

Hampton School
Field Notes

Tuesday, 25 February 1986.

Arrived in school car park at 9.15
and followed David to changing room. He had just returned from a
shopping expedition to buy measuring tapes for the p.e. lessons.
A cold and overcast morning with temperatures at or below freezing.

Lesson One: Second Year. 24P 1NP.

Prior to start of lesson I helped David set out the circuit for the
termly measurement of flexibility and the collection of
anthropomorphic data. An example of the measurement protocol is
included in the appropriate file.

My notes for the lesson include the following:

- introductory warm up - flexibility and mobility exercises (4 mins)
- exposition with class gathered around teacher. Included question
and answer about the process of measurement
(4 mins). The class were attentive and interested.
- handing out of forms - each boy given his form by David. (2 mins)
- groups organise themselves into threes, all have pens.
- measurements taken (16 minutes)
- changing time (8 minutes)

With this group I assisted with the skin fold measurements and once
again this underscored the particular relationship between p.e.
teacher and pupil. Skin fold measurements require the measurer to find
and pinch in skin calipers the fat beneath the skin. In this series
of measurements, three different skin folds were measured:
tricep, sub-scapular and waist.

The boys were industrious and self - directed they worked quietly in
groups of three carefully recording the anthropomorphic and
flexibility data.

Their previous scores were appended to the current form and they were
keen to compare their previous performance.

At the end of the lesson I carried the various pieces of equipment to
Steve's gym for the next lesson.

Lesson Two: Second Year 22P 1NP

I attempted to write this lesson down as events happened to provide

atemporal sequence for the notes. I left David just as bell sounded and noted:

10.15 Early boys raced into the changing room to change and have conversations. A time for acceptable noise or genuine excitement and anticipation ?

10.23 Boys told to get out mats in order to start measurements of local muscular endurance (these terms not used). Loud whistle from Steve brought the class to order and around his feet. Exposition of day. Run cancelled because of weather and therefore today's tests would take place. Steve did advise pupils to bring tracksuit for next week in case run possible and they could then keep warm.

10.26 Paul and friend enter the gym thus group up to 24P. Paul dressed in school shirt complained about having to do "this fitness thing again". Steve commented that the lesson had been planned this way because he thought Paul enjoyed it so much.

(Note: perhaps I could explore Steven's relationship with pupils like Paul and Anish. He seems very sensitive to their difficulties.)

Steven's comments were to Paul but were audible to the group .

10.28 All the forms were given out and partners had gone to mats. Boys seemed keen to start. All had their own pens.

10.29 Steve led and participated in warm up of stretches and activities on the spot. Paul Fisher behaving in a way to attract attention.

10.31 Steve demonstrates the exercises to be measured. He provides verbal then visual demonstration. Emphasis is placed on quality. Class quiet and attentive during demonstration. Executive demonstration precise with key factors/points emphasised.

10.32 Activity group one exercise for one min. at press ups. End of time signalled by loud whistle from Steve.

10.34 Steve discusses the examples of press ups he has seen and comments on some of the scores. He starts his comments by "Pay attention, boys...".

Steve explains that high scores can be misleading yet helpful. High scores mean incomplete press up yet still remain a point of relative comparison if style maintained in subsequent tests

"...so don't go comparing yourself with the person next to you." Steve then proceeded to ask for scores from group one

"How many scored..."

over forty ("excellent")

thirties ("very good")

twenties (O.K. that's fine")

10.35 Steve starts group two on press ups. After a short time he observes

"Superb press ups that side" pointing to one side of the gym. He then moves around the class during the one minute activity encouraging each pupil working.

10.36 End of press ups and Steve says "excellent". There is a ripple of noise as partners compare scores and experiences. Steve compliments the group on the quality of work and emphasises the need for quality. "Don't skip on the quality". He identified two problems: the ethics of cheating and one's own loss and the danger of injury.

10.38 Steve verbally and then visually demonstrates sit ups. Key factors are emphasised and safety stressed. Group one sit ups. Steve moved round the class to encourage individuals (Paul Green who is Paul Fisher's partner works extremely hard and is involving Paul in the effort). Throughout the minute's activity Steve gives feedback about the effort expended and the time remaining.

10.39 Whistle to end and Steve says "Very, very good" (emphasis on both verys).

10.40 group two start and Steve sets Paul target of 25 sit ups, within seconds changes this to twenty. Paul works very hard encouraged by his partner. Steve whistles end of minute. Steve's first words are to Paul "How many Paul?" "22" "Excellent". This is a private aside.

10.42 Steve demonstrates squat thrusts. "Watch carefully boys" Cheating discussed and standardised squat thrust demonstrated. Key points succinctly summarised thus "Backside low, long range of movement, knees to elbows, weight on arms." The he warns them "Now listen ... (pause) it's going to hurt, but keep pushing." And later "It is a question of whether you stop or try to push through."

10.43 group one start. "We are after 60". Low whistle to end. "Any sixties?" "50s?" "well done" "50+?" "excellent".

10.45 Partner two "try to beat your partner" (note competition with others rather than relative importance of effort). Whilst this group is working Steve comes over to chat for the first time since the start of lesson. I have my notebook open. I comment on the responsible behaviour of the boys. Low whistle to end the minute. "60s?" "63, excellent" "50s" "very, very good...excellent".

10.46 Steve concludes the lesson. One partner hand in the forms and one partner put away the mats. "Queue up sensibly those who are putting the mats away".

10.47 Boys start to leave the gym and conversations commence.

10.50 Bell sounds for break with most boys still undressed.

Observational notes:

I have become interested in the flow of activity in the lesson and I decided to try and follow Steve through the lesson. I had my note book open throughout the lesson and tried to record in long hand what was happening. My record is selective and partial.

Whilst concentrating on Steve I was aware of the work of the boys and tried to follow Paul Fisher through with his partner. Paul worked very hard and seemed pleased with his effort at the end of the lesson. The boys recorded their own scores or had their partners score. One boy had with him in the gym a biro, a pencil, a ruler and a bottle of Tippex.

The lesson went smoothly. All boys wore appropriate kit.

Memory bank

Identify basis of measurement tradition.

Breaktime

The conversation started with Steve in the gym carried on in the cloisters and into the staff room. After some brief exchanges with Geoff, I sat down with Steve and asked him about the fitness measurement and its origins.

1. Steve started to test fourth and fifth year students when he first came to the school. This happened four years ago.
2. The test was based on Steve's course at Madeley and subsequent reading.
3. The current test was agreed by Geoff and David as worthy of application to all years shortly after David's arrival.
4. The test is administered every term and comprises:
 - Cooper's 12 minute run
 - Muscular endurance: press up, sit up, squat thrust (1 min max)
 - Flexibility: sit & reach, shoulder
 - Anthropomorphic measurements: weight, height, girth of limbs, waist, chest
 - Skin fold measurement: tricep, sub-scapular, waist
 - Strength test for older boys: grip strength, leg press.
5. Boys record their own performance and typed pro-formas are filed for reference and comparison.
6. Steve feels that too much emphasis is placed on that which can be

measured rather than finding a means of measuring that which is worth measuring. He would be distressed to find that the termly measurement became an exercise of generating numbers rather than about providing an important process for the boys to learn in the measurement of their own performance in a long term sense. Steve thinks that for him the main aim of measurement is to facilitate knowing how to test oneself and evaluate one's performance in subsequent years. Standards and safety are important in this process.

As break drew to a close we moved on to talk about Steve's fourth year course and the amount of interest generated by the pupils. Pupil feedback has been encouraged and supportive. This led to a very brief discussion of the current success of the weights club on Tuesday lunchtimes at which c.60 pupils attend of varying levels of ability. (Later in the day Steve discussed the fourth year course and there is a strong sense of investment of energy by him in this context).

Lesson Three: Third Year 23P 2NP

Measurement theme continued and David used similar format to lesson one. David and I arrived from break at same time.

11.19 Boys already changed into a variety of kit.

11.20 Warm up starts - similar content to lesson one. David demonstrates and participates.

11.24 David explains reasons for warm up which involves "getting good marks...it's a personal thing". Then more warm up activities.

11.26 Boys sit down at David's request around him and he provides exposition of the lesson. This is clear and concise. With regard to the muscular endurance tests David says "When you accept you are going to get tired..."

In this exposition David uses tried phrases from lesson one. Group quiet and attentive.

11.30 sheets handed out and boys crowd round to collect

11.31 groups start to move off.

I help with skin fold measurements again.

11.35 David responds to a question about measurement and answers by talking to whole group. Not everyone hears or pays attention and David remonstrates with most distant group for not paying attention.

David spends next five minutes talking to non-participant about the skin fold measurements.

11.47 David calls an end to measurement and draws group in to discuss the process of measurement and the analysis of results. (The boys worked conscientiously). David announced that there would be a run and there muffled groans. The lesson concluded with a discussion of the problem of variation in measurement prompted by one pupil's observation that he was three centimetres shorter than last time.

Lesson Four: I left school and came to College to collect Essex data. Returned to school and photocopied the material for David and Steve.

(Later in the day I discovered that Geoff had not passed on the health related material to Steve).

Lunchtime

After return to school I had a brief walk outside. In the playground, one game of football and numerous games of fives. Mainly second and third year boys. Elsewhere groups in classrooms although one conversation group (c 8) outside and happily conversing.

Then went to weight club. The rowers have moved to the North gym at Steve's request for safety reasons. The whole gym now occupied by fourth year weight trainers of varying abilities and physiques.

Lunch with Steve and talked about Rugby.

Lesson Five

Second Year measurement. 23P 1NP.

I tried to get to the gym before the second bell but by the time I arrived most of the boys were changed and had obviously used part of their lunch time to change. Anish and friends were playing in the gym with a small rubber ball. My arrival prompted rapid retreat. (2.05)

2.07 Steve arrives and tells boys to get jumpers to keep warm.

2.10 boys gather around Steve to be told about the day

"I want YOU to do the measuring..."

Steve outlined measuring protocols. Height was to be measured in the north gym and pupils could come and go as they pleased in order to measure.

2.13 Steve goes through the standardised measuring procedure. Forms are handed out.

2.15 activity starts and I volunteer to do skin fold measurements. Thereafter boys work quietly with partners in conscientious manner. When anthropomorphic measures are collected Steve shows group how to measure shoulder mobility.

2.34 Lesson called to a close.

2.36 "I want to explain a couple of things..."

2.37 "Listen carefully..." and then Steve outlined the impact of warming up on mobility measures. Next week run and flexibility to be measured for those remaining. The run and other activities would be in order to "use the time for a good score".

Boys then compared scores.

One pupil asked "Can we wear a tracksuit for the run?" (this was the same boy who asked about the Mars bar some weeks earlier).

Boys left gym in conversation. "two minutes to get changed".

Lesson ended at 2.40 yet at 2.49 a group of boys were just wandering off to English and Mrs. Watson.

Lessons six and seven: fourth year.

2.40 Steve assumes responsibility for the whole year group and directs them to south gym in order to make organisational announcements. Ground conditions prevent outdoor activity but tennis and football group go out. Geoff takes one group in gym and Steve in the other. Steve takes the time to promote the fourth year weights club and to express his pleasure at the enthusiasm of the boys who attend. He emphasises that it is for everyone. Complete silence whilst Steve talks. End of talk and options offered within the context of pitch conditions. Geoff takes away those who would like to play "silly games". Steve would like as many as possible to stay and learn about the power clean.

3.05 Lesson starts 30P. Steve lets group get weights out and warm up.

3.06 Steve and I discuss fourth year and his work which leads to a discuss about staffing issues.

3.20 Steve gives verbal and visual demonstration of power clean using part-whole-part method. Key factors are identified head on and side on

. Very clear demonstration of technique using 40k. Executive demo exact and awesome - demonstrates where the weight of the bar rests by taking his hand off the bar and whole weight rests on chest/shoulders. Group murmur admiration and exchange glances.

Group the practices first part of power clean.

3.32 Lesson halted for safety point. very strong emphasis on support.

3.35 Steve demonstrates the second part of the clean. Class carefully arranged for demonstration. Confident exposition and prescription of action. Steve then moved around the class and offered advice and encouragement.

3.41 strong whistle and class called in for demonstration of third element of lift. Offered mechanical account. Class attentive. Steve then moved around gym offering advice and praise.

3.46 strong whistle and shadow demonstration. Graphically illustrated points

3.47 last goes each..."

Skipping and broken out at this stage.

3.50 Whistle and class asked to observe demos o pupils identified by Steve. Whole group watched individual whilst Steve gave commentary after lift. Each comment accompanied by shadow demo.

3.51 "A good session, very pleased."

As boys put equipment away Steve and I discussed my research at end of conversation pupil asked Steve for advice about weights. Steve gave idea about value (Argos), kit and expansion. But this was prefaced by an enquiry about the boy's mum whom Steve had seen in hospital casualty.

Day ended with Steve et al taking part in Games Committee meeting. This is a committee of all masters-i-c of games, head, deputy head and Tony. Bursar is secretary. When I asked Steve about p.e. issues he indicated that more specific issues were discussed by Dave, Geoff and himself.

For staffing points see yellow field notebook.

Rectory School
Field notes

Wednesday, 26 February 1986

In today's notes, I am unable to follow the structure established at Hampton for recording lessons. The logistics of my day at Rectory define what is possible in the recording of field notes. I have tried to provide a basic account but this is often written up at the end of lessons rather than within the flow of lessons. Such retrospections are selective and involve a considerable black market of knowledge.

I arrived at school much earlier than usual at 8.50. I was able to meet Martin D and Kevin before the morning school to exchange greetings about half term and catch up with news. I discovered that Miss Forward had been injured skiing in France and was still in hospital. The accident occurred on the 1st day of the holiday. Otherwise Martin had had a successful holiday with the children.

Arrangements for the half term activities had been made and the new groups started today. It was a brilliantly sunny day with an extremely cold wind (forecast of -14 F). All three p.e. teachers intent on working out of doors during the day. I decided to spend the day moving from lesson to lesson as the children do. The only exception was a lift with Martin L at lunch time in order to continue a discussion about my research.

At the pre-schol chat I was able to identify my itinerary for the day. Kevin determined to go outdoors lessons 3 & 4 rather than double up in sports hall. (Kevin now looking to move out of school as are Martin and Martin).

I gave Martin D a copy of the Essex fitness norms and BJPE. Martin has already spoken to Stephen Pain and Loughborough. Headteacher and Martin will meet Martin D and Sharon on Friday.

Lesson One: I left school at the end of registration period and the walk took me 8 minutes. Martin D had agreed to meet me at the sports hall because he had decided to take the second years inside for Rugby. I arrived at sports hall to find doors open and heating engineer checking one heater. I arrived at 9.30.

9.38 pupils start to arrive.

9.39 Martin makes comment to pupils about behaviour.

I volunteer to help stack mats and thus put away notebook. Martin volunteers Stuart a regular non-participant to help me. Stuart and I have a conversation about his interest in spirit combat and his involvement in club on Friday evenings. In course of conversation

Stuart comments on his own seasonal involvement in p.e.. He is he thinks a warm weather person and only enjoys pe in the warm times of the year. During the lesson he and another NP spent their time chatting, sliding along benches, mock wrestling whilst seated, escaping from their seats into the smaller gym area, sneaking off to eat peanuts and generally, whenever the opportunity arose shadow punching, kicking and attempting to trip some participants.

Martin's lesson followed the following framework (times approx)

9.50 warm up starts 21P 2NP running and getting into groups of n. Richard Skenner and Ricky caught out.

9.55 groups of three and one ball formally organised to work across sports hall. Martin verbal expo and then demos touch down/try.

Practice organised start "not a race" at end "first, second..." "you lost because the ball rolled away..."

Martin demonstrates pick up.

10.00 next practice same as before but pick up and pass. Organisation left boys at different ends of sports hall.

Martin clarified problem.

10.05 Channels set up and verbal exposition of procedure. Demo verbally and visually with help of two pupils.

10.20 organised corner ball 10v 11. elimination game.

10.26 lesson ended with one side having eliminated more players. Boys now have four minutes to change and get back to school. Martin asks what lesson they have next "French" and replies that "I will have to write a letter."

In the time after the introductory warm up there was a maximum of 7 minutes of activity time available to the pupils. The sports hall was cold and the group was restless during verbal expositions. Martin gave many organisational points and teaching points and waited for silence before proceeding this led to delays. "I think it is rude to talk when I am talking..."

Lessons three and four: walked across to sports field after lesson. Took five minutes.

10.35 Arrived and no pupil there. Very cold wind but beautiful day. Ground hard but not slippery. The door was locked and my hands were cold enough to effect handwriting considerably.

10.45 first boys arrive and one of the first, Colin, says that some have gone to the sports hall because they thought they were indoors.

10.48 Kevin and Martin arrive in mini bus and discuss who should be where. ML goes off to sports hall. Throughout this time boys make comments about cold others notably those with tracksuits want to go out. (Kevin had told them to bring warm clothing at previous lesson).

10.59 First boys outside. Some keen others reluctant. 20P 7NP.

11.05 most boys outside and Kevin sends those who are ready for lap of

Rugby pitch. I join group and tag along at the end and pretend to race Daniel to the finish (he wins). By the time we return all but John have joined the group. Second run starts and half way Kevin divides the group and I work with 9 boys. He carefully gives me half group of pleasant disposition. thereafter my emphasis is on activity with minimum verbal exposition beyond basics of organisation. Structure used:

running warm up then individual/partner work emphasis on fun; then races with shuttles with partner; then 5v5 touch rugby. Basic rules, I play. (boys have worked very well to this stage but rumblings of cold partic. from Darren).

I decide to strike bargain with the group: a specified time (15 minutes) and then we go in. Agreed by boys and Sean acts as independent timekeeper. Good response but some niggles between individuals. Darren refuses to pass but is skilful. They win 12-8. Half time to resolve squabbles with boys. Game ended I thanked the boys for their effort. They ran off to get warm just as Kevin brought his group over to play v us. Now 11.25 and boys have 15 minutes to change and get warm. Apologised and offered game next week.

Kevin was happy to have been out. Most boys participated. Sean tried. At end of lesson boys walked off chatting.

Observations:

pupils without tracksuits commented on teachers warm clothing, one said "it's alright for you..."

Dwain did not do p.e. just handed his record book in for demerit.

Robert Smith took part for the first time for a year

worked hard

drank pint of milk before start of lesson

called fellow pupil 'turd arse'

Two pupils Taig and Trevor display strange behaviour. In Taig's case how does he integrate into the school. More successful at informal rather than formal?

Break time

I walked over to Cavan bakers. as usual there was a flow of boys in and out. As I left at 12.07 two boys were just leaving bakers for lesson in the sports hall. 12.10 Kevin arrives at sports hall in cloud of dust. Crowd of boys outside the doors waiting to start. I walked over to sports field.

It will be interesting to explore whether the visit to Cavan bakers

provides an important marker in the school day. I have already noted the long morning school (something I discussed with Stuart in lessons 1 & 2). To what extent do playground games, conversations, illicit smoking, p.e. provide important markers in the school day/week. How do half term holidays affect what is going on? How do the boys view the considerable walking required to p.e. or waiting for the teachers?

Lessons five and six

I arrived at 12.15. Martin L to teach Rugby. All boys in changing room when I arrived. now brilliant sunshine. Bitingly cold wind.

I left my notebook in the changing room. the following schematic outline of events was written up subsequently.

1. The 'action' lesson. As the game phase started Martin constantly used the command 'action' to instil activity. Eventually sounded like a film set.
2. Warm up consisted in preliminary kicking of ball and occasional passes whilst we waited for everyone to appear. Some boys wearing short sleeves others complaining about the cold. Then Martin set warm up run for group I joined them, noticed Irvine taking part for first time ("I like Rugby"). A long run, I tried to catch front runners at finish and this encouraged Jason Heath to excellent performance (see note at end). During this warm up Martin set up cones to mark out field.
3. the whole group 17P were organised into two teams Martin and I played on separate teams. the 8Nps were left outside changing rooms with variety of activities. Two engaged in trick cycling.
4. Martin set limit of first to four tries as limit to stay outside. In the game a number of boys tried very hard. Jason Heath and Ricky were very able. Four boys from Martin's team centred on Richard Sawyer decided to lessen the effects of the strong cold wind by lying on the frozen ground. They took little or no part. as the game progressed and the target of four tries appeared a number of boys decided to let the fourth try occur to precipitate early finish. when the score came, Martin changed to "next try wins". Similar messages went around the group and as the try was scored all but four pupils made a dash for the changing room. I collected the cones and bibs. Spent some time in changing room congratulating players on their efforts. I went round changing room talking to boys in my game. Jason Heath an interesting character - on report yet tried extremely hard throughout the lesson, in fact outstanding boy in lesson. What routines do boys accept?

Because lesson ended early Martin left with the control of pupils in changing room for 20 minutes. He and I talked about Loughborough conference. Conversation continued in the car (he offered me a lift

back).

Lunch time

Bought sandwiches and returned to staffroom to have lunch with Martin D and Kevin. Main topics of conversation were international Rugby and the new coffee machine. Parallels here with humour in Woods et al. (comments about scale posts for responsibility for machine). Chatted with Martin D about his chat with head. discussed third period of p.e, after school/optional when all five p.e. teachers would be timetabled.

Favourable response to this . Martin D keen to meet Hampton teachers and discuss curriculum initiatives.

Spoke briefly to Lesley about examinations. No GCSE national guidelines and SE at draft seven of CSE paper.

At end of lunch I went down to sports field to await arrival of fifth year soccer. I arrived at 2.32, first pupils arrived at 2.35, Martin arrived 2.40. 10 boys arrive but only three with kit. The group sat and talked in changing room. Martin and I discussed job applications and his present application to Giggleswick. he asked my advice about application letter and curriculum vitae (he had already sent them). We discussed application procedures. I did not probe his reasons for wishing to leave.

as boys got louder in changing room we went to sit in the room. Attempts at conversation with boys foundered, Martin unable to get serious answer. The boys attempted to carry on their game of throwing glove at someone, this particularly the case when pupil being talked to by Martin.

at end of lesson I walked back to school. On the way saw Sean from lesson 3/4 as I walked past on the opposite side of the road he shouted out "baldy". Carried on walking but amused by his comment. The Hanworth road full of children and traffic. Passed one smoking group by bus stop. Those children walking home mainly in twos although Josh's friendship group of five. No greeting as they passed me or as we walked in close proximity for half mile. Break up of group at sweet shop at St. James's Ave. Josh and Ben into sweet shop, Owain to Avenue, Ginger to Eastbank, fifth friend right into road opp St. James's.