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**Interviewer
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- BF: 00:04 Hello. I'm Bob Flynn, UMM Class of 1970, and today is June 17, 2018. And today, I'm talking with Mark Fohl, former UMM Athletic Director. So welcome, Mark.
- MF: 00:16 Hi, Bob.
- BF: 00:18 So Mark, just tell us your timeline here at UMM.
- MF: 00:22 Okay. I came to UMM in 1985, and worked full-time until January of 2016, and then stayed on part-time as the golf coach for a couple of years.
- BF: 00:41 So you are just now finally retiring?
- MF: 00:46 I am just now totally retired. Yeah. Yeah.
- BF: 00:48 Okay. Okay. And you were not just the athletic director. You were a coach.
- MF: 00:54 No. When I was hired as the athletic director—well, when I came to UMM, I was hired as—my title was assistant to the athletic director, and my duties were: I managed the equipment room in the athletic department. I was the head coach of the baseball team, and I was an assistant football coach. And I taught one class, at that time, and that was the baseball coaching class, in the spring. And within two years, then, the previous athletic director retired due to health reasons, and I was hired as the athletic director, but I continued coaching football and baseball for a number of years, and then when I moved away from football, I started coaching men's golf.

BF: 01:47 It sounds like it was more than a full-time position.

MF: 01:50 Well, it is not something that many athletic directors do anymore, but it wasn't totally uncommon when I became the athletic director for athletic directors to be coaches in the department. But it's not very common now.

BF: 02:07 So how many sports were there when you arrived at UMM?

MF: 02:12 Sure. When I came in 1985, we had 13 sports. Seven were for men's; six for women. We gradually added things, over time, until we got to 19, which is currently what is offered in the athletic department.

BF: 02:33 Okay. And through all that, you maintained these roles as director and coach.

MF: 02:41 Right. I was the director of athletics. I was the golf coach and baseball coach for many years, and then the last couple of years, I moved away from baseball and just coached the golf team the last two years or so.

BF: 02:58 Okay. I'll ask you about some of your teams [crosstalk 03:00].

MF: 03:00 Sure.

BF: 03:01 But I'm thinking in terms when you say the mix of men and women, was Title IX well in place when you were here?

MF: 03:10 Yes. Title IX was well in place. It was always something that we paid attention to, and in fact, one of the first things we did was we started to add some sports for women. We had a golf for women probably 1988, maybe, so that got us balanced at seven and seven, and then not long after that, we added soccer for women, cross country for men and women, swimming and diving for women. We did discontinue wrestling at the time we added swimming and diving for women, and we started operating an indoor and outdoor track-and-field seasons for both men and women. So that got us to the 19.

BF: 04:09 Talk, if you will, about discontinuing wrestling. That sounds like a big deal.

MF: 04:15 Well, it was, and it was not something that I or anybody really wanted to do. It was simply that we were moving to a conference—the conference we're in now—where no one

else in the conference sponsored wrestling. So we now would've not been able to find competition in a conference. Now, the argument is they don't have swimming and diving either, but we were adding swimming and diving for women. But the fact was that a lot of colleges were discontinuing wrestling, and it was getting very difficult to find a schedule.

05:04 Our wrestling team was having to travel substantial distances to compete, and we weren't getting very many wrestlers committing to UMM, so our squad size was not very big. I know that there were times, previously, that we had a big rosters in wrestling. We had very successful individuals and teams, and it was a popular sport. So it was not easy to think about discontinuing wrestling.

BF: 05:46 Yeah. It helped your mix, I suppose.

MF: 05:49 Well, it helped us with the gender equity and Title IX because we were discontinuing a men's sport, and we did have some women wrestlers too. We had a women's team.

BF: 05:59 Oh, really.

MF: 06:03 And we were adding a swimming and diving team that was only for women. We knew that swimming and diving was going to take off a little bit. At the time, I think there were 5- or 600 schools in Minnesota sponsoring swimming and diving for girls, so we knew there was going to be a pool of high-school graduates to recruit from. And that has proven to be true. The swimming and diving roster is usually in the twenties, and recently, they've had some success nationally. So we've had women in the Division III national championship now, and so it's going well.

BF: 06:49 So talk about the divisions, this switchover from Division II to III, was it?

MF: 06:57 Yeah. Well, in 1985, we were both—we were NAIA at the time. Previously, to 1985, up until about 1981, maybe '82, we were both NAIA and Division III. Division III politely told us we couldn't stay because we weren't meeting a requirement in scheduling. Our conference was either Division II or NAIA. None of them were Division III.

07:27 So they had a rule: you had to have 50 percent of your competition against Division III. We weren't able to do it, so Division III told us "Sorry. Can't be a member

anymore.” So we stayed strictly NAIA for a number of years.

07:44 And then our conference determined that the NAIA wasn't the right place for us, and I think they were right. We needed to move away from the NAIA. I know our chancellor at the time, David Johnson, at a meeting of our conference—the Northern Intercollegiate and the Northern Sun—made a motion to go to Division III, rather than Division II, did not get a second to the motion. So it died. And then it passed to go to Division II.

08:26 We knew that it probably wasn't the right thing for us, but at the time, we didn't have any choice. Each chancellor, that I worked for, asked me to contact the MIAC about joining them. I know Jack Imholte asked me to do that; Dave Johnson, Sam Schuman, all wanted us to think about moving into Division III, mostly in the MIAC, if you're familiar with those schools: Carleton, Concordia, Saint John's, the rest.

09:03 And they were polite, but they were not interested in expanding and had no interest in adding a public institution to their mix, and I don't blame them. I think we knew that that was probably going to be the response. So we went to Division II. Now, we stayed Division II for a period of time, maybe 10 years, with very little success. The other schools in the conference were expanding their athletic aid programs, increasing the number of scholarships. We were falling further and further behind.

09:48 And then I got a call from the athletic director at Northwestern, and he asked me if we might be interested in joining with a group of schools who were looking to become a Division III conference, and I said, “You darn right we are.” So I talked to Sam, at the time, Sam Schuman, and he said, “Absolutely, let's follow up on that.”

10:22 So we did. Went to some meetings and determined that we would leave the Division II and the NSIC and join with the Division III conference, which was the UMAC, which is the one we're in now. And so that all takes a period of years—takes a few years to switch, but that's what we did. So we went from NAIA to Division II to Division III over the span of about 25 years.

- BF: 10:50 And that happened when? That obviously was the right place for you.
- MF: 10:54 Yeah. The Division III change was about 2003, 2004. The change from NAIA to Division II was in the mid '90s, like '94, '95 maybe. So UMM has been in just about everything, except Division I.
- BF: 11:17 Okay. Okay. Well, wow, with all the changes, the growth, the additions, there must've been constant challenges at that time, at least, regarding space, and facilities, and so forth.
- MF: 11:32 Yes. As we added sports, the size of the department grew—more athletes. And we added an athletic trainer I know during that time. We added a sports information director during that time. We added a number of coaching staff to coach these sports and athletes and outgrew the PE Center office complex. We added what they call an annex building.
- BF: 12:09 Annex to the annex.
- MF: 12:11 Annex to the—yeah. We added an annex building for offices. That's full. We have two of them now that are mostly full with coaches. Yes. And also, it costs money. In other words, we had to do some things to make sure we had the funding for these sports.
- BF: 12:36 Now, a lot of the growth certainly involved—you've been involved in the community, and there's a part of your job you're involved in the community, like the Regional Fitness Center and the Big Cat, so talk about how those came to be.
- MF: 12:52 Sure. Well, they were pretty close to the same kind of period of time. The football stadium came about, really, because the school district was abandoning their elementary school building and building a new elementary school. Their football stadium was at the site of the old elementary school, and so they were looking at "What are we going to do about a football stadium to play in?" At the same time, UMM was looking to build a biomass heating plant, which was going to take up the eastern edge of our—or the northwestern edge of our football stadium, so it was we were going to lose our football stadium.

- 13:54 So I remember having discussions with the school district at the time, and we started talking about working together to build one football stadium and share it. So we had a number of discussions, a number of meetings. The school district did a referendum which passed. The UMM got funding from the system. We had a pool of money to work with, and then we started—prior to that, we had been working on the design, and where’s it going to be located, and how’s it going to be managed, and all of that kind of stuff. We put together a number of committees, and we still have a joint-use committee, it’s called, made up of representatives from the school district and the university.
- 14:50 And I remember having the discussion about “What’s it going to—is it going to be grass, natural grass, or is it going to be turf? And we pretty much had 100 percent agreement that natural grass was not going to hold up to the number of competitions, so we put in the artificial turf, which was the right thing to do, and now it’s probably due to be replaced. It’s been in there 12 years.
- 15:19 So it is true that not every community could manage this kind of thing as well as the community of Morris does. ‘Cause I’ve heard some horror stories from other places that tried to do these things, and it just didn’t seem to ever work out or come together, but for us, it was a pretty simple thing.
- BF: 15:45 And the Regional Fitness Center, then, also involves a third entity, involves the city or the community. Yeah.
- MF: 15:51 Community. Yeah. And I didn’t have as much to do with the original fitness center as the football stadium—the Regional Fitness Center. I remember being on some committees that were talking about how it was going to be funded, what it was going to look like. I think everybody, I think, hoped for more than what it is, but the funding—what was built was what was allowed with the funding.
- BF: 16:18 So talk about the Morris community and your experience, your view, how they work with you and your responsibilities.
- MF: 16:31 Yeah. I always felt like the Morris community was very supportive of the university and the things that the university was doing. Not always do a group of young liberal college students get along in a fairly conservative

western Minnesota farming community. But it seems like it's—it seems like it's been good over the years.

- BF: 17:00 Yeah. Yeah. It's certainly productive.
- MF: 17:08 Yeah.
- BF: 17:09 The relationship has certainly been productive.
- MF: 17:10 Yeah. I think it has been. I know that there's probably some landlords wished that they had more renters, that kind of thing, but I know that it's been pretty good for both the city and the university to be here.
- BF: 17:27 So you were involved—and obviously, you keep talking about all the meetings you went to. You were involved in a lot of—were you not? —in a lot of campus committees.
- MF: 17:36 Yeah. I think I served on all of them at one time or another over the years: the Campus Planning Committee, the Scholastic Committee, the da-da-da.
- BF: 17:47 How did you see campus governance, if that's the right word? How did you see campus governance evolve over the years?
- MF: 18:00 Boy. I don't know if it has.
- BF: 18:02 Oh, okay.
- MF: 18:07 I'm not sure that it has evolved a lot. The Campus Assembly is still an important thing, which is kind of a unique thing, I think, for colleges.
- BF: 18:22 Why so?
- MF: 18:23 Well, I think, the Campus Assembly includes everybody, and not everywhere do they do that, but here it seems to work. But we've changed, I suppose, as things have changed nationally and within the university. The system makes changes, and UMM has to do those.
- BF: 18:52 I have a bit of a prejudice, but it seems to me that the personality of UMM makes those kind of collegial enterprises workable here where they would not be workable elsewhere, probably.

- MF: 19:07 I think that's probably true. There is a spirit of cooperation around UMM that I know doesn't exist everywhere. 'Cause other ADs would tell me these things, like, "Geez. If we ever tried to do that at our place, that would never work" when we're talking about things that we're doing.
- BF: 19:31 And I understand you personally were good at campus unity, that you were a piece of—you seemed to be a big piece of that.
- MF: 19:40 I don't know as though I always was, but I tried to. I tried to. I think there were things that not all coaches understand the mix of athletics in a college setting. I think I have always had a pretty good understanding of what athletics' role is, and not all coaches understood that all the time.
- BF: 20:15 Well, one of the terms I heard was that in other places you have athletics versus academics.
- MF: 20:22 Right.
- BF: 20:24 That's not true here.
- MF: 20:25 No. Well, at least, we did not want that. We were not seeking that. We always try to adhere to the policies, and the major goal I always had was to make sure that kids are graduating. They didn't all graduate, obviously, but I wanted to make sure that coaches had policies about the success that their students were having in the classroom. The teams I coached I always made sure they were doing the things they needed to do to get their degree.
- BF: 21:08 Was there a difference in terms of scholarships, and so forth, for the athletic department or were your athletes in the same pool with everybody else?
- MF: 21:19 The athletes were in the same pool as everybody else, except for a brief period of time toward the end of Division II when we had raised some money to give some scholarships to students who were athletes. We didn't call them athletic scholarships, and an equal amount of aid had to be given to students who weren't athletes. So if we raised \$20,000, \$10,000 would be for athletes earning these, and 10,000 would be for students in other areas who weren't athletes. So there was a brief period of time when we gave what you might think of as an athletic scholarship.
- BF: 22:15 Is the academic focus here a recruiting tool?

- MF: 22:23 Well, it can be for those kids who are good athletes, but also very good students and interested in a place where they can commit to that without a coach telling them, “No, you got to be here at 4:00” or “You got to do this each weekend.” The academic requirement overall, though, does not allow to recruit everybody you’d like to be able to recruit. When a football coach needs a couple of linebackers to make his team better, not always is he going to be able to find a couple of linebackers who are top high-school students in his class and are interested in UMM. So it doesn’t always work—
- BF: 23:17 It probably doesn’t always meet your wishes.
- MF: 23:19 No. Not always.
- BF: 23:19 But it, probably, by nature, helps determine a lot of people who are not going to come here.
- MF: 23:26 Exactly. In other words, one of the things coaches have to do is determine who is going to be admitted when they start recruiting. Because there’s lots of kids that are thinking about UMM and hoping to be recruited by our coaches, but they’re not the kind of student that can be successful here, and coaches have to sometimes make that decision on their own or in consultation with admissions, make that decision.
- BF: 23:59 But it makes it—it makes the campus wonderfully unique.
- MF: 24:04 Yes.
- BF: 24:05 And maybe, that’s not fair to many other colleges to say unique.
- MF: 24:08 There are other colleges that are like this. There’s a few in Minnesota that are like this. I think we’re probably the only one in our conference that pays this close of attention to the academic record of its applicants and whether or not they have a chance to be successful here.
- BF: 24:31 Good. Well, now, in addition to your coaching and your administrative duties, you were also—you carried a class load. You probably always did.
- MF: 24:40 I didn’t teach a lot of classes, but I taught something every fall and something everything spring semester. Over the years, I taught—well, going back years, I taught a class in organization and administration of athletics. I taught a class

in sport governance one semester. I taught a golf activity class. I taught the baseball coaching class over the years. There were some other classes that I taught too.

- BF: 25:11 Now, was the baseball coaching, for example, a part of the education department?
- MF: 25:16 It was part of the education department. It was part of the coaching endorsement program. Students who were thinking about going out with their teaching degree and also coaching were required to take some classes in coaching theory in—well, a bunch of classes—in order to get the coaching endorsement that is part of the state requirement for high-school head coaches.
- BF: 25:45 Wasn't there a physical education major?
- MF: 25:47 The physical education major had ended prior to when I started in 1985. I think it ended maybe like a year or two before, so we didn't have a PE major, but for a number of years, we had PE licensure. In other words, we were still giving licensure to PE students, and then gradually, that ended also.
- BF: 26:18 Well, we haven't talked about your teams, about all the teams, and you may not, in the moment, remember all the teams, but tell us about some of the highlights. When you think about that, what pops into your head when you think about some of the highlights of your teams?
- MF: 26:35 Oh. I remember winning the football conference in 1986, and a guy named Bill Magnuson ran back the opening kickoff for a touchdown against Morehead State.
- BF: 26:46 Wow.
- MF: 26:51 We ended up winning the game—I don't know—32-6 or some such, but that was exciting because we knew we had to win that game to have a chance to be the conference champion. It was exciting. In the mid '90s, we had some basketball teams that were very good. I remember a gentleman, named Rick Stark, and I chartered a small four-seater airplane to fly from Morris to Kansas City to see our team play in the second round, actually, of the national tournament, which we won. And it was actually flown by the son of Warren Anderson, who's an alum—the airplane. I think his name was Tom, and also with us was Rick Cunningham, who was our athletic trainer, and he ended up

staying there for the next few days because our team kept winning.

28:10 I had a lot of exciting things in baseball. Our teams didn't win any championships the way I had always hoped, but we had a lot of good times, a lot of fun trips, a lot of southern—we'd take off and go south for a week each spring break and play games, and those were always fun. And I remember our bus driver, one time, I would take my golf clubs along, and some of the players would also, and we'd throw them under the bus. And on our day off—'cause we always had one day off where we didn't play—some of us would go golfing.

28:53 And I remember our bus driver, Art Durkee, who was a great guy—but he was trying to be nice. He took my golf clubs out of the motel room and set them down behind the bus so that the players, all bringing their luggage and their bags, they would load them up, and then he'd throw the golf clubs in on top. Well, he had my golf clubs on the ground. A woman needed to back out of her parking space, so Art backed up and drove right over my golf clubs, and he felt horrible.

BF: 29:31 I'm sure.

MF: 29:32 It wasn't that big a deal to me, but he really felt bad about it.

BF: 29:37 It just sounds like you wanted to win, and academics were important. It just sounds like you had some sort of a mindset that all of this has to be fun.

MF: 29:50 I did. In fact, I used to tell players, "We are going to have fun. We're not doing this if it isn't fun, so I'm having fun. If you want to have fun, great, but, boy, we're not going to sit around, and mope, and feel bad. We're going to make this fun." And I tried to make it fun, and we won some along the way, but I would've like to have won more. And we had some great players. We've had only one player make it to the majors from UMM, and that's a guy named Kerry Ligtenberg. He pitched here for two years and then transferred to the Twin Cities.

30:35 He was a chemical engineering major. He was a great pitcher in high school, and he and a teammate came in for a visit to campus, and they were both great students. They

both were going to get one of our academic scholarships, and I can remember thinking, when I saw him pitch the first time—I'm thinking, "Oh, man, how did we end up with this guy? He is really good." And anyway, he transferred to the Gophers, and had a great career there, and then signed a minor league deal, and then got traded to the Braves for some bats and balls.

- BF: 31:23 But Morris, Morris started him.
- MF: 31:25 Just got him started.
- BF: 31:26 Yeah. That's right.
- MF: 31:26 Tried to teach him a changeup.
- BF: 31:30 And you were responsible for all the hiring over the years, I expect.
- MF: 31:34 Pretty much, every coach in the department, I was the chair of the committee that hired them. I kind of felt that was one of my important jobs was to be the decision maker on who's getting hired.
- BF: 31:51 Were there struggles in terms of the hiring and then in terms of retaining?
- MF: 31:59 We had periods of time where it was hard to keep some coaches, and we had a lot of turnover in some sports for a number of years. Not always were the salaries we were able to offer comparable to what was being paid by other places. So lots of times, coaches came here with the idea that they're going to come here for a while, but they're going to use it as a steppingstone to move onto something else. But there were coaches that stuck around for a while, but I don't know if a coach ever stayed as long as I did. I stayed for 30 years.
- BF: 32:57 Well, I understood that one of the struggles you had was always how to cobble together the budget you had with the coaches and the staff you needed.
- MF: 33:05 Yeah. It was always a challenge to find a way to put together the money to hire the coach we wanted to hire, and there were lots of people that helped with that. I know Gary McGrath, Sandy Olson-Loy, the chancellors, they all had the same goal. We wanted to hire the best person for the job, and so we tried to put together a way to do that, and as

it go, it worked. I'm sure it's the same discussion they have in major colleges, except they're talking about, "Can we pay them 3 million or 4?"

- BF: 33:51 And you never had that conversation—
- MF: 33:52 Never had that conversation.
- BF: 33:55 So nor did they have that conversation about your salary.
- MF: 33:58 No. No. I don't think they ever did.
- BF: 34:04 Now, one of your hires were the Grove brothers, Tim and Paul. Tell me about them. They revitalized or just continued.
- MF: 34:15 They both revitalized, honestly. Paul was hired first. Paul had been coaching at Mayville State, where I coached prior to coming to UMM. So I knew how difficult it was for him to be successful there, aside from the fact that two of his younger brothers had come to UMM. So we knew the family here at UMM. Great family. There was nobody else in my thoughts about who we'd want to hire if we could get Paul, so we were able to hire Paul.
- 34:59 About two years later, or so, we had a late resignation of a women's basketball coach, and we decided to do an interim hire, and Tim was coaching at a high school at the time. And so I called him: "I can't guarantee we'll hire you after this year, but we'd like you to come and coach the women's team for this year anyway." And he did. They were very successful. He did a great job, so we hired him to stay on after that.
- BF: 35:39 So what is it about them that—
- MF: 35:45 Well, they're both real smart. They're both bright. They're both terrific family guys. They grew up in a good family. They both loved the game of basketball. They both have a way of coaching that you see can be productive. Players are going to want to play for them. They're going to want to follow them. They're both good leaders.
- BF: 36:17 Sounds like this was a nice match that probably—for both of them, this was a great opportunity, and you were sitting here waiting for them.

- MF: 36:24 Yeah. I think they were both good enough that they could've gone some place else, to be honest, and probably made more money, or things could've been different, but they wanted to be here.
- BF: 36:41 So what is it? What's that thing about Morris? Why did you stay here, for example? Part of it must've been because it was UMM. What is that thing?
- MF: 36:56 Well, I'm a little bit of a liberal arts kind of guy. One of my undergraduate degrees is English. I taught English for seven years in high school. And a couple of years at Mayville, I taught freshman composition. So I like the idea of this liberal arts kind of education. My oldest son graduated from UMM.
- 37:31 But it's not for everybody. It really isn't. There are people that just would not thrive at this kind of a college, but I always found it to be a good match. And for me, I have three sons. They all started school here. They all graduated from the local high school. We like this kind of a community. Not a big community, but a nice college campus. Nice college in the community.
- BF: 38:06 Yeah. There's an awful lot of people in love with this place who've been and gone. And especially, it seems the athletes. The enthusiasm of the athletes in the alumni, this was a big part of their life.
- MF: 38:19 Sure. Yeah.
- BF: 38:21 So by the way, were you also responsible for intramurals?
- MF: 38:25 For a period of time, I was. I coordinated the intramural directors. For a number of years, we had student directors in intramurals, and I supervised them, and so I did their scheduling and helped them with getting the intramural program organized. As that grew, that became impossible, so we started to assign a staff member the position of director of intramurals, and we've been doing that for a number of years. So it had been one of the coaching staff was also the director of intramurals.
- BF: 39:08 So once again, it was one of those things that was on your plate.

- MF: 39:13 When I took over, it was on my plate, and it stayed there for a number of years and then gradually moved it to one of the other coaching staff.
- BF: 39:22 And there's also now club sports here, there's frisbee golf and rugby.
- MF: 39:25 Right. During my time, we had—well, rugby was going, and we had a big soccer club, and our first year of women's soccer, that's where we drew most of our roster from, were the women who were on the club team, and then gradually moved away from that, and did our recruiting.
- BF: 39:54 Soccer's a big success story.
- MF: 39:56 I think it is.
- BF: 39:56 When did that come in comparison to you in your tenure?
- MF: 39:59 Oh, let's see. I guess I was the AD when we started. I think it was probably 1999, maybe, when women's soccer was started. I hired the coach. I got the funding arranged. Everything worked out, and then gradually we had to add an assistant to that, and then we determined that we would add men because the UMAC, the conference, required us to have men's soccer. So we added men's soccer, and that's been successful too. In fact, their rosters are both good-sized rosters [in the soccers 40:50]. We don't think of it so much as a foreign sport anymore in America. We kind of think of it as something we do.
- BF: 41:00 I was just sitting here thinking its time was right. When you started it here, its time was right in terms of it becoming an American thing.
- MF: 41:08 Right.
- BF: 41:09 'Cause it certainly is an American thing now.
- MF: 41:12 That's right. Yeah.
- BF: 41:15 Hey, you know what we haven't talked about was the NCAA. That had to be fun. That had to be challenging.
- MF: 41:24 Yeah. When we moved to Division II, there was a certain amount of trepidation, I guess, about the amount of governance and the legislation, the rulebook, the—that was going to be a lot more to handle, and it was for a number of

years. And the strictly requirements to be a NCAA Division II member were so much greater than NAIA, at the time. But the NCAA is its members. It is not some organization out there telling you what to do. The members are the NCAA.

- 42:21 And there's a convention at which you can make proposals, and vote on legislation, and determine what the NCAA does and doesn't do. It's democratic. So once you figure that out, then you realize that, "Okay, most of the people want to do it this way. It might not be the way we want to do it, but they want it to be this way. So we're going to go on. We're going to have to go along with it."
- BF: 42:54 And that rulebook—which probably never got reduced at the conventions—
- MF: 42:59 No. Not very often. No.
- BF: 43:01 Yeah. That must've sat on your desk as an administrator.
- MF: 43:06 I was right there all the time, and after a while, I got to be pretty good at knowing the rules, and we were pretty darn good. We had a few violations over the years. Coaches would make a mistake sometimes and do something that they didn't realize was against the rules, or they just didn't know. So we had a few. I wasn't very patient with coaches who knowingly violated. In other words, that had a little more stern response.
- BF: 43:46 So how many hours a week were you on this campus? We're sitting and talking about—
- MF: 43:52 Oh, boy. Yeah.
- BF: 43:53 —everything you did, all the places you were involved.
- MF: 43:58 I rarely had a Saturday off, and when I was coaching baseball, I never had a Sunday off. In other words, I worked seven days for six or seven weeks during the baseball season. I think I probably averaged 60 to 70 hours.
- BF: 44:27 I'll bet.
- MF: 44:28 But I was one who wanted to be in the building if there was something going on, and I suppose I was at things sometimes where I probably wasn't needed to be. But I

spent a lot of time in the building, and my kids spent a lot of time in the building with me.

- BF: 44:47 Yeah. Good. Good, good.
- MF: 44:48 But that's just the way it is.
- BF: So let me ask a final question, and then you can go where you want with it, 'cause the question is, what question should I have asked you about your history here that I missed, that I didn't think about?
- MF: 45:13 Well, there were some bad days. There were some days when it wasn't such a good thing to be the one in charge, so to speak. I hated the days that I had to let coaches go. Those I agonized over and lost a lot of sleep over those days when I had to sit down with a coach and say, "It's not working out." Most of them were understanding and not always.
- 45:52 We had a student die on campus after a football game when a goalpost was torn down and struck a student, and he was killed. That was a bad day. There were other things that happened over the years that you just couldn't see coming, really, just things happened.
- BF: 46:19 Like?
- MF: 46:22 Oh, stupid things that athletes would do sometimes. These are 18- to 21-, 22-year-olds. They're not going to make perfect decisions all the time. They're going to make some bad decisions, occasionally, and you had to—they made messes once in a while that had to be taken care of.
- BF: 46:43 And like the rulebook sat on your desk, the messes sat on your desk.
- MF: 46:47 Pretty much, yeah. And so you had to—there were lots of days when you had to be dealing with things that you just in your mind thought, "What in the world was that young man or young woman thinking?" But that's the way it is.
- BF: 47:04 How many years total for you?
- MF: 47:07 Well, let's see. I was the athletic director for 28 years. I was the baseball coach for 27 years. I coached golf now for 16 years. I coached football for 10 years, and my total

number of years were 30. And then a couple of years as a part-time just coaching the golf team.

- BF: 47:35 Now, I think if you actually added up all the years, it was about 120 years.
- MF: 47:39 Well, I don't know if—yeah. There were people who think that—there are people still, I suppose, who think that coaching and working in athletics is an 8-hour week—or a 40-hour week, an 8-hour day, and that, of course, is never—that's not true. It just isn't. You play on Saturdays so that students don't miss class.
- BF: 48:06 Right?
- MF: 48:07 Sometimes, you play on Sundays so that they don't miss class. So that doesn't mean that coaches can take Monday and Tuesday off because they got to work Saturday and Sunday. No. You work seven days. That's the way it is in athletics. It's just the way it is.
- BF: 48:33 It's a real [crosstalk 48:33].
- 48:33 I remember when I asked my wife to marry me, some 38 years ago or so, I said, "I am going to be a coach. It is not going to be the way—I'm not always going to be home at supper time. I'm not always going to be home every Saturday. I'm going to be gone some. I'm going to have to go recruiting on occasion. I'm going to be—" So I said, "If you're okay with that, then let's get married."
- BF: 49:03 And she said she was okay.
- MF: 49:04 She was. Yeah.
- BF: 49:05 And obviously, she must've been.
- MF: 49:07 She is. Yeah.
- BF: 49:08 Still is. Yeah. Well, it's an awful lot of dedication and an awful lot of lives touched, not just in the sports department. An awful lot of lives touched on this campus.
- MF: 49:21 Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.
- BF: 49:24 So, Mark Fohl, thank you for your time. Thanks for taking us through such an important part of UMM history.

MF: 49:32 Thanks, Bob.
BF: 49:32 Sure. Thanks again.
MF: 49:33 You bet.