

VEC 2nd's Season Summary 2018/19

The 2nd's will consider themselves disappointed with their final league position of 5th in UCFL Division 2 after a season of near hibernation in 2nd position.

A positive start to the season saw us lose only once in our opening 8 league games. The goals were flowing in too with no less than 9 different goal scorers. One man in particular clearly setting his stall out for top scorer, new signing Sam Jackson netting 10 times in those opening games.

No win in the following five league games ultimately cost the team any chance of winning the league. A creditable 1-1 draw away to runaway league champions Oldbury was followed up with hugely regrettable draws at home to Booterstown Utd and Portmarnock 2nd's.

Turn of the year and a change in formation from manager Fergal 'Stumpy' Nolan saw a run of three impressive away wins. A run that included a dogged 3-1 victory on a dangerously icy pitch in Walkinstown against league runners up Rathmines Roosters and a superb performance away to Atletico Malahide that saw Sam Jackson help himself to all 5 goals with goalkeeper Brendan Murphy pulling off 2 of his astonishing 7 penalty saves over the course of the season.

Team spirit was at a season high at this stage, led by the experience of Simon Roche in midfield with the youthful Conor Ryan in tandem. Gildas Oliver and Richie Burke added steel to the engine room: Oscar Ó Foghlú and Damon Maguire brought 1st team experience mainly on the right, while the interchangeable Karl Reck & Josh Caffrey on the left were always a threat. Conor O'Neill, Jorge Castrillo and 'Swan' made important contributions along the way, while the new back 3 always performed solidly playing with any combination of Fergus Brady, Paul Smith, Shane Reddin or the enigmatic Darragh Kelly.

Unfortunately, goals dried up after our potent strike partnership of Tom Wrynne and Sam Jackson were rewarded for their combined 28 goals by being called up to the 1st team where they continued their good form to help the club to a famous premier league and cup double.

Our target to reach the final of the MMI Cup started well with a comprehensive 6-3 win over Riverside Utd. but was followed by a poor showing in the quarter final against high-flying Tallaght Utd., resulting in a 0-4 loss.

Back in the league, hope of an immediate promotion back to Division 1 was re-ignited with a fantastic team performance away to Booterstown Utd. Goals from new signing Matthew Wallace and Richie Burke preceded a wonder strike by Trevor Screeney against his former club. However, results elsewhere and a disappointing defeat in our final game quashed any lingering promotion aspirations.