

Tangerine News

The Newsletter of St.Kevins Boys Club

March 2017

Academy Cup Sees Barcelona Return

The line-up for our annual Academy Cup Tournament (the ninth year that we have run the tournament) sees the current holders, Barcelona, return to defend their trophy.



The St Kevin's Boys Academy Cup started off in 2009 to celebrate 50 years of St Kevin's Boys.

The inaugural tournament featured West Bromwich Albion (who we have very close links with), Hull City FC, Coventry City FC, Aberdeen AFC and the DDSL squad. Since that time the tournament has grown and gained considerable recognition throughout Europe. In fact it is now considered to be one of the best schoolboy tournaments in Europe and we

receive numerous requests from well-known European clubs looking to participate.

Over the years we have welcomed Real Madrid, RCD Espanyol, Arsenal, Celtic FC, AFC Ajax, FC Benfica, SC Braga, Austria Wien, Bronby IF, Sunderland FC, St Pauli FC and Ado Den Haag to Shanowen Road and all of them depart full of praise for the standard of football, facilities and hospitality that they receive.

The tournament has placed St Kevin's Boys firmly on the European footballing map and has led to our teams being invited to take part in numerous tournaments in Spain, Italy, France, Germany, Holland and England. This year alone has seen some of our teams face Barcelona four times and Real Madrid three times! In fact we have had to turn down some requests, which have come from across Europe, the Middle East and the United States, as we feel they would interfere with our domestic league programme.

These type of tournaments allow our teams compete against the elite players from professional Academies in Europe and gives the players an opportunity to see the level that is required should they wish to play football professionally.

Last year Barcelona defeated our own Under 13s on penalties in the final. Leading 3-1 at half time in the game, Barcelona thought they were home and dry but the Saints changed their tactics and equalised in the second half to see the game finish 3-3. The penalty shoot-out saw Saints keeper, Mark Smith save two spot kicks but Barcelona prevailed when it went to sudden death.



Last year's Barcelona team with the Academy Cup

Joining Barcelona in the Academy Cup will be Deportivo La Coruna and West Bromwich Albion, both of whom have been involved in the

tournament over the years, Deportivo were the winners in 2015. This year we welcome two newcomers to the Academy Cup as Olympique Marseille represent France and KRC Genk represent Belgium. So as ever it is a truly international tournament.

Saints Teams March On in All Ireland Cups

We had seven teams involved in national cups during the month. Five of the teams were taking part in the quarter final stages of the various SFAI All Ireland cups. At this stage of the competition our teams can find themselves putting in the miles as they play teams from outside of Dublin.

As ever, Eirbus were the preferred bus operator for our teams travelling up, down and across the country. We had two teams leaving at the same time on Saturday so Pat Daly, who organises the travel, was very insistent on the Thursday night before the games regarding the meeting places for each team – we didn't want the wrong players on the wrong bus!!

Our Under 12 DDSL Premier had a very early start as they left at 7.30am to head to Malin Head, north and north again of Donegal where they defeated Carndonagh FC 7-0 to reach the semis in the Sketchers Cup.



Our Under 12s look bright and breezy at 7.30am

On the same day Donegal team, Cappry Rovers travelled to Shanowen Road to play our Under 13 DDSL Premier team. Our U13s ran out 8-0 winners and put their name in the hat for the semi-final of the SFAI Troy Cup.

The previous night under floodlights our Under 14 DDSL team defeated Crumlin United 3-2 in the quarter final of the SFAI Goodson Cup (see report inside).

In the SFAI Barry Cup our Under 16 DDSL Premier team travelled to play Corduff and booked their place in the semis with a hard fought 2-1 victory. Meanwhile our Under 16 NDSL Elite team travelled to Galway to play Mervue United but unfortunately they exited the cup with a 4-0 defeat.

In the FAI Under 17 Cup our DDSL Premier team faced Ringmahon Rangers of Cork in St Aidans and recorded a 2-1 victory with a very late winner. They also booked their place in the semi-finals of the Leinster Youth Cup with a 4-1 win over Edenderry the following weekend. This cup could end up being an all SKB final!

Sadly our Under 18 DDSL Premier team lost 2-1 in the FAI Youths Cup as they travelled to Cork to play Wilton United.

So as we get to the semis of the various cups we have five teams still in the draw.

SKB AGM Report



The St Kevins Boys AGM was held in the Clubhouse at the end of February and a strong turnout (who appeared to be afraid to sit in the front row!) were given a detailed report by the members of our Executive Committee.

Chairman, Michael O'Callaghan opened the AGM and following the reading of last year's minutes he then asked Club Secretary, Brendan Bermingham to give his report.

Brendan started off by saying that 2016 was a landmark year for both St Kevins Boys and Irish soccer. In a year that saw the country celebrate and remember 1916, St Kevins Boys opened their state of the art, All Weather pitch in St Aidans school, lose out on penalties to Barcelona in our Academy Cup having defeated them in the group rounds and see two of their ex-players star in the Euros. Meanwhile the authorities that run schoolboy football changed the season to calendar year football – against our advice I might add. Brendan thanked all those that helped him during the year, in particular Carole Daly and Dave Furey and he paid great tribute to our Club coaches and managers for their great work in ensuring we consistently produce top class teams.

Next up was Treasurer, Pat Daly who gave a detailed account of where every euro that comes into the Club goes. I always think that some members are taken aback at the sheer scale of costs associated with running a football team and club. Suffice to say that all agree that every euro is not only well spent but thoroughly accounted for. The longest report each year, as would be expected, always comes from our Director of Football, Ken Donohue.

Ken started off by saying that his report had as much to do with events off the pitch as opposed to on the pitch!

He gave a list of last season's achievements by our teams noting in particular our Under 15 DDSL Premier who were SFAI Cup winners and went on to win the DB Sports Champions Cup against Cliftonville later in the year.

He spoke of the seven teams who have reached the quarter finals of the FAI, SFAI and provincial cups and wished them luck in the next stages.

The Senior section finished in the AUL league and have started very well in the Leinster Senior League and he felt that the change had brought a new impetus to the teams.

Ken spoke of the nine players who had gone on to begin a career in the UK last season and said that we look to have seven or more players joining them this season. He also commended all our players who had gained international caps during the year and also those who represented the DDSL and NDSL squads in tournaments.

He paid tribute to Club Coach, Alan Caffrey for the tremendous work he does with our players and wished to thank Pat Malone who has had to step away from the Small Sided Coach role for the moment.

As we expected, he was in total disbelief at the current changes in schoolboy football. He felt that the schoolboy section had been dealt a very raw deal by both the DDSL and the NDSL who he had hoped would fight the corner for the section. The changes proposed and the manner in which they are proposed by the governing body, the FAI are going against the best interests of schoolboy football in the country.

He was completely frustrated at the FAI's attitude to St Kevins Boys in denying them access to the proposed leagues and felt that the powers that be do not want us involved in the development of football in the future – something that seems inexplicable

considering the players that we have produced for the international teams and the status our name has throughout Europe. He questioned which League of Ireland club would have the ability to not only attract teams as world renowned as Barcelona and Real Madrid to take part in their tournament, but have them enjoy it so much as to want to return!

Finally he called on all members of the Club to continue to fight in the best interests of Irish soccer.

The main discussion from the floor centred on the FAI's plans for U15s football. Suffice to say that everyone felt this was a regressive step in Ireland. The FAI had failed to include the main schoolboy football clubs, such as Belvedere, Cherry Orchard, Crumlin and ourselves in their plans and now the LOI clubs feel that the standard of play will be significantly reduced which will hamper player development – the very thing that the FAI have been bleating on about!

The meeting ended (late!) and a number of members stayed to have a cuppa and a catch up.

New Calendar Season Kicks Off?

And they're off the pitches that is not the football season. Saturday 11th March saw the new calendar season lined up to kick off with five games listed for Ellenfield Park. So as I made my way down to Ellenfield in anticipation of watching, photographing and reporting on our Under 10-3 Sat A1, the U11-6 Sat D1, the U13-2 Major, U14-2 Major and possibly the U11-4 Sat B before I headed to the Little Saints I was thinking "yes, this will fill the newsletter completely"!

Unfortunately as I reached the park I noticed that there was nobody about. A quick text to Ken confirmed my fears.....all games are off! Now I only have myself to blame as the website and social media sites were all updated about 9.00am that morning to say Ellenfield was unplayable so I should have checked.

But it did get me thinking to this whole Calendar Year Season and what all those people had voted for. Most people are under the impression that the Calendar Year Season would see us all out in shorts and sunglasses – here was the reality. I reckon if you went back through the last number of seasons you will find that there were more grounds called off in March and April than any other months. We could end up with a lot of games to squeeze into a few weeks of dry weather!!

U13s Meet Barcelona in Spain



Our Under 13 DDSL Premier team travelled to Spain recently to participate in the Argentona Cup where they faced local side Sant Andreu, Barcelona, Olympique Marseilles and Real Sociedad and acquitted themselves well against tough competition. It was a good taster for the Saints as both Barcelona and Marseilles take part in the Academy Cup in April.

Like most Spanish tournaments the Argentona Cup is heavily sponsored by the local council and the games are normally played in local stadia with large attendances so it can be an exciting experience for our teams.

The other teams competing in the Cup were Real Madrid, RCD Espanyol, Sevilla CF, Real Zaragoza and RC Celta de Vigo – names I think all football fans will recognise immediately. The Saints and Marseilles were the only two non-Spanish teams to be invited to take part in the tournament – it says a lot for our standing in European schoolboy football.

SKB the Family Club



One of the things that St Kevins Boys pride themselves on is being a family club and over the years we have had numerous examples of fathers, sons/daughters and brothers/sisters who have played for SKB. The Dequina family are one such group who have had

a long involvement with the Saints.

Many years ago Dad, Jeff brought son, Aaron (or Aao as he is better known) down to join the Little Saints. From there Aao went on to one of our teams and has played all his schoolboy football with the Saints winning many honours over the years. Aao not only played for his own team throughout the age groups but was always willing to line out for older teams whenever he was asked. He was also a very important coach in our Little Saints during his teenage years. Currently he is part of our Senior Section.

All through these years Dad, Jeff would be a willing driver as he attended just about every game Aao was involved in and despite many hints dropped by us he shied away from running a team. Fast forward a few years to his second son, Kevin starting in the Little Saints (with his big brother coaching him) and progressing onto a team and suddenly Jeff was no longer able to stay away so he ended up co-managing the team with Mick Cummins.

Finally, Adam started in the Little Saints and from day one you could tell that he had been waiting for his moment to shine for the Saints like his older brothers. He progressed from the Little Saints onto his current team managed by Denis Cassidy where he is developing into a very fine footballer.

All the family are Liverpool fans with only Kevin and Adam supporting LOI team Dundalk where their favourite player is ex-Saint, Sean Gannon. Aao who prefers the midfield or striker role describes himself as the joker in the dressing room and feels that SKB is like his second home. When asked about his best sporting moment to date he replied that there wasn't enough room for the answer.

Meanwhile, Kevin, who prefers defence, is on our Under 11s and says everyone in the Saints is really friendly and nice. He is also involved in Tae Kwon Do and swimming. He once scored a goal from his own area and the best piece of advice he ever received was "never give up". Adam plays for our Under 8s and says SKB are the best club in Ireland. He has a silver medal from the Tae Kwan Do European Championships and says that Shadow is the biggest joker in their dressing room.

As we said we pride ourselves on being a family Club and I heard through the grapevine that Mum, Jane has decided that if you can't beat them join them as she volunteered to lend a hand at the upcoming Academy Cup.

Now the only question we have isdo they have a dog or a cat at home who might be able to help us in some capacity??

Trophy Cabinet Gets New Additions

This year saw the introduction of the SFAI Regional Cups and the Saints teams have been involved in the Leinster area. We had three teams contest the finals of the competition recently in Abbotstown. Our Under 12 DDSL Premier team were first to capture the trophy as they defeated Shamrock Rovers. Coming from a goal down at half time they turned on the style in the second half to record a 3-1 victory. After them our Under 14 DDSL Premier team produced a stunning display as they ran out 5-0 winners against Cherry Orchard. Unfortunately our Under 16 DDSL Premier team were unable to add to the cabinet as they lost out 2-1 to Athlone Town in the other final.

Little Saints Update



With the change in the football season to calendar year we had a few hiccups during February and beginning of March with availability of coaches.

As most of our Little Saints coaches are also involved in managing or playing in teams we can be stretched on occasion. Our teams are

currently taking part in pre-season tournaments, futsal tournaments and other games that mean they are not necessarily available from 1.00 pm on the Saturday for the Little Saints.

Thursday nights are the normal ring around time to check everyone's availability and we were looking to be in trouble recently until Andy McKenna who plays with our Senior team stepped in.

Andy has played for the Club for many years and during his teenage years was one of our Little Saints coaches. Since the Saturday Senior team had no game recently he volunteered to give us a hand. So we had Andy helping out his sister Lauren (both pictured above) with the coaching while his Dad, Andy senior was helping in the Clubhouse to install our new intruder alarm system – family club!

I again extend a gentle reminder to the parents of the players to ensure that they arrive 15 minutes prior to their starting time – besides it being very disruptive trying to reorganise groups when there are latecomers, the players themselves lose out on the value of the session itself.

Finally, please ensure that player's laces are tied properly – I'm getting a pain in my back bending down speed-lace tying!

Gerry Murtagh

International Saints

Yet again, St Kevins Boys have dominated the Republic of Ireland International squads.

We had five ex Saints on the Under 19s squad for the Tournament in La Manga in Spain in February. So congrats to Darragh Leahy (Coventry City), Trevor Clarke and Michael O'Connor (both Shamrock Rovers), Dan Mandroiu (Brighton) and Conor Kane (Drogheda United).

Meanwhile the U17s squad to take part in the UEFA U17 Championships Elite Qualifiers also boasting five current or ex-Saints in Kameron Ledwidge (SKB), Gavin Kilkenny (Bournemouth), Luke Nolan and Brian Maher (both St Patricks Athletic) and Kian Clarke (Bohemians).

Locally, we had 16 (yes you read it correctly, 16!) of our U18 players involved with the DDSL Youths team that defeated Galway to progress to the semi-finals of the Inter League Cup where they face Waterford. So well done to Jamie O'Brien, Levi Boardman, Ben MacShane, Mark Byrne, Jamie Delaney, Craig Connolly, Ryan MacGuinness, Stephen Blake, Mark O'Connor, Adam Campbell, Mick McAuley, Sean Cummins, Mark Powell, Morgan Biggs, Peter McElroy and Andrew Brennan.

U13s Fundraiser Race Night



The parents of our Under 13 DDSL Premier team are holding a race night in support of our Academy Cup. Great fun will be had in the Comet Bar on Friday 7th April so make a date and see you there.

To buy a horse, sponsor a race etc please contact the team directly.

U14s Leave it Late

A Friday night under floodlights in St Aidans, a big crowd and two top class teams in the quarter finals of the SFAI Sketchers Goodson Cup – it had all the ingredients for a fantastic night as our Under 14 DDSL Premier team faced Crumlin United.



Having watched our Under 14s a few times this season I have to say that they were very lacklustre for most of this game. Despite having the best of the play throughout the first half they failed to make the breakthrough as Crumlin defended deep and took to hitting long balls to their pacy forward.

Just on the break Crumlin took the lead completely against the run of play, as the Saints failed to clear a free kick.

Following some stern words at half time regarding their performance the Saints took to the pitch for the second half and we were expecting them to up their game.

This they did to an extent but within three minutes they found themselves 2-0 down as a Crumlin shot hit the back of the Saints defender and left the keeper clutching at air. Conan Noonan came closest to getting an early goal back but the Crumlin keeper pulled off a top class save.

Crumlin put everyone behind the ball and kicked it anywhere knowing that they would be under the cosh for the remainder of the game.

The Saints piled on the pressure but were unable to breach the Crumlin defence and were looking like they were heading out of this cup until the final 6 minutes when the game turned in their favour. A free kick was headed on in the area by Cian Byrne and in the scramble at the back post Noonan managed to head it home to make it 2-1.

With 2 minutes left a great ball by Danny Norris was played by Roland Banya into the path of Bosun Lawal just inside the area and he made no mistake with a superb strike.

The first period of extra time saw the Saints look to win the game but again Crumlin stood firm at the back.

Four minutes into the second period of extra time and the Saints were awarded a penalty for a foul on Norris. Up stepped Banya and it must be said that he was the epitome of cool as he sent the keeper the wrong way to make the score 3-2. Within 30 seconds he was buried under his teammates in celebration.

Crumlin had no response and were unable to muster anything in the remaining 6 minutes.

So despite a poor display from the Saints they were able to breathe a sigh of relief as they booked their place in the semi-final of the cup SKB: Mark Smith, Chris Kenny, Gavin O'Brien, Ronan Kilkenny, Cian Byrne, Bosun Lawal, Dan Wilson, Colin Conroy, Conan Noonan, Aaron Doran, Danny Norris, Roland Banya, Dan Bivol, Len O'Sullivan, Eoghan Heavey

Snippets



Congratulations go to Dylan Kelly of our U17 DDSL Premier team who was the lucky winner of €3200 on our Klotto draw recently.

Dylan is pictured receiving the cheque (on behalf of his Mum we might add) from Tony Bolger of our U17 management team and we hope they enjoy their winnings. Remember the Klotto draw is a very important

fundraiser for St Kevins Boys and each week you have a chance to win our Jackpot or one of our six €35 consolation prizes. Tickets are a mere €2 for three numbers.

We were delighted to see Robbie Brady sign for Burnley at the end of January. It was great that Robbie could again team up with Jeff



Hendrick considering they have both played for the same team since they were 7 years of age. This is very unique for two players who have grown up together to play professionally and especially in the English Premier League. Their first managers Billy McCormac and Kevin Wallace went to catch the first game that would feature the two lads recently and were thrilled at what both have achieved with their careers.

On another note congrats to Robbie on winning three awards at the FAI 3 Awards recently. Robbie was named Senior International Player of the Year, Young Player of the Year and Goal of the Year. Interestingly, another player that starred on the same schoolboy team



as Jeff and Robbie is Cian Bolger. Cian has played a starring role in the rise of Fleetwood Town who look like they will gain automatic promotion to the English Championship. Word from Fleetwood is that Cian is considered the best centre half in the league and his goal tally of 5 goals proves his worth to the team cause.

SKB Needs



Our Academy Cup will take place over the Easter weekend and we are appealing to all those connected (or not connected) to St Kevins Boys to volunteer some time to help us out.

We will require people for pitch & grounds security, crowd control, entry gates and general duties over the three days of Friday 14th to Sunday 16th April. I won't lie to you the three days are tough and draining but it is an opportunity to

be involved in the greatest tournament hosted in this country each year and you will have great fun and make new friends in our footballing world. Please contact Carole Daly on 086-1733311 who is chief co-ordinator for all volunteers or contact the Clubhouse direct on admin@skbfc.com or text 086-8585450 if you can help out in any way.

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