

2019\_esch\_PFVP\_04

**Interviewer**

***Interviewer 2***

Interviewee

*Interviewee 2*

*[background speaker]*

**Okay if you could just say your names for me first?**

Stephen Maynard

**Okay**

*[Pat?]*

**And...**

*Oh sorry.*

**Shall I do you together?**

*I'm Pat Mahoney*

**Okay and could you both just tell me your first experiences of the Olympics, not necessarily 2012, anything you remember about watching the Olympics?**

*[Bye everyone, see you soon!]*

*I have very few memories of other Olympics except what I saw on TV, I went to the London Stadium this year for the Paralympics-*

*[Lovely to meet you]*

All the best, Maureen

*Maureen, god bless, good luck at the weekend okay*

**Bye**

*[Thank you]*

***Shall we start that one again a little?***

**Yeah sorry**

*Sorry about that*

*[Bye Steve, bye bye Pat!]*

***Bye really nice to meet you, thank you, bye bye***

See ya later Jo!

*Right shall we start again?*

**Start again please, thank you**

*Right, the first experience of the Olympics myself, actually being there was when I went to London Stadium this year to watch the Paralympics, I was with my wife and two daughters, and it was our second visit to the London Stadium because we had been on one occasion when the actual Olympics were on, but we didn't have tickets to go to anything. We tried to see if they'd let us in, if though we knew that some of the events had spare seats and empty seats inside of them, but the first experience at London Park was absolutely brilliant, really really enjoyed that. Then we went back for the Olympics and the Paralympics, and went up the Orbit as it was called at the time, and into the stadium, very impressed with the stadium. The big flame they had at the end, I remember distinctly, so yeah, it was a good experience and I thought the stadium looked really good. When West Ham moved there, I was anxious to see what it would look like then, and I think they did a good job of converting it from a athletics stadium to a football stadium, other people criticised it, and there are issues which still need to be addressed, but as a football stadium it looks good. That's my experience.*

**Cool okay**

Well I haven't got no personal experience of going to a stadium and watching the Olympics but I was always watching it on the television every day, 'cause it was always- especially when I was at school, in the school holidays, and my first memory was 1956 in Melbourne, I believe. I can't remember much about it but I do remember I think one of our guys won the steeplechase, Chris Granger I think he won a gold medal in 1956. A clearer memory is 1960 in Rome, we had a guy who went to Thomas Lethaby School in East Ham, his name was Brian Phelps and he was our high board diving champion, British diving champion and he did have high hopes, doing well in it, and I remember in the holidays all the schoolkids, one of our friends, his mum, let us all go in her living room and watch it, his event, and I remember us all cheering because, none of us knew him and I still don't, and being an East Ham boy we all thought we knew it. And I believe he came third, I think he might've got a bronze medal, I'm not sure, but I can still remember that day in a friend's living room, all us kids watching it, it was a great feeling. And another day I remember, I think is 1968, and that was at Mexico games, and that's for a personal reason, it's because I remember when my wife came down to live from Scotland, we was going to Euston station to pick her up very early in the morning and I can remember relaying the events back from Tokyo- sorry, from Mexico, in '68 and there was Long John Baldry singing the theme song, I can remember that clearly. But as years has gone on, I wish I had gone to a- I never have done, I been to watch the Paralympics once and I thought it was a great experience, really enjoyed it, but I have been a telly addict over the years **[laughs]** I always watch it, and always enjoyed it.

**Cool. What did you go and see at the Paralympics, which event?**

Er I think it was the running. It was incredible how fast they was running round the people, it just took your breath away. And er no, I enjoyed it, and I was really pleased I went. And that was at the London stadium

**What was the atmosphere like?**

Oh the at- oh it was brilliant, what I thought it would be there. And no I thoroughly enjoyed it and even now when the Olympics come up again, you go that buzz inside you, you see your team, what's been picked, and you look at their times and um, and er, hopefully we're doing really well now, a lot of the runners we've got, athletes we've got now, very pleased.

**Do either of you have any memorabilia or anything from either London 2012 or any other...?**

*Don't think so. Oh a booklet which was given out at the time of the Olympics, a daily programme they would give out, what happened the day before and what was coming up that day. Because I went to some of the events at the O2, event at the Earl's Court and Excel. And ~~XXXX~~ the Olympic Stadium as well, at least they gave us out these booklets, so they're the only things I would have*

**Do you still have them now?**

*Yes. Think I have, think so [laughs]*

**[Laughs] So they were making those like each day, almost like a little newspaper?**

*That's right, yes.*

Mm

*A booklet, they cost- they sold them for- they give you all the events that's happening that day as well, like a daily programme.*

**Okay cool**

***I think you were gonna say something Pat, when Steve was talking?***

*Yes, Steve was talking*

Sorry

**Sorry**

***No no I just wanted to follow it up***

*It just brought back a memory to me, what I can distinctly remember was the 1964 Olympics in Tokyo, and on television, they had a distinctive tune which every morning they played, which was Good Morning Tokyo*

[singing together] Good Morning Tokyo

*Good Morning Tokyo, happy to be seeing you [laughs]*

Yeah, I remember that!

*I'll always remember that*

They always had a tune didn't they? A song for each four years. As I say Long John Baldry done the Mexico one in '68 and I remember that one

**Can you sing it?**

Go on

Er, what was it now? [Singing] underneath the stars of Mexico, Mexico!

[Laughter]

**Said you weren't gonna sing**

I know

**That's fantastic**

I haven't got no memorabilia but the thing I remember from Olympics is when we done a tour of the stadium and I've always been fascinated seeing the athletes start from their starting blocks. And as we went in stadium they've got a practice track in there, as you know, and they had the starting blocks down so I thought I've got to have a go at that. And I didn't realise how hard it was, as I went to start, I went [hits table] toppled over!

[Laughs]

So it was good awakening as to how hard it is and I could see how Usain Bolt, fastest man on earth, he always had trouble starting. And I can see, 'cause he's like me long legs, tall man, and I can see why he had trouble. I know he's a different level to me [laughs] but you can see why it hinders him even at his level

*One big memory I have from the last Olympics that I thought was absolutely brilliant was the volunteers because they helped to make the Olympics as they were. As we turned up, there was lots of volunteers who were big fans, smiling, cheering, talking to people, and it was absolutely brilliant I thought. XXXX these people, go out and enjoy yourselves, and make the crowd enjoy themselves, and there was a very very happy type atmosphere because of them*

**So I think we've been joined by someone else, do you want to say who you are**

*Yeah I'm Don Adams, I'm the chairman of Any Old Irons. The story that Pat just said about the games-makers, we deliberately bought tickets for the Paralympics and on the Friday evening, just happened to be my birthday and as we were coming out of the stadium, one of the games-makers who was sitting in the big tennis umpire chair shouted out, is it anybody's birthday? So one of the group I was with pointed in my direction, and the whole crowd sang happy birthday.*

**Aww**

**Oh wow that's amazing**

That's good

**How lovely, so nice.**

**That's a good birthday present**

***Can I take you back again to the previous games that you spoke about and if you had any memories of any differences between the games in terms of clothing or the countries that participated, anything that you can remember in terms of the politics, or anything in history that you might remember in relation to the Olympics, Paralympics?***

Paralympics, I got to be honest I haven't got a very good knowledge of Paralympics there. I mean honestly with the Olympics the style's changed, you used to have the ladies sitting down, there'd be pleated skirts and everything, and meas- especially with the long jump, measuring, as time's gone on now with technology and style's change, er, people wear, it's like they've got athletes now, just go round the stadium checking everything. It's just progress and obviously the world records have changed as well over the-

***Yeah yeah yeah***

As time's gone on

***I think you had your finger up first***

*Politically, the big thing that will stick in my mind was I think 1972, Munich. When the athletes-*

Yeah

Yeah

*The athletes were killed, and I thought to myself at that time, what happened was horrendous obviously, the games continued. And I couldn't get over that.*

**What was that that happened? Sorry just to butt in**

Terrible

*Israeli athletes were attacked by terrorists, entrapped in their room, they were killed eventually. And while this was going on, this hostage scene was going on, the Olympics still continued and XXXX someone won a gold medal, and you think well, they surely can't be going on,*

No

*You know, with what's going on, the horror what's going on in the Olympic village*

It was terrorists they shot all Israelis, it was in Munich, wasn't it?

***All the athletes? All the Israeli athletes?***

A lot of them

*No, a certain amount of them*

I can't remember the amount

*There were about nine or ten killed I think*

**Wow**

It's always gone a bit political, in '68 I think, I think that was in Munich about '72 was it?

*'72 was Munich I'm pretty sure, yeah*

But in '68, I believe, I'm not exactly sure about the year, you had three black athletes from America, Tom Smith, Ron Carlos

*That's right yeah, the Black Power*

and another guy and they- when they got presented with their medals, they done a Black Power salute and that went all around the world, and that started off, well it was just too political, and sport's not supposed to be like- certainly going to Munich, what Pat said, that's horrifying, I was gonna mention that, I'm glad Pat did mention that, because I didn't know whether to or not, but it is a part of history

**No, it's-**

**Of course**

And obviously it's awful what happened. And I agree, I- they did carry on didn't they?

**You were gonna mention something Don?**

*Yeah I think the one thing that a lot of people are aware of um is the underlying cost of staging modern Olympics, um. It looks as if it's almost getting to the point where no single country will be able to afford to stage the Olympics. And I think the other thing was, and everyone will remember 2012, the impact that the opening ceremony had on everybody. 'Cause there were all the people, we'll get it wrong, something will happen-*

**Yeah yeah**

*We can't do it properly*

**Yeah**

*And it was an absolutely fantastic opening ceremony.*

**Yeah**

*You know, the queen jumping out the helicopter*

**[Laughs]**

**Yeah yeah yeah**

Nobody could've dreamt that could they?

*No, no*

**No, no. Brilliant. So in relation to that- oh sorry were you gonna say something?**

*Sorry I was just gonna say as well, what Don said, the cost of staging the Olympics [clears throat] excuse me, is I've always thought, the best way forward is every four years to hold it in Greece, and for each country participating to contribute to the cost of Greece staging the Olympics. 'Cause that would take away the pressure of the countries trying to outdo each other, take away the pressure of the countries trying to cover- 'cause so many countries who have staged the Olympics have run out on a loss. You take Brazil, last year, the year before, they did it, and the cost for Brazil was horrendous, so the social conditions in Brazil which weren't being attended to, instead they were concentrating on building stadiums. You look around the world where the Olympics have been held, and there are stadiums which are still lying empty which haven't been used. Whereas if Greece were happy with it, that sort of infrastructure XXXX to build massive stadiums, just for the purpose of the Olympics, XXXX once afterwards, but then it would take away the onus on countries feeling that they've got to make their country look good by having the Olympics.*

To be honest, our Olympic stadium, if it wasn't for West Ham playing there, that would be tumbleweed. It wouldn't be used

**Yeah**

Yep

And I know we've got a good deal out of it but I don't think- if it wasn't for West Ham, that would be losing loads more than what it is now.

*I think that's emphasised by the fact that the main stadium that the Brazilians built, a year later, was being used to park buses*

**Wow**

**I didn't know that wow**

No I didn't know that

Yep. *They had no other use for it*

*And the architect who designed London Stadium, designed it in such a way that after four years, it could be taken apart and shipped off to Brazil, which would've saved Brazil a fortune. But Brazil obviously had their own contractors who they wanted to build this, and they may have felt that XXXX [loud music] different people by getting different projects out there*

**So going back-**

**What do you-**

***Sorry- so going back to- so we got 2012 so going back to 1948 games, and then 1908, those were kind of both rescues weren't they? I think, you know, London stepped in, especially after the Second World War, so I don't know if you've got any memories of that***

That was the White City, that was the year I was born '48. Obviously I've seen newsreels of them, and I was- and er the one in Berlin, just before the war with Jesse Owens, winning all

the sprints, he won about four gold medals. And um, anyway, it goes political and I don't wanna go into it

***Oh I like the political***

Do you?

***Well it has a big influence on history***

Well the guy who won it was a guy called Jesse Owens and he was a black athlete. Obviously Hitler hated it 'cause he went to Munich, on his own turf, and won gold medals. And that is a man who's forever in history, Jesse Owens, for what he- and it shouldn't been like that because he just had pure talent, as a fast runner, and he really- he's known more for that than his running exploits, the friction he created there with the athletes. But as a child, as a kid, they used to show the newsreels, I think it was about '36 was it? And I was always fascinated 'cause all the cameras always went a bit quicker what they went, 'cause it wasn't good cameras them days, but cor they used to be burning up the track down there, it always fascinated me, but thereagain, he's forever in history that man Jesse Owens, and I like to think it's because of what he accomplished

*Hitler was trying to emphasise the superiority of the Aryan race*

**Mm**

*The Aryan race was much superior to anyone else so when the German athletes couldn't beat Jesse Owens he was not happy*

No he wasn't was he?

***So you saw it in the cinema or on television?***

On the television they showed it, they- we used to have a programme called All Our Yesterdays

*That's right yes*

And they always showed bits of sports and that was shown a lot, it was always shown in the cinema, it was always shown, not so much now, 'cause we- it's years and years gone past, but it is probably still shown now because it is a part of history what that man, what that man done

*Sorry the other side to that story is that Jesse Owen won four gold medals at those Olympics, but from him, right up to the time when Cassius Clay won an Olympic gold medal, when those athletes went home to America, they weren't allowed to go on the buses, they weren't allowed to go into restaurants*

That's right yeah yeah. They show no respect

*You can make a political point leaning any direction you like but all the publicity was about Jesse Owen and Adolf Hitler but when they went home to their home countries, they were still treated as second class citizens*

Yeah yeah exactly yeah

***Did you get any stories from your parents in relation to the games?***

To the games, I just think, I can remember my dad saying once, that was the year you was born when London had the White City in '48, 'cause they did used to show the old games a lot on the television I was always fascinated watching them. That's why I can pick out gold medal winners going back, 'cause I always watched it on the television

***Any favourites?***

Yeah I used to- er, like him, in 1960, won a gold medal, Peter Radford, the sprinter, always used to watch him, because I loved the 100 metres, how quick they did it. And then we had Alan Wells, he won a 100 metres didn't he?

*People like Davie Thompson*

Davie Thompson

*Who was a real character*

He was a character yeah. As I say, yeah, the sprinters were my favourite yeah. But obviously you wanted everyone to- and the middle distance runners, I like Steve Ovett there, he won a gold- he won one gold medal at the half-mile, hundred metres and that wasn't his specialist distance, his specialist was 1500m and yet Sebastian Coe won that and his specialist distance was 800 metres.

*A lot of the interest there was the rivalry between Coe and-*

And they were two British boys as well but they built up a big rivalry between them, but Sebastian Coe, he was the one that got all the world records

Yes

He used to have a pacemaker, not at the Olympics he didn't

*And a bit like Brexit now you're either a remainer or a leaver, in those days. You're either a Coe supporter or an Ovett supporter*

**[Laughs]**

*At the Olympic Park, at one place, they've got measured out the distance that Steve Rutherford- Steve Rutherford? - flew.*

***Greg Rutherford***

Right the long jumper?

*Long jumper*

***Greg Rutherford, Greg Rutherford***

Oh Greg Rutherford, yeah, Greg

*It was Greg Rutherford, yeah, the distance he flew. If you look at it, it's absolutely incredible, the long jump outside. And we went to the London Stadium that night, the night of Super*

*Saturdays they called it, I had some old college friends down, and we couldn't get near the stadium but we went to a pub in Stratford and we sat in the garden and they had big screens there, and we could see the lights of the stadium in the distance*

**Oh**

*It was over there, and we were watching in a pub in Stratford*

**That must've been amazing to actually be in Stratford**

*Yeah*

*Mm*

*I was expecting Stratford to be buzzing. It wasn't, this was Stratford, old Stratford by the church there. And it was an ordinary Saturday night there, felt quieter than an ordinary Saturday night*

**Really? I would've thought the opposite**

*I thought it would be busier than I expected as well*

**Yeah. I was just gonna ask a bit about how you think- do you think the changes that have happened to Stratford because of the Olympics, what do you think about that?**

***The impact of the games***

**Buildings, or the experience of-**

*It's good that Stratford itself, businesses over there, obviously, it was always quite a good shopping centre, I don't think it was a really busy, busy shopping centre, because when we lived in East Ham we never really went Stratford to shop there. But I think obviously with West Ham there now and Westfield, got a handy name, it's brought a lot of money into Stratford, the only thing is, where the West Ham's moved, this area round here has lost a lot of money and you've got people- buildings, pubs closing, the pie and mash shops closed because that's what they relied on that revenue on match days. But thereagain it's not a perfect world is it?*

*I lived in Stratford many, many years. I left Stratford the year before the Olympics. In fact, the year before the Olympics were announced, in fact, we sold our house the year before the Olympics were announced. If we had waited until the next year, our house would've gone for a lot more money because we lived right close to it*

**[Laughs]**

*But the impact on Stratford has been- if you take the old shopping centre as it was, and you go towards where Westfield is now, it's completely changed, completely, it's unrecognisable. I mentioned to Maureen today coming back from the stadium across the bridge, I said, if I sat here look at the skyline now I recognise nothing from when I lived here. However, once you go to where the old shopping centre is, and go to the old shopping centre and come up where the church is, there's nothing changed there at all- cycle lanes, things like that, but a lot of people who live round the area, people I know, said, well the Olympics did nothing for*

*us. People were promised it was going to regenerate Stratford, regenerate the whole area, they haven't done that. And secondly is we were promised as well that when the Olympic village was built and flats were going up, the social housing, the affordable housing and everything, very very small, the rest was being privately sold and they're raking millions of pounds in there. So a lot of the promises that were made by politicians at that time never happened, which- these residents in Stratford XXXX for them. Sorry for getting political*

### **No it's interesting**

*Looking at it from a slightly different- I think environmentally, Stratford as you see it now compared to ten or fifteen years ago, the amount of dereliction and pollution that was on that site that is now the Olympic park, um, it's got to have improved, just a general living conditions that are around there*

Yeah yeah, when you think of all the waste ground what was round there and now what's been built on there, it's only for the better

**Yeah there's so much green space on there now it's- I mean I didn't know it before but actually it's a really nice place to go**

It's nice

### **The Olympic park**

*Oh yes yes sorry it's lovely*

### **It's a nice place to go**

Oh it's lovely. We've had boat tours through Any Old Irons we've been taken round 'em you know, the locks you know and it's brilliant, the clean-up they've done, I can remember them rivers, walking past- well looking down on the train, the state they used to

*You couldn't even walk across the River Lea before*

Yeah you could do yeah

### **Really**

So yeah it is for the better the environment, good point what Don said there, and er health and safety and hygiene

### **Yeah yeah**

***I think just the last question was if you had any memorabilia, anything from the games at all, anything that we might be able to take a picture of***

*I'm thinking to myself looking through some programmes the other day, the West Ham memorabilia, I couldn't find those ones, unfortunately I think I threw them out*

*I had some programmes and ticket stubs. I think because I'm in the process of packing and ready to move and I think I gave a lot of stuff to one of our group members*

### **Okay**

*Because he runs a little sort of memorabilia place at Dagenham Football Club and I passed a lot of stuff I don't know if that included the Olympic programmes*

**So I think we're gonna take your details and then maybe we could come back and ask that question again if that's okay?**

**Okay I'll just pause this**

**[End]**