

SOCCER GERALDINES AFC 75TH ANNIVERSARY

Well do they remember: Geraldine's Munster win

In the latest of his articles on Geraldine's 75-year celebrations **Turlough McNamara** remembers the club's sole success in the Munster Junior Cup

Without question the big two trophies to be won outside of your own leagues is the FAI and Munster Junior Cup. The closest in which we went to achieving FAI glory was in 1973/74 as we failed in the penultimate round. But the Munster Junior Cup has been only won once by the Dines and it was 33 years ago on Sunday June 3 1979 that victory was played in Priory Park - now better known as Jackman Park.

For this cup final it would prove to be a close and tight affair as it took extra time before the destination of this trophy would be sorted.

The Dines supporters - old and young - in great numbers made their way to the Careys Road venue and with plenty of support from all other local Clubs the Candy Stripes had the edge on their opponents from Waterford as the Johnville outfit came to town with a good run of victories prior to this final.

The game was rather slow to get going, as both sides seemed to be testing each other for any apparent weakness. However, the Dines were first into the attack and some good work by Eddie O'Neill and Tommy Hannon went for nought, as Liam Meade in the Waterford goal and Jim Whelan and John Butler were in superb form in the Johnville defence.

Gerry Cussen, Alfie Johnson and Liam Lawlor were all unfortunate with good efforts. Cussen, in fact, had the ball in the net in the eighth minute but to the annoyance of the huge Dines support he was adjudged offside. After this let off Johnville came more into the game with their midfield partnership of Jerry Doheny and John Delaney showing their class. They laid off some superb passes to their wingers who tormented the Dines backline with some superb runs on both flanks.

The Dines rearguard were in complete disarray at this stage and only for the coolness of Finbar Ryan and Seamus Kenihan would surely have been punished severely.

Johnville paid dearly for these misses when minutes later Seamus Kenihan collected the ball on the halfway line, worked his way into the

Johnville penalty area, was unceremoniously upended and Alfie Johnson crashed the resultant spot kick to the back of the net. Little more of note occurred in a rather featureless first half and so we held onto our one goal advantage when the half-time whistle sounded.

On the resumption the Waterford outfit quickly got on terms when in the 53rd minute Billy Kelly got the better of Pat Madigan to tie up this cup final and after this we had to defend extremely well to keep Johnville out.

And so to extra time, however one felt that Johnville had shot their bolt and that after missing so many gilt-edged chances that they would be punished by the Dines and this we did in brilliant fashion.

Straight from the centre-off Alfie Johnson ran down the right wing he cut inside his full back marker and slipped the ball to the waiting Johnny Graham who had no trouble in beating Meade in the Johnville goal.

Geraldines began playing football at long last and with Tommy Hannon, Finbar Ryan and Mick Condon playing to their full ability there was no real way that Johnville could penetrate the Dines defence. Alfie Johnson sealed the issue with a few minutes remaining when he blasted the ball to the roof of the Johnville net to the absolute joy of the huge local following.

A tremendous win then for the Dines who brought honour to the local junior soccer scene and everybody involved were very proud of this great Club.

Great credit must go to the management team of Pat Murphy the Geraldines manager and his assistant Sean O'Donovan who had moulded this fine team together into one of the best sides in Munster. The victorious Dines squad that lifted the Munster Junior Cup were as follows: Pat Madigan, Fintan Lawlor, Mick Condon, Seamus Kenihan, Stephen Cusack, Finbar Ryan, Eddie O'Neill, Tommy Hannon, Gerry Cussen, Liam Lawlor, Alfie Johnson, Johnny Graham and Joe Cussen.

Also that year we added the Premier league trophy to our trophy cabinet as we were proud to be the first winners of the magnificent Paddy Cusack Cup.

To become victors we had to navigate a win over what was a top class Balla outfit who had players of the calibre of Gaynor Earls, Glynn Cusack and the O'Donnell's in their line-up.

In the fifteenth minute of this half the Dines Eddie O'Neill latched onto a loose ball on the halfway line beat two defenders and crossed beauti-

MUNSTER JUNIOR CUP — 1979 — OUR GOLDEN YEAR



The Geraldines team that won Munster Junior Cup and Premier League honours in 1979. From left (back): Alfie Johnson, Martin Dore, Ger Cussen, Pat Madigan, Mick Condon, Stephen Cusack, Liam Lawlor. Front, Fintan Lawlor, Finbar Ryan, John Graham, Noel Moloney, Tom Hannon, Eddie O'Neill. Insets, from left, Joe Cussen, Paddy Murphy, team manager, and Seamus Kenihan.



Admiring the Munster Junior Cup and the Premier League won in 1979 were (from left), Mike Ryan, Mike Frawley, Martin Prenderville and Paddy Murphy.

Remembered: 1979 was a big year in the history of Geraldine's AFC and the pictures above from a magazine remember that glorious season

fully for Liam Lawlor to slam the ball goal wards but Balla's 16 year old goal-keeper Micheal McNamara saved brilliantly to tap the ball over for a corner that proved fruitless.

McNamara in the Ballananty goal again saved brilliantly from the head of Liam Lawlor after great work by O'Neill. In the 40th minute Geraldines got a touch on the left as Liam Lawlor spotted Gerry Cussen unmarked in the Balla square took a quick throw and with all the time in the world Cussen chested the ball down and without a tackle being made on him he blasted the ball past the keeper.

Straight from the centre-off Balla had a golden opportunity of equalising when from a corner on the station end of Priory Park, Dermot Glynn missed an absolute sitter when he mis-timed his header and Pat Madigan cleared to the obvious relief of the vast throng of Geraldines supporters.

In the 50th minute a Johnny Gaynor burst into action when he collected the ball on his own 18 yard line beat off all would be tackles in typical comic book fashion cut inside and drew the keeper he had no difficulty in slotting the ball home

for a well equaliser.

We were destined for extra time and straight from the centre off Noel Moloney the Dines substitute winger crossed to the waiting Johnny Graham who slammed the ball off the underside of the crossbar. McNamara in the Balla goal scrambled the ball out for a corner.

Little or nothing of note happened for the remainder of extra time until the very last minute when penalties looked on the cards. Mick Condon the Dines left full accepted a pass from Cussen he floated a high dipping ball goal wards and to the joy of the Geraldines players and supporters the ball just dipped under the crossbar for the winner. The scenes of joy and jubilation when Bernie Spain blew the full time whistle just had to be seen to be believed and this Premier league trophy added to the Munster Junior was a great double achieved by a talented bunch of players. That was the first of three in a row Premier leagues as 1979/80, 1980/81, also found its way to Garryowen.

Not to be out done our Schoolboys also were in trophy-winning mood that year as Lawson cups seemed to be attracted to Geraldines like a magnet and this time we annexed the

Lawson Cup for the U-15s. As in the final we saw off the Boro in a 2-0 victory as the opening goal came in the 45th minute when Frawley availed of a long clearance and showing great turn of foot he calmly lobbed the ball over the Boro custodian.

The second piece of play when Mike Blake found Gerry Lawlor, he cantered along to the back line centered perfectly for the inrushing Christy O'Neill to make it 2-0 with just five minutes remaining. Amidst great scenes of jubilation Gerry McCormack presented the K.E. Lawson Cup to captain and goal-keeper Martin Clancy.

Also that year the babes of the Club - the U-10 A squad - annexed the U10A league. The Club also created a wee piece of history as our two U-13 sides contested the final of the (A) cup with the (Bs) already having clinched their league title. The A team just did enough to win that final.

All in all the footballing season of 1978/79 will always be cherished by all in the Club for it was a golden year for players, committee and a large band of Candy Stripe supporters.