolved from technological institutions to become Universities, and Queen's College Dundee (1967) had separated from St. Andrews. Thus, when it opened in 1967, Stirling was the eighth Scottish University, albeit the only completely new institution.

**Facilities.** The government donated a 400 acre eighteenth century estate containing a 28 acre loch and a mansion designed by Robert Adam. In the three years prior to the arrival of the first intake of students a development plan for a University of 6500 students emerged- Playing fields for football, hockey and rugby and a 400-metre running track plus floodlit tennis courts were laid out in the first phase of the development plan. As a temporary measure an air-hall covering a single tennis court catered for indoor sports. It was a target for vandals, and in one three months period it was deflated twelve times, with a consequent smashing of light fittings. Prior to my appointment as the Director of Physical Recreation the University had received a donation of £150,000 from the Gannochy Trust to finance a sports pavilion, They might have been better advised to look at what was happening elsewhere before spending such a large amount on a building that did not include a single activity space. It was a lost opportunity to match the kind of facilities that were being erected in other new universities such as Bath, Exeter, Keele, Kent, Surrey and York. Shortly afterwards St. Andrews University opened a sports centre costing the same as the Stirling pavilion that included an 8-court hall, gymnasium, squash courts, and changing areas for indoor and outdoor sports.

The first Secretary of the University, Harry Donnelly, was previously a senior civil servant with a great passion for tennis. He had umpired at Wimbledon and he ensured that the University all-weather tennis courts were of a high standard. Few of the students showed much interest in tennis but when I proposed to mark the area for 5-a-side football the staff and wives took great umbrage. However the vocal response from students overwhelmed their resistance. The decision to give a high priority to intra mural sport was justified by participation rates. By 1976 there were 48 student and 16 staff football teams using the tennis courts, involving a total of 650 regular participants every week. In addition there were two leagues for 20 mixed hockey teams and smaller of. leagues basketball, indoor tennis water polo using other facilities. In the summer 60 students and staff turned out regularly for intra-mural cricket, and the golf championship attracted 51 entries. A race to the top of a local hill and back, the Gannochy-Dumyat race attracted over 200 entries. All Of this was happening when the student population was well below 2000. Sadly for the University Harry

Donnelly and the Principal Tom Cottrell both died, in 1969 and 1973 respectively, before their ambitious plans for Stirling had reached fruition.

**Rannoch.** The University was always open to new initiatives. Edinburgh University owned an outdoor centre on the shore of Loch Tay which proved to be hugely popular with the student outdoors clubs. Tom Cottrell was a keen sailor and as a professor of chemistry at Edinburgh before his appointment at Stirling had seen the appeal of outdoor sports. Sir Derek Lang who succeeded Harry Donnelly as the Secretary of the

University in 1971 was also a strong advocate of outdoor education. An opportunity arose to acquire an 8-acre estate of Croiscrag on the shore of Loch Rannoch. With the support of both the Principal and the Secretary and an earmarked donation from the Wordie family, the

Rannoch Centre was purchased. It opened in 1971 and operated as an outdoor and field centre managed by the physical recreation service. The house had not been inhabited for some years and there was no electricity. The phone number was Rannoch 4, an indication of antiquity. I recall a group of students arriving to an open fire in the hearth having walked across Rannoch moor from the Glencoe road. We had a real sense of optimism about the Centre. The University Grants Committee (UGC) provided financial assistance with the refurbishment of the building and purchase of equipment.

In hindsight the operation was too ambitious. It was intended that during semester time the centre would be used mid-week by reading parties from academic departments. Outdoor activities for student clubs and groups would be provided mainly at week ends. It was hoped that family holidays would be popular during the summer. For such a relatively modest programme we would have been better advised to look for a cook/housekeeper, and to provide instruction using part time staff based at the university. Instead we opted for a full time warden and full time housekeeper. We recruited Brian Han from Glenmore Lodge, the national training centre for outdoor activities as warden and his wife Kitty as housekeeper. In fairness to Brian he was probably over qualified for the instructional side and inexperienced as a centre manager. I had no previous experience of operating an outdoor centre or indeed any other facility 100 miles away from the campus. It was not an ideal arrangement and our relationship was never a happy one.

Initially the centre proved popular with clubs and departmental reading parties, and the summer holiday bookings were quite encouraging- However during 1975 it became clear that the financial problems of running the centre were coming to a head. Recreational weekends accounted for only of usage, and the proportion of non-university usage had risen to 66%. By the end of the year the deficit had exceeded the amount agreed by the University Court. In May 1976 we were given six months to put the centre on a firm financial footing, but our efforts failed and it was sold off in June 1977. Brian and Kitty found employment elsewhere and part of the proceeds of the sale of the centre was used to fund a post, based at the university, of senior instructor in outdoor activities to which Les Berrow was appointed in 1977.

**National Swim Centre.** The University began planning for a swimming pool in 1970 in the knowledge that until then the UGC had never funded a pool in a Scottish university. The UGC's support for student sport was based on the popularity of indoor sports such as badminton,

basketball, fencing martial arts and table tennis. Their strong advice was for an indoor sports hall. The University took the view that a pool would be more attractive to students, staff and the local community. there were lengthy discussions but eventually the UGC were persuaded, and funded the full cost of the 6-lane 25 metre pool which was opened in 1974.

I was the secretary of the committee for swimming at the 1970 Commonwealth Games in Edinburgh. This brought me in touch with current ideas about design and usage patterns for pools. Surveys showed that as many as 90% of bathers were in standing depth most of the time, i.e. they were crowded into the shallow end and more than half the pool was empty for much of the time. I concluded that a box design of uniform depth of 4 feet would spread the users and reduce crowding. However I also heard about pools with a bottom which could move up and down hydraulically, changing the depth from 18 inches to ten feet. The Estates and Buildings officer, Norman Walker and I visited sports centres in Germany to see such pools in action and were convinced that this would give great value for money. The design and costs were approved by the University but before it went out to tender we were forced by the government to make a saving of £20,000 and the moveable floor was cut from the contract. It would have been the first pool in Britain with this feature which is now relatively common.

I was a close friend of Jack Queen, the part-time Director of Swimming for the Scottish Amateur Swimming Association at that time. During the construction phase of the pool we discussed the possibility of centralising national team training at Stirling- He and the Association's treasurer, Iain Martin went a step further by proposing to move their administrative headquarters to the University. Before the pool opened we agreed a programme of week-end training for national squads but it took longer to include systematic use of university residences and offices. Eventually, in September 1976 a four year contract between the Association and the University for a National Swim Centre was signed. This guaranteed the Association access to the pool for 30 week-ends and other mid-week periods each year. The swimmers were accommodated in the University residences at week ends under a scheme that enabled some students to pay a 5-day rent. Dave Haller, coach to the Great Britain Olympic swimming team was appointed as the SASA Director of Swimming. Part of his duties was to coach the University swimming and water polo teams. Offices were provided in the Pathfoot building.

We were the first university to create graduate assistant posts in sport, whereby a young PE graduate could register for a higher degree and at the same time gain experience of teaching sport to students and local children. One of the first, Penny Crisfield, undertook work with the Scottish swim team preparing for the 1998 Commonwealth Games in Canada. Her thesis dealt with stress as a factor in high level performance and it served two purposes. Firstly it consolidated the relationship with the SASA and convinced them of the value of our applied research. Secondly the quality of the research undertaken by her and the other graduate assistants helped to build support from colleagues in academic departments for our claims for recognition. Shortly after the pool opened a schools swimming scheme was established. Local schools had access on five mornings a week and graduate assistants were employed from income to teach the classes. This helped to -offset the running costs of the pool.

**Golf Course and Squash Courts.** I was asked by the University Secretary to submit ideas for small scale capital projects for submission to the Manpower Services Commission, a government agency set up to provide training schemes for young unemployed people. We

were successful with two bids for funding. The first was for three squash courts at a time when squash was growing in popularity nationally. There were two courts attached to the Alangrange Student and Staff Club which were open to the community on payment of a membership fee. It was agreed that this arrangement should be extended to the new courts. Most universities, and all the new universities owned squash courts. A growing number of students had played the game before coming to university. The new courts opened in April 1973 and were hugely popular.

The other bid was for a 9-hole golf course, the first to be built on a university campus anywhere in Britain. I had no experience of designing or managing a golf course but I was aware of the popularity of golf in Scotland. Fortunately help was at hand in the shape of Ken Moran, a lecturer in physics who was also an ardent golfer. He contacted a local golf professional, John Stark of Crieff Golf Club who agreed to design the course on a 18 acre site alongside Airthrey Castle, the historic mansion designed by Robert Adam. This is an appropriate point at which to recognise the University's good fortune in having the services of Henry Milne as Superintendent of Gardens and Grounds. Henry was an absolute genius in caring for and enhancing the entire campus. He maintained the playing fields to a very high standard, and worked with volunteers in the Airthrey Gardens Group to raise funds for special projects. He worked with John Stark from the outset and between them they produced a beautiful small golf course. Work began on it in 1978 and it opened in 1980.

The golf course was a runaway success. We had estimated that there would be 5000 rounds in 21 weeks. The actual number was 17,000, giving 'profit' of £8,000 instead of the estimated £250. I reported to a conference on the operation after four years. Peter Bilsborough, a full time assistant in the Department had undertaken an analysis of the usage and management of the course as part of a postgraduate course of study. Most of his recommendations were accepted the most important being that pricing should be used to spread usage more evenly. We introduced prices based on low and high seasons, peak and off peak rates for students, junior and adults. The effect was remarkable. Usage levelled out at over 21,000 rounds in 28 weeks, generating income in excess of £30,000. Adults representing 63% of the usage generated 74% of the income. Students accounted for 22% of the rounds and 14% of the income. It seemed an ideal model for the joint university/community usage of a sports facility. It was possible to invest in an irrigation system and to transfer excess income to a sports bursaries fund. We were able to attract a grant of £16,000 from the Scottish Sports Council for synthetic grass tees which solved the initial problem of damage to the natural grass tees. The new ones showed little signs of wear after nearly 200,000 rounds.

**Sports Hall.** All that remained to complete a range of sports facilities was an indoor sports hall. Other universities, mainly in England were undertaking loan-financed schemes to enhance their facilities. Most were small scale but Lancaster had built a swimming pool using loan finance. Stirling agreed that this might be a way of funding a sports hall if the revenue could pay off the capital costs within 15 years. With the support of the Principal, Dr. Cramond, project architects were appointed in 1977 and the 8-badminton court size hall opened in November 1980 at a cost of £300,000. The Physical Recreation service was required to repay the University £35,000 per annum. The air-hall which had been in use since 1969 was dismantled.

**Indoor Tennis Centre.** In 1988 we were faced the need to resurface the outdoor tennis courts that were laid in 1967. Discussions with the 'Scottish Lawn Tennis Association (SLTA) began in March 1989 and these threw up two possibilities. Firstly it emerged that the Lawn Tennis

Association (LTA) in London might be willing to offer grant aid through their Indoor Tennis Initiative to cover the courts and also provide a new surface. Secondly the SLTA might be interested in moving their headquarters to Stirling. A preliminary appraisal indicated that the cost of covering the four courts with an inflatable air hall, resurfacing the existing courts and laying three additional outdoor courts would be about £300,000. The LTA quickly decided to provide a grant of £150,000 and the Scottish Development Agency came in with an offer of £75,000. The University would pay the balance.

I was not happy with the idea of another air hall in view of the vandalism to our original one. I pressed for and got an estimate for a permanent brick structure of £1 million. The Director of Development for Stirling Council was the project manager and he introduced me to the Gannochy Trust which had been set up by the Arthur Bell Whisky Company in Perth. I well remember meeting the trustees and explaining that we were seeking funding for a national tennis centre in the grounds of the university. One of them reminded me that the University's reputation and to some extent that of Scotland had suffered due to outrageous behaviour by some students during the Queen's visit to the campus in 1972. I thought he was preparing to decline to help us but when I asked for £500,000 they immediately agreed. Armed with this substantial offer we went down to London and negotiated a grant of £350,000 from the LTA. Simultaneous discussions with the Scottish Sports Council produced a grant of £250,000. We went ahead and were doubly fortunate when Princess Diana agreed to formally open the new Centre in 1991.

**Sport and Physical Recreation Committee.** In 1974 the Acting Principal, Fred Holliday (later the Principal of Durham University) established the need for a committee of the University Court for sport and physical recreation. He pointed out that there was a committee to oversee the Rannoch project, a part of the Physical Recreation service, but no committee for the whole service. This would give direct access to the Court on matters of general policy relating to sport and recreation. The first chairman was Professor C.V (Chuck) Brown, head of the Economics Department. He provided leadership and tactical skill on behalf of sport and operated as an effective link with academic colleagues on other University committees. He negotiated a deal that income in excess of 45% of the budget for physical recreation should be passed to a Sports Amenities Fund for the improvement of the service. He reached an agreement with the University that no UGC funds would be used for the golf course but I would be able to use any excess income for sports development. These measures helped to motivate the staff to put in extra effort to generate income. He persuaded the University to upgrade one of the graduate assistant posts to Assistant Director on the grounds that I should be freed of administration duties to develop fund raising schemes. Katherine Tait was appointed to the post.

We were incredibly fortunate in having support from several talented administrators as secretary to the Committee, notably Douglas Wood on whom I relied for advice about the passage of initiatives through the committee system. We could not have made the same progress without the support of Bob McIntosh, for long the Deputy Finance Officer. There were times when I was bemused by his skill in persuading the Finance Committee that the figures for a variety of small scale projects stacked up but he was always successful. Those two officers provided a balance to my enthusiasm for expansion.

Chuck Brown was succeeded by Dr Ken Moran of Physics as chairman of the Sports and Recreation Committee in 1977. The new chairman brought other qualities to the job of chairman. He had a youthful, irrepressible enthusiasm for sport developed through school

and university in Belfast. He was tremendously supportive of the Physical Recreation service and as a member of the Estates and Buildings Committee he was able to press the case for additions to the sports facilities. This was very beneficial when the University was developing the 9-hole golf course. He played a key role in persuading University to with the sports hall at a time when finances were under extreme pressure. He began the process of awarding trophies for outstanding achievement which were awarded at the annual Sports Union ball. His most significant contribution was in shaping and helping to develop a sports bursaries scheme, starting in 1981. This is reported more fully in a later section.

**Community Sport.** The Appeal Committees invested a huge amount of time and energy in campaigning to bring the University to Stirling. I took the view that their efforts should be recognised in community access agreements for sports facilities. This led to a radically different management philosophy from other Scottish universities. As far as sport was concerned my concept of Stirling was that it would be 'a university in the community for the community'. Adult memberships were offered for swimming, squash, golf and fitness, and there were family memberships for swimming. By 1980 there were about a thousand community members. Most of the income from hire of facilities was reinvested in improvements to the service. The facilities were heavily used by local clubs for competitions such as national league athletics, basketball, football, hockey, and rugby. A regional training centre for canoeing was established on the loch. From the day it opened the swimming pool accommodated a schools swimming scheme, catering mainly for local primary schools. It consisted of instruction for about 800 children each of whom received an 18-hour block of teaching by university staff. During the summer schools holidays an average of 1000 children received instruction in canoeing, swimming and tennis.

The University also collaborated with local authorities. From 1974 to 1995 there was a two tier structure of local government consisting of District and Regional Councils. For example there were three Districts (Stirling, Falkirk and Clackmannan) within the Central Region. Each of the District Councils established Local Sports Councils consisting of representatives of local clubs. I was a member of Stirling District Sports Council from its inception in 1976 and chaired the research and development committee until 1982 when I was succeeded by Peter Bilsborough. Our staff conducted three funded research projects for the Council, two of which consisted of surveys of local clubs. The other by one of our graduate assistants, Josephine McCusker achieved national recognition. It dealt with youth participation and nonparticipation in sport. This research-based approach to policy formulation was unusual in Scottish sport at the time.

In 1976 embryonic Sports Development Scheme was launched when a joint project between the University and the regional Youth and Community Service received an award of {9,000 from Manpower Services Commission. The project was intended to tackle the problem of the gap between school and community sport. Fortunately the Director of Education, ran Collie, gave unstinting support to the venture including the secondment of a PE teacher, Drew Michie on a full time basis as the Sports Development Officer. Just as importantly, Collie provided free access to school sports facilities. From 1976 to 1982 the unit, which included three graduate assistants was based at the University sports centre. By 1982 over 6000 youngsters were involved annually in 31 teaching centres throughout the region in five sports.

The incoming President of the Sports Union for session 1979-1980 complained to the Sport and Recreation Committee that the volume of community usage of sports facilities was

impacting adversely on the student population, particular on student sports clubs. I was asked to conduct an analysis and report back to the Committee, which I did in January 1980. My conclusion was upheld by the Committee. It was that community use did not threaten the student programme. The main problem lay in getting the students to make full use of the time given to them. Nevertheless it was a very unsettling experience after ten years of good relationships with the student body.

No sooner had we resolved the issue of community access than we were faced with the need to reduce the costs of sport in response to cuts in higher education made by the Thatcher Government. The Principal asked Chuck Brown to investigate ways of making savings in the budget for sport and physical recreation. As a first step he identified the total cost of sport. The gross amount of £268,000 included indirect costs of maintenance of the sports grounds and buildings which had always been charged to Estates and Buildings. It was the first time that I had seen the full costs. Income amounted to £68,000 leaving a net cost of £202,000. Professor Brown recommended savings of £70,000 per annum should be made, but this was amended to £50,000. The largest item of expenditure was salaries, and we decided regretfully that Les Berrow's five year post should not be renewed when it came to an end in summer 1982. Thankfully he was able to secure a similar job at Edinburgh University. Bob McIntosh and I were able to identify other reductions of £30,000 which were approved by the Committee. Within a few months we identified further savings in energy costs, including a cover over the surface of the pool from closing to reopening, and installation of light meters in the squash courts. The latter was a measure that had been resisted consistently by the Committee. Within two years I could report to the University that gross income had exceeded £100,000 for the first time, an increase of £32,000.

**Sports bursaries.** In terms of participation, by 1977 nearly 50% of the student body were taking part in intra-mural sport or Sport Union clubs on a regular basis, and many others were swimming or playing squash recreationally. It was estimated that as a proportion of the student population, participation was higher than at any other British university. There were successes at Scottish and British Universities level, and Stirling regularly hosted Scottish Universities championships such as basketball, cross-country, hockey, squash and swimming. Nevertheless student sport was not highly regarded by national governing bodies of sport. I was a strong supporter of the right of students to manage their own affairs but I could see the weaknesses created by the annual turnover of club officers. The fortunes of clubs fluctuated from year to year and the needs of talented sportsmen and women were not being addressed in that system.

In 1978 an opportunity arose to improve the lot of elite level student athletes. I listened to a conference presentation by Tom Hudson of Bath University on the topic of Sports Scholarships. I was overwhelmed with the simplicity of the idea and the huge potential it offered for talented students who were not necessarily being catered for by universities. I organised a visit to Bath for a small group of students and the group returned full of enthusiasm for the concept of sports scholarships, Ken Moran, Douglas Wood and I developed a paper that was taken through the appropriate university committees and approved in principle in summer 1980. Ken Moran recalls that he had to overcome worries about threats to academic standards such as had occurred in some American universities. It was made clear that a sports bursaries scheme (a term chosen in place of sports scholarships) would have to be self-supporting and the University would not divert additional funds to it. Matters then took a completely unpredictable turn. On 4<sup>th</sup> August 1980 I was awakened at midnight by a reporter to comment on an item to appear next day in the



Scotsman newspaper that the University had offered a sports scholarship to 16-year old Linsey MacDonald on her return from the 1980 Olympics. I knew nothing about it. It emerged that the student President of the Students Association, Jack McConnell and the President of the Sports Union, Liam McClarey acting on their own initiative, had indeed made the offer, Although the offer was not taken up it received massive beneficial publicity in the press, radio and television and the whole process of introducing bursaries accelerated rapidly.

Soon afterwards an application was received from Colin Dalglish, an exceptionally talented young Scottish golfer who had been disillusioned by his experience of a golf scholarship at Ohio State University. He registered as a student in February 1981 and was one of the first three recipients of sports bursaries in September. He was therefore a Stirling student that summer when he not only won the Scottish Amateur title but also played for Britain against America in the Walker Cup. Incidentally his bursary was funded by the Scottish International Education Trust which had been founded by the Edinburgh born film star Sean Connery from his fee for his final role as James Bond. Between September 1981 and May 1990 a total of 35 bursaries were awarded of which 17 went to golfers. The others covered athletics (1), badminton (3), canoeing (1), squash (5), swimming (2), and tennis (6). From the outset I was convinced that there should be two or three core sports in which we should seek to dominate Scottish and British university championships, while leaving room for talented athletes in other sports. I had imagined that swimming would be one of them but this did not happen. Instead, golf, squash and tennis emerged as the core sports: In the first ten years the University's reputation for elite sport performance was based on the successes of golfers. In 1989 the golfers held the following team and individual titles.

Scottish Universities (team)

Scottish Universities (individual)

Scottish Universities (staff)

British Universities (team)

British Universities (individual)

European Challenge Trophy (team)

European Challenge Trophy (individual)

We were fortunate in recruiting both men and women golfers of the highest quality. Shirley Lawson won the Scottish Girls (stroke play) title in 1983 and 84 and was runner up in 82 and 85. She won the Scottish Ladies match play championship in 1988, 89, and was runner up in 90. She played for Britain in the Curtis Cup in 1988. She was followed by Catriona Lambert (better known now as Catriona Matthew) who had a similar record as an amateur prior to playing professional golf in the USA. From a long list of achievements it is sufficient to mention winning the Scottish Ladies (1991, 93, 94) and the British Ladies (1993); playing for Britain in the Curtis Cup (1990, 92, 94) and in the World Amateur team championships. Elaine Ratcliffe subsequently also played in the 1996 Curtis Cup. No other university before or since has provided members of the team in five consecutive occasions. We were fortunate in recruiting Gordon Sherry in 1992. He was 6 feet 8 inches tall, with auburn hair and a huge smile. The Press loved him. He became a national icon based on outstanding performances in the British Open at which Jack Nicklaus and Greg Norman showered him with praise. They introduced him to George Bush the American President, all of which Gordon took in his stride. He also defeated Tiger Woods in the Walker Cup in which he played an inspirational role.

It was not only in golf that Stirling was successful in those early days. . Marjory Adam represented Britain at the World Junior Skiing championships. Frank Ellis played for Scotland at both the World Junior and World Senior Squash championships. Bruce Flockhart was a regular member of the Scottish badminton team at European team championships and Gwen Lewis won a team bronze medal at the World Modern Pentathlon championships. Young won several medals at the Commonwealth Canoe championships.

We did not have a budget for recruitment. It meant that I went to as many Championship events as possible, which restricted us in face to face approaches only at Scottish events. We also advertised extensively in specialist magazines for particular sports. I acted as a consultant for Scottish Sports Council projects, one of which was to undertake a study visit to Sweden. The purpose was to evaluate their approach to elite sport development. In the course of my trip in 1991 visited several sports schools and some of the students showed interest in enrolling at Stirling. We were able to use some of the R & A funds to create two international sports bursaries for two outstanding Swedish golfers, Anna Berg and Maria Hjorth.

We had to work hard to fund the cost of £7,500 per annum for each bursary. We relied on trusts such as the Scottish International Education Trust and the McLeod Foundation. We were also supported by companies like the Scottish Mutual and Cape Insulation. Profits from the golf course were another invaluable source of support. However the big breakthrough came from a chance meeting with Michael Bonnalack the Secretary of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews (R&A). He and I were platform speakers at a conference at which I was describing our efforts to stem the drain of sporting talent to America. He asked me to submit an application for funding of a bursary for a nominated student. I applied on behalf of Catriona Lambert and it was approved. The R&A offered to provide two bursaries a year up to a steady state of eight and they suggested that this arrangement should be extended to other universities. Over the next twenty years their support for bursaries rose to £300,000 per annum, making it the largest, longest running support for an individual sport in British universities. An additional bonus came in the shape of an invitation from the R&A to send a team to an intercollegiate tournament in Japan representing Britain. This was a very high level event and we progressed to second place in the team event in our third year when Catriona also won the women's individual title. One of the other participants was Annika Sorenstam who went on to dominate world professional golf.

**Academic development.** Early attempts to establish an academic footing were firmly rejected. When Stirling opened, none of the Scottish universities offered sport, physical recreation or physical education as a degree subject. As the secretary of the Scottish Physical Education Association I had been involved in an unsuccessful submission to the University in 1966, before it opened. Within months of being appointed I decided to submit a proposal to the University for a Part 1 Minor in Physical Recreation. The Board of Studies for Social Studies were invited to consider the proposal before it went to the Academic Board, The report of the meeting shows that there were two opposing views. The first, conservative response was that it would be unwise to accept physical recreation as an academic subject in terms of academic respectability. There was also concern that the proposed subject matter was too wide ranging and consequently lacking in depth. Another objection was that students would lack prior knowledge of the subject which was not taught in schools. On the other hand there was support for the idea that it could have a valuable broadening effect on a student's academic programme. was also a case for units which could be useful for intending teachers or youth workers. This group argued that Part 1 of the degree course should contain a number of independent Minor courses of which this would be the first. This

led to a discussion as to whether further academic developments along those lines should be 'problem-oriented' or discipline-oriented'. Those in support of the submission pointed out that the proposed Part I Minor could develop into Part 11 as part of a course on the sociology of leisure. It was agreed that I should meet with members of the Sociology Department to discuss revised proposals along these lines.

A few days later the Academic Board rejected the proposal, noting that 'when the establishment of physical recreation in the University was being considered it had been made clear to all concerned that this would be a service department, free of any specific academic involvement.' This view persisted and led to further rejections when I made subsequent submissions for a post-graduate Diploma in Physical Education in 1971 and for Minors in Sports Studies in 1974 and 1979. It was a frustrating period during which other Scottish institutions instituted B.Ed. degree courses in physical education. All of this was very frustrating, particularly as I had been offered a Chair in Physical Education at the University of Otago, a post which I turned down for family reasons. I was also acting as an external examiner at other universities such as Birmingham Glasgow and Loughborough.

Undismayed by these setbacks, I concentrated on the research studies undertaken by the graduate assistants. We were extremely fortunate in that Professor Chris Turner of Sociology agreed to act as supervisor of their research, with me in the role of joint supervisor. Between 1974 and 1981 they produced theses of high quality. Some of them were highly relevant to the work of the National Swim Centre. Others related to the on-going sports development scheme operated in conjunction with Central Regional Council. There were others dealing with the curriculum in physical education. Gradually this began to have an effect. In 1976 the Education Department invited physical recreation to offer a non-graduating course in physical education for intending teachers. This paved the way for the introduction of a unit in the M.Ed. programme in 1981. For seventeen years the M.Ed. was an undifferentiated degree consisting of eight units plus a dissertation. From 1988 in addition to the general M.Ed. students were offered specialist 'tracks' one of which was entitled School, Sport and Leisure. Our staff taught the four units in the track and supervised the dissertations. As a direct result of Chris Turner's enthusiastic support, a unit in Sports Studies was introduced in the taught post-graduate M.Sc. course in Applied Social Research.

Without making too great claims I would like to think that I helped to redefine the role of a Director and a Department of Physical Recreation. We had a strong Sports Union but we also had a level of community access that was unparalleled anywhere in Britain. By 1989 we were being treated as significant partners in the development of sport, locally, regionally and nationally. The bursaries scheme had brought the kind of public awareness that one can only dream of. We had raised public consciousness of Stirling as a centre of sporting excellence. We had sports facilities and a staff/student ratio that were in excess of other Scottish universities. On the downside I had not been able to convince the University that all of this could be combined with academic development as happened at other places such as Loughborough University.

### **Postscript.**

I opted for early retirement and was replaced in October 1989 by Alan Nichols the Director of Physical Education at Queen's University, Belfast. He was also Assistant Dean of the Faculty of Education. He and his colleagues made the transition to full academic department status

including the establishment of a Chair in Sports Studies. The following is a very brief summary of these events.

In response to the draft University Academic Plan 1993/4 to 2002/3 Alan proposed that Sports Studies might be developed within the plan. He was invited to submit a rationale for a degree course and a detailed submission, with costings and predicted student numbers, was submitted to the Academic Planning Committee in December 1993. The proposal was for a combined honours course with Sports Studies as the second subject. Sports Centre staff would teach semesters one and two units and additional academic staff would be appointed over the first two years. Funding was approved for a Human Performance Laboratory. Seven units and a project were submitted and approved. Targets for recruitment for 1994 onwards were exceeded and by December 1996 136 students were on course.

Further development was driven by Professor Mike Jackson, senior Deputy Principal who chaired a working party on sport during the autumn semester 1996 and reported on progress to the Policy and Resources Committee in January. His paper set the future direction of sport at Stirling. It was possibly the most inspirational document in the short history of the subject. He set out three aims as follows.

- The aim should be to provide a range and standard of sporting and physical recreation facilities that cannot be bettered at any other UK university.
- The aim should be to develop an academic activity that meets the same teaching and research standards as those demanded of other departments in the university and which can challenge the best in teaching and research in this subject area in the UK.
- The aim should be to place Stirling in the first rank of UK universities for sporting excellence.

He also addressed the question of the organisational structure best suited to deliver these ambitious aims. Two models were being considered, the first being an integrated model in which the whole of the activity was integrated and located within the academic area. There were examples of the success of this approach at places like Loughborough. The other model was where the main activities were developed separately. The integrated model emerged as the best option and it continues today. He mentioned that funding had been secured for a chair in Sports Studies. Grant Jarvie was appointed in 1997 as professor and Head of Department. With his appointment the success of the venture was secured and delivered. The formal establishment of an integrated Department of Sports Studies took place on 1 August 1999.

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