

Interviewee: Steve Mungavin
UoS Dates: 1975 -1978, BA (Economics)
Role(s): 2nd Sabbatical President of Sports Union 1978-1979



Interview summary:

Start 0:00 – he’s more known by his school nickname, Gus; went to school at Dollar Academy; he did his Highers in 5th year and got the necessary grades, so he came straight to university aged 16

02:03 – reasons for him to choose Stirling University: local university gave him comfort, Stirling seemed to be different, fabulous campus, flexibility in course and semester system seemed to be “fresher”; he just applied for Stirling, was what he wanted to do; he was influenced by teachers David McDougall and Jack Galbraith, they inspired him to study and Stirling seemed to be the perfect place

03:52 – actually signed up for business studies, but accountancy didn’t agree with him; he majored in economics and studied history and business law as well; but 20 years later he became an accountant; in his career he worked in higher education: one of his colleagues at the University of Ulster, Professor Alan Fox, had been a young lecturer while SM was a student in Stirling 20 years earlier

05:10 – in his first year he wasn’t involved in the union, because he was struggling with getting along with university – maybe extra year in school would have helped with learning methods; so he didn’t participate in organized sports

07:01 – in second year he joined the rugby club, “wonderful” mixture of different players (ability, from different places); he got involved in the running of the Gannochy Sports Pavilion, on a student committee, which was the stepping stone for him for the Sports Union executive committee; he was elected by the Sports Union members; Sports Union was separate from the Students Union; he was the second sabbatical president, Barry Dickson was the first (wonderful sportsman and ambassador); he held office for a year – “like a proper job” with an office and a secretary and staff; Gillian Burnett succeeded him; 1978/9 he was sports union president, he already graduated, so he had “the degree out of his way”, sees it as stepping stone to the world of work

10:53 – worked closely with Director of Physical Education, Dr. Ian Thomson; explored idea of sports scholarships within a trip to Bath, was involved in campaigning for and building the indoor facilities; Principal was Dr Bill Cramond, whom he found gentlemanly and open to reasoned argument, university administration was helpful; Stirling didn’t have a reputation as sports university, so there was a lot to do

13:25 – Scottish football team 1978 trained on university's pitches; students got all the signatures and photographs of them; after performing disastrously in the world cup, despite great expectations, there were rumours that the players were more involved with students and bars than training, so he had to face a few

journalists

15:30 – highlights of his year as sabbatical officer: exchange with University of Katowice in Poland, country under communist regime in these days, so it was a diplomatic challenge; they took ten singles players for the exchange (badminton, table tennis); trip to Bath University; hosted the British Universities Cross Country Championships - Stirling itself was a beautiful setting for an outdoor sporting event, running around the campus, championship in sight of the Wallace Monument, was a major event with lots of people – it was a cold, frosty morning when the championships were due to begin, and there were doubts about the surface, but the event did go on

18:26 – he wouldn't say that he followed all the sporting development in Stirling afterwards, but occasionally he caught a sporting success, that made him remember his time in the sports union

19:20 – his experiences undoubtedly prepared him for work, it was a wonderful bridge between studying and employment; experienced governance side of university, working with lots of people, healthy relationship with students union (president was Stuart Hepburn)

21:00 – after university he wanted to work with people and in a large organization, so he started to work for Glasgow City Council and two local councils in England; he then moved to Northern Ireland and worked in higher education as well as on the administration side as head of finance and administration for Business School at the University of Ulster, then he started studying accountancy, specialized in public finance and in 2002 he joined Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and has worked there ever since as head of their activities in Northern Ireland, but worked in different places as well

23:18 - he gave rugby up at 33, passed his skills on to his son; Stirling had a huge impact on his life, he met his wife there and they got married at 21, so this university changed his life.

Ends 24:32

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