

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Daniel Black
Date of Interview	18 th Nov 2010
Location	N/A
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Seán Moran
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1960 Home County: Dublin
Education	Primary: St. Peter and Pauls, Shropshire, England Secondary: Belvedere College, Dublin Third Level: TCD
Family	N/A
Club(s)	Cuala GAA, Dalkey [Dublin]
Occupation	Journalist
Parents' Occupation	Company Director [Father]; Housewife & Teacher [Mother]
Religion	Roman Catholic
Political Affiliation / Membership	Labour
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	N/A

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Date of Report	24 th July 2012
Period Covered	1920s 2010
Counties/Countries Covered	Dublin, Wexford, Clare, Australasia, Australia
Key Themes Covered	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Playing, Managing, Administration, Celebrations, Sponsorship, Education, Media, Emigration, Involvement in GAA abroad, Role of Women, Role of the Club in the Community, GAA Abroad, Identity, Culture, All-Ireland, County History, Irish History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Impact on Life, Career, Challenges, Violence, Politics, Northern Ireland, The Troubles, Ban on Foreign Games and Dances, Opening of Croke Park, Ban on Security Forces, Relationship with the Association, Professionalism, Food and Drink, Relationships, Economy/Economics
Interview Summary	<p>Seán Moran has been the Gaelic Athletic Association Correspondent for the Irish Times since 1996. He offers a great deal of insight into the media aspect of the GAA and the relationship between the two. He talks about how the relationship between the players and the media has evolved from his predecessors' time to his own. He also has an interesting perspective because he was not involved with the GAA throughout his childhood as intimately as many other people throughout Ireland. Seán talks in-depth about his opinions of the successes and failures of the GAA, including the GAA's role in The Troubles.</p> <p>0:30 Earliest memories of the GAA being watching All-Irelands as a child but being reared in a family that was not active in the GAA.</p> <p>00:55 Specific memories of the 1970 All-Ireland Football Final between Kerry and Meath.</p> <p>1:30 Not playing any Gaelic sports as a child and going to Belvedere College, a rugby playing school.</p> <p>2:00 Seán's path to becoming a GAA journalist, through studying law at Trinity University and various jobs including freelance journalism before pursuing it full time around the age of 30.</p> <p>2:55 Becoming involved in the Gaelic games aspect of journalism due to departures of people in that area from the Sunday Tribune when he first started.</p>

	<p>3:20 Being able to make a seamless change into covering the GAA because of his interest in the sports.</p> <p>3:55 Personal attention to sports media in Ireland and memories of Con Houlihan.</p> <p>4:40 Influences who wrote in the Sunday Tribune before Seán began writing there, including Kevin Cashman and his writing style.</p> <p>5:35 Thoughts and memories of Breandán Ó hEithir and his book called <i>Over the Bar</i>.</p> <p>6:35 Feelings and memories about working in Public Relations.</p> <p>7:35 What he learned from working in Public Relations that can be applied to sports journalism.</p> <p>8:50 How advances in technology have affected journalism during Seán's time in the field.</p> <p>9:50 Going to Australia while freelancing to cover the International Rules Series in 1990 and how in 1986 the Irish Times was the only publication that covered the series in Australia that had a fax machine.</p> <p>10:45 Joining the Irish Times in 1994, being issued a laptop by the Times, and how email has helped journalism.</p> <p>11:35 A downside of the advance in technology being the way newspapers are printed and how that affects deadlines.</p> <p>12:50 Saving printing costs by shutting down the printing presses earlier at night and making it difficult to add things to the newspaper late at night.</p> <p>13:35 How online media has affected the journalism field and the ease it allows to read provincial newspapers.</p> <p>14:35 The challenge online media presents for print journalism.</p> <p>16:10 Seán's feelings on the best way to use modern technology to document the history of the GAA.</p> <p>16:55 His feelings about how the GAA and Irish culture are related and comparing an exhibition he saw in Australia dedicated to Donald Bradman to efforts made by the GAA to document their history.</p> <p>17:55 A lack of availability of moving images or video of old</p>
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	<p>GAA matches and progress made in that area recently.</p> <p>18:45 Seán's own ideas of doing a project of documenting the memories of surviving members of teams that won All-Irelands in the late 1920's.</p> <p>19:50 Feelings about a lack of work done to document the history of the GAA decades ago.</p> <p>20:25 The relationship between players and the media during the time of Seán's predecessor, Paddy Downey.</p> <p>20:55 A story told to him by Paddy about trying to interview Dan Quigley in 1968 and the different reactions he got from his family and then from Dan Quigley himself.</p> <p>21:35 Other longer tenured sports journalists telling Seán about the ease with which they used to be able to interview members of teams playing in All-Irelands.</p> <p>22:00 The institution of "press-nights" being set up by teams and feelings about these nights.</p> <p>22:55 The difficulty of being able to have in-depth interviews with players in more recent years.</p> <p>23:25 Players being sponsored and being pressured by companies to make product placement part of interviews.</p> <p>23:45 How the British tabloid culture affects sports journalism.</p> <p>24:20 The differences between broadcast media and journalism.</p> <p>24:55 Feelings about players who would be happy to do interviews being restricted by managers.</p> <p>25:20 Superstition of players who do interviews before matches playing poorly in the match.</p> <p>26:00 Feelings about people not wanting to interact with the media.</p> <p>26:30 The difference in the media's relationship with professional and amateur sports.</p> <p>27:05 Seán's opinions and experiences of interacting with rugby and soccer players.</p> <p>27:55 How being an amateur sports association affects the GAA's relationship with the media and the role managers play in the relationship.</p>
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	<p>28:45 The players not being under any obligation to interact with the media.</p> <p>29:30 The GAA finding overseas exposure through the Diaspora of Irish emigration.</p> <p>30:00 The importance of the GAA expanding internationally during the 1950's because it gave immigrants a point of contact.</p> <p>30:55 A model of the GAA becoming popular throughout Europe recently because of emigration that is based on recreational and social considerations and there being tournaments throughout Europe based on it.</p> <p>32:05 Local natives becoming interested in the GAA through these tournaments and what the GAA has learned from this.</p> <p>32:50 Seán tells a story about a club in Dublin who had a number of former players play for in the Junior League for fun and then becoming more competitive.</p> <p>33:50 Opinions of Gaelic games becoming a global sport and the likelihood of this happening but also the sports developing throughout the world through emigration.</p> <p>34:45 Comparing the games to Australian rules in that it is an indigenous sport and has a certain appeal to people in other countries but will not develop into a global game.</p> <p>36:00 The GAA's role in Northern Ireland during the troubles and how difficult it was for the organization.</p> <p>36:30 The nationalist community in Northern Ireland clinging to symbols of their own identity, such as the GAA.</p> <p>37:20 Watching a documentary of TG4 about rugby in Ireland and about rugby players from the Republic refusing to play in a match in Belfast in 1954.</p> <p>38:35 Talking about his father's experience of going to a rugby international match in Belfast in the 1950's and the police force removing Irish flags from cars going to the match.</p> <p>39:10 The GAA becoming targeted as a symbol of nationalist culture when The Troubles began and as recently as 1997 when Sean Brown was murdered.</p> <p>40:10 The fact the games remained so popular south of the boarder being a sign of Irish culture but in the north it meant something different.</p>
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	<p>40:40 Playing in the GAA in Northern Ireland as being a way to identify yourself and members being more committed to a sense of Nationalism rather than a sporting outlet.</p> <p>41:20 People in the Republic backing off of issues in the GAA such as the Bans and letting the Ulster GAA members decide those issues.</p> <p>42:10 The process taken by Seán McCague to remove the Ban on British Security forces from playing in the GAA.</p> <p>43:10 The worst times of The Troubles putting great pressure on the GAA.</p> <p>43:30 Liam Mulvihill's worst memories of being Director General of the GAA being focused around the Hunger Strikes in 1980-1981.</p> <p>44:30 The GAA having to be careful about allowing the emotions of the times to spill over into the operations of the Association.</p> <p>45:05 There recently being Republican rallies held in a GAA pitch in Belfast that the GAA did not particularly want held there.</p> <p>46:00 The Troubles creating tension at not only the Ulster level for the GAA but also nationally.</p> <p>46:20 Through the 1990's clubs continuing to oppose the relaxing of the bans but things settling in recent years.</p> <p>47:05 The Ulster Council initiating outreach schemes to try to bring Unionists into Gaelic games, and the successes of these schemes.</p> <p>47:50 The GAA helping to heal the wounds of the Civil War in the 1920's but how it is a much different situation than what is faced in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>49:00 Not having many personal difficulties with covering the GAA in Northern Ireland because Seán started working as The Troubles were winding down.</p> <p>49:25 Memories of going to a Derry and Tyrone championship match during The Troubles and the presence of soldiers at the match.</p> <p>50:10 Not having anything happen to him personally that was alarming or would have exceeded the experiences of an ordinary person going to a match.</p>
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	<p>50:50 Being appointed GAA correspondent for the Irish Times after the first IRA ceasefire and as The Troubles were beginning to die out.</p> <p>51:15 Predecessors, such as Paddy Downey, experiencing more tense times in covering The Troubles.</p> <p>51:35 Story about Tom Humphries going to a match in Casement Park the day after the Greysteel murders.</p> <p>52:10 Being conscious that as a journalist, he was just going in and out but there were people living with the tension all the time.</p> <p>53:00 His daughter playing ladies' football and camogie in his local club.</p> <p>53:20 The sense of engagement of people throughout the country with Gaelic games and reasons for enjoying coverage of club competitions.</p> <p>54:00 Being interested in how clubs establish their presence in the community and how local clubs are similar to how county teams used to be in their relationship with the media.</p> <p>55:05 Memories of driving around to local clubs and seeing the scale of their presence in the community.</p> <p>56:15 Enjoying meeting people through covering County games because of their dedication to the GAA.</p> <p>56:40 Being interested in the sense of tradition and history in the GAA.</p> <p>57:20 Finding enjoyment in the International Rules Series.</p> <p>58:10 Difficulty of reproducing the supporter's experience of matches when you are part of the media.</p> <p>58:40 Thoughts on the 2010 All-Ireland Hurling Final between Tipperary and Kilkenny, and the historical significance of the match.</p> <p>1:00:10 Memories of Clare beating Limerick in the 1995 Munster Final and comparisons of the match to the 2010 All-Ireland Hurling Final.</p> <p>1:00:50 Having a special attachment to Wexford through his in-laws and its hurling and football accomplishments.</p> <p>1:01:25 Memories of talking to Billy Rackard about the differences between hurling and football in County Wexford.</p>
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	<p>1:02:10 The dominance of Cork, Kilkenny, and Tipperary in hurling but other counties coming through from time to time, such as Wexford in the 1950's.</p> <p>1:02:55 Wexford's success coming at a time when the Irish economy was flat-lining during the 1950's but there still being historic numbers of supporters at the Finals.</p> <p>1:03:35 Clare winning their first All-Ireland in 1995 since 1914, and only the second in their history but Clare people saying they were most pleased to win their first Munster title since 1932.</p> <p>1:04:05 The difference in the mindset of the Wexford people who had been at the top of the game in the 1950's and 1960's from Clare people.</p> <p>1:05:30 The extent to which the success of a county team ties in with the self-esteem and moral within a county.</p> <p>1:06:10 Seán's feelings on why the success of a county ties in with the moral of the county in general.</p> <p>1:06:50 Having frustrating memories of the GAA's administration side, in terms of decisions such as the ban on the security forces.</p> <p>1:07:40 The benefits of opening Croke Park in 2005.</p> <p>1:08:05 The struggles of the GAA to impose a disciplinary system that penalized foul play.</p> <p>1:08:35 His worst experiences would be seeing people lose their lives based on their association the GAA.</p> <p>1:09:20 How an organization that is generally beneficial to the community began to attract violence in the circumstances in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>1:10:00 What the GAA brings to the country as a whole.</p> <p>1:10:30 The increase in participation in Gaelic games by women but it being frustrating that the women's games are administered by separate organizations.</p> <p>1:11:10 Thoughts of the "One Club" project.</p> <p>1:11:55 The GAA's interaction with society and its ongoing role with the immigrant community.</p>
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Involvement in GAA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input type="checkbox"/> Player <input type="checkbox"/> Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Steward <input type="checkbox"/> Chairperson <input type="checkbox"/> Committee Member <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person <input type="checkbox"/> Caterer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jersey Washer <input type="checkbox"/> Referee <input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____
Record as a Player (Titles won; Length of time played)	N/A
Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)	N/A
Format	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
Duration	Length of Interview: 01:13:21
Language	English

To be filled in by Interviewer:

I hereby assign the copyright of the content of the above to the GAA Oral History Project on the understanding that the content will not be used in a derogatory manner. I understand that I am giving the GAA Oral History Project the right to use and make available to the public the content of this interview.

Signed: _____ Daniel Black _____

Date: _____ 18/11/2010 _____