

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	John O'Shea
Date of Interview	6 th Dec 2009
Location	Interviewee's home, near Cushendall, Co. Antrim
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Terence McNaughton
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: N/A Home County: Antrim
Education	N/A
Family	N/A
Club(s)	Ruairí Óg CLG [Antrim]
Occupation	N/A
Parents' Occupation	N/A
Religion	N/A
Political Affiliation / Membership	N/A
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	N/A

Date of Report	23 rd August 2012
Period Covered	1980s – 2009
Counties/Countries Covered	Antrim, Down, Tyrone, Offaly, Tipperary, Kilkenny, Clare
Key Themes Covered	Travel, Supporting, Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Training, Managing, Coaching, Refereeing, Officials, Administration, Celebrations, Material Culture, Education, Religion, Media, Emigration, Involvement in GAA abroad, Role of Clergy, Role of Teachers, Role of the Club in the Community, Volunteers, GAA Abroad, Identity, Rivalries, All-Ireland, Club History, County History, Irish History, Earliest Memories, Family Involvement, Childhood, Impact on Life, Career, Challenges, Sacrifices, Outsider's Perspectives, Alcohol, Violence, Politics, Northern Ireland, The Troubles, Opening of Croke Park, Ban on Security Forces, Relationship with the Association, Professionalism, Retirement, Socialising, Relationships, Economy / Economics
Interview Summary	<p>Terence 'Sambo' McNaughton, the son of a Cavan father and Derry mother, was not born into a hurling tradition, but this interview underscores the extent the game has influenced his life. Growing up in Cushendall in Antrim, McNaughton followed his older brothers in taking up a hurling and he refers to how hurling helped him during difficult early years. He was 16 years old when he first played senior hurling for the club, the same year the club won its first senior county title. This is one of a number career highlights in McNaughton's career and he reflects on others with club and county – which include reaching the 1989 All-Ireland final with Antrim.</p> <p>Reflecting without regret on his playing career, McNaughton believes that the Antrim team of the late 1980s, early 1990s might have achieved more had they been less naive and better helped to deal with the pressures of playing in All-Ireland semi-finals and finals. He talks about the friendships he made through the game and the far-flung places he visited when playing it. As well commenting upon the roles of clergy and the media on GAA life, he addresses the issue of politics and perceived association with Irish nationalism.</p> <p>McNaughton provides clear insights into the impact of the Troubles, discussing both his own personal experience and that of the wider GAA community in the north: for example, he recounts the fears and anxieties of being involved in Gaelic games, the attitudes of the loyalist/unionist community, the precautions taken and the harassment (and worse) experienced. He charts also the great changes that have</p>

	<p>taken place in the north and how this has transformed the experience of GAA members – manifest in the great visibility of GAA jerseys in Belfast and other ‘mixed’ towns. He acknowledges the efforts the GAA has made to develop hurling in Ulster and to reach out to the Protestant/unionist community and he considers their prospects for success. Not all changes find agreement with him. McNaughton voices concerns at certain development in the GAA such as the treatment of clubs and their players, reports about the payment of managers and the undervaluing of local voluntary effort. For all that, the GAA has played a key role in shaping both his personality and his life and McNaughton emphasises the positive benefits to individuals and to society at large from participation in GAA activity.</p> <p>00:00:03 Interviewee introduces himself as Terence ‘Sambo’ McNaughton.</p> <p>00:20 Growing up on housing estate outside Cushendall, starting aged 12 and following in older brothers footsteps.</p> <p>00:44 Talks about having a speech impediment and influence this had on his sporting career. Hurling didn’t require him to speak.</p> <p>01:09 Lack of family background in the GAA. Neither father nor mother had hurling experience. Father from Cavan was interested in sailing; mother from village of Kilrea in south Derry where there was no hurling.</p> <p>01:30 Mentions that he has no ‘Antrim blood’ in him.</p> <p>01:45 Talks about involvement of his brothers in hurling and discussion about the game around the dinner table.</p> <p>02:20 Impact of GAA on life. ‘Without the GAA, my life would have been very empty, I imagine.’ Remarks on the dedication to the game, ambitions in the game and not smoking or drinking as a result. Says that hurling at times took precedence over work and family.</p> <p>03:11 Discusses supporting club and his brothers in a north Antrim competition, of which Roger Casement was one of the original founders.</p> <p>03:50 Mentions club being in Division 2 when he was growing up, inferior to two neighbouring clubs – Glenarrif and Cushendun.</p> <p>04:20 Remarks that in his first year of senior hurling with</p>
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	<p>Cushendall in 1981, the club won the senior county title.</p> <p>04:40 Selects as the standout games of his career the beating of Offaly in the 1989 All-Ireland semi-final and the 1991 All-Ireland semi-final when Kilkenny defeated Antrim by a point. Refers also to All-Ireland club semi-finals – drawing with St. Joseph’s Doorabarefield and watching his son lose a semi-final in final seconds.</p> <p>05:38 Remarks on being only 16 years-old when club won first county title. Says that his youth meant it didn’t mean as much to those older members of the club. Tells of seeing grown men cry, of farmers going into bars on the night of the final who had never passed their doors before. Mentions that celebrations continued for a week, but that he had to go to school the following day.</p> <p>06:25 Role of GAA in school. Mentions his rebelliousness nature in school and his primary interest in hurling and sport. ‘I suppose I thought school was there to organise hurling matches.’</p> <p>06:55 Discusses the contribution the GAA makes to the community and what it does for young girls and boys. Mentions having run a bar for 11 years and gives his impression of the impact of participation in sport on social behaviour.</p> <p>07:43 Remarks on the impact of drugs and anti-social behaviour on his own community and the lack of involvement among young GAA members.</p> <p>08:00 Comments that the GAA doesn’t get the credit it deserves from Irish society for the work it does for Irish youth. Reflects on the role of the GAA in giving young people purpose in life, in providing players with jobs and opportunities.</p> <p>08:50 Remarks on the healthy rivalries between neighbouring villages.</p> <p>09:00 Comments on the influence the GAA has had on his own children and equipping people for other challenges in life.</p> <p>09:35 Remarks on the minor involvement of the clergy in the GAA during his lifetime. Recalls one priest, Fr. McMullen, who took him to Antrim minor games, who wrote him a prayer etc.</p> <p>10:30 Relationship between the GAA and politics: reflects on the perception of the GAA as a nationalist organisation among unionists and the absence of politics in his</p>
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	<p>experience. Says that none of the children he currently trains are involved because of politics or religion, but because of 'a love of the game.'</p> <p>11:10 Difficulties in playing hurling outside the Glens of Antrim. Recalls the loyalist/unionist attitudes towards the GAA, including Sammy Wilson's description on television of the GAA as the 'sporting wing of the IRA'.</p> <p>11:55 Belief that attitudes are beginning to change, growing appreciation of the GAA as a solely sporting organisation.</p> <p>12:05 Reflects on the dangers associated with being involved with the GAA – watching where you went; not bringing hurleys or GAA gear in certain areas. Belief that players were 'legitimate targets'.</p> <p>12:55 Mentions his own high profile and how this impinged on the routes he took to work, where he went out socially etc.</p> <p>13:20 Considers the impact of Troubles on hurling in the north, in particular reluctance of parents in mixed areas to stay clear of the GAA. Mentions that his own area was predominantly Catholic and that this lessened the dangers.</p> <p>14:40 Mentions the paucity of villages in north Antrim playing hurling and the reasons for it.</p> <p>15:00 Main disappointments with the GAA: recalls failure to win an All-Ireland and general contentedness with career.</p> <p>15:30 Suggests the Antrim team he played on in late 1980s, early 1990s could have achieved more. Suggests they were a 'bit naive in preparations'. Remarks, however, that he has 'no regrets'.</p> <p>16:00 Comments on the absence of modern techniques of preparation and the lack of experience of playing in All-Irelands. Contrasts the Antrim situation with that of Tipperary and suggests that outside advice – someone who had won an All-Ireland - might have helped.</p> <p>16:50 Recalls the countdown to the 1989 All-Ireland final, getting fitted for jackets and the huge level of media interest.</p> <p>17:10 Impact of GAA in shaping his own identity. Says it instilled confidence in him, helping him overcome his speech impediment. Mentions boys in school wanting him on their hurling team and how this made him feel.</p> <p>18:16 Discusses the importance of rivalries to the GAA and what it says about how people view their community.</p>
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	<p>Mentions the rivalry his own team had with Ballycastle and the rivalry his son's team has with Dunloy.</p> <p>18:45 Refers to inter-county rivalry with Down and how it felt to lose to them.</p> <p>19:10 Mentions the proximity of Glenariff and Cushendun and how, when he was hurling, they played in lower divisions.</p> <p>19:47 Considers the health of hurling in Cushendun and impact of rising house prices on the social make-up of the area. Remarks also on the impact of smaller families on numbers playing the game.</p> <p>20:50 Talks about playing for club for 21 years, with the county and Ulster for 18 years and playing for Irish teams. Refers to the friendships made and to the far-flung places he has played hurling – Australia, America and London. Mentions the names of clubs he has played with abroad: Harry Bolands in Chicago; Sinn Féin in Melbourne; Brian Ború's in London.</p> <p>21:50 Mentions that the 1989 Antrim was the best he has played on and the 1985 Cushendall team was the best club team he played on.</p> <p>22:03 Talks about experience in management, losing to Limerick and Galway in two Minor All-Ireland semi-finals.</p> <p>22:14 Mentions frustration of being Antrim senior manager and trying to get players to be dedicated and committed. Remarks that there was many a 'sleepless night'.</p> <p>22:35 Considers changes in media coverage of the GAA: recalls the role of the <i>Irish News</i> when he started playing and the expansion of coverage in other papers such as the <i>Irish Daily Star</i>, the <i>Irish News</i>, <i>Gaelic Life</i> etc. Refers to enhanced TV coverage and comments being 'picked up' on.</p> <p>23:20 Considers the biggest challenges facing the GAA, commenting on the role of the GPA and his concern at the plight of club players and the treatment of the club game. Worries about gearing everything towards the big games in Croke Park.</p> <p>24:40 Stresses the need for the GAA to look after clubs better.</p> <p>25:00 Comments on the work done by the GAA, the influence of Peter Quinn on the development of Croke Park, the improvement of facilities at club level, concerns over amateur</p>
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	<p>ethos and reports of managers being paid. Remarks on who he believes are the real heroes of the GAA.</p> <p>26:40 Remarks that the GAA 'can survive without Croke Park, but it can't survive without our clubs'. Worries about the acquisitive nature of society and how this might impact on the GAA.</p> <p>27:10 Makes reference to growing up in Ulster and the risks associated with GAA involvement; suggests that it means more than to them than those involved in the south.</p> <p>28:00 Fears that fundamental purpose of the GAA will be lost and contrasts the scene in Croke Park on big days with the everyday experience in clubs across the country.</p> <p>29:00 Reference to words of support for volunteers in clubs as 'cheap talk'.</p> <p>29:20 Recalls a county quarter final which was held up for over an hour because players were stopped and searched by the side of the road by soldiers.</p> <p>29:50 Tells of the difficult situations faced by GAA people during the Troubles. Refers to Seán Fox from St. Enda's, the burning Ballycran club house; Gerard Devlin. Mentions shooting at St. Enda's on night he did a presentation at the club.</p> <p>30:50 Reflects on the worry of his mother and not wanting his son to endure the same issues.</p> <p>31:34 Tells story of coming from a presentation in Omagh one night and being stopped by a single soldier, being forced to sit for an hour and a half. Recalls the fear of being on the top of a mountain.</p> <p>31:50 Remarks on the vast improvement in the situation in the north – 'the troubles don't affect the GAA now'. Remarks that Belfast a different city, Northern Ireland a different country. Remarks on the prevalence of GAA jerseys in Ballymena and Belfast.</p> <p>32:30 Considers ways the GAA might promote hurling among unionist community. Comments on the nationalist stigma, the appearance of Gerry Adams at games, the opening of Croke Park etc. Says GAA is heading on the right road and considers the potential for future involvement of Protestant and Loyalist involvement in Gaelic games.</p> <p>33:30 Credits the Ulster Council and the GAA for the work</p>
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	<p>they are doing for hurling in Ulster.</p> <p>34:00 Refers to the difficulty and cost involved in hurling and, by contrast, the relative ease of football. Stresses the importance of getting players young.</p> <p>34:40 Mentions the participants of Protestants in his own club and mentions that George Best's cousin, a Protestant, had played on the 1943 All-Ireland final Antrim team.</p>
Involvement in GAA	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input type="checkbox"/> Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Steward</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Chairperson <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Committee Member <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Caterer <input type="checkbox"/> Jersey Washer <input type="checkbox"/> Referee <input type="checkbox"/> None</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____</p>
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: 35:49
Language	English

To be filled in by Interviewer:

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Signed: John O'Shea

Date: ___23rd August 2012_____