



Kevin O'Byrne: A Tribute, Silvano Borusso & Strath Media Team



Kevin Francis O'Byrne was born in Galway, Ireland, on 2nd December 1934, the 2nd son of Sean and Mary O'Byrne. He received his primary school education at the Patrician Brother's School and later attended St Joseph's College, Galway where he did his leaving certificate in 1952.

Early Life

After primary and secondary school in his native town, he joined the National University of Ireland (N.U.I.), Galway, where he obtained a 1st Class Honours Degree in Civil Engineering, coming first, country-wide, in the Engineering class of 1955.

That same year he met and joined Opus Dei, while pursuing specialized courses in Statistical Analysis and Computations as a Hydrometric Engineer for the Electricity Supply Board of Ireland under Prof. Donge and tutoring to students of N.U.I.

In 1957-58 he worked as Design Engineer for the British Reinforced Concrete Engineering Company in Dublin and in the UK.

When St Josemaría Escrivá, the Founder of Opus Dei, asked him whether he would move to Kenya to help start Opus Dei there, he unhesitatingly dropped the promising career already undertaken and came to Nairobi, where he would spend the remaining 50 years of his life.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- 2nd Dec 1934: Born in Galway Ireland
- 1952: Completes Leaving Certificate
- 1955: Graduates with 1st Class Honours Degree in Civil Eng. @ N.U.I
- 1957-58: Design Eng. - British Reinforced Concrete Engineering Co.
- 1959: Ass. Lecturer @ Royal Tech College
- 1960-65: E.A Rugby Team ScrumHalf
- 1961-66: Mathematics Teacher, Vice-Principal - Strathmore College
- 1966-71: Lecturer - Nairobi University
- 1971-76: Private Practice Engineer
- 1980: Appointed member of Strathmore Registered Trust



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Memorable Trip

As Kevin passed through Rome on his way to Kenya, the Founder removed from his neck the medal-scapular of the Blessed Virgin Mary and hung it on Kevin's neck, exchanging it with the one Kevin had. It was a blessing that would accompany Kevin for the rest of his life.

In Nairobi, he had no difficulty in obtaining work with the firm of Ove Arup and Partners as a Design Engineer. He calculated the structures of various office blocks, including

1. Government Lands Office Nairobi,
2. New Mulago Hospital, Kampala,
3. Norwich Union building,
4. Nairobi, Life Insurance Corporation of India building, etc

In 1959 he took a job as an Assistant Lecturer with the then Royal Technical College, the core of the future University of Nairobi, where he taught Soil Mechanics and Theory of Structures.

Beginning of Life in Strathmore

When Strathmore College of Arts and Science opened its doors on 6th March 1961, Kevin once again dropped his second career as University lecturer to prepare 'A' level students for the Cambridge Higher School Certificate in Mathematics, Pure Mathematics and Applied Mathematics, and two years later for the Advanced Level G.C.E. examinations (University of London) in the same subjects.

As a teacher he was meticulous, precise and extremely well-organized. He had his classes carefully planned out over the two-year course and had a sincere concern for constantly improving his methods. In the examinations for January 1965, Kevin's class had 100% passes at Advanced Level, no Ordinary Level passes and no failures.

Athlete and Coach: Spotless Career

Kevin was an outstanding athlete, rugby coach and referee. His first pupils were St Mary's under-13s and later Strathmore students, where he organized the sport from scratch and taught the game to beginners who had never had a chance to play before. Thanks to his coaching and encouragement, in 1963 and 1964 Strathmore College won the seven-a-side competition organized for schools in Kenya. He himself was an accomplished rugby, football

and tennis player. In rugby he represented East Africa as scrum half 1960-65, and played the same position for Kenya and Central Province and club teams. He also played a good game of golf, reaching single-digit handicap at his peak.

Vice-Principal

Together with teaching, he discharged his duty as Vice-Principal of the College for the five years 1961-66. When having to act as Principal in the incumbent's absence, he always did so authoritatively and decisively, without however appearing as a harsh disciplinarian. On the contrary, he had an exceptional understanding for



Photo: Kevin and Mrs Kiboro look at a family photograph on the occasion of her 25th wedding anniversary in 1994.

teenagers and their ways, which made him not only a valuable member of staff but also gained him the full respect of his students.

In 1966 he returned to the University of Nairobi, where he taught Theory of Structures and Fluid Mechanics for five years, 1966-1971, after which he returned to private practice, first with Architects-Engineers Collaborative 1971-76, and then with Gathaiya Njagi and Partners to the end.

Strathmore Registered Trust

In 1980 he was appointed member of Strathmore Registered Trust, discharging his duties there. In 2006-2007 he accepted once again the job as lecturer in Mathematics and Statistics for the students of the newly set up Strathmore University.

All those who have met him during his fruitful half century in Kenya are in a position to testify to his quiet, unassuming and sincere personality, as well as to his absolute integrity. The enormous contribution to Kenya by this good and faithful servant was offered in an unobtrusive and effective way.

Kevin Francis O'Byrne
2nd December 1934 - 29th May 2008

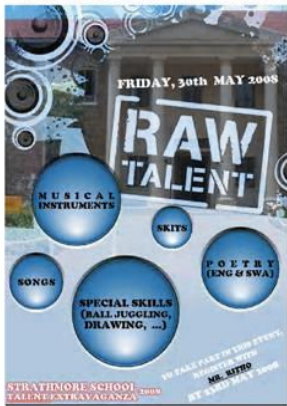


Photo: Kevin (far right) with the 1967 Bandits Starting XV

Talent eXtravaganza,

Le Critique

We need a new angle to this tale of talent. Does anyone have any ideas out there? Well, how about this...



Pic: Poster announcing the event

This year's Talent Show was all about being radical, being wild, being unafraid of what the rest of the School thought. It was about stepping out of one's cocoon and braving the world. Time to be reckless.

The best examples of these fell heavily among the Form 3s and first-formers. **Gideon Sonoiya**, a man already known to be an all-rounder showed that he also has a taste for music. His ballad-rock, at the start of the event earned him a 68%. Looking like penguins as they walked onto the stage, the first-

timers - the **Form One choir** - impressed the majority. Their conductor was competent and hilarious while the rest of the group exemplified "Malaika" with a good bass : (85%). For the **Form 2 rappers**, we have to say that they need to look up from the ground a bit more. The challenge, answered by one **Marvin Sultani (F3&)** was startling to say the least. The defeat of the daring F2 rapper was memorable : (61%). The **Form 3A class**, represented by Back Left Productions™, called upon all their comedic qualities in playing "Idols" and "3A Snake". In both skits, they showed world-class acting, perfect self-control and first-class comedy. They exploited knowledge of the world, choosing wonderful themes to play around with, centered around students. Their characters and dialogue were amazing. Remember, "22 years!" and "I wanted to survey the surroundings." : (86% and 80%). Newcomers on the scene, "**Alexander and Julian**" added a touch of history. **Gladiators** were introduced to the modern Strathmoreans, with well-thought out props. A long-forgotten art - combat - lent light to the boldness of these Form 3s. (68%) Yet another valiant soul was **Brian Waweru (3&)**, hot on the heels of **Andrew Muema (F4, 2007)**. He has a great ear for beats, and he rendered a heart-stopping experience : (77%).

Songs and Musical Instruments

With regards to songs and musical instruments, there were many who stepped up. **Kenneth Mbuthia**, a fantastic performer played a piece on the piano : (70%). **Vincent Rono** on the guitar was smooth and relaxing : (66%). **Jared Babu**, a much more experienced performer, a veteran even, sang at the piano. His great voice rang out; he's obviously comfortable with singing in Swahili : (88%). The **Vincent Rono** and **David Ogutu** duet was fair,

Continued Page 3, Column 1



Photo: Form 2 band doing their thing

THIS WEEK WE START A SERIES THAT WILL TAKE US THROUGH THE SAMBASPORT 2008 SEASON

It truly is strange how life offers up all the surprises that spice up our existence despite our frailty as human beings. In full retrospect, words such as "dreary" and "dull" would fittingly be misplaced if used to describe this year's rugby season. Those who followed the exploits of the 2nd and more so, the 1st XV will quickly agree that the season failed to serve up any sense of monotony. Those who did duty for the school successfully pulled themselves out of the cavernous depths of despair if only to attain a level of achievement never before seen in the colourful annals of the beloved Strathmore School.

At the end of Sambaseason 2007, reality hit hard. The 1st XV this year was faced with the almost-unthinkable and hence scary prospect of having to sit out the whole season in conjunction with **StrathSupport©** in the stands. This is because the 2nd XV featuring some steely-eyed Form 3 players was already destined to play in the only other league available, the 2nd division DamuPevu Cup competition.



Just to get a feel of what the stakes were like pre-season, imagine 1st XV captain **Caleb Gitau** having to sit out the whole season this year because there is no competition for him to play in... With that in mind, now you understand the agitation that ignited a deep-seated desire to perform within the Final-year players that were meant to play in the Prescott Cup. The DamuPevu Cup did not offer up an option.

"The Great" Playoffs

The Bandits prepared for the task at hand. There was focus. Goals were set both on a personal level and even better, for the team. These were all quickly accepted without argument.

The first target was to win the unavoidable play-off against a resurgent **Dagoretti High School**. The additional targets of winning the BlackRock 2008 competition and then at least attaining semifinal status at Prescott Cup level were set. As these goals were being identified and settled upon, the clock continued ticking.

In what served as a pointer to what was to come, Dagoretti had absolutely no answer to what hit them. The Bandits of the day outscored their opponents 6 clean tries to 1 with flyhalf **Jonathan Chirchir** magically concocting opportunities for all sorts of runners. At the end of this rousing exhibition of running rugby, it suddenly dawned on all the players that the goals preset were not unattainable if everyone set their minds on the task at hand.

In the meantime, the school's 2nd XV achieved quarterfinal status in the provincial NSSSA rugby competition. On agreement, the main Bandits team took it up from there.

In this competition, UpperHill School gallantly tried to outscore the **UpperHill School** homeboys in a game played out at the Patch cauldron. With the crowd obviously with the underdog, the UpperHill boys intelligently kept the ball tightly held up at breakdown points, as its impact players tried everything legal so as to succeed in puncturing the solid Strathmore defense through certain fringes.

The main highlight of this game was the massive smother-tackle meted out by the cross-covering **Mwariga Mukundi** (right) that denied UpperHill a sure try. The final result was 12 - 10 in favour of The Bandits. It must be stated that many bruises were nursed that weekend after this encounter...

Next: how we got stuck in the Bushes after Blackrock



from Page 2, Column 1 earning a 67%. Our very own maestro, **W. Kemoli (F4)** returned to claim everyone's gaze. He has a certain style, one expected at a ball, but he appreciates contemporary music : (75%) and can thus play anywhere and almost anything. The Rockaway band was an exceptional idea; blending reggae and rock. It did disappoint a little though, if one considers those who took part. **Waweru's** drumming brought some life to it : (75%). **Zak Muhudhia (F3)** and **Eric Ndoria (F2)** had something good to offer but the crowd was not on their side. They are serious with their music; one just needs to listen : (54%). The Strath Anthem was given a much lighter side to it, devoid of the wildness we usually give to it. The presentation earned a 64%. The Form 4s, eager to leave in gangster style, rapped an exciting song. They roped in some F2s to help while J. Babu also lent his strong voice : (74%). The F2 Song, by S. Kinyua, J. Muthure and A. Ochuodho was not so vibrant. They were a tad too lax and comfortable :



Photo: juxtaPOSE - Dance Theta vs. Step Up 3

Dance (66%).

And on to dance...a fairly congested site for all talented teens. Claiming a not-so-modest 84%, **Dance Theta (F3&C)** danced with a fiery attitude, speaking where words were not needed. Not so far behind were the 3Aers who donned a striking attire of white. This colour gave the impression of innocence and notoriety in harmony. They had beautiful uniformity and they certainly can dance! (80%). The Form 2s tried their luck in the arena, spotting an 80%. They moved fluidly, no-holds-barred, showing great promise for the future. They could improve their co-ordination. The Form 4s had to jump in with their own dancing. It was rather out of the blues! They obviously love dancing! (76%).

To end this testimony of talent, I would bring to mind the Sonoiyas Soccer Skillz. These twins never disappoint in the way of superb sibling rivalry. The 's' rolls off the tongue, much like the ball rolls willingly around the feet of these brothers.

Certainly, no one was afraid of expressing their opinion this year. Let us hope that upcoming years may witness the same bold determination the talent of Strathmore has to offer. To all participants in this year's Talent eXtravaganza, Congratulations and all the Best Wishes for the future!



Photo: G. Sonoiya pushing his skills to the limit during the eXtravaganza

COMING IN EDITION 32:

1. READ ABOUT HOW THERE HAS BEEN A MASSIVE CHANGE ON WEDNESDAYS THANKS TO THE FORM 1 CHOIR.
2. FIND OUT MORE ABOUT ST. JOSEMARIA'S BUST THAT ADORNS THE STRATHMORE SCHOOL LOBBY.
3. SAMBASPORT ANALYSIS CONTINUES.
4. FAMILY SPORTS - SPOTS NEW ACTIVITIES, FIND OUT WHAT THEY ARE.

COMING SOON... COMICAL TIMES! & AUGUST ACTIVITIES ROUND UP...
KEEP READING!
