

GAA Oral History Project

Interview Report Form

Name of Interviewer	Brian Becker
Date of Interview	27 th July 2010
Location	Croke Park, Dublin
Name of Interviewee (Maiden name / Nickname)	Tony Watene
<u>Biographical Summary of Interviewee</u>	
Gender	Male
Born	Year Born: 1965 Home County: New Zealand, Australasia
Education	N/A
Family	Siblings: N/A Current Family if Different: 1 daughter
Club(s)	Na Fianna [Dublin]
Occupation	Inclusion Officer, GAA
Parents' Occupation	N/A
Religion	N/A
Political Affiliation / Membership	N/A
Other Club/Society Membership(s)	N/A

Date of Report	29 th July 2010
Period Covered	1980s – 27 th July 2010
Counties/Countries Covered	Australasia, New Zealand, Dublin, Waterford, Cork, Galway, Limerick, Kilkenny, South Africa, Monaghan
Key Themes Covered	Grounds, Facilities, Playing, Coaching, Refereeing, Officials, Administration, Fundraising, Education, Emigration, Involvement in the GAA Abroad, Role of Teachers, Role of Women, Role of Club in the Community, Volunteers, GAA Abroad, Club History, Family Involvement, Career, Challenges, Outsiders' Perspectives, Northern Ireland, Ban on Foreign Games and Dances, Opening of Croke Park, Relationships with the Association, Professionalism, Socialising, Economy/Economics
Interview Summary	<p>Tony Watene describes his involvement with the GAA starting as a player in New Zealand through the current time when he serves as the Inclusion Officer of the GAA in Croke Park. He delineates specific attempts by the GAA in recent years be proactive about inclusion and to combat discrimination of all types.</p> <p>0:21 He describes his first involvement with the GAA in New Zealand. Gaelic football, rugby, and Aussie Rules Football, and the Australasian Games are mentioned.</p> <p>1:42 He describes playing against inter-county players such as Sean White, Jim Stynes, and Brian Stynes. The Melbourne Demons are mentioned.</p> <p>2:25 He recalls being coached by Tony Dunne in the Australasian Games.</p> <p>2:50 He describes his partner winning a radio competition which gave away a Contiki tour of Europe.</p> <p>4:00 He discusses preparing for his first trip to Ireland. Pat Daly, training as a primary school teacher and getting hired by the GAA are all addressed.</p> <p>5:25 He discusses initially working for the GAA. Anti-</p>

	<p>doping, sanctions, transfers, and national summer camps are mentioned.</p> <p>5:57 He discusses his role as the Inclusion Officer for the GAA, Ladies football, and Camogie.</p> <p>6:18 He describes the nine grounds of discrimination: gender, race, ethnicity, age, family status, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, and religion.</p> <p>6:58 He discusses his relationship with race and disability officers with FAI.</p> <p>7:18 He discusses canvassing the country to frame the integration strategy. Forming his committee is described.</p> <p>8:00 Attempts to attract people with minority-ethnic backgrounds are discussed. Have-a-go days, high density populations, club involvement, and foundation coaching courses are mentioned.</p> <p>9:00 He discusses approaching clubs to host have-a-go days. Openness and avoiding reverse racism are described.</p> <p>10:00 Promotional materials for have-a-go days are discussed.</p> <p>10:20 Foundations of coaching, code of ethics training, respect initiatives, and rules of the games are described.</p> <p>11:00 He discusses vetting, referees, and players from war-torn states.</p> <p>11:15 He describes the need to include all voices in his committees. Two subcommittees are discussed: disability, sensory impairment, mental health, and wellbeing; and race, ethnicity, Travellers, and socially excluded groups.</p> <p>11:50 He discusses social exclusion.</p> <p>12:45 He describes processing incident reports.</p>
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	<p>Resolution, a respect initiative, and sanctions are mentioned.</p> <p>13:50 Examples of potential incidents including name calling and sexual orientation are given. A leading hurler admitting homosexuality is mentioned.</p> <p>14:23 Vicarious liability and accountability of the Association is discussed.</p> <p>14:50 Quantitative and qualitative data regarding reception of integration initiatives is described.</p> <p>15:37 A pilot open day program is discussed with mention of the four sports, Irish music, and Brazilian capoeira.</p> <p>16:20 He discusses the natural progress of the integration initiatives. Volunteer, administrator, and player participation in clubs are mentioned.</p> <p>17:21 He discusses specifically targeting clubs and the importance of parish rules.</p> <p>18:35 He discusses going into city clubs. The dominance of African players during school open days is mentioned.</p> <p>19:05 He discusses the lure of paid sports for young athletes. Professionalism, emigration, and employment is mentioned.</p> <p>20:15 Emigration and immigration are discussed.</p> <p>20:22 Fear and the education process is discussed with race and disability mentioned.</p> <p>20:55 Work within the five urban areas is discussed. Waterford, Cork, Limerick, Dublin, Galway are mentioned.</p> <p>21:25 He discusses the importance of visiting clubs in person.</p>
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	<p>22:50 He discusses his work with the games department and establishing relationships with people working in various clubs. An equality awareness workshop is mentioned.</p> <p>23:20 Disability awareness and intercultural awareness workshops are mentioned.</p> <p>23:45 Various ways of achieving inclusion are given including going to special needs schools and working with people with different ethnic backgrounds. He also describes monitoring inclusion efforts.</p> <p>24:50 He describes Go games.</p> <p>26:00 The respect initiative is described. Respect and for referees and social and rec games are mentioned.</p> <p>26:40 He discusses giving lectures in VEC classes. A bean bag hurling game and football are mentioned.</p> <p>27:34 He described sending letters to mild and moderate learning disability schools.</p> <p>28:15 He discusses research of reaching out to people with disabilities, attracting minorities, and coaching in primary schools.</p> <p>28:45 He discusses teacher involvement with GAA coaching.</p> <p>29:35 He mentions players from minority backgrounds including Jason Sherlock and Seán Óg Ó hAilpín.</p> <p>30:11 He discusses the treatment of African soccer players in Spain. Travellers, homosexuals, and education are all mentioned.</p> <p>31:10 He discusses wheelchair hurling, power soccer, wheelchair basketball, and wheelchair rugby. Teams from Dublin, Tipperary, Cork, Limerick, and Waterford are mentioned. Players with cerebral palsy and those who are ambulant are described.</p>
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	<p>33:00 The building of a new Handball alley at Croke Park with allowances for wheelchair hurling is discussed. Players from Tipperary are used as an example.</p> <p>34:15 Gender separations are discussed. Ladies football, camogie, and male coaches are mentioned.</p> <p>35:30 Female referees are discussed. Whistlers at go games are mentioned.</p> <p>36:44 International rules games are discussed. Competition for underage players is mentioned.</p> <p>38:00 The fight before a previous match is mentioned. The player perspective is given.</p> <p>38:40 He recalled a meeting with Liam Mulvihill and Joe McDonagh in Brisbane regarding the globalisation of gaelic sports. His rugby coaching experience is mentioned.</p> <p>39:30 The opening of Croke Park and the foreign games ban are discussed.</p> <p>40:05 The allocation of money from tickets sales is described.</p> <p>40:20 He recalls the anthems being played before the Ireland versus England rugby match in Croke Park.</p> <p>41:20 He recalls the Special Olympics being held in Croke Park.</p> <p>41:38 Amateurism is mentioned.</p> <p>41:56 The revenue generated by rugby matches and concerts Croke Park is discussed.</p> <p>42:45 Club facilities and stadia are described. A comparison with rugby and soccer clubs is made.</p> <p>43:38 He describes a 2007 forum at Croke Park and the feedback received by participants from non-traditional communities.</p>
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	<p>44:15 He discusses differences in integration efforts in schools and clubs. Attracting full-family involvement is mentioned.</p> <p>45:30 Playing in his first inter-county game against Western Australia is recalled.</p> <p>46:15 His appointment as Inclusion officer is mentioned.</p> <p>46:23 He describes attempts to have his daughter play camogie.</p> <p>46:45 He describes what it is like to work for the Association.</p> <p>48:00 He recalls taking a course at Trinity College, and discusses the ability of sport to break down barriers. Nelson Mandela, Morgan Freeman, and the film Invictus are mentioned.</p> <p>50:20 Rounders as an integrative sport is discussed. Baseball, softball, slow-pitch are mentioned. An International Rounders Day in Croke Park with teams from the North, New Zealand, Australians, South Africa, and the United States is suggested.</p> <p>51:30 Eastern European handball players in Monaghan, native handball players in Moyross, squash, and racquetball are mentioned.</p> <p>52:55 The purity of gaelic games is addressed. South Africa is given as an example.</p> <p>53:35 The fear of incoming people taking jobs and propaganda are discussed.</p> <p>54:15 A desire to integrate is described. The importance of gaelic games in Irish society is mentioned.</p> <p>54:45 Family involvement in the GAA is described.</p> <p>55:10 He describes the possibility for immigrants to send video of themselves playing gaelic sports to people in</p>
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	<p>their home country. Nigeria is given as an example.</p> <p>55:50 The 2010 Leinster final between Meath and Louth is discussed. Thierry Henry's handball and the GAA potentially requiring a rematch are described.</p> <p>56:55 Changes to the rule book and the GAA constitution are discussed.</p> <p>57:37 The social network of the GAA is described. Examples of Christmas dinner at his boss's house and his being given use of a holiday home are given.</p> <p>59:11 He describes first arriving in Dublin and joining Na Fianna. Training and socialising are discussed.</p> <p>1:00:30 He recalls Na Fianna success.</p> <p>1:01:07 He discusses the effect of foreign players on Dublin football.</p> <p>1:02:25 He recalls his opportunity to play for the county team and compares play in Dublin with play in New Zealand. His experience playing Aussie Rules Football and the level of play in Croke Park is discussed.</p> <p>1:03:30 He discusses the level of kicking and catching in the current game.</p> <p>1:04:00 He discusses the level of play in hurling. Kilkenny is mentioned. A comparison between hurling and gaelic football is made.</p> <p>1:04:35 He recalls playing hurling in New Zealand. Different equipment, hockey, and go games are mentioned.</p> <p>1:05:25 He discusses various improvements to Croke Park. The stadium in Tullamore and efforts to allow for people with disabilities are mentioned.</p>
<p>Involvement in GAA</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player <input type="checkbox"/> Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Steward</p>

REFERENCE NO. AA/1/1

	<input type="checkbox"/> Chairperson <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Committee Member <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds-person <input type="checkbox"/> Caterer <input type="checkbox"/> Jersey Washer <input type="checkbox"/> Referee <input type="checkbox"/> None <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): GAA Inclusion Officer
Record as a Player (Titles won; Length of time played)	N/A
Record as an Administrator (Positions held; how long for)	GAA Inclusion Officer, 1 year
Format	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual
Duration	Length of Interview: 01:06:36
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: _____ Brian Becker _____

Date: _____ 29th July 2010 _____

