

SPECIAL FEATURE



The Limerick United team that won the FAI Cup in 1982 arriving home in Limerick. The team won the league in 1980 during a great era for Limerick soccer. Included from left Eoin Hand, Des Kennedy, Pat Nolan, Tony Morris, Tommy Gaynor, Brendan Storan, Ger Duggan, Al Finucane, Mick McDonnell, Gary Hulmes and Joe O'Mahony. In front are Mick O'Donnell with the legendary keeper Kevin Fitzpatrick, and the great Tony Ward, who excelled in both soccer and rugby

Recalling the glory days of Limerick Utd and the great cup win in Dalymount

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HOW sad to see the state of senior soccer in Limerick at the moment.

And sometimes being old is a good thing to recall the glory days of Limerick football.

Even though I have not seen this magnificent photo for 38 years I instantly recognised everyone in it. What entertainment this and other Limerick teams of the 70's and 80's gave us.

The photo above is of Limerick United team that won the FAI Cup in 1982, on their arrival home to Limerick.

I hope I have not omitted anyone below when mentioning the names involved in that great team.

From the age of 10 I went to the Markets Field to watch Limerick and they had some fantastic players, real class.

I think Al Finucane will always stand out for me, what a brilliant centre back who was partnered with one of the nicest guys to don a Limerick jersey, the late and great Joe O Mahony.

I still get a great thrill looking at this photo. There are so many legends there

who brought so much joy to Limerick football.

On the extreme left of course is the great Eoin Hand who arrived as player manager from Portsmouth for the 1979-80 season. I remember well because, Dave Mahedy not in the photo above, left my own team Mungret to join Limerick as coach, and had them in brilliant shape when Hand arrived and they won the League in Hand's first season in charge.

I remember well travelling with great sports journalist Charlie Mulqueen to Athlone, when Tony Meaney, sadly gone to his eternal reward since 2003, got the penalty to win the match and secure the League title in 1980.

But getting back to the cup win of '82, centre half Brendan Storan scored the winner against Bohemians in the final. In goal was the wonderful Kevin Fitzpatrick who played his final game after 22 seasons.

Also in the photo above from left is Des Kennedy, who will always be remembered as the man who scored twice against Real Madrid in the European cup; Pat Nolan, ex Wembley Rovers, a brilliant attacking

full back who turned out to be a top class golfer: Tony Morris, who played at least one season with my own club Mungret and turned out to be an incredible goal poacher; holding onto Morris is Tommy Gaynor, who went on to have an amazing career with Nottingham Forest spending five years with the Brian Clough-managed team before joining Millwall; Gary Hulmes, a brilliant winger; the aforementioned Brendan Storan; midfield dynamite Ger Duggan whose son is still playing League of Ireland; Mick McDonnell who was also a talented Gaelic footballer but did not make the team on the day; Jimmy Nodwell, who if memory sets me right came from Cork. Joe O'Mahony with the cup, Kevin Fitzpatrick and one of the most popular members of the team, Mick 'Muckles' O'Donnell, a brilliant keeper, but not quite as good as Fitzpatrick, and of course one of the most instantly recognisable players Tony Ward. I can't spot the great Johnny Walsh, who like Finucane was capped for the Irish international team, but who played a fine game in the final.

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