

# Sports

## Bob Steadward — at the helm

by Mark Spector

As you enter the office of Dr. Bob Steadward, Chairman of Athletics, you are struck by the air of organization in which he exists. His desk is the neatest one found on the entire west side of the campus, (complete with matching ju-jube jars) and not a single picture hangs crooked. At 9:00 a.m., he has probably already completed a portion of his day's work.

The Gateway had an opportunity to speak with Dr. Steadward, and we hope that the following will fill you in on the new course taken by U of A athletics.

**Gateway** — After you were hired in July of '85, you immediately made several personnel changes in the Athletics department. Why?

**Steadward** — In July of '85, when I was fortunate enough to get the appointment, there were a number of things in athletics that I felt were of a very high priority on this campus. I also felt that in the 20 years that I have been around this campus, there have been a lot of changes in students, in faculty, in growth of buildings, and the (athletics) program was just not keeping up to it. That's not to say that my predecessors did not do a good job... but there are some new looks that must be taken into consideration.

First and foremost I wanted to give more credence to the women's athletic program. Therefore, I worked with the faculty to change the position of Women's Athletic Coordinator from part-time to full-time, and we have hired a full-time person in that position (Susan Natrass).

The second thing that I felt was important was to increase our visibility both on campus and in the community at large. And therefore I created a new position of a Director of Marketing and Public Relations (Dale Schulha). That person's primary role will be to put together a solid gameplan, which could be one to three to five years, to deal with where athletics is going, how we can make it more visible within the community, and how we can gain some stability and commitments from within the campus.

**Gateway** — Many of the people that you hired are actually alumni of the U of A. Is this merely a coin-



idence or was it planned that way?

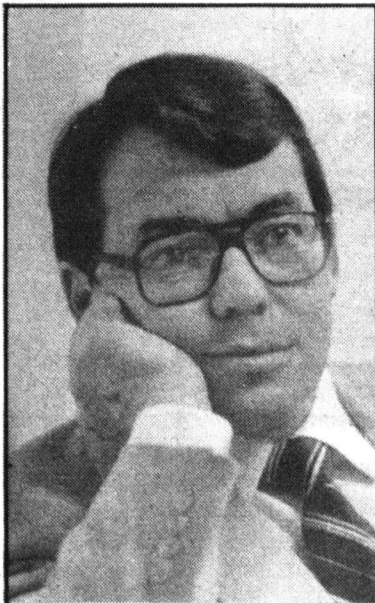
**Steadward** — That's a very interesting question (laughing). I guess that to some degree it's a coincidence, but I'm certainly not apologizing for it. Because anytime that you can attract your alumni back to your campus you know that you are getting someone that is committed to excellence.

**Gateway** — In terms of athletic funding, you seem to be following the example set by American universities in heavily involving your alumni. Is this correct?

**Steadward** — You betcha. There's no question that we can learn from

*"We're certainly not... going to be offering all sorts of money and scholarships and have the tail wagging the dog..."*

other institutions no matter where those institutions are. There is no doubt that we can take advantage of their good points, and insure that we learn from the mistakes that they have made. We're certainly not going into a situation where we're going to be offering all sorts of money and scholarships and have the tail wagging the dog, or the outside monies coming in beginning to run this program. Remember, a student is first of all here for an academic program, and secondly, within our department, to excel in a particular sport. But



when we look at the financial situation, (it is clear that) we have to treat athletics like a business. Because it is a business. It's a big business with a lot of money involved, and not just university money. As a result, we have to go out and raise the funds. That's why I created such events (organizations) as the Green and Gold Society. That's why we're having one of our major annual functions — the Sports Wall of Fame Dinner. These sort of events get our alumni involved in our program. I don't just want their money. Certainly it's important, but I also want them there to get involved, to help us create a good program on this campus.

**Gateway** — When this decision was made, was any type of study done to find out where American schools like S.M.U., Tulane, and Clemson (schools on or recently on athletic probation) have gone wrong?

**Steadward** — We haven't... uh... There's all sorts of studies available on various aspects of a program at universities (he lists several of these studies), there's tons of those studies available. But I have also had the opportunity to travel fairly extensively to most major universities across Canada and the U.S. and discuss at great lengths with the various Athletic Directors some of the strategies that they have used to improve their programs, some of the projects that they have put into place to raise funds, and how they have involved their alumni, etc. So I have done some fairly extensive investigation myself.

**Gateway** — As Canadian university athletic programs continue to follow their American counterparts, do you foresee the same type of



situation that has taken place in the U.S. regarding recruiting infringements, fund misappropriation, etc?

**Steadward** — No, I don't think so. Because first of all I believe that the mentality of Canadians is somewhat different than that of Americans, generally speaking. I also believe that we have a very strong administrative body that will insure that we do play by the rules. So anything to do with student awards and athletic bursaries will always be handled through the university student awards office with a very stringently controlled group of set criteria.

**Gateway** — When you approached members of the local business community on the subject of funding, how receptive were they?

**Steadward** — I have never been more pleased with the cooperation that the people outside of this uni-

*"We want to get people involved like they were back in the 60's."*

versity have shown in the interest (of) and commitment to our program. I had felt that it was going to be disappointing and very difficult to convince and attract senior business people from our community to get involved in the sports Wall of Fame Dinner and as a result, in our program. I thought that we might be able to attract four or five individuals who might be interested in paying the price to become interested and involved in our program as a vice chairman (of the Wall of Fame Dinner), and we were very fortunate to get 16 people involved.

**Gateway** — Athletics has decided

that they need to present more than just the game in order to fill the stands. Is this a major component in your gameplan?

**Steadward** — One of my major goals is to generally increase the quality of our program. It is important that we introduce more of a carnival atmosphere to our events this year. Now this isn't going to happen over night, because remember that a lot of my people didn't get in place until the end of August and we're already supposed to have our game faces on. So certainly this year we'll have to play a lot of catch up. But we're already planning for next year. In the past they've waited until spring and summer to plan for the fall. We're planning right now for next fall. So we are going to be developing a real game operation type of an effect. We want to get students involved like they were back in the 60's. I'd like them to adopt a player or maybe a team that they can sort of hang their hats on... I want to get the fraternities back involved in doing some special events at our games. I want to get the residences more involved... I want to involve everyone in the games themselves — in halftime shows, pre-game events, post-game events; put on some parties, and some dances and other social events following the game. And the fan's ticket to get them into the game will also maybe be a reduction (in the fee) to get them into the post game show. And make sure that our concessions are the best possible ones that we can have. It all ties into providing an event for an individual. For instance you don't just go to the Citadel for the play. You go for the atmosphere and greeting and meeting people and socializing. I would like to make out athletic events the same way. The event is very important... but I also would like them to be there for the pre-game and halftime and other activities.

**Gateway** — Obviously this is part and parcel with Athletics decision to charge students two dollars a head admission to athletic events. Was this a difficult decision and how do you feel about it?

**Steadward** — I guess in one way I am fortunate that the decision was made before I came on board. So I guess that from that point of view it was very easy (laughing). But I guess that I've always been one to believe myself, that you get what you pay for. And I was a student myself and didn't have a great deal of money in those earlier days. For instance: you go to watch Rambo it's going to cost you five fifty. You're going to be more critical and more appreciative of the show because you payed to get into it. And I've always believed that the students will also appreciate the athletics more once (they know that) they have contributed something towards their fellow students. So I believe that any form of entertainment and anything that you get, always has a little bit more worth when it's being paid for.

Dr Bob Steadward is a man of high aspirations. As you begin to understand his character, you really do get the feeling that he is quite sincere, and that he will stick to his guns while either sinking or swimming.

In any case, we'll have ample opportunity to see Steadward taken to task. Because in every rebuilding situation such as Athletics' faces at the U of A, things get worse before they get better. So if Steadward is still in the kitchen after two full years, you'll know that he can stand the heat.

### Students' Union Involvement Opportunities



#### Housing and Transport Commission

- requires 2 student-at-large members
- The Housing and Transport Commission:**
- Makes policy recommendations to Students' Council concerning housing and transportation concerns.
- Is responsible for the preparation and maintenance of a long-range plan of housing and transportation for the students at the U of A by the Students' Union.
- Works with the various student residences on issues of concern.
- Investigates development and zoning plans for the University area.

**Term of Office:**

Immediately to 30 April 1986

**Deadline for Applications:** 30 September 1985

**For Applications/Information, contact the Students' Union Executive Offices, Room 259 SUB, 432-4236.**

### TYPEWRITERS

over 80 reconditioned typewriters.

Some IBM Selectrics

Some Manuals

\$49.00 - \$275.00

Show your Student ID for a \$25 discount.

**15 day money-back warranty.**

#### Kellam Business Systems

10717 - 176 Street

483-8912

### The Chesterfield House

"NEW & USED"

Living Room Suites • Hide-A-Beds

• Loveseats • Rockers • Recliners

• Reconditioned-Steam Cleaned-Deodorized

Bedroom Suites • Kitchen Sets • Stereos

• End Tables • Lamps • Etc.

12015 - 76 St.

477-6585