

Interview with Gildo Canali 3/5/96

INT: What is your birth date?

GC: My birthday is March 24, 1931

INT: First I want to just find out about yourself. Where did you grow up at?

GC: I grew up at Crystal Falls Michigan. I received my high school diploma in 1949 in Crystal Falls and I went into the United States Air Force and I was discharged in 1953 and then I came to Northern Michigan University graduating in June of 1956.

INT: And where did you receive like a Education degree, or a what type of degree did you receive.

GC: right, I received a education degree, my major was a physical education, my minor was History and biology. And upon graduation from Northern Michigan University I received a graduate assistant ship from Indiana University where I graduated in August of 1957 with a masters degree in Health education and athletic administration.

INT: Was there any significant events that you would like to tell about your life that ? your position in your position.

GC: Like well during my high school days I played athletics for an outstanding coach. by the name of Edward Chambers, and then of course I went to the Air Force and when I was discharged from the Air force I was going to start working in the mine, but he suggested I try to receive a college education because there would be a great future for me if I went to college and that is exactly what I did and from there everything worked out.

INT: Did you hold any positions at other schools or anything before you came to Northern.

GC: Yes, I was a, I worked for football, and basketball and taught the science classes at Munising High school for 3 years prior to coming to Northern in 1959.

INT: and now, you were hired by ? Moneyet, and when were you hired?

GC: I was hired in July in 1959, as the first full time athletic trainer at Northern and also a instructor in the field of Physical Education.

INT: And when you came to Northern, how was the Athletic Department and the Physical Education department at that time.

GC: Well at that time it was on a small basis, but our athletic

program was starting to flourish. They had hired a new coach, by the name of Mr. Frasca, that is during the era we moved from the national association intercollegiate athletics into the NCAA which we are affiliate members of today.

INT: What kinds of classes did you teach?

GC: When I first came to Northern I taught general physical education classes, and I taught a class in Health education for secondary school teachers, and I believe I also taught a class for health education for elementary school teachers.

INT: Would there a lot of classes in the Health department or was it more on the physical education aspect?

GC: There were more classes in physical education than health.

INT: there were.

GC: yes.

INT: Okay, at the time that you came what sports were ? ? now or less ?????

GC: less sports when I first came, we were proficient in football, basketball, we did have track and I believe we, no we did not start, those were the main sports football, basketball and track.

INT: okay. Was there any problems with the athletics, like ? equipment, funding, participation.

GC: no we had sufficient funding, and sufficient number of participants for the sports that we offered and of course we did offer scholarships for our athletes.

INT: Okay I did have a question about scholarships. Was all the sports given out scholarships?

GC: Yes they were. Football, basketball and track all had scholarships.

INT: What about womens sports.

GC: Womens sports did not come on the scene until 1968, 69. That is when we started womens field hockey, womens basketball and I believe ? ? .

INT: Okay. Did they have scholarships?

GC: Yes, they had partial scholarships at that time.

INT: Was there any problem funding scholarships?

GC: No. They were scholarships as such, that, that period of time that you had to work part time on campus to help pay your room and board.

INT: Did any certain sport at that time stand out, for Northern such as like football.

GC: yes, football, football and basketball both, we played various teams throughout the country. Like football we played Quantico Marines, we played the University of Tampa which later dropped football, our basketball program played Michigan State, we played Oklahoma, Wyoming, large schools throughout the country during that time.

INT: Okay. Now I just want to know little bit about Rod Money, if you could just describe him and his position.

GC: Okay, Mr. Money came to Northern in the Fall of 1947, at that time he coached all sports, he had football, basketball, track, tennis, golf and he was also took over the PE chairmanship in 1957 which he held for 10 years until 1967. He did coach football from '47 to '55 and also basketball.

INT: how long was he there do you know?

GC: yes, he came here in '47 through '67.

INT: now did most of the coaches, that were hired, did they teach were they basically the teachers for the phys ed and health classes?

GC: Yes. All coaches also taught classes. Whether it be health, physical education, recreation, but everyone was involved even intramural sports.

INT: Was recreation big at that time? or was it real small.

GC: It was very small. We didn't have any so called recreation department the only thing we had was the intramural sports program and various coaches were assigned for seasons. Say if you were involved with football you would take the basketball intermurals or softball intermural's in the spring of the year.

INT: So basically if you got hired as a coach you were also a teacher or ?. Okay. Was there anything during your time that started the Health department more health classes and more recreation, such Phys ed I know there were physical education classes at the time, but when did you know that if you were there at the time, more how in recreation classes come in.

GC: Health classes really in the early '70's it started top develop. Same thing for the recreation department.

INT: Was there a demand for those students or

GC: At that time not necessarily, it was just beginning.

INT: It was just beginning.

GC: right, there was a lot of classes being taught in first aid, and swimming areas like that.

INT: Do you know who was the head of the Health Department in the '70's.

GC: Head of the Health Department, no I can't remember that.

INT: I think I have that down. Is there anything you want to add about your position in athletics at Northern, certain points significant to you.

GC: Oh yes, well when I took over in 1971 I came in as interim athletic director, I was in acting basis for one year and then it made it a permanent basis during that period of time and that is when the program started to move. We got into a athletic conference, all of our sports gained national prominence at the championship level, that is when we won the National Football Championship and came in second place in Ice Hockey, then we Ice Hockey championship in '91 and we were second in basketball, the womens program started to flourish.

INT: Is the womens, started to pick up, you said when did they start? what was there first sport?

GC: First sport was field hockey and basketball.

INT: Field hockey and basketball, around what time what year.

GC: 1968

INT: 1968 and more came

GC: Right more came. Then womens teams started to come, and womens swimming, womens gymnastics.

INT: okay. Was there a demand put out by the women that they wanted this sports.

GC: yes, the women right, women demanded that they wanted to have more sports. And that was also required by the conference and the NCAA.

INT: Okay. Looking back from time, from the time you were at Northern and now, what do you think were the major changes, good or bad.

GC: Well the major changes was the growth of Northern from 500 students up to, we were as high as 9500 and I believe we are down to 62 or 6300. The reason for that being that as you know there

are a lot more colleges now than there were then. I think there are 15 four year schools and 24 community colleges. And many of the students are staying close to home rather than traveling. And I think that our programs have all expanded and grown at Northern. And I think that this is necessary to have a rounded four year school.

INT: Okay then I was just going to ask you. What is an athlete at the time when you were here, was there any problems that they, or the students in the phys ed department, was there any problems that they had or any certain things wrong that they thought was the department of the athletics?

GC: No. not necessarily, most of the students, like I said, were on full scholarships or partial scholarships and we didn't have any problems with any of the student athletes and at that time we had quite a few blacks on the team too and I notice now they don't have that many on some of the teams that we had back in the '70's and '80s.

INT: Basically that is all the questions I had for you today, is there anything you would like to add?

GC: I can't think of anything right off the top of my head.

INT: If there are more questions I might, is it okay if I give you a call.

GC: certainly.

INT: I think I want to write more down about the ?, I think I will go through that this week and give you a call.

GC: Sure.

INT: ?

GC: American First Aid, Red Cross award from Lyndon Johnson, Washington for saving lives, and I also have been inducted into Northern Michigan's University Hall of Fame and also the U.P. Sports Hall of Fame, I coached and refereed football and basketball and track for 40 years, I received the Michigan High School Athletic association award, and various other stuff.

INT: Could you repeat what you said before, the ? you had to take?

GC: Oh yes, we took the class in elementary school rythems, where we learned all the various games to teach kindergarten through twelfth, that qualified us to graduate to teach physical education from lower grades all through high school. Then we took a class in physical diagnosis which enabled us to recognize different illnesses and different types of diseases in young kids that we had, then we took a class in Kinesiology, that is the

study of muscles, we knew all the different muscles in the human body and then elementary health education, secondary school health education, first aid, and those, and education administration of physical education.

Monday in March 24, 1954

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