



VEC FOOTBALL CLUB



Annual Hon. Secretary's Report — Season 2025/2026

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Season 2025/2026 At A Glance

Competition	Final Position
AUL / UCFL Premier Division	7th Place
Challenge Cup	Semi-Final
Richard Knight Cup	Quarter-Final
Premier Division Shield	Semi-Final
LFA Junior Cup	2nd Round
FAI Junior Cup	Did Not Enter

Management & Squad Milestones



First and foremost, a huge thank you to the managerial team who took the reins this season. **Keith Moloney**, supported by **Colly Power** until December when a new horizon opened up for him in foreign lands in January 2026!

Joey Byrne & Rob Newe graciously took over the reins for the remainder of the season, which was a huge commitment as they were still playing and also both juggling their new Fatherly duties over the course of the season. (Congrats to both!)



We are extremely grateful to all involved for their effort and commitment.

Key Milestones & Feats of Dedication

- **Defensive Dedication:** The playing and training records of our regular centre-halves **Neill Love** and **Shane O'Connor** this season were a feat of dedication worth mentioning. Both appeared in 28 of 31 games.
- **Golden Boot Winner:** Congrats **Paddy Cook**! Winning the Golden Boot for a fourth successive season and scoring double figures for the 5th season in a row (12, 14, 17, 15, 15).



PreSeason Recruitment Campaign



The club, following discussions at the previous AGM, made a conscious effort to recruit aggressively in the off-season ahead of re-entry into the Premier Division. The committee undertook a paid social media campaign across the Summer of 2025 for the first time in its history... and while there were rewards reaped in the addition of new faces such as Rory Kiely and Lorcan Dooley. Ultimately, the time (and to a lesser extent the money) invested in the campaign did not result in the huge influx of talent and squad depth that had been hoped for. See below metrics in respect of the two most impactful ads run.

Social Media Paid Campaign Performance Summary

Metric / Metric Category	Ad Campaign 1 (3-Day)	Ad Campaign 2 (7-Day)	Total / Combined
Campaign Duration	3 Days	7 Days	10 Days Total
Total Spend	€97.76	€174.57	€272.33
Total Views / Impressions	56,575	88,956	145,531
Unique Accounts Reached	31,216	38,426	69,642
Total Engagements	7,061	12,661	19,722
3-Second Video Plays	6,980	12,341	19,321
Link Clicks	63	247	310
Profile Visits	574	1,681	2,255
Likes / Reactions / Saves / Comments	16	55	71
New Instagram Follows	3	42	45

Player Status & Low Availability Summary

Player	Status	Appearances
Pat Meghen	Injured	10
Martin Aguilera	Departed	9
Tshepo Montsho	Departed	7
Matheus Monteiro	Departed	6
Andy Howell	Active	7
Conor Vaughan	Active	5
Antoine Daubigny	Active	5
Swan Sweeney	Active	5
Richie Hannify	Retired	2

There were a notable set of talented squad members who for various reasons failed to break double figures for appearances this season, making the transition to the premier considerably more difficult.

A special note of commiseration for staunch club man **Pat Meghen** whose season was dramatically cut short in a February training session with a torn achilles. Hopefully Pat's recovery is going well, and his unique brand of all action football will be seen again soon on a Dublin football pitch.

⚽ Season Highlights & Challenge Cup Campaign



While a cup match in Bray didn't represent a turning point in the season, or an unexpected tactical masterclass, the narrow defeat to **Wolfe Tone FC** in the semi-final of the Challenge Cup was arguably one of the highlights of our season – and there weren't many! We know that football culture prioritises winning, but this match was memorable because the context elevated the performance above the final scoreline of **1-0**.

After a cagey first half with few clear-cut opportunities, the deadlock was broken in the 70th minute. A swift counter-attack down the left flank culminated in a low shot from their no. 10 that found the far corner of the net. The result marked a heartbreaking end to a notable cup run, with many feeling the team deserved more from their performance on the day. So near and yet so far for a cup final appearance – which for one reason or another – didn't take place until 11th July when our semi-final conquerors **Wolfe Tone FC** triumphed over **Harding FC**.

🏠 League Campaign & Executive Proposals

Let's go back to the start of the season!

With just **13 fit players** available for our first game in August, we certainly had our backs to the wall for large periods of the game against fellow newcomers to the 2025-26 Premier Division, **St. Mary's Sandyford**. **Swannie Sweeney** scored the only goal of the game in the 32nd minute and we then defended magnificently.

It was to be 13 Premier Division league games later (in April) that we secured our next league win against ... yes ... **St. Mary's Sandyford** again! Thereafter, we got just one other proper league win in May against AUL outfit **Celtic Utd**. It was quite bizarre that our wins recorded against **Quarryvale FC** on 9th May were a combination of our Richard Knight Cup win and 2 league wins (by prior agreement with all concerned)! That **3-2 win in Terenure** was the only other highlight of our season and probably our best performance – a season where we were effectively out of our depth during a waterlogged Premier Division Season!

⚠ Executive Committee Communication & League Format Proposal

- **Pre-Season Executive Communication:** "Just a text to advise all UCFL teams participating in the Joint Premier Division along with 4 teams from AUL - as there are now only 9 teams in our Premier Division, there will be 3 Rounds of fixtures to give a meaningful number of games. In the 3rd round of games each team will have 4 home and away fixtures. Any queries, please let me know."
- **VEC FC Split Format Proposal:** VEC FC raised concerns at the December meeting and proposed a two-phase split format (similar to the Scottish Premiership): Phase 1 (16 games total) followed by a top/bottom split (Phase 2 - 3 to 4 games) to prevent an unmanageable 24-game schedule. While described as 'logical and practical', the Premier Clubs were not consulted and our proposal was sadly binned.

AUL / UCFL Premier Division Standings 2025–2026

Pos	Club	P	W	D	L	Points
1	ROC Celtic	24	19	3	2	60
2	Howth Celtic	24	15	5	4	50
3	Ely Woodlawn FC	24	16	2	6	50
4	Harding FC	24	12	6	6	42
5	Blackforge FC	24	11	4	9	37
6	Quarryvale FC	24	10	0	14	30
7	VEC FC	24	5	4	15	19
8	Celtic United FC	24	2	5	17	11
9	St Mary's Sandyford	24	2	3	19	9

🏆 Cup Competitions & Milestones

- **Challenge Cup:** Lucky early round draws saw us hammer Division 3B side Pavee Utd 7-1 in Sean Walsh Park Astro (including a Paddy Cook hat-trick, our only hat-trick of the season); Larkview 3rds (Div. 3C) conceding; a Paddy Cook goal beating AGP FC; and defeating Old Bawn FC in the quarter-final.
- **Richard Knight Cup:** Colin Power played his 100th competitive game for VEC FC in December against Blackforge FC 2nds. He marked the occasion with some excellent saves and a clean sheet, with the Club's 'GOAT' goal-scorer Joey Byrne scoring the winner. (**Joey Byrne has now reached a record 263 goals**). We eventually exited in the quarter-finals to Harding FC.
- **Premier Division Shield:** Reached the semi-finals (1-1 at half-time) before being outclassed by Blackforge FC.
- **LFA Junior Cup:** 2nd round exit via a narrow 2-3 defeat to Quarryvale FC after beating Confey Utd in Round 1.
- **FAI Junior Cup:** Did not enter.





Fundraisers & Social Events

Our main fundraising source of income for the club, **Pick-a-Winner**, returned this season for two outings, resulting in **€1,200** raised across **130 entrants**. A testament to the club members' efforts!

Pick-a-Winner Winners & Standings

- **Round 1 Winner:** Former player Mark Howell (father of VEC player Andy).
- **Round 2 Winner:** Current player Eoin Monaghan.
- **Prize Winners:** Seamus Doherty, Paul Langan, Aidan Hyland & Colin Power.
- **Round 2 Honourable Mention:** If Richard Hannify had selected Aston Villa instead of Chelsea in the last round, he would have shared 1st prize!



Awards

Award	2024/2025 Winner	2025/2026 Winner
Player of the Year	Colin Power	To Be Announced
Golden Boot	Paddy Cook & Pat Meghen (15 Goals)	Paddy Cook (15 Goals - 4th Consecutive)



FAI Club Mark

Last season the FAI introduced a 3 tiered system to (theoretically) make clubs stronger and encourage best practices in governance, management and administration of clubs across the country. The deadline for completion of the certificate was extended from the end of 2025 to the beginning of the 26/27 season due to uptake struggles across the broader junior football scene.



The process was being worked through by the committee throughout the season. Garda vetting backlogs created delays across the board and as club secretary I am in my 4th month of waiting for my vetting application to be approved.

We will preserve the application for the coming months in case we choose to finalise or resurrect it.

Closing Notes

Touched on in our opening management section but a massive thanks to our **Chairman, Joey Byrne** and our **Honorary Treasurer, Rob Newe**. Both have welcomed new members to their non-VEC families this year, while carrying organizational, training and managing responsibilities throughout the season at the club. Joe's and Rob's combined leadership, shared passion and invested energy in recent seasons has been the one constant that the club could always rely on.

Thank you as always to **Dave Spring, Noel Ryan and Seamus Doherty** for their continued support of the club, both in person on match days, and behind the scenes lending knowledge and experience to club matters. The committee's founding members offer a vital link to our 50+ year heritage, keeping the club's original principles at the heart of everything we do today.



Grounded in that rich history, we reach the final paragraph in the current chapter of VEC Football Club.

Today we regrettably, but necessarily, vote on resolutions in respect of winding up the club.

Across 52 seasons, VEC FC has delivered more than its fair share of success on the pitch, forged lifelong bonds off the pitch, and is woven into the fabric of multiple generations of the same families. The club has spanned decades, weathered economic upheavals, transcended global events, and even—most impressively—survived multiple Keatings officiating the same game!

We have dined with Bond Girls, won quadruples, shared pitches with internationals, and logged countless miles to Limerick, Roscommon, Kilkenny, Northern Ireland, and beyond. We have won, lost, cursed, and appealed together, but above all else, we have most certainly enjoyed our sporting lives together. So, wherever the VEC FC name goes next, those memories remain ours forevermore—as proud clubmen for life.

Richie Hannify Hon. Secretary