

VEC Football Club's GOLDEN JUBILEE



Celebrating 50 Years

A Chronology of Memories; Records; 'Moments of Truth'; Achievements & Successes from 1974 to 2024



Let us begin at the start ...

The process that started the formation of the **V.E.C. Football Club** was a letter from a number of administrative staff working in the City of Dublin Vocational Education Committee (**V.E.C.**) to its Chief Executive Officer in **Summer 1974** formally seeking the use of the Sportsgrounds in Terenure — which he granted (see correspondence at [Appendix 'A'](#)). Hence the Club Name.

Following five friendly matches, the Club purchased its first set of jerseys (Maroon & Sky Blue) for £25 and in **June 1974** made application to the United Churches Football League of Ireland. The first Chairman Vin Lennon attended that meeting, along with the first Hon. Secretary Liam Cooke and current Chairman David Spring. The League Committee's eyes lit up when they heard that we would be playing our home games in the VEC Sportsgrounds in Terenure, and we were immediately accepted into the top division. In those days the U.C.L. was confined, allowing only Protestants to participate and the league only had two divisions. When it was decided to open up the league to any suitable club, the first two to enter were V.E.C. and Dublin Savings Bank (D.S.B.). We have remained in the top (Premier) division ever since – bar 1 season (1982-1983) when our first team moved to the Leinster Senior League Major Division and our application to keep our other team in the top division of the UCFL, was rejected. More about that later ...



Our Club Constitution: The main aims and objectives of V.E.C. Football Club are “to fulfil a role in promoting the game of Association Football (Soccer) and to provide football for players who join the club. It seeks to attract quality players to the club and it is also committed to the development and improvement of the skills level of all players within the club, in order to develop football to the highest standards possible; and it aims to achieve this in a spirit of sportsmanship and through self-discipline, teamwork and co-operation”.

So now, let us continue ...

7th September 1974: VEC Football Club played its first official game. It was a Barton Shield match played in the VEC Sportsgrounds in Terenure against St. Maelruan's from Tallaght, and unfortunately the game was lost 1-3. [See team line up at [Appendix 'B'](#)].

5th October 1974: VEC Football Club played its first **league** match in Terenure against St. Canice's United and that game was lost 2-5 with Canice's going on to win the league.

12th October 1974: One week later, we had our first win. It was a Leinster Junior Cup match in the Phoenix Park against Cashel Rangers. We won 3-1 and **John Loughman** scored a hat-trick.

19th October 1974: A further week later, we secured our first league point against Harding in a 2-2 draw and then on the

.... **26th October 1974:** we achieved our first league win. It was in the VEC Sportsgrounds in Terenure: it was 4-1: and it was against St. Mary's (Crumlin).

Our final game of that first season (1974-1975) was also against St. Mary's, played in Terenure; the goal-keeper was unable to travel because of the petrol situation, but we drew 3-3 and **David Spring** managed a hat-trick with three headed goals!

1975: See our first season's Receipts and Payments Account at [Appendix 'A'](#)



Our earliest photo, taken in **1975/76:**

**Back: Brendan Keegan, Les Young, Jim Boland, Dave Spring, Cormac McCrann, Pat Gleeson (R.I.P.),
Front: Brendan Spring, Ken Ryan, Joe Keogh, Gerry Hatch, Gerry Betts.**

Missing that day: Mike & John Loughman, Dave Earley, Maurice Boland, Dave Hughes, Paddy Mullins, Tom Foley.

1976: At the age of 24, **David Spring** managed and captained the first VEC team to reach the Elvery Cup (UCFL Challenge Cup) final, which unfortunately we lost 2-1 to Dublin University (later to become Trinity Corinthians). Despite leading by a **Ken Ryan** goal at half-time, their tactical changes brought them two goals late in the game to win a very memorable match in their own back yard at Santry Avenue. [See VEC team line up at [Appendix 'B'](#)]

1976: Ken Ryan was selected and played in two games for the UCFL League Team. Many more **VEC** players would follow.

Summer 1976: **VEC FC 2nds** were formed and we purchased 2 new sets of jerseys.

1977: Beating the RCSI team 15-1 in January 1977 with four players achieving hat-tricks. Three months later (Easter), losing 13-1 to DSB when only 8 players were available – but we still played! Both are still record club winning and losing scores.

1979: It wasn't until our 5th season that we won something – the Barton Shield – beating Dublin Savings Bank 6-5 on penalties on 6th June 1979; having dispatched established UCFL clubs Strand Utd., 8th OBU and St. Catherine's on route. **John Gleeson** managed and captained that first **VEC** team to win a final.

1980: **John Gleeson** scored six goals in a cup game in the Phoenix Park around 1980 — still a Club record.

1980: **Mick Kenny** managed and captained the first Elvery Cup final win (4-1) in 1980 against St. Mary's in Tolka Park. [See VEC team line up at [Appendix 'B'](#)]

1981: **Larry Doherty** managed and captained the second Elvery Cup win in 1981 at Haddon Park in Killester against the league winners, Spartak Dynamo. Not only did VEC register Spartak's only defeat in the entire season, but **Pat Quin** (father of **Steve Quin**), playing in an unusual (for that time) four-man midfield (masterminded by Mick Kenny), scored the four goals. [See VEC team line up at [Appendix 'B'](#)]. In the League, we lost 1-0 to Spartak away and drew 0-0 at home, and won every other game, and still finished as runners-up!

Also, in **1981**, six V.E.C. players represented the UCFL: **Pat Quin, Mick Kenny, Ken Ryan, Denis Molony, Dave Spring and Gerry Hatch** played in some of the UCFL games in that very successful season. The former four mentioned combined with five players from Spartak Dynamo (and 1 from Cherryfield) to reach the semi-final of the Oscar Traynor Trophy, only to lose in a penalty shoot-out to the eventual winners, Leinster Senior League, who incidentally had a certain Dalkey Utd. player, Paul McGrath marshalling their defence. The UCFL team on the day was managed by David Blood (who later became President of the FAI and sadly passed away in 2022) and the team was captained by our own **Pat Quin**.

1982: Former V.E.C. player **Jim Behan** hammering home four goals against Galway United on his debut for Thurles Town in the League of Ireland in March 1982.

1983: The third team was set up in 1983; was managed by **Paddy Mullins**; and disbanded after 3 seasons. Home games were played in the VEC Grounds in Whitehall. After-match refreshments were enjoyed in one of Dublin's oldest pubs – the Cat & Cage in Drumcondra.



1983: The second team's play-off game for the second division league title against Harcourt Rovers in 1983. The game went into extra time and eventually to penalties which we won. **Dave Spring** was manager and made some shrewd substitutions and tactical changes in the 2nd half, which paid dividends.

1984: The second team's unforgettable Elvery Cup win again against St. Mary's (Crumlin) in Tolka Park. Player/Manager **Dave Spring**, assisted by **Noel Ryan**, selecting an adventurous 3-4-3 formation, missing a penalty himself, but seeing **Joe O'Hanlon** (before he became a top-class referee) and **Noel Ryan** scoring two excellent goals following exquisite right-wing crosses from **Willie Kissane**, to win 2-1. [See VEC photo and team line up at [Appendix 'B'](#)]

1985: The first children's Christmas Party was held in Kevin Street College in 1985 and there followed eleven more with an average of thirty children attending annually. **Ken Donoghue** was a splendid Santa Claus each time.

1986-1987: The first team returned to the U.C.F.L. in 1986, having played in the Leinster Senior League for four seasons, achieving promotion in 1983/84. Now in the newly-named Premier Division, we had one of our most successful seasons to date, and while only finishing runners-up in both the league and the Elvery (Challenge) Cup, a wonderful run in the F.A.I. Junior Cup saw the club reach the 6th round, only to be knocked out by top A.U.L. side Glenmore Celtic.

Of note: **Goalkeeper Tommy Coyle** scoring a goal from play in an Elvery Cup match against St. Catherine's FC., where a long kick (with the aid of a strong breeze) bounced once and over the other goalkeeper's head!

1987-1988: The team got its revenge against Strand United with a comprehensive 4-0 drubbing in the Cup Final at Tolka Park, having lost to the same opposition the previous year. **Tommy Coyle** was the player/manager on this occasion (although injured for the game) and the goals came from **Mick Finnerty**, **Noel Ryan (2)** and **Jerome Murphy** with **Paudie O'Riordan** being awarded man-of-the-match. We were runners-up in the League again!

1988-1989: After winning our 5th round F.A.I. Junior Cup game against Beggsboro (who were runners-up in the previous year's final), we met the previous year's F.A.I. Junior Cup winners, Tolka Rovers in the **last 16** of that cup in Terenure. The team valiantly held out for 70 minutes before Tolka opened the scoring and went on to win 2-0 with the second goal only coming in injury time when **VEC** were pressing forward. Tolka Rovers went on to win the trophy.

The much talked about Leinster Junior Cup game against a highly fancied Telecom team in October 1989 at Kimmage Manor which we won 4-3, with **Willie Kissane** scoring a famous hat-trick (right foot; left foot; header) and **Dave Spring** with a top-drawer free kick winner. In the League, we were runners-up for the 3rd consecutive season and for the 4th time altogether.

1993: We won the (Prudential Life) Challenge Cup Final win against Dublin University at Tolka Park, when **Dermot O'Dwyer** scored two goals in a game that ended 2-2 after extra time and went to penalties where we won the shoot-out 3-2 with goalkeeper **Paul Hughes** being awarded man-of-the-match. **Darby Timbs** and **Chas Heather** were the managers for this game.

1993: The 3rd team was re-formed and entered Division 3 in the Leinster Senior League, playing matches on Sundays for just 1 season. But then reverted to Saturdays in Division 3 of the UCFL, lasting a further 20 seasons before disbanding in 2014, having won the **Sidney Bedlow Cup** that year for the first time for the Club.

1993-1994: **Dave Spring** played in 41 games in the 1993/94 season – still a club record, having played in 40 games in 1988/89. **Noel Ryan** had played 39 games in 1984/85 and also in 1988/89.

April 1995: It was quite extraordinary when the second team and the third team were drawn to play each in the quarter final of the Leslie Reynolds Cup in 1995. On an eventful Saturday - ironically on the 1st April – in the VEC grounds in Whitehall (the 3rds home pitch) with more than fifty interested spectators, in what was a very exciting game, it took just one sweet strike from player/manager **Dermot Sharkey** mid-way through the second half to secure the win for the seconds over **Robbie Ebbs's** very valiant third-team squad. See teams at [Appendix 'C'](#)

April 1997: The VEC inaugural golf outing in City West which **Mick Kenny** (Roddy) won by one point over **Paul Hughes**. Then, from 2001 to 2012, golf trips to Westport, Dungarvan, Athlone, Kilkenny, Waterford, Ballyliffin, Dromoland and Killarney – some on more than one occasion.

April 1998: Dave Spring's son **Neil** joining him in a Division 2 game in Terenure: the first father/son combination.

26th October 1998: The inaugural '**Willie Kissane Perpetual Trophy**' match took place against C.Y.M. in their Sportsclub in Terenure. The magnificent trophy (Willie's Boot) was specially commissioned by the club (thanks to Sandra Ryan and Susan Kissane) following Willie's untimely death in 1997 at the age of 36 following a short illness. The 8-team annual tournament was organised by the Club in each of the 20 years from 1998-2017 in Willie's memory.



Suaimhneas sioraí dá anam. For the last 14 years of its 20 years' operating, the Willie Kissane Tournament has been an 8-team invitational 11-a-side tournament. In those 20 years, VEC won 'Willie's Boot' on 6 occasions. See the winners of 'Willie's Boot' in those 20 years at [\(Appendix 'D'\)](#).

December 1998: VEC 1sts v VEC 2nds were drawn to play each other in the cup. This time in the Challenge Cup - now called the Progressive Cup – the first team beat the second team by 3 goals to 2 after another memorable match played in a truly sporting spirit. With **John Griffith** on form scoring two goals, the first team took some time to settle before **Garrett Brennan** responded with two goals and **Noel Ryan** with one ... and where again, from a club point of view, the correct result was achieved!

10th April 1999: The highlight of the year had to be the Golf Outing and Dinner Dance in City West Country House and Hotel to commemorate our **25th Silver Jubilee**. It was a magnificent day and evening and it was great to see such a large attendance, particularly from ex-players of the club. **Dave Spring** produced a superb commemorative brochure* with over 70 pages of memorabilia, press cuttings and photos spanning the 25 years which made for compulsive reading. For Dave's work over those years, the club presented him with some lovely crystal.

*Unluckily for Dave, **Dermot Sharkey** inserted into the brochure **A Tribute to a Genius!** Which you can read at ([Appendix 'E'](#)).



1999: Having rendered exceptional service to the Club in its first 25 years and as he was stepping down as Chairman, **David Spring** was honoured at that season's AGM with **Honorary Life Membership**. The Club referred to his unstinting, immeasurable and professional work in the massive administration necessary for the successful running of our club.

As that commemorative brochure in 1999 reported in detail on our first 25 years, with plenty of pics. and reports and information, the remainder of this publication will concentrate of the 25 years from 2000 to 2024.

2001: Our on-line Fundraiser Pick-A-Winner commenced, thanks to hard work initially from **Séamus Doherty** (through e-mail) and then by **Neil Spring** when he transmogrified it on-line (www.pickawinner.ie) from 2011 onwards.

Séamus Doherty was elected to the Executive Committee of the United Churches Football League (UCFL), later becoming the League's Hon. Treasurer – a position he still holds!

From **2001** to **2012**, **Séamus** organised our Club golf trips to Westport, Dungarvan, Athlone, Kilkenny, Waterford, Ballyliffin, Dromoland and Killarney – some on more than one occasion.

October 2001: For a third time, two VEC teams were drawn together in the 2nd round of the Irish Life Challenge Cup: **VEC 1sts v VEC 2nds** – and again the first team beat the second team, this time by 6 goals to 2 after another memorable match played in a truly sporting spirit. Goalscorers for the winners were **Peter Bull, Eamon Kirk, Paul Little, Glenn Morrissey, Derek O'Neill and Brian Ward** ... and where again, from a club point of view, the correct result was achieved! **Conor MacArtain** and **Paul Hutchinson** had responded for the 2nds. See teams at [Appendix 'C'](#)

May 2002: And we went on to the final, where we unfortunately lost 0-2 in Tolka Park to an excellent Trinity Corinthians side who had two Junior Internationals in their side: Aaron Shearer and David Battigan. Team line-out / squad:

Ronan Cotter

Peter Morrissey Neil Spring Dave Collins Gus McInerney
Mark Noonan Glenn Morrissey James Croke Derek O'Neill
Alan Scullion Brian Ward

Subs: Peter Bull, John Murray, Paul Hutchinson, Eamon Kirk, Brian Quinn

2002: The professional development of our excellent and enviable website www.vecfc.ie was undertaken by **Neil Spring**, free gratis. Between himself and his father **Dave**, they produced the VEC logo/crest.



Karl Nolan (who played for 6 seasons and in 175 games, scoring 4 goals) and **Tommy Doherty** (who played for 17 seasons and in 403 games, scoring 50 goals), followed in **Joe O'Hanlon's** (who played for 6 seasons and in 110 games up to 1989, scoring 87 goals) footsteps and changed their football boots for a pair of Referee's boots – and continue to make a good job of it too!

Here are the three of them – Tommy, Joe & Karl – officiating in the **Willie Kissane Tournament Final** in the VEC Sportsgrounds in 2007.

2004-2005: A hugely successful season for the Club! Our first trophies in 12 years with each of our 3 teams taking silverware. A club record broken for the most goals scored in a season with **Joey Byrne**, scoring 36 goals in 36 games. His co-striker **Brian Ward's** 26 goals was also amazing. For only the third time, we reached the 6th round of the FAI Junior Cup, beating St. Mochtas, Whitehall Rangers, Workmans Dunlaoire and Maymount Celtic (from Cork) before losing 0-1 to top Tipperary outfit Peakevilla. We won the Premier Shield, 2nd Division Shield and were runners up in the Richard Knight Cup. Another 1st for the club was the UCFL's Merit award received by the 3rd team, for their performance on and off the field, a very noteworthy trophy for the club to be awarded. The firsts won the Shield final 3-2 against Clontarf Athletic while the 2nd division shield was won by defeating the league runners-up Rail PSV 2-1 on the same day out in the AUL Complex.



2005: As they were stepping down as Chairman and Hon. Secretary respectively, **Noel Ryan** and **Séamus Doherty** were both elected into Honorary Life Membership for their immense, important and hugely valuable work for the club over many years.



2005-2006: **Joey Byrne** scoring in 9 consecutive games — a Club record until 2014. Of note: **Ken Ryan** in 1980/81 and **John Griffith** in 1996/97 - both scoring in seven consecutive games.

2006: That memorable 6th round Leinster Junior Cup game on a Sunday losing only 1-0 to arguably the best Junior soccer club in the country at the time Killester Utd. who went on to win the Trophy. **Dave Spring** was manager with **Paul Hutchinson** assisting and it was a magnificent performance by all concerned – particularly as we were missing two key players **Neil Spring** (away with work) and **Joey Byrne** (injured) on the day.

2006-2007: The Club was very proud that **Paul Hutchinson** was selected as the UCFL Manager for the season. He asked **Dave Spring** to assist him. Considering that this was his first year, it was very successful, as the league team qualified for the knock-out stages of the Oscar Treanor Trophy, before losing out to the eventual winners AFL in the quarter-final. It was an honour too for **Paul O'Sullivan** who played in all the competitive games for the league team, and to **Joey Byrne, Anthony Dunne** and **Peter Morrissey** who were also selected, as were the **Doherty** brothers **Dara and Mark** in the final game of the season for the league team, against the Northern Amateur League.



2007: **Fergal (Stumpy) Nolan** was honoured with Honorary Life Membership of the Club, acknowledging the considerable time which he gave enthusiastically during his 10 years as team manager for our 1st and 2nd team and his proficient coordination of training around this time.

2007-2008: **Hutch** was re-selected as the UCFL Manager for a second year and he asked **Dave** to assist him once again. It was an honour too for VEC club members **Paul O'Sullivan, Joey Byrne, Darragh McGinley** and **Mark Doherty** who were selected to represent the league team during the season.

2008-2009: At last! In our 35th season, with **Dave Spring** and **Noel Ryan** at the helm, we won the Premier Division title pipping Trinity Corinthians by 1 point to complete a remarkable season. (Trinity had won the title on 7 occasions in the previous 10 years). It came down to the final game of the season, when we had to beat them in Terenure to win the title. We won 3-1.



Premier Division Champions 2009

Back: Paul O'Sullivan, Peter Morrissey, Rory O'Dwyer, Darragh McGinley, Neil Spring, Brian Ward, Joey Byrne, Gavin O'Sullivan, Simon Roche.

Front: Brian Quinn, Nicky Perry, Ross Kavanagh (c), Anthony Dunne, Rav Jennings, Mick Keating.

2009: Our Chairman **David Spring** was invited by the F.A.I. to participate on the F.A.I. Disciplinary Panel and has been actively involved ever since.

2010: **Pick-a-Winner** website launched on 26th February 2010 – built by **Neil Spring**.

2010-2011: What a great season for the Club! VEC 1st won the Challenge Cup, beating our old rivals Stedfast Utd. 2-0 with goals from Joey Byrne and Brian Ward. This was **Dave Spring's** 6th Challenge Cup medal, although this time only as manager! Goalkeeper **Darragh McGinley** deservedly won the Man-of-the-Match award. This had followed our Shield Final win against Clontarf Athletic on the previous Monday, when we won 1-0 after extra time. We also won the Willie Kissane Trophy for the first time in five years, when we beat Leicester Celtic 7-6 on penalties in August 2010, after the final had finished at 1-1. The 2nd and 3rd teams - managed by **Dave Carroll (Jayo)** and **Julien Dingle** respectively - also had great seasons, both finishing runners-up in Divisions 2 and 3A. The 3rds also had a great run in the Leinster Junior Shield, eventually missing out on a quarter-final spot (in a game they should really have won) to Banagher Utd, from Offaly. VEC 2nd were runners up in Div. 2 and VEC 3rd were runners up in Div. 3B, with both teams promoted! Action and squad from cup final below.



Darragh McGinley
 Peter Morrissey Neil Spring Mick Keating Steve Quin
 Rav Jennings Tom Delaney Simon Roche (c) Anthony Dunne
 Joey Byrne Brian Ward

Subs: Paul O'Sullivan, Ross Kavanagh, Ian O'Neill, Rory O'Dwyer, Seán Kerr, Marc Doherty, Ronan Cotter.

2010-2011: VEC players called into the UCFL squad – **Anthony Dunne** who played in the Oscar Traynor game, **Darragh McGinley, Neil Spring, Joey Byrne**.

2011: **Paul Hutchinson** hung up the boots for two seasons to go refereeing in the UCFL, but returned to the Club as player/manager! And then two years later, reverted to refereeing again.

Andy Myler, who scored a total of 133 League of Ireland career goals, signed for **VEC FC** at the age of 37. He made his debut for **VEC FC** on 14th January 2012, playing the full game in the 2-2 draw against Strand Utd. in the UCFL Premier Division in Terenure. Having started his professional career at UCD where he made his League debut on 9th January 1994, **Andy** had retired from Bray Wanderers at the end of the 2008 season. He played 85 official games for **VEC Football Club** in the 9 seasons between 2011 and 2020, scoring 32 goals along the way, before returning to the League of Ireland – this time as Manager of UCD up to November 2023. *[See UCFL Player Profile from Facebook - November 21, 2020 at [Appendix 'E'](#)].*

2011-2012: **Darragh McGinley** (VEC player-of-the-year in 2011) was awarded a soccer scholarship in the U.S. and proved himself to be a top-class keeper.

2013-2014: This was, no doubt, what turned out to be, the start of a very successful 10 seasons for **VEC FC**, which started with **Paul Hutchinson & Dave Spring** at the helm. Although **Joey Byrne, Rob Newe, Simon Roche** and **Peter O'Brien** took a year out, and **Rav Jennings** and **Michael Keating** did not re-sign, **Tom Delaney** and **Paul O'Sullivan** made a welcome comeback after their travels; and we welcomed new players **Aidan Hyland, Séamus Staunton, Gavin Murphy, Ray Jaudzems** and **Andy Waugh** (GK). We went on to finish runners-up in the Premier Division, losing only 2 league games and obviously stayed in the premier/top UCFL Division for the 40th consecutive season – a remarkable feat in itself.

On a memorable night on the front pitch in Terenure on 23rd May 2014, **VEC 3rds**, managed by **John Dingle**, won the **Sidney Bedlow Cup** for the very first time for the Club, beating Riverside Utd. 8-7 on penalties after the match had finished 2-2 after extra time.





VEC FOOTBALL CLUB

11th October 2014: On the social side, there was a special function to celebrate our **40th season**. Our very successful 40th Anniversary B-B-Q was held in the Morrison Hotel on Ormond Quay and there were nearly 80 in attendance. Apart from the current players and Committee, we were privileged to have many players from the past with us on the night, including **John Eager** and **Ken Donoghue** who are probably better known for the sterling work they put in for many years as Treasurer and Secretary (12 years) respectively.

Our guests included the then Chairman of the UCFL Barney Blood and Barney's brother – a good friend to the Club over many years and a former President of the Football Association of Ireland – David Blood. Sadly, both have since departed this world. The Chief Executive of the Football Association of Ireland John Delaney graciously accepted our invitation and attended together with his partner and a few 'unexpected' friends.

2014-2015: After 21 consecutive years, unfortunately the 3rd team disbanded before the start of the season, due to shortage of numbers. In effect, the 2nds and 3rds from the previous season amalgamated.

Having finished very strongly in the previous season with 7 goals in the final 5 games, **Aidan Hyland** scored 12 goals in his first 7 games of 2014-2015 (including a remarkable 5 goals in August against Arthur Griffith Park FC), thus scoring in 12 consecutive games and smashing the previous record of scoring in 9 consecutive games set by **Joey Byrne** in 2005-2006.

2015-2016: While the 2013-2014 season might have effectively been the start of a hugely successful era in the Club, as was mentioned, then the 2015-2016 season was definitely the start of 'The Golden Era' (nostalgically in the lead up to our Golden Jubilee in 2024). That one season surpassed everything VEC ever achieved in any one season! Having won the Premier Division (Barton) Shield on the May Bank-holiday Monday by beating AGP FC 4-3 on penalties, we then added the UCFL Challenge Cup by beating South William Street Celtic 4-1 on Saturday 21st May in Home Farm and then the Richard Knight Cup by beating FC Sportslink Ailesbury 5-1 on 31st May meaning a clean sweep of UCFL trophies for the 1st team – a remarkable first for the club (*and only ever achieved twice before in our League in nearly 70 years: by Stedfast Utd. 19 years previously and by Clontarf Athletic 21 years previously*). Details of the Season's results and a synopsis of that extraordinary season are at [Appendix 'F' and Appendix 'G'](#).





We also reached the 5th Round of the FAI Junior Cup where we met one of the favourites (and subsequently losing finalists) Pike Rovers in Limerick, which was a great achievement, and although we gave a good account of ourselves, we eventually succumbed to a 2-0 loss. Managing the 1st team that exceptional season was **Dave Spring**, who inveigled **Kevin O’Hanlon** to join him. **Kev** had suffered a serious knee injury in an annual fixture against CYM Terenure at Christmas 2014, which unfortunately and effectively ended his playing days. Along with **Dave**, he was inspirational in steering **VEC** to an extraordinary and historic **Quadruple** (Premier Division, Challenge Cup, Richard Knight Cup and Barton Shield). But, what a bunch of players we had!



Now, everybody knows that success does not last forever! Bill Gates once said: *“Success is a lousy teacher. It seduces smart people into thinking they can’t lose.”* But we made our success a consistent, proactive, dynamic, learning experience so that we could achieve further success in the future. And we did ... read on

2016-2017: i.e. the following season, having being reluctant to move directly into the lead management role the previous season, **Kevin O’Hanlon** then stepped seamlessly into that role, steering **VEC** to the retention of the Premier Division title, which we had won in 2016 and in 2009. Moreover, we were the only team throughout all the divisions in the UCFL to go undefeated for the season. We won all the games we played bar one, away to Glasnaion FC which we drew. The remaining 3 games were ‘dead rubbers’ and were not played and were deemed by the League to be draws. The season after – again with Kev in charge – **VEC** finished as league runners-up, but then in his fourth season (2018-2019), he managed **VEC** to a remarkable double: Premier Division champions and Challenge Cup winners.



	P	W	D	L	Pts.
Our record as Champions in 2016-17 was:	21	17	4	0	55
Our record as Champions in 2015-16 was:	21	16	3	2	51
Our record as Champions in 2008-09 was:	20	16	2	2	50

October 2016: the UCFL announced that *“The management of VEC FC, led by **David Spring**, has accepted the UCFL's request to manage the UCFL Team for this season's Oscar Traynor games with assistance from referee **Paul Hutchinson**, who is himself a former UCFL League Team manager. It is expected that VEC FC, as last season's League and Cup winners, will form the nucleus of the squad, but that Clubs who believe that they have players of the required standard should submit the names of those players to the League”.*

This ultimately resulted in **11 VEC players** achieving the honour of representing their League over that season. While **Anthony Dunne, Joey Byrne, Mick Kinsella and Aidan Hyland** had previously represented the UCFL, it was a first for **Neal Breslin, Gav Murphy, Ray Jaudzems, Séamus Staunton, Pat Meghen, Killian Finlay and Richie Hannify**.



February 2017 - FAI Junior Cup:

Having reached the 6th Round of the FAI Junior Cup on four previous occasions*, we reached the 7th Round (last-16) – for the first time in the Club's history. Having received a bye in round 1, we beat Inchicore Athletic 3-1, Sacred Heart 2-0, Columbas Rovers 3-1, Clara Town (Offaly) 4-0 and Buttevant AFC (Cork) 2-0. Unfortunately, we lost 2-0 away to Boyle Celtic (Roscommon) on **5th February 2017**, to end a magnificent run in this prestigious cup. [See Appendix 'H'](#)



*[*In 1987 we lost to top AUL outfit Glenmore Celtic; in 1989 having received a bye in the first round, we beat Greystones, Chapelizod, Ashbourne and the previous season's runners-up Beggsboro, before losing to the holders and eventual winners Tolka Rovers. In 2005 we beat St. Mochtas, Whitehall Rangers, Workmans Dunlaoire and Maymount Celtic (from Cork) before losing 0-1 to top Tipperary outfit Peakevilla. In 2016, we reached the 6th Round of the FAI Junior Cup where we met one of the favourites (and losing finalists) Pike Rovers in Limerick, but although we gave a good account of ourselves, we eventually succumbed to a 2-0 loss].*

March 2017: Remarkably in a league game on 25th March 2017, **Aidan Hyland** scored 5 goals against Arthur Griffith Park FC. This helped Aidan become – for the 4th season in a row – the Club's leading goal scorer on 37 goals – thus beating **Joey Byrne's** 12-year old Club record of 36 goals in a season.

April 2017: **VEC Football Club** accepted an invitation to represent the Leinster Football Association in an annual fixture for the John Bagster Cup against a Mid-Ulster team. What an honour! This is a long-standing and prestigious event that has maintained the sporting friendship between MUFL and the Leinster FA over the years. The event was held at Bignian Park in Kilkeel, Co. Down on Saturday 22nd April 2017. We played Hill Street FC. (who had been invited



UCFL ON TOUR: Dave Spring, manager of VEC FC, Noel Fitzroy, UCFL Fixtures Secretary and FAI Junior Council President, David Blood President (UCFL) and Barney Blood (UCFL Chairman) and president Leinster Football Association at the Mid-Ulster representative fixture in Kilkeel, Co Down on Saturday afternoon. Photo: Eamon Scott

to represent the Mid Ulster Football League) and despite losing 3-0 at half time, we dominated the second half with a great display and pulled two goals back through **Dani Gonzalez** in the 65th minute and **Séamus Staunton** in the 85th minute, before running out of time when an equaliser seemed a real possibility after constant pressure. [Squad below].



July 2017: What a day in VEC on 29th July 2017 as the inaugural 'Champions v Legends' Match took place with Paul Hutchinson officiating. Many past players joined the Champions (see pic.) adjourning afterwards to Brady's for BBQ food and a fundraiser quiz for the injured players' fund.



August 2017: On a sentimental day, the final Annual **Willie Kissane Tournament** took place: unfortunately, **VEC** lost out in the final to CYM Beechwood.



On **October 7th 2017**, in Round 1 of the Challenge Cup, **Joey Byrne** bagged a brace and his 198th and 199th goals for the club.

In so doing Joey surpassed **Noel Ryan's** long-standing club goal scoring record of 198 goals.



2017-2018: Having topped the League in the previous two seasons, we reaped a silver medal in the Premier Division for the second time in recent years along with a Richard Knight Cup final appearance in FAI HQ at Abbotstown, where we lost after extra time to Harding FC.

October 2017: **Paul Hutchinson** accepted the position as the League team manager and asked **Dave Spring** to assist him (a reversal of the previous season's arrangement). 6 VEC players represented the UCFL in the Oscar Traynor Trophy that season: **Neal Breslin, Gavin Murphy, Aidan Hyland, Pat Meghen, Andrew Kilmartin & Alan Keane.**



July 2018: The 2nd annual VEC 'Champions v Legends' Match took place in July 2018. The turnout was fantastic and really built on the success of the previous year. Former **VEC** player **Tommy Doherty** officiated.



VEC FC 'Legends' 2018

Back (l to r): Simon Roche, Richie Hannify, Rob Newe, Gearoid Midden, Conor O'Neill, Richie Donnelly, James McGauran, Steve Quin, Peter O'Brien, Neal Breslin, Seamus Staunton, Ron Doyle, Pat Meghen, Brian Ward, Dave Carroll, Joey Byrne, Mick Kinsella, Gavin O'Sullivan, John Doyle, Jack Nolan, Gavin Murphy, Andy Myler.
 Front: Karl Reck, Alan Barry, Gildas Oliver, Alan Keane, Ray Jaudzems, Aidan Hyland, Fergal Stumpy Nolan, Russell White, Lee Rego, Seamus Carty, Ronan Cotter, Eoghan Webb, Dave Evers, Brian Quinn, Anthony Dunne.

2018-2019:

The first team claimed an emphatic **Double of League and Cup** while the seconds, with an influx of new bodies, mounted a challenge in a very strong Division 2. Unfortunately, due to player and management non-availability, the club once again had to disband its third team.



Once again, we reached the 7th round (last 16) of the **FAI Junior Cup** for the second time in three years, unfortunately losing 1-3 to Kilkenny outfit Evergreen FC on 3rd February 2019 after beating Pegasus St. James 4-3, Balscadden FC (away) 3-1, Glebe North 2-0, Castleisland AFC (away) 3-0 and Glin Rovers from the Desmond League (Limerick) 4-0 at home in January 2019 in the 6th round. (See [Appendix '1'](#)).

Paul Hutchinson and **Dave Spring** remained at the helm of the UCFL league team, and the **VEC** influence on the team remained potent with an astounding **10 VEC clubmen** among its ranks (see pic.) While it was a disheartening campaign for the UCFL side, it did serve to highlight the contribution the **VEC** have made to the league itself in those recent years and the strength in character our player-base continued to demonstrate year on year.



Analysing the players involved in the 8 Oscar Traynor matches over those past 3 seasons, shows that **Gav Murphy** played in an astounding 7 of those 8 games; **Pat Meghen** in 6; **Aido Hyland** and **Neal Breslin** in 5. Congratulations to them and all who represented the Club.

2019-2020: Upending all areas of life, the **COVID-19** pandemic made no exception for sports, creating turmoil worldwide as well as in our league and our club of course. In light of the threat posed by the COVID-19 outbreak and in the best interests of players, coaches, volunteers, etc., the Football Association of Ireland announced on March 12th 2020, the cessation of all football under its jurisdiction with immediate effect, following directives from Government, the Department of Health and UEFA. The UCFL complied fully with this instruction, which meant that no fixtures were set until further notice. This was unfortunate as we were on schedule to complete another quadruple, albeit with plenty of hard work and hopefully some good fortune awaiting us along the way.

When football resumed some 4 months later (18th July 2020), unfortunately things did not go according to plan! While we duly won our next 5 premier division matches, we succumbed to South William Street Celtic on 15th August losing 2-0 in Ringsend and relinquishing our league title. To make matters worse, we exited both the Richard Knight Cup and the Challenge Cup on penalties on both occasions. At least we atoned for this by winning the Premier Division Shield after a penalty shoot-out with Coolock Village in our final game of the season (on 29th August 2020).

August 2019: The 3rd annual VEC 'Champions v Legends' match took place on 10th August 2019. The turnout was great once again and really built on the success of the previous years.

October 2019: **Paul Hutchinson** and **Dave Spring** remained at the helm of the League team and the **VEC** influence on the team remained potent as 3 **VEC** players started in both games: **Davy Frewen, Gavin Murphy & Peter O'Brien**. They were joined in games by **Conall O'Shaughnessy, Mick Kinsella, Seamus Staunton** and **Ray Jaudzems**. [The competition hasn't returned since the pandemic].



2020-2021: **VEC FC** and other clubs played their part in the community fight against COVID-19. For months throughout the season (if you could call it that), we had Level 5 Government restrictions which prevented us playing. As such, the 2020/2021 season was effectively a washout. We resumed training on 11th May 2021. Then the League's admirable proposals for a 'Return to Football' resulted in a Pre-season Tournament which ran from 12th June 2021 to 7th August 2021.



Of extraordinary interest was **VEC** player **Jack McKnight** playing a full world cup qualifying CONCACAF first round Group E qualifier match at left back for the Turks and Caicos Islands national football team against Nicaragua in March 2021. He also played a full game in the next match on 30th March 2021 against Belize.

Jack played in 18 matches for **VEC Football Club** between 2018 and 2020, making his debut on 28th March 2018 in VEC Terenure against Beech Park FC in the Premier Division of the UCFL. He played 8 times for VEC 1sts and 10 times for VEC 2nds in official matches and scored 4 goals.

2021-2022: We once again reaped a silver medal in the Premier Division. Tallaght Utd. justly claimed the title, having gone the season without losing a league game. But we atoned for that somewhat meeting them (the current holders) in the final of both the **Challenge Cup** and the **Richard Knight Cup**, deservedly winning both matches on 1-0 scorelines.



VEC 2nds reached the MMI Cup Final. It was the first time that a **VEC** team had reached that Cup Final and it was played in Home Farm against Division 2 runners-up Coolock Village – bizarrely on the same evening that **VEC 1sts** were playing in the Richard Knight Cup Final. Unfortunately, the team was unable to emulate the 1sts cup win, losing 2-0 after conceding two late goals to a strong Coolock Village side (who for years had played in the Premier Division) despite a brave effort. [Squad below].





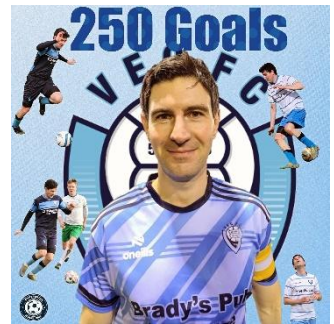
June 2022: The Club extended a special congratulations to Club Chairman **David Spring** who received a special recognition award from the FAI in June 2022, as part of their centenary celebrations. In VEC's Hon. Secretary's Report, Richie Hannify stated: *"This award could not be more richly deserved as Dave makes an unparalleled contribution to the success and longevity of*



this club and has dedicated many years now to grassroots football in Ireland". [Dave is here with the then Chairman of the UCFL Barney Blood & General Secretary of the Leinster Football Association Peter Doyle].



April 2023: In his first start in nearly 3 months, **Aidan Hyland** (left) returned to action for VEC in the Premier Division match against AGP FC in Terenure, scored VEC's first goal of the game and significantly, **Aidan's 200th goal** for the Club.



November 2023: on the 11th November to be precise: in the ETB (VEC) Sportsgrounds in Terenure against AGP FC in the Premier Division of the UCFL, **Joey Byrne netted his landmark 250th goal for the Club.** What

an achievement! What a milestone! It took the legendry Wayne Rooney 546 games playing for Manchester Utd. to achieve that milestone; whereas Joey has achieved that after playing in just 432 official games for VEC FC, having made his debut on 21st August 2004 against St. Canice's Utd. in Terenure.

Some more of those 'Moments of Truth' and Final Thoughts:

- Many other players have represented the U.C.L. in representative games, notably **Dave Hughes** (in our second season), **Eamonn Gleeson** and **Noel Ryan** (particularly when the UCFL team travelled to the Isle of Man in 1989), **Gerry Hatch**, **Dave Spring**, **Paul Hughes**, **Tommy Doherty**, **John McCarthy**, **Denis Molony**, **Chas Heather**, **Dermot Sharkey**, **Niall Little**, **Mick Keating**, **Brian Ward**, **Joey Byrne**, **Marc Doherty**, **Dara Doherty**, **Paul O'Sullivan** and **Anthony Dunne**. In addition, **Pat Quin**, **Mick Kenny** and **Ken Ryan** were also given the honour of captaining the league team, as were **Neal Breslin & Gav Murphy** subsequently.
- **Joey Byrne** moved into 3rd place on most games played for VEC – 427 games (over 18 seasons) at the end of last season -and he's still playing! Still a bit behind **Noel Ryan** (610 over 22 seasons) and **Dave Spring** (750 over 27 seasons). But **Joey** is way out on goals scored, as mentioned, reaching the 250 mark in November 2023, while **Aidan Hyland** (201) surpassed **Dave's** 190 and **Noel's** 198 goals.
- **FACT:** VEC has played in the top (Premier) division of the UCFL every one of our 50 years – bar 1 season (1982-1983) when our first team moved to the Leinster Senior League Major Division and our application to keep our other team in the top division of the UCFL, was rejected. But we famously won the second division that season and returned to the top division and stayed there. **So, in 49 seasons, we were never relegated from the UCFL's top division!** That's a remarkable and unique achievement in itself of which everyone associated with VEC Football Club should be very proud! **That's some legacy!** Hopefully, we make it at least 50!

- **FACT:** In the knock-out stages of the Challenge Cup over the 50 years, the outcome to advance to the next round **or** even to the final was decided in a penalty shoot-out in 11 of those years [1990, 1992, 1999, 2001, 2004, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2015, 2020, 2023]! How many of those 11 shoot-outs did we win? ... **NONE! We lost them all !** The only penalty shoot-out that we won in the Challenge Cup was in the **1993 Final** against Dublin University.



➤ **Sadly,** We acknowledge the loss of five former players who died in recent years: **Pat Gleeson** from Thurles who played 41 games in the first four seasons; **John O'Leary** who was the goalkeeper in the 1980 Elvery Cup Final and also played for two seasons; the flamboyant **Willie Kissane** (left) who we mentioned earlier and who played many memorable games in his total of 160 between 1982 and 1990, including the infamous 1983



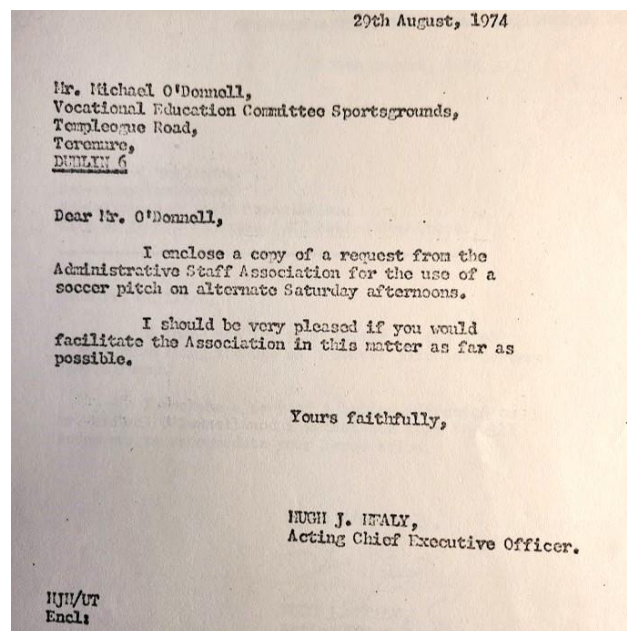
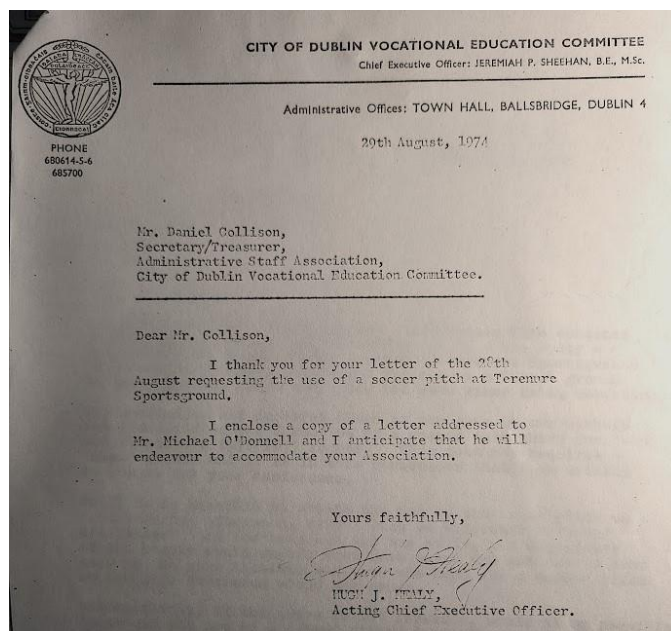
Elvery Cup final; the carefree **Jimmy O'Loughlin**, who joined in 1977, played in 88 games in 5 years including two cup finals in 1980 & 1981 and died in December 2012. And the colourful and inspirational **Robbie Ebbs** (right) who impressively managed VEC teams for five seasons in the 90's and who died in November 2022. May they rest in peace.

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- **Players-of-the-Year:** Over those 50 years – see [Appendix 'J'](#)
- **'A Tribute to a Genius'!** (by Demot Sharkey) – see [Appendix 'K'](#)
- **Challenge Cup Record:** Over those 50 years – see [Appendix 'L'](#)
- **A Few Former Players' Early Memories** – see [Appendix 'M'](#)
- **Statistics:** Over those 50 years – see [Appendix 'N'](#)
- **Notable events in Ireland and elsewhere in 1974** – see [Appendix 'O'](#)



Many more memories, reports, photos and information at: www.vecfc.ie



Receipts and Payments Account of the V.E.C. Football Club
For the period May 1st 1974 to April 30th 1975

Receipts			Payments		
Date		£	Date		£
May 22	To Staff Association	30.00	May 29	By Jerseys	25.00
Dec 13	To Xmas Draw	205.00	July 14	By Football	11.75
Apr 30	To Club Income	71.25	July 25	By Donation Groundsman	1.00
"	To Membership Fees	12.25	Sept 7	By Water Carrier	0.69
			Sept 21	By Bandages etc.	0.21
			Nov 23	By Scissors etc.	1.36
			Dec 9	By Bank Book	0.25
			Dec 13	By Xmas Draw	135.00
			Dec 21	By Xmas Present Groundsman	5.30
			Jan 7	By Elvery Cup Fee	2.00
			Feb 20	By Freeze Spray	1.15
			Mar 14	By Bank charge	1.00
			Apr 8	By Football	11.75
			Apr 26	By Bandage/Vaseline	1.80
			Apr 30	By Postage	0.24
			"	By Club Expenses Laundry/Refs/etc.	48.99
			"	By Bank Balance	63.70
			"	By Cash Balance	7.31
Total		£318.50			£318.50

Note: The Club's affiliation and entry fees, amounting to £19.25, were paid directly to the United Churches League, by the Administrative Staff Association of the City of Dublin V.E.C.



V.E.C., who beat St. Mary's 2-1 in the Elvery Cup final at Tolka Park on Friday.

Last minute goal gives V.E.C. cup

Elvery Cup Final - May 1984 - Tolka Park - VEC FC 2nds v St. Mary's (Crumlin)



There is another page of Appendix 'B' showing the early VEC Teams

**1st April 1995: V.E.C. 3rds v V.E.C. 2nds
Quarter-Final of the Leslie Reynolds Cup**

V.E.C. 3rds

Marc Walsh

Paul Dunne	Padraig Donlon	Dave Collins	Fergal Harrington
Jimmy McGowan	Mick Kenny	Ken Donoghue	Tom Kiely
	Brendan Mateer	John Murrinan	

Managers:
Robbie Ebbs &
Seamus Doherty

12. Ray Power 13. Tom Doran

V.E.C. 2nds

Noel Carberry

Dave Fox	Des Loughlin	Rory O'Donoghue	Fergal Carberry
Eoin Cotter	Chas Heather	Tom Kerwick	Dave Spring
	Dermot Sharkey	Sean Sharkey	

Managers:
Dermot Sharkey &
Chas Heather

12. Willie Heather 13. John Griffith

**20th October 2001: V.E.C. 1sts v V.E.C. 2nds
2nd Round of the Irish Life Challenge Cup**

V.E.C. 1sts

Paul O'Keefe

Peter Morrissey	Neil Spring	Dave Collins	Gus McInerney
John Murray	Glenn Morrissey	James Croke	Derek O'Neill
	Brian Ward	Peter Bull	

Managers:
Fergal Nolan &
David Spring

12. Paul Little 13. Eamon Kirk 14. Anthony O'Callaghan

V.E.C. 2nds

Ronan Cotter

Simon Cruise	Karl Nolan	Noel Ryan	John Doyle
Thomas Byrne	Paul Hutchinson	Conor MacArtain	Gavin O'Sullivan
	Derek Glennon	David 'Jayo' Carroll	

Managers:
Conor MacArtain
& David Carroll

12. Dave Evers 13. John Griffith

Willie Kissane Trophy

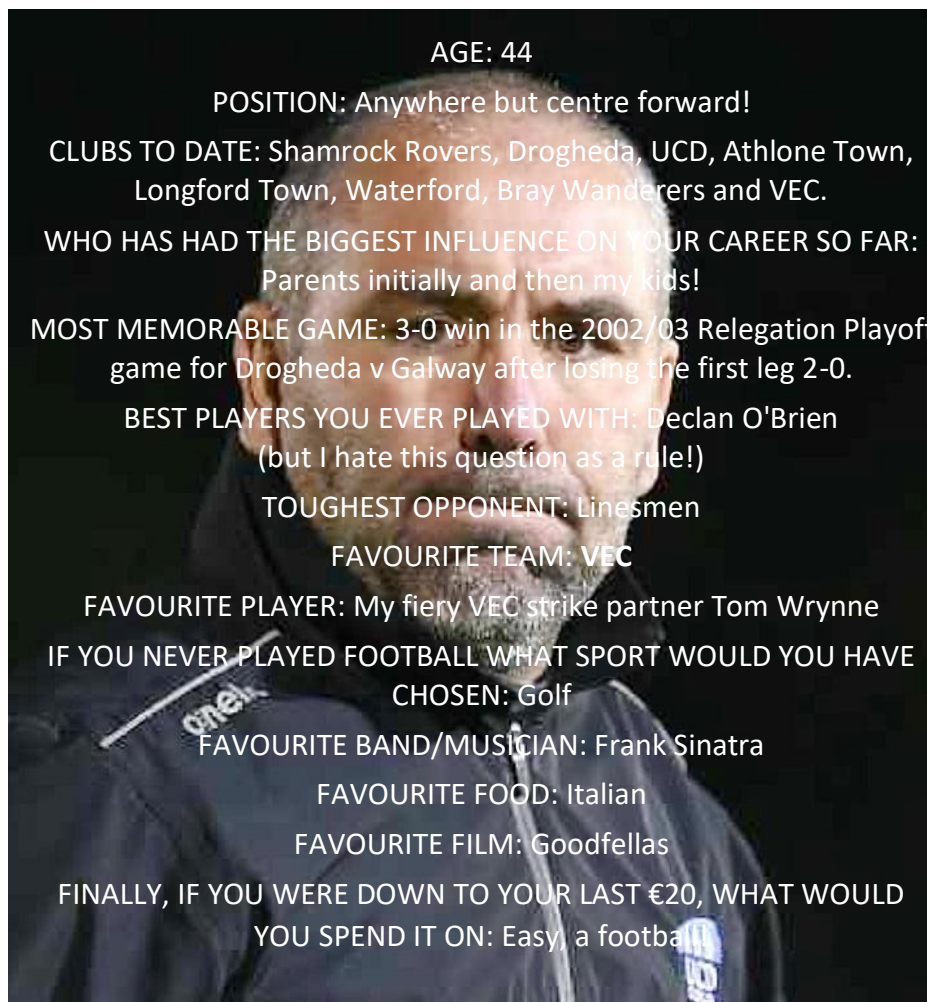


This is Willie's boot which was painted in bronze and presented to the club by Willie's wife, Susan, following his untimely death in 1997.

VEC Football ran the Invitational Willie Kissane Tournament every August for 20 years between 8 invited teams in Willie's memory
[For the first three years, 1998, 1999 & 2000, only two teams competed]

Year	Winners	Runners-up
2017	CYM Beechwood	VEC Fc
2016	Leicester Celtic	CYM Beechwood
2015	Leicester Celtic	VEC Fc
2014	Knocklyon Utd.	VEC Fc
2013	Sandyford Utd.	Leicester Celtic
2012	Leicester Celtic	CYM Terenure
2011	Terenure Fc	Leicester Celtic
2010	VEC Fc	Leicester Celtic
2009	Knocklyon Utd.	Lower Crumlin
2008	Knocklyon Utd.	VEC Fc
2007	Templeogue Utd.	Parkvale FC
2006	Templeogue Utd.	Knocklyon Utd.
2005	VEC Fc	Leicester Celtic
2004	Leicester Celtic	Knocklyon Utd.
2003	VEC Fc	Knocklyon Utd.
2002	CYM Terenure	VEC Fc
2001	Leicester Celtic	CYM Terenure
2000	VEC Fc	CYM Terenure
1999	CYM Terenure	VEC Fc
1998	VEC Fc	CYM Terenure

UCFL PLAYER PROFILE: **Andy Myler** - from Facebook - November 21, 2020



VEC Sportsgrounds in Terenure

2015-2016 All-Conquering VEC Winning Squad



Anthony Dunne

Played in 32 games. The Captain of this extraordinary squad. Led by example directing play and most crucially, regularly cutting out many opponents' attacks. Official m-o-t-m in Challenge Cup Final

Gavin Murphy

Started 34 of our 37 games. Only missed home game against AGP in November. Mr. Consistent. He hardly ever put a foot wrong throughout the season

Aidan Hyland

Also started 34 of our 37 games. Only missed cup game against Leixlip in April. In order to play for the League team, he magnanimously stepped aside for our cup game against Aston Village in January. Scored an extraordinary 33 goals

Seamus Staunton

Also started 34 of our 37 games. Only missed home game against Glasnaion in March. Also scored an amazing 17 goals from mid-field. A truly consistent season which won him player-of-the-year.



Raimonds Jaudzems

Played in 32 games. His pace and 'rocket' shots brought him an impressive 12 goals (plus a hat-trick for the 2nds) from mainly the wing-back position - some very memorable.

Killian Finlay

Also played in 32 games. Improved immensely as the season progressed. Mr. reliable in various positions. Some immense performances

Pat Meghen

Played in 31 games. Missed a chunk of the early season but battled hard to win his place, starting in 22 games

Conall O'Shaughnessy

Also played in 31 games. What a rock at the heart of the defence in his first season! His experience was invaluable. Official m-o-t-m in Richard Knight Cup Final.



Richard Hannify

Played in 29 games. Out injured from beginning of March until 16th April – playing in 11 of the final 13 games. Some great performances

Stephen Quin

Played in 28 games. Another Mr. Reliable. Saved his best performance for the crucial league victory away to Orchard Celtic.

Niall Flynn

Played in 26 games. Only joined us in January and only missed 3 of our final 25 games. Great addition to the squad.

Neal Breslin

Also played in 26 games. Missed the first 4 games of the season through injury and then a few during April but returned when needed in May with some towering performances.



Paul O'Sullivan

Also played in 26 games. A regular up to the cup final – but crucially returned from Galway for our win away to Orchard Celtic. 10 brilliant seasons for VEC FC.

Mick Kinsella

Played in 25 games. Becoming a daddy didn't prevent him from making a massive contribution in midfield in his first season for VEC.

Joey Byrne

Played in 21 games. Only managed 2 full games in an injury-filled season but nonetheless started in 15 games, scoring 12, plus 2 for the 2nds.

Andy Myler

Played in 14 games. Started in 10 games, where his vast experience was so valuable. Also stepped in as goalkeeper in 3 games, conceding only 1 goal – against Orchard Cel.

Owen Martin

Played in 13 games. A real stop-start season due to injuries along the way. His cameo against Chapelizod was striking.

Alan Keane

Reserve Goalkeeper. Played in 6 games. This included the Richard Knight Cup Final. Never on a losing team. Very safe hands when called upon.

Brian Martin

Played in 8 games. Unavailable for most of the season. His only full game was the memorable FAI Junior Cup game against Pike Rovers in Limerick



It's a Quadruple!
Managers Kev O'Hanlon & Dave Spring

It may have been Kevin's first season involved with management, but it was Dave's 15th consecutive season involved with the management of VEC 1sts. What an impressive partnership!





By Eamon Scott

TERRY CASSIN of Umbro likes to draw the home teams when asked and holders Sheriff YC will be happy as the Toplion executive landed the green and white hoops with a home tie where they will entertain Villa FC of Waterford.

Special mention was made of Sheriff YC's Brian Dunleavy who has a serious illness and MC Will Downing articulated the sentiment of all in attendance in wishing Brian a speedy return to health when the seventh round draw was made at their Ballymount premises midweek.

The 'home' draw is always a sought after slot in any cup competition and the FAI Junior is no exception yet remarkably Dave Spring of VEC FC was non plussed with his side's impending trip to Boyle Celtic in north Roscommon.

"We've been drawn at home in the last two rounds and to tell you the truth, I don't mind playing away from home. You'd of liked a home draw but we're playing well and we'll enjoy the trip and look to book a place in the quarter-finals.

"We always give our opposition the respect they deserve and Boyle Celtic will be no different, but the road trip will help us get into the spirit of the competition and we'll do so in a positive way."

Killarney Celtic, victors over a fancied Newmarket Celtic with

Evergreen FC	V	Willow Park FC
Ballynanty Rovers	V	Killarney Celtic
Navan Cosmos FC	V	Janesboro FC
Sheriff YC	V	Villa FC
Donnybrook FC	V	Carrick United
Boyle Celtic	V	VEC FC
Regional United	V	Carrick United
Peake Villa FC	V	Crumlin United

a dramatic late winner down in Co Clare are on the road again - but this time to Limerick where they were paired against Ballynanty Rovers but joint manager Eoghan Donnellan was, like Dave Spring, philosophical about the road trip.

"We've had a few this year and we're still alive, so we'll go to Limerick and look to win the tie. Ballynanty are an excellent side but we don't have too far to travel and will be able to bring a bit of support with us. We're looking forward to it and we'll give it a good shot."

Navan Cosmos - the remaining NEFL side - and who have the scalp of title favourites in Sheriff YC have a home draw against Janesboro who are installed as the second favourites

to lift the fabled trophy this season.

Kilkenny's Evergreen FC will host Leinster Senior League Willow Park FC while the other remaining LSL club Crumlin United face a trip to Tipperary to tackle Peake Villa.

Regional of Limerick host Carrick - conquerors of River-valley Rangers and AUL side Donnybrook will entertain another Co Limerick side in Kilmallock.

The geographical breakdown sees four Dublin, four Limerick, a Kilkenny, NEFL, Kerry, a Tipperary along with two Waterford sides in the last sixteen. Expect eight serious confrontations as all aspire to claim their place in the last eight of this super competition.

FAI JUNIOR CUP - LAST 32 (VEC GROUNDS, TERENCE)



HYLAND'S HAT-TRICK POWERS VEC INTO LAST 16 OF FAI JUNIOR



VEC.....4
GLIN ROVERS....0




By Eamon Scott

AN Aidan Hyland hat-trick fired Kevin O'Hanlon's VEC into the last 16 of the New Balance FAI Junior Cup at the expense of a battling Glin Rovers in Terenure on Saturday.

The UCFL Premier Division side had the perfect start with Conall O'Shaughnessy rising high to power home Dani Gonzalez's second minute corner.

Gonzalez was a thorn in the side of the Desmond League's side and the Spaniard's brilliant right wing cross set up Hyland for his first and team's second on 31 minutes.

Glin had a big shout for a penalty on 41 minutes but referee Joe O'Hanlon waved away the visitors strong appeals.

On the turn round the third goal of the game was always going to be pivotal and it was Hyland who finished off after Mike Kinsella's effort had come back off the crossbar after excellent approach play in the 51st.

VEC bossed the game to the finish and created several opportunities and Hyland finished off the treble when substitute Jamie McGauran's shot looped into the air and Hyland reacted quickest with a half volley to complete a comprehensive win for VEC.



Appendix 'J' shows all the Players-of-the-Year

VEC 1st's - Season 2015-2016

Date	Competition	H/A	Club	Opponents	VEC Goalscorers
12/09/15	U C L	H	VEC 1st's	5 v 0 St. Mary's Boys	void P. Meghen / A. Dunne (2) / A. Hyland / J. Byrne
19/09/15	Leinster Jun Cup R1	H	VEC 1st's	4 v 1 Portmarnock AFC	A. Hyland (2) / C. O'Shaughnessy / R. Jaudzems
26/09/15	FAI Junior Cup R2	H	VEC 1st's	7 v 3 Eskel Celtic	A. Hyland (3) / S. Staunton / G. Murphy / R. Jaudzems / P. Meghen
03/10/15	Leinster Jun Cup R2	H	VEC 1st's	2 v 1 Columbas Rovers	M. Kinsella / A. Hyland
10/10/15	U C L Premier	H	VEC 1st's	0 v 2 Chapelizod FC	-----
17/10/15	FAI Junior Cup R3	H	VEC 1st's	3 v 2 Columbas Rovers	A. Hyland / S. Staunton / M. Kinsella
31/10/15	UCL Challenge Cup	H	VEC 1st's	10 v 2 Stedfast Utd.	A. Hyland (3) / J. Byrne (2) / A. Myler (2) K. Finlay / R. Jaudzems / P. O'Sullivan
07/11/15	FAI Junior Cup R4	H	VEC 1st's	3 v 2 Coolock Village	R. Jaudzems / J. Byrne / A. Hyland
21/11/15	U C L Premier	H	VEC 1st's	7 v 2 Arthur Griffith Park FC	A. Hyland (2) / S. Staunton (2) / J. Byrne / M. Kinsella / P. Meghen
06/12/15	FAI Junior Cup R5	A	VEC 1st's	0 v 2 Pike Rovers (Limerick)	-----
19/01/16	Leinster Jun Cup R3	A	VEC 1st's	0 v 6 Crumlin Utd.	-----
23/01/16	UCL Challenge Cup	H	VEC 1st's	4 v 1 Aston Village	J. Byrne (2) / P. Meghan / S. Staunton
30/01/16	U C L Premier	A	VEC 1st's	2 v 2 Orchard Celtic FC	A. Dunne / N. Flynn
06/02/16	U C L Premier	A	VEC 1st's	2 v 2 FC Sportslink Ailesbury	S. Staunton / A. Hyland
20/02/16	UCL Challenge Cup	H	VEC 1st's	2 v 1 EID FC	A. Myler / N. Flynn
27/02/16	U C L Premier	A	VEC 1st's	2 v 0 Clontarf Ath.	N. Flynn / A. Hyland
05/03/16	U C L Premier	A	VEC 1st's	8 v 1 Arthur Griffith Park FC	S. Staunton (3) / A. Hyland (2) / R. Jaudzems (2) / P. Sullivan
12/03/16	U C L Premier	H	VEC 1st's	0 v 0 EID FC	-----
19/03/16	U C L Premier	H	VEC 1st's	2 v 1 Glasnaion FC	o.g. / A. Dunne
02/04/16	UCL Challenge Cup	H	VEC 1st's	1 v 0 Leixlip Town	P. Meghan
06/04/16	U C L Premier	H	VEC 1st's	2 v 1 Orchard Celtic FC	S. Staunton / A. Dunne
16/04/16	Barton Shield	H	VEC 1st's	4 v 0 Chapelizod FC	S. Staunton / P. Meghan / N. Flynn (2)
20/04/16	U C L Premier	A	VEC 1st's	7 v 0 EID FC	A. Dunne (3) / J. Byrne / A. Myler / A. Hyland / P. Meghan
27/04/16	Barton Shield Semi	A	VEC 1st's	4 v 1 FC Sportslink Ailesbury	Semi A. Hyland (2) / J. Byrne / N. Flynn
30/04/16	U C L Premier	H	VEC 1st's	w.o. Clontarf Ath.	---w.o.
02/05/16	Barton Shield Final	A	VEC 1st's	1 v 1 Arthur Griffith Park FC	Final C. O'Shaughnessy (pens: C. O'Shaughnessy / A. Hyland / S. Staunton / K. Finlay)
				<i>aet: 1-1 after 90 mins. 1-1 after extra time. VEC won 4-3 on penalties</i>	
04/05/16	U C L Premier	H	VEC 1st's	3 v 1 EID FC	J. Byrne / A. Hyland / R. Jaudzems
07/05/16	UCL Challenge Cup	N	VEC 1st's	5 v 2 Glasnaion FC	Semi J. Byrne / A. Dunne (2) / S. Staunton / P. O'Sullivan
11/05/16	U C L Premier	A	VEC 1st's	4 v 2 Chapelizod FC	A. Hyland (2) / C. O'Shaughnessy / P. Meghan
14/05/16	U C L Premier	H	VEC 1st's	3 v 4 FC Sportslink Ailesbury	P. Meghan / S. Staunton / N. Flynn
17/05/16	Richard Knight Cup	A	VEC 1st's	5 v 0 Clontarf Ath.	A. Hyland (2) / O. Martin / S. Staunton / B. Martin
21/05/16	UCL Challenge Cup	N	VEC 1st's	4 v 1 Sth. William St. Celtic	Final N. Flynn / S. Staunton / A. Dunne / R. Jaudzems
23/05/16	U C L Premier	A	VEC 1st's	3 v 2 Clontarf Ath.	R. Jaudzems / A. Hyland / P. Meghan
25/05/16	U C L Premier	H	VEC 1st's	5 v 0 Arthur Griffith Park FC	P. Meghan / N. Flynn / R. Jaudzems / A. Hyland / S. Staunton
28/05/16	Richard Knight Cup	H	VEC 1st's	2 v 1 Harding IF	A. Hyland / R. Jaudzems
31/05/16	Richard Knight Cup	N	VEC 1st's	5 v 1 FC Sportslink Ailesbury	Final A. Hyland / A. Dunne / N. Flynn (2) / R. Jaudzems
02/06/16	U C L Premier	A	VEC 1st's	5 v 1 Glasnaion FC	A. Hyland (3) / J. Byrne / o.g.
04/06/16	U C L Premier	A	VEC 1st's	w.o. FC Sportslink Ailesbury	---w.o.
07/06/16	U C L Premier	A	VEC 1st's	1 v 0 Orchard Celtic FC	S. Staunton
09/06/16	U C L Premier	H	VEC 1st's	w.o. Glasnaion FC	---w.o.



Committee 1998/99: Séamus Doherty (Hon. Treasurer).
David Spring (Chairman).
Ken Donoghue (Hon. Secretary).

A Tribute to a Genius!

[Penned by Dermot Sharkey for the 'Official VEC Fanzine' at our 25th year celebrations in City West in 1999].

Fifty-eight years ago, in a run-down old shack in Sao Paulo, Brazil, a football genius was born. His name was Pele. He is black. Although Dave Spring is 14 years older and as white as an albino's ass, they both have given their lives to the world of soccer!

David Roger Oliver Sally Spring was born in 1927 in Nobber, Meath. As the son of Ireland's first 'clumper', Dave was determined to be more popular than his father. On his 3rd birthday, he received his first ball: it was actually a wet sack but Dave loved it. Every day he would 'hoof' it against the back wall for hours, using both feet. When his Dad suggested that he use one foot at a time, Dave started to improve! In 1933, as Hitler was gaining power in Germany, Dave attended St. Smyther's National School in Nobber, where he was immediately spotted by the Gym teacher, Fr. Nicholas 'hands' McCabe. Speaking recently from his cell in Mountjoy, the priest remembers fondly: *"Aye, he had a great first touch, a lovely touch."*

In 1968, Dave joined the Vocational Education Committee at board level. Within 2 years he was promoted to seat level where he received his first chair. Being part of the VEC had fulfilled half of Dave's lifelong dream! *"I always wanted to be over a student body"* he once remarked! Most people would have been happy with Dave's lot ... but not Dave!

One summers night in 1974, he experimented with 'funny' cigarettes and confided in a close friend (a nearby tree) that he was convinced he could create a football club, unlike any other football club, where the emphasis would be on technical excellence, speed, teamwork and above all ... winning! After sobering up the next morning, he changed his mind and instead launched VEC Football Club in the UCL.

The rest, as they say, is history! Dave won many medals over the years, some of them deservedly. He has scored 43,521 goals in a career spanning seven decades. His dead ball strikes were infamous in the UCL. He allegedly scored the winner against Dollymount in 1979 direct from a corner kick taken from trap 2 of the men's toilets in St. Anne's. If he recovers from his current injury, he will have run the equivalent of four trips to the moon, outlived 12 White House interns and arranged more matches than Maguire & Patterson. Not even Pele can say that!



VEC FC's Challenge Cup Record over 50 Years			
2023-2024	1 st Round	Coolock Village FC	Lost 3-2 after extra time
2022-2023	2 nd Round	Fairview Celtic	Lost 4-5 on Penalties (3-3 aet)
2021-2022	FINAL	Tallaght Utd.	WON 1-0
2020-2021	N/A - Not played due to Covid-19		
2019-2020	Quarter-Final	Dunshaughlin Youths FC	Lost 3-4 on Penalties
2018-2019	FINAL	Drumcondra AFC	WON 6-3
2017-2018	Quarter-Final	Blackrock College FC	Lost 1-2
2016-2017	3 rd Round	AGP FC	Lost 1-2
2015-2016	FINAL	South William St. Celtic	WON 4-1
2014-2015	SEMI-FINAL	FC Sportslink Ailesbury	Lost on Penalties SEMI-FINAL
2013-2014	Quarter-Final	Chapelizod FC	Lost 1-3
2012-2013	3 rd Round	Sandyford Utd.	Lost 2-5
2011-2012	3 rd Round	Sandyford Utd.	Lost 4-5
2010-2011	FINAL	Stedfast Utd.	WON 2-0
2009-2010	4 th Round	Trinity Corinthians	Lost 0-1
2008-2009	SEMI-FINAL	Terenure FC	Lost 0-3 SEMI-FINAL
2007-2008	SEMI-FINAL	Sportslink FC	Lost on Penalties SEMI-FINAL
2006-2007	2 nd Round	Glasnaion FC	Lost on Penalties
2005-2006	2 nd Round	Rail PSV FC	Lost on Penalties
2004-2005	3 rd Round	Clontarf Ath.	Lost after extra time
2003-2004	2 nd Round	Strand Utd.	Lost on Penalties
2002-2003	4 th Round	FC Ailesbury	Lost after extra time
2001-2002	FINAL	Trinity Corinthians	Lost 0-2 FINAL
2000-2001	Quarter-Final	Stedfast Utd.	Lost on Penalties
1999-2000	4 th Round	Strand Utd. #	Lost after extra time#
1998-1999	SEMI-FINAL	Strand Utd.	Lost on Penalties SEMI-FINAL
1997-1998	Quarter-Final	FC Ailesbury	Lost 1-2
1996-1997	Quarter-Final	Harding FC	Lost 2-3
1995-1996	2 nd Round	Stedfast Utd.	Lost after extra time
1994-1995	4 th Round	St. Mary's FC	Lost 2-4
1993-1994	3 rd Round	Russell Ath.	Lost 1-3
1992-1993	FINAL	Dublin University	WON 3-2 on penalties (2-2 aet)
1991-1992	2 nd Round	Castle Rovers	Lost on Penalties
1990-1991	2 nd Round	Courtlands FC	Lost 1-2
1989-1990	3 rd Round	Stedfast Utd.	Lost on Penalties
1988-1989	3 rd Round	Strand Utd.	Lost 1-3
1987-1988	FINAL	Strand Utd.	WON 4-1
1986-1987	FINAL	Strand Utd.	Lost 2-1 after extra time FINAL
1985-1986	SEMI-FINAL	C.M.H.	Lost 0-3 SEMI-FINAL
1984-1985	1 st Round	Butterfield Rovers	Lost 1-4
1983-1984	FINAL	St. Mary's (Crumlin)	WON 2-1
1982-1983	3 rd Round	St. Catherines	Lost 1-3
1981-1982	SEMI-FINAL	St. Catherines	Lost after extra time SEMI-FINAL
1980-1981	FINAL	Spartak Dynamo	WON 4-1
1979-1980	FINAL	St. Mary's (Crumlin)	WON 4-1
1978-1979	Quarter-Final	D. S. B.	Lost 2-3
1977-1978	2 nd Round	Glendale Celtic	Lost 2-5
1976-1977	SEMI-FINAL	St. James Ath.	Lost 2-3 SEMI-FINAL
1975-1976	FINAL	Dublin University	Lost 1-2 FINAL
1974-1975	2 nd Round	Harding FC	Lost 1-2



Reflections by John Eager

I joined the 3rd team of the club in late 1994. I had not played club football before so it took a long time to get (better!) and into the rhythm of 11-a-side adult football.

I was on the side-line for the famous 2nds vs 3rds cup game in '95. The 3rd team was mostly a social team, featuring tryers like me and much better, but older, players coming down from the 1sts and 2nds. There

were lots of characters in the 3rd team like Tommy Doc, Ken Donoghue, Billy Sweeney, Brian Kelly, Karl McCafferty, Karl Nolan and many others. 'Humperdinck' was a unique soul. We played out at the VEC grounds in Whitehall on the Northside opposite the Regency Hotel, while training with the whole club in Terenure. After matches in Whitehall, Billy Sweeney would share his deodorant so that we could all "smell like him" and then we'd drop into the Cat 'n' Cage for a "swift half".

Eventually I got a regular slot on the team in the 97/98 season, settling into left back position. The VEC grounds in Whitehall and Terenure were always immaculate, but elsewhere in Dublin it was different... we played some interesting games around Dublin, including inside the grounds of the Central Mental Hospital in Dundrum. We would park across the road in the pub and assemble at exactly 2.40pm, when the gate would open for 2 minutes to let us in, and it was locked again behind us. Kick-off was 3pm. The grass was always very long as the CMH team were much older men and the long grass slowed the ball enough for them. Mick Meegan, an Irish International player, played for CMH well into his 60s. Referees were very kind to the older CMH team. We'd be let out the gate again within 10 minutes of the game ending.

The results were never great on the 3rd team but as we were in the last division of UCL, we couldn't get regulated!

On 19th January 2002, we played a game against Grant City in Marley Park. I came on a sub, with a few minutes to go. Unusually, I was put on up front. I ran for a ball than landed between me and the keeper. I stepped into the arc of the keeper's kick and suffered a double fracture to my tib and fib on the left leg. The game was abandoned with us leading 1-0 against the run of play. We lost the replay, I ended up in hospital for 5 days, on crutches for 6 months and it was 5 years before I could play football again. That was the end of my competitive football career. I returned to train with the club for several years in my late 30s, but was never selected for the subs bench, despite having my 'boots in the car'.

I served as Treasurer of the Club for 10 years in the Noughties. The club, and playing football, are fond memories.



I really have fond memories of my 12+ years in VEC: enjoying playing with the lads, winning the league, beating Trinity as well that year (2009), the fun night after winning the league; getting promoted with VEC 2nds; winning the cup with the third team in 2014; Stumpy, Dave, Hutch, Jayo and John Dingle the managers; the many laughs at Brady's ... thank you for a great time .. I am sorry I can't be there for the 50th birthday... say hello to all the boys...

Sicco Lansu



I joined the VEC in 1975. Played with some great men. Highlights were Elvery Cup Final wins, representing and captaining the UCL Oscar Traynor league team and coming up against the great Paul McGrath in the semi-final of that competition. Unfortunately, I'll be in France and can't be there for the celebrations. Loved my time with the club and wish VEC every success in the future.

Ken Ryan



My first memory, which I do recall very clearly, was the training facilities in Terenure where I was somewhat in awe with VEC's Leinster Senior Team notably with some big men that were involved, the likes of John B, Tommy Doc and Paudie come to mind. To be honest I felt like a boy amongst men having played no real team sport previously having come from a running background and runners by their nature would have had much smaller frames, so when I met Davie Fox, I felt more at ease. I played my first game in the Phoenix Park for the 3rd team which if I recall was managed by Paddy Mullins and I may have even scored on my debut, no doubt the club records will verify this in time. Being more involved with the 3^{rds} for most of my time with VEC which if I am honest was just about my standard, I had the pleasure of meeting some great people and the crack was always good in the pub afterwards. In addition to being a player and manager I played the role of Santa at many of the VEC Christmas parties and went to represent the club as club Secretary for several years. Great memories.

Ken Donoghue.

Notable events in Ireland and elsewhere in 1974

The **1974** Rugby Five Nations Championship was won by Ireland.

6 April: Abba won the Eurovision Song Contest with the song 'Waterloo'.

17 May – Dublin and Monaghan bombings: Thirty-three civilians were killed and almost 300 wounded in four car-bomb explosions in Dublin and Monaghan by the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF).

17 May – Andrea Corr, lead vocalist with The Corrs was born.

7 July: In the World Cup final in Munich, West Germany beat Holland 2-1.

10 July – Imelda May, Dublin musician was born.

18 July – Ladies' Gaelic Football Association founded in Thurles.

August: Richard Nixon resigned over Watergate.

1 September: Kilkenny beat Limerick by 3-19 to 1-13 in the All-Ireland Hurling final.

7 September: Billie Jean King wins her 4th and final US singles tennis title; beating Evonne Goolagong Cawley of Australia 3-6, 6-3, 7-5.

7 September: VEC Football Club played its first official game.

8 September : Jimmy Connors wins his first of 5 US singles tennis titles; outclasses veteran Australian Ken Rosewall 6-1, 6-0, 6-1 in last US Open played on grass.

22 September: Dublin famously beat Galway 0-14 to 1-6 in the All-Ireland football final.

30 October: Republic of Ireland beat the Soviet Union 3–0 in Group 6 of the UEFA Euro 1976 qualifying tournament in Dalymount Park.

Don Givens with a hat-trick in the 22nd, 30th and 70th minutes. Attendance: 31,758

30 October: Muhammad Ali regained the World Heavyweight boxing title by knocking out George Foreman in the eighth round in Kinshasa, Zaire in what was called *The Rumble in the Jungle*.

17 November: President Erskine Childers died suddenly.

3 December: Cearbhaill Ó Dálaigh was sworn in as the fifth President of Ireland.

The **1974–75** League of Ireland Season was contested by 14 teams, with Bohemians winning the championship comfortably.