

## GAA Oral History Project

## Interview Report Form

<b>Name of Interviewer</b>	Brian Becker
<b>Date of Interview</b>	29 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2010
<b>Location</b>	N/A
<b>Name of Interviewee</b> (Maiden name / Nickname)	Justin Golden
<b><u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u></b>	
<b>Gender</b>	Male
<b>Born</b>	<b>Year Born:</b> 1950 <b>Home County:</b> Americas
<b>Education</b>	<b>Primary:</b> Easton, PA <b>Secondary:</b> Notre Dame High School <b>Third Level:</b> University of Virginia
<b>Family</b>	<b>Siblings:</b> 2 brothers; 1 sister
<b>Club(s)</b>	Washington DC Gaels [United States]
<b>Occupation</b>	Banker
<b>Parents' Occupation</b>	Newspaper Report [Father]; Clerical worker [Mother]
<b>Religion</b>	Roman Catholic
<b>Political Affiliation / Membership</b>	Republican
<b>Other Club/Society Membership(s)</b>	Wrestling USA, Police Emerald Society, Smithsonian Institute

<b>Date of Report</b>	16 <sup>th</sup> July 2012
<b>Period Covered</b>	1998 – 2010
<b>Counties/Countries Covered</b>	USA, Americas
<b>Key Themes Covered</b>	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Coaching, Refereeing, Administration, Fundraising, Sponsorship, Education, Religion, Media, Role of Women, Volunteers, GAA Abroad, Identity, Rivalries, Club History, Challenges, Food and Drink, Socialising, Purchase of Grounds, Relationships, Economy / Economics
<b>Interview Summary</b>	<p>Golden discusses his introduction to the GAA, first as TV viewer, then as social member and support, and then as an administrator and player with the Washington DC Gaels. He sheds a light on differences between the GAA in the five major cities and in places like Washington and outlines the ways in which the DC Gaels club has gone about recruiting players and funding itself. The ethnic background of the club membership is discussed as are issues of national and cultural identity. Golden outlines his own sporting background and discusses the transferability of skills from American sport to Gaelic games. In addition, he outlines the club plans for the immediate future and recommends approaches to developing the GAA in America.</p> <p>00:00:15 Introduction to the GAA in 1998 when preparing for a family trip to Ireland – watching hurling and Gaelic football games on the local PBS network. Coverage of D.C. Gaels and getting members to explain rules to viewers.</p> <p>00:01:35 Watching the games the following year in Flanagan's pub and the social dynamic among the Irish-born patrons.</p> <p>00:02:39 Approximately three years later, he became a social member of the DC Gaels as he wound down his involvement in other sports. Mentions helping out with the club and attending events.</p> <p>00:03:10 Encouragement from Paul McDonagh to play the game – mentions that he was then, in the mid 2000s, in his mid to late fifties.</p> <p>00:03:33 Request to assist in identifying someone to help with physical conditioning of hurling team, c. 2008. Mention getting involved in training and playing.</p>

	<p>00:04:50 Going to Boston for NACB championships.</p> <p>00:04:58 Mentions former involvement in wrestling at national and international level and the benefits he brought to the team.</p> <p>00:05:28 Mentions playing in the DCISL Fall league and subsequent involvement in administration with Washington DC Gaels. Mentions that he is still Secretary of the Club.</p> <p>00:06:26 Distinguishes between the big city GAA clubs which bring over Irish players and clubs like DC Gaels. Refers to numbers of teams city clubs tend to have, to their budgets and their use of those budgets to look after Irish players.</p> <p>00:08:00 Outlines the different approach of DC Gaels and teams in other cities. Emphasis on development with American-born players or long-term residents.</p> <p>00:09:16 Challenges facing volunteer organisations in the United States in respect of compliance issues.</p> <p>00:10:45 Discusses the problems associated with difficult economic climate – e.g loss of sponsorship – and the creative response of the club to fundraising.</p> <p>00:11:50 Difficulties the GAA has in attracting local sponsors in comparison with other sports.</p> <p>00:12:35 Recruitment initiatives undertaken by club – mentions non-discriminatory approach of club and the targeting of certain groups. Refers to post-college athletes and youth programme through schools, especially Catholic schools.</p> <p>00:15:25 Locating post-college age players and the emphasis on Irish events – bars, St. Patrick's Day parade, Shamrockfest – and general health and fitness events.</p> <p>00:16:12 Mentions some of the demos the club has done to attract new members and the use, and impact, of social media. Refers to efforts to generate publicity and to the use of social activities for recruitment.</p> <p>00:18:15 Discusses the appeal of the game and the social scene around it.</p> <p>00:18:50 Explaining the games of hurling and gaelic football to potential recruits – the use of comparison with American sports and match clips on website.</p> <p>00:22:30 Mentions the sporting backgrounds of many</p>
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	<p>American players with DC Gaels – soccer, lacrosse and ice hockey. Also mentions the transferability of skills from other sports – American football, basketball, baseball, field hockey. Mentions also a cricket player from Australia who played in Fall league.</p> <p>00:24:17 Discusses the distinctive appeal of Gaelic sports. Refers to the elitism of participating in Gaelic games and the seriousness it requires.</p> <p>00:25:55 Mentions his involvement in elite sports at the highest levels and the attractiveness of playing against teams from different cities.</p> <p>00:27:35 Provides details of sporting background: growing in Pennsylvania in the 1950s and 60s and playing baseball. Discusses traditions of wrestling in the town and his involvement in the sport, including the establishment of his own club. Mentions his attendance as a coach at the Olympic training centre for freestyle wrestling. Acted as coach for two World Junior team.</p> <p>00:29:37 Involvement as an administrator in amateur athletics, helping to bring World junior championships to Washington in 1984.</p> <p>00:30:00 Discusses his experience of wrestling in college and his desire to 'give something back'. Refers to the number of wrestlers he has coached and the success they have enjoyed.</p> <p>00:31:20 Draws parallels between his wrestling experience and that in the GAA.</p> <p>00:31:50 Discusses the GAA community in Washington and the large size of the DC Gaels by American standards. Mentions the friendships and relationships that have sprung from the club, the events organised by the club and planned for the future. Contrast the quality and scale of organisation in DC Gaels with other clubs.</p> <p>00:35:05 Discusses the challenge in finding suitable and affordable places to play and the competition for space from other sports and other ethnic groups. Mentions the costs associated with renting fields in different regions.</p> <p>00:39:00 Mentions development of strategic plan for club with aim to secure permanent grounds and how this might be achieved. Considers likely locations for such a ground and issues that need to be considered.</p>
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	<p>00:41:50 Discusses the ethnic make-up of club and issues of identity. Downplays the importance of Irishness to members and reflects on the age profile of other Irish groups in the region, including the AOH.</p> <p>00:44:15 Agrees that GAA affords opportunities to connect with Irish heritage.</p> <p>00:45:28 Discusses the relationship/connections between the DC Gaels and other Irish groups. Mentions the reliance on friends and family for support for club teams.</p> <p>00:47:00 Ambitions for the club: talks about financial goals and the build up of administrative capacity.</p> <p>00:50:00 Mentions the need to develop coaches and referees.</p> <p>00:51:50 Mentions the need for North American GAA to develop American plays and invest in youth programmes. Refers to the resistance to this approach, in particular among teams in the big cities.</p> <p>00:53:00 Talks about the need for more television exposure for Gaelic games in America on channels like ESPN. Believes the games are 'custom built' for Americans.</p> <p>00:54:30 Comments relationship with GAA in Ireland and the fact that North America comes under umbrella of the Munster Council. Discusses practical ways that GAA in Ireland might facilitate clubs in America.</p> <p>00:58:20 Concludes with a reiteration of the need to get message about GAA out. Recalls divisions between old and new guard of GAA in America over the adoption of a new crest. Stresses the need for modernisation.</p>
<p><b>Involvement in GAA</b></p>	<p> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter   <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player   <input type="checkbox"/> Manager   <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coach   <input type="checkbox"/> Steward  <input type="checkbox"/> Chairperson   <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Committee Member   <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person  <input type="checkbox"/> Caterer   <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jersey Washer   <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Referee   <input type="checkbox"/> None  <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____         </p>
<p><b>Record as a Player</b> (Titles won; Length of time played)</p>	<p>2009 Junior B hurling championship; 2009 Junior B football championship</p>
<p><b>Record as an Administrator</b></p>	<p>Secretary WDC Gaels, 2009-2010</p>

**REFERENCE NO. AM/1/16**

(Positions held; how long for)	
<b>Format</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
<b>Duration</b>	Length of Interview: 01:01:02
<b>Language</b>	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:      Brian Becker

Date:      29<sup>th</sup> Nov 2010