



It is very difficult to do justice to David's contribution to the game of Rugby Fives. His efforts both on and off the court have been enormous and span a period in excess of forty years. Born in 1936, David was educated at St Dunstan's College in South-East London during an era which saw the emergence of a number of other well-known Fives personalities such as Stan Holt, Eric Marsh and John Howe.

On leaving school, he continued his education at Loughborough Colleges (1958-61), accompanied by fellow Dunstonian Stan Holt. This period saw the development of David's organisational prowess. Not only did he create a flourishing club in Loughborough despite the fact that the nearest courts were in Denstone, but he also initiated the first ever British Universities Championships. These were held at Bedford Modern School over four days in 1960. There were singles, doubles and team events, and accommodation was organised in the Officers' Mess at nearby RAF Cardington. The occasion was completed by a wonderful formal dinner held at the Swan Hotel. The camaraderie of the occasion was a fitting tribute to David's tireless energy, and many lifelong friendships were forged over those four days - as a member of the Edinburgh team, I certainly felt privileged to be part of such an auspicious event. David's determination, loyalty and administrative qualities are exemplified by the fact that from 1965 to date he has overseen the running of this tournament, liaising variously with BUSF, UAU and latterly BUSA. He has also had an important part to play in raising the British Universities team for the annual "international" against the RFA. Over the years his patience and resourcefulness may have been stretched on a number of occasions, but they have never been found wanting.

For over 40 years, David has been a member of the Rugby Fives Association Executive Committee and was, of course, a distinguished President from 1974-76, a period which saw him as busy as ever on court. Even so, he found time with the help of his wonderful parents to inaugurate the President's Dance, which coincided with the National Doubles Championships and was held at Colfe's School, where David has devoted his entire teaching career. These dances were wonderful social occasions which truly reflected the warmth of the Fives Community and also provided an important stimulus to the RFA's finances, thanks to David's generosity. Forthright in Committee and tenacious in his ambitions for the game, David has always believed that actions speak louder than words, and to this end he initiated a

course at Catford Evening Institute which sought to introduce the game to those who had not had the opportunity to play at school.

All of this administrative acumen is, however, easily matched by David's achievements on court. Outside Schools and Universities Championships, there is no title that has eluded him and his immaculate left-hand craft. He won the National Singles title in 1964, the West of England in 1962 and 1963, the North of England four times (1957, 1963, 1964 and 1965) and the Scottish in 1957, 1958, 1959, 1960 and 1965. To these can be added the North-West in 1969 and the inaugural Veterans' in 1977. In doubles, his best-remembered partnerships were forged with his old school chum Stan Holt and then with Merchistonian Stuart Reid. Others who were pleased to see him on the left included Eric Marsh, John Watkinson (no reflection on his politics) and Chris Heron. All in all he won 51 doubles titles - 7 of them National, no less than 10 in the North of England, where he and Reid virtually made the trophy their own, 6 at Bristol in the West of England and 9 across the border in Scotland. By any standards this is an Olympian achievement.

Throughout his involvement with the game of Fives, no journey has been too far, no sacrifice too great. Many have enjoyed the warm hospitality of his legendary caravan at tournaments round the country, although I suspect that I am one of the few Fives players to have been stimulated by his gin-and-tonics on foreign fields - during a particularly wet cricket tour to Rotterdam. David has been an unstinting contributor, and the thesis that he composed on Fives and its History whilst at Loughborough remains one of the definitive textual sources available to succeeding authors. His has been a lifetime's contribution, and the world of Fives is truly grateful.

Rick Wilson