

SOCCER END OF SEASON REVIEW



Happy days: Pike Rovers celebrate their famous FAI Junior Cup win in Turner's Cross in May - the win was the highlight of the local soccer season. PICTURE: OWEN SOUTH

A year to remember for magic Pike

2011 was another busy year on the local soccer scene. **Pat Sheehan** looks back on an eventful 12 months

LOOKING back on 2011, the year's highlight is undoubtedly Pike Rovers first FAI Junior Cup success.

Becoming only the third Limerick club to lift the trophy, Pike ended over 70 years of frustration when they defeated St Michaels 2-1 in the final at Turners Cross in May.

It formed part of a four trophy haul for the Hoops in 2011 where they proved dominant throughout.

A heavy defeat to St Michaels in the semi final of the Munster Junior Cup spoiled what would have been a clean sweep.

Wembley Rovers lost in the other semi final going out to Carrick Utd on penalties.

Below is a reminder of the talking points of 2011

JANUARY

Pike beat Nenagh 3-0 on their way to FAI success; The Oscar Traynor team with a Keith Harnett penalty beat Galway 1-0 in Jackman Park.

Fairview maintained their 100% league record with a 1-0 win over Balla courtesy of Robbie Kelleher but in their next outing lost it when

Pike recorded a 4-2 win while Summerville suffered their first defeat in Div 1A going down 1-0 to Croom.

FEBRUARY

Kilmallock beat Crettyard in the FAI in a penalty shoot out while Balla and Aisling advanced in the Munster Junior.

Pike Rovers opened their new dressing rooms and also defeated Kilmallock 2-1 to take another step in their FAI run.

Ballynanty recorded a superb 2-1 win away to Killester and they also captured the Youth Horan Cup with a 4-0 win over Cappamore.

MARCH

Pike beat Dublin side Belluragan 8-0 in the FAI Cup while the Oscar Traynor team hit seven without reply against the WW/EC League.

In the Munster Junior Cup ten man Pike beat Balla 5-2 while Aisling went out to a lively Wembley Rvs XI. Balla exited the FAI when losing 4-2 to Sheriff YC in Dublin.

APRIL

Fairview Rangers Pat McGarry starred in Ireland's 2-0 win over their Northern counterparts.

Pike recovered from 2-0 down to beat Athenry in the FAI.

A Dean O'Brien double gave Balla

victory over Corbally in the Youth Division 2 cup while Fairview won the Division 1 cup.

In the Munster Junior Cup, Pike were brought back to earth when comprehensively beaten by St Michaels in Jackman Park. Wembley also went out on penalties in Carrick but took relief when winning promotion.

Pike held their nerve to beat Sheriff in a penalty shoot out while John Colbert's goal gave Prospect the Division 4 cup.

MAY

The local soccer world was shocked at the death of Damien Parker in a tragic accident. Balla won the Ger Ryan with a 4-1 win over Granville. Pat Roche scored another hat trick to match his semi and quarter final feats.

Limerick beat Kerry to reach the Oscar Traynor final as Wembley completed the Div 1A Cup and League double.

A last minute Keith Harnett free kick won Pike Rvs their first FAI Junior Cup and a few days later they added the Fran Mullally Premier League with a 6-1 win at Aisling.

JUNE

The soccer world were further saddened by the sudden death of Summerville's Gerry Manahan while on

the playing front Pike added the Lawson Cup in a 2-1 win over Balla.

Conor Kavanagh was named Player of the Season while the Oscar Traynor team were hit with a last minute goal against the Dublin AUL to bring the season to a close.

AUGUST

The 2011/12 season kicked off with the champions in mean mood hitting Aisling for ten goals. Janesboro were also making shapes and Shane Clarke's hat trick in their 5-2 win over Carew Park brought his tally for the month to ten. Geraldines under Paul O'Donnell made it a four from four start in Division 1A.

SEPTEMBER

Pike kicked off their bid to hold onto the FAI with a difficult tie against Janesboro and won 2-0 but other Premier sides Corbally, Wembley and Star Rovers made early exits.

Pike found Aisling a tougher nut in the MFA winning 2-1 before accounting for Balla on a 3-2 scoreline.

OCTOBER

The Oscar Traynor kicked off with a 4-0 win over Clare; Fairview were knocked out of the FAI by Regional but had better fortune in the MFA beating Kilmallock 3-2. Janesboro

clipped Pike's wings in the League while in the FAI Moyross scraped through against Coonagh while Shannon beat Summerville 6-3. On a sadder note John Halpin, a member of the famous Star Rovers sides of the early 80s, passed away.

NOVEMBER

Carrick beat Pike 1-0 in the Munster Champions Cup. The Inter county youth team beat Kerry 5-2 with Kieran O'Hanlon bagging a hat trick. Boro pipped Balla in a seven goal thriller in the Tuohy Cup. Pike scraped through in the FAI against Caherdavin.

DECEMBER

A Ken Neylon goal gave Corbally passage in the Munster Junior Cup against Star Rovers with other to get out of town were Boro, Fairview, Wembley and both Pike Rovers teams.

In the FAI Pike again needed penalties to get through this time against Ballynanty Rovers.

Other Limerick sides had no such luck as Moyross, Carew Park, Hill Celtic and Mungret bowed out.

Murroe won the first silverware of the season beating Coonagh in the Division 4 League Cup final.

The Oscar Traynor side qualified for the quarter finals with a 5-2 win in Galway last weekend.