

EVENTFUL SUMMER AT WINDSOR PARK



BY PETER MULLAN

With the ultimately disappointing 2008/09 Irish League season now consigned to the history books, the close season has had an eventful start with the arrest of Linfield Legend, Winkie Murphy, on charges relating to counterfeit money, with the player current on bail in Spain.

And while this is a major talking point, possibly a bigger talking point is the departure from Windsor Park of goal scoring legend Glenn Ferguson after 11 years and 285 goals.

In, Out, Staying, On The Way?

It is just three years since the Linfield Clean Sweep season, but in that time the majority of that all-conquering squad have now left Windsor Park for pastures new, and the latest changes to personnel are:

Glenn Ferguson – the veteran striker who, despite turning 40 in July, seemed to have done enough to secure himself one last year in the famous Linfield Number 9 shirt, was surprisingly released, bringing the curtain down on a trophy-laden spell of more than a decade. Next season will see Spike turn out in the white of Lisburn Distillery where he will look to prove that there is life (and goals!) in the old dog yet

Alan Mannus – the international goalkeeper will no longer be the first name on the team sheet having decided not to renew his contract with Linfield, and will now look to secure a move to a cross channel club after 367 appearances, numerous clean sheets, and one goal

Paul McAreavey – the lynchpin of the Clean Sweep side has had a couple of difficult years and has now moved on to Dundalk

John Martin – after one season playing for his boyhood heroes, John Martin is another player leaving Windsor Park

Ryan McLaughlin, Gary Thompson, Thomas Lambe – the three young midfielders, who played their part during last season, have been released and will try to find first team football with other clubs

All of these players take with them the best wishes of all Linfield fans.

The January transfer window saw Linfield make a number of new signings, and this summer's window also promises to be busy with new players coming on board:

Philip Lowry – the highly rated young midfielder, who has attracted the attention of a number of cross channel clubs, has signed a 3 year contract with Linfield and looks the likely replacement for the departed McAreavey

Alan Blayney – the former Ballymena Utd goalkeeper, who once played for Southampton in the Premiership in England, is the man chosen to try and fill the gap left by the departure of Mannus

And there has been other good news with the re-signing of a number of out-of-contract players, including some of the main stays of the Clean Sweep side:

Noel Bailie – the skipper is just a few games short of a momentous 1000 games for the club, and he has signed up for 1 more year

Michael Gault – Linfield fans breathed a sigh of relief when the last remaining member of the 'Holy Trinity' signed a new 3 year full time contract, and the once capped midfielder will look to return to his usual high standards after a difficult 2008/09 season

Jim Ervin – the newly married defender

has agreed a new 2 year deal and will look to continue with the fine form he showed after returning from a serious injury in March

Paul Munster – the big striker, who arrived at the club in August following a globetrotting career in Europe and North America, has signed a new, improved, 2 year contract, and is the player most likely to take up the challenge of trying to replace Ferguson

Aaron Burns – the 17 year old from Banbridge was due to head off to Leicester City next season, but has instead decided to stay with Linfield and has been promoted to the first team squad after many fine displays for the Linfield Swifts and Rangers sides

Who else signs in the next few weeks remains to be seen, with the return of Peter Thompson and the possible signing of the much-wanted Lisburn Distillery striker Curtis Allen, just some of the rumours doing the rounds. And with Winkie Murphy unlikely to be available for an, as yet, unknown period, a centre half looks likely to be on David Jeffrey's shopping list.

One thing is for sure – the competition for first team places at Windsor Park will be just as intense next season as it has always been as the club looks to regain the Gibson Cup from rivals Glentoran.

Friendly Announced

Linfield will travel to Oswestry to take on League of Wales side The New Saints on 20th June as both sides prepare for Europa League action starting on 2nd July (Linfield will play their 'home' games in the competition at Mourneview Park as the Windsor Park pitch undergoes refurbishment).

Linfield on the Web

Keep up to date with all the latest news from Windsor Park at www.linfieldfc.com.

Shankill Summer League

Group A	Group B
WestLife	Balmer Memorial
Royal Bar	The Pinky
McCallum Memorial	Lower Shankill
Crosset Memorial	Ballysillan Elite

Fixtures

Monday 18/05/09 - Royal Bar 3-1 WestLife
 Tuesday 19/05/09 - The Pinky 4-0 Ballysillan Elite
 Wednesday 20/05/09 McCallum Memorial 3-1 Crosset Memorial
 Thursday 21/05/09 Balmer Memorial 4-3 Lower Shankill

Monday 25/05/09 - Ballysillan Elite 2-3 Balmer Memorial
 Tuesday 26/05/09 - Crosset Memorial 7-1 Royal Bar
 Wednesday 27/05/09 - Lower Shankill 0-1 The Pinky
 Thursday 28/05/09 - WestLife 0-4 McCallum Memorial

Monday 01/06/09 - Balmer Memorial 3-1 The Pinky
 Tuesday 02/06/09 - McCallum Memorial 2-1 Royal Bar
 Wednesday 03/06/09 - Lower Shankill 6-4 Ballysillan Elite
 Thursday 04/06/09 - Crosset Memorial v WestLife

Monday 08/06/09 (1) Winners Group A v Runners Up Group B
 Tuesday 09/06/09 (2) Winners Group B v Runners up Group A
 Wednesday 10/06/09 - **Exhibition Match**
 Thursday 11/06/09 Winners Match 1 v Winners Match 2

Group A

Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
McCallum Mem.	3	3	0	0	9	2	6
Crosset Mem.	2	1	0	1	8	4	2
Royal Bar	3	1	0	2	5	10	2
Westlife	2	0	0	0	1	7	0

Group B

Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Balmer Mem.	3	3	0	0	10	6	6
The Pinky	3	2	0	1	6	4	4
L/Shankill	3	1	0	2	9	9	2
Ballysillan	3	0	0	3	6	13	0

Cup Competition

Monday 15/06/09 - WestLife v Balmer Memorial **A**
 Tuesday 16/06/09 - Lower Shankill v Crosset Memorial **B**
 Wednesday 17/06/09 - McCallum Memorial v The Pinky **C**
 Thursday 18/06/09 - Royal Bar v Ballysillan Elite **D**

Monday 22/06/09 - (1) Winners Match **A** v Winners Match **D**
 Tuesday 23/06/09 - (2) Winners Match **B** v Winners Match **C**
 Wednesday 24/06/09 - **Old Crocks Match**
 Thursday 25/06/09 - Winners Match **1** v Winners Match **2**

All matches kick-off 7.00pm.

Cairn Lodge A.B.C. Show Report

The following boxers fought on our show on Friday 22nd May 2009 at the Mountainview Club which was a great success, the only disappointment being Rob Lloyd (The Secret Millionaire) could not attend as business matters held him up. We wish to express our gratitude to Frank of Woodvale Costcutters for very kindly sponsoring the trophies, and members and committee of The Mountainview Club for the use of the premises. The results are also as follows:

The following bouts were exhibition bouts:

S. Cherry (Cairn Lodge) v D. Keery (Cairn Lodge), J. Hamilton (Cairn Lodge) v P. McDonald (St. Agnes), R. Nesbitt (Cairn Lodge) v J. McDonald (St. Agnes), C. McCullough (Cairn Lodge) v D. Reid (Albert Foundry)

The following bouts were contests:

N. Dunn (Cairn Lodge) beat D. Reid (Abbey), G. Potter (Cairn Lodge) lost to N. Swaffield (Abbey), D. Lecky (Cairn Lodge) lost to McGreavey (Gleann), R. McCullough (Cairn Lodge) lost to C. Kong (Sandy Row), S. McCullough (Cairn Lodge) beat C. Gargan (St. Georges), L. Crocker (Cairn Lodge) beat S. Hinds-Adjecko (Holy Trinity), M. McCullough (Cairn Lodge) v A. Cacace (Holy Trinity) Exhibition, T. J. Waite (Cairn Lodge) beat H. Hyland (Gleann), A. Gilles (Cairn Lodge) beat T. Reid (Albert Foundry), D. Potter (Cairn Lodge) beat R. Devlin (Toombe), R. Irvine (Cairn Lodge) beat T. Waites (Toombe), W. Waite (Cairn Lodge) beat D. Duffy (Gleann), L. Adair (Cairn Lodge) beat N. Adams (Gleann), M. Orr (Cairn Lodge) v S. Araray (Sandy Row) Exhibition

Aaron Giles was awarded the Most Improved Boxer of the Year award. Nathan Dunn was awarded The Best Young Boxer of the Year award. Matthew Orr was awarded the Best Senior Boxer of the Year award. Lewis Crocker was awarded the trophy for Best Boxer of the Evening.

Cairn Lodge Amateur Boxing Club

We, at Cairn Lodge, have had an extremely good year. It started off with very good results in The County Antrim Novices, we had 5 boxers entered and 3 winners and 2 runners up - Stacey McCullough, Lewis Adair and Aaron Giles (winners), Michael Sloan and Reece McCullough (runners up). This was then followed by being chosen for Channel 4's Secret Millionaire, who is still helping the club.

Three of our boxers were chosen to represent Belfast in the Beltways tournament in the U.S.A. where all 3 were winners - T.J. Waite, Derek Potter and Matt Orr.

Nine boxers entered in the County Antrim Boy & Girl 4, 5 & 6 Championships where we had 5 winners, 2 runners up and 2 semi-finalists - T.J. Waite, Ross Irvine, Stacey McCullough, Derek Potter and Katie McCullough (winners), Jonathan Goddard and Bill Waite (runners up) and Lewis Adair and Michael Sloan (semi-

finalists). The 5 winners qualified for the National Championships in Dublin and did well, 4 losing in the semi-finals and 1 finalist - T.J. Waite, Ross Irvine, Derek Potter and Stacey McCullough (semi-finalists) and Katie McCullough (finalist).

It was then our younger boxers turn to perform and they did just that when the County Antrim Boy 1, 2 & 3 Championships came up. Four boxers entered and finished with 2 winners and 2 runners up - Nathan Dunn and Aaron Giles (winners), Reece McCullough and Dean Lecky (runners up).

The boys who reached the semi-finals of the Nationals entered the National Cadet Championships (Boy 4, 5 & 6) resulting in 1 winner and 2 runners up - T.J. Waite (winner), Derek Potter and Ross Irvine (runners up).

The 2 County Antrim winners went to the National Boy 1, 2 and 3 Championships in Dublin. Aaron Giles was a finalist and Nathan Dunn was beaten in the semi-final by a 2 time National Champion.

The same 2 boxers entered the National Junior Cadet Championships again in Dublin. Nathan Dunn lost on double countback to the eventual champion in the semi-final and Aaron Giles lost in the final.

To top off our season Marc McCullough returned for his first competition since injuring his hand to win the Ulster Featherweight Championship.

Tucker of Shankill News very kindly sponsored Nathan Dunn for The National Championships.



S. Cherry (Cairn Lodge) v D. Keery (Cairn Lodge).



S. McCullough (Cairn Lodge) beat C. Gargan (St. Georges).



R. Nesbitt (Cairn Lodge).

