



# BSPL NEWS

Issue 7 - April - 2003 / 2004 Season

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## Chairman's Corner

In recent columns I have been critical of the sportsmanship in our League and the worrying trend that it was setting. I was pleasantly surprised and pleased by the quarter final cup game that I had the pleasure to referee recently. Both teams played the game with great commitment but attained a high degree of sportsmanship and fairness. The game went to extra time and penalties, but throughout, it was an excellent advert for the League, and all that I can say is thank you Mona Star and Boca Seniors. During the game, a Mona Star player, Dee Mc Auley was badly hurt and was taken to hospital by Ambulance. We wish him a speedy recovery from his injury.

Yours in Sport -

*Gabe Devlin*

# LEAGUE SPONSORSHIP ANNOUNCED

## BSPL ON VERGE OF SPONSORSHIP DEAL

**For the first time in it's history, the Belfast Sunday Premier League is on the verge of securing sponsorship to bolster it's finances and provide assistance to clubs.**

In a meeting held last month with Gerry Flynn of O'Neills sportswear, a package whereby the BSPL would receive equipment vouchers for a four figure sum in exchange for renaming the BSPL League the "O'Neills Belfast Sunday Premier League" was discussed. Whilst the deal has yet to be signed, the Committee are confident that this

will be done prior to the BSPL Cup Final and that O'Neills may well provide three matchballs for use in the final along with equipment vouchers for the winners and runners up.

Initial discussions were that O'Neills would provide three kits for League winners etc, but this was rejected as it was unfair to weaker teams. A new deal whereby a lump sum voucher would be presented allowed the Committee to donate every team in the League some type of equipment and this was thought to be a fairer proposition.

## PLAYER OF THE MONTH

There are no outright winners of the Player of the Month and the prize will be carried over to the end of the season

## Reggie Quinn Perpetual Shield Result

Sunday 7th March, 2004 saw the initial Reggie Quinn Perpetual Shield being contested at Allen Park, Antrim between Dub FC and Rushlight FC.

Expectations were high that the Second Division Team, high up in their League would provide stiff competition for the experienced First Division Rushlight.

Alas it was not to be, and Dub struggled on the big Chimney Corner pitch, never matching Rushlights superior passing and movement. The final score of 8 - 1 in favour of Rushlight told the tale and it was Stevie Shields who picked up the Shield from Marty Quinn in the Club after the match.



*Rushlight Captain Stevie Shields receives the Reggie Quinn Perpetual Shield*



The Victorious Rushlight Team

## FAIR PLAY TABLE

### Standings up to and including 4th April, 2004

TEAM	No. of Matches	Additional Disciplinary Points	Total Points from Yellow Cards (2 Pts per Card)	Total Points from Red Cards (4 Pts per Card)	Total Points	Average Points per Match
COLLINGWOOD SKUNKS FC	23		8		8	0.348
FORT FC	20		12		12	0.600
BOCA SENIORS FC	22		12	4	16	0.727
KNOCK FC	21		16	4	20	0.952
DUB FC	24		20	4	24	1.000
TURFLODGE STAR FC	19		12	8	20	1.053
C.F.A.N.I. FC	21		16	8	24	1.143
APOLLO ATHLETIC FC	21		24	8	32	1.524
BROOKVILLA FC	21		28	4	32	1.524
GLENCOLIN SWIFTS FC	22	5	22	8	35	1.591
ST. MATTHEWS FC	25		24	20	44	1.760
TRINITY LODGE FC	22		34	8	42	1.909
ADELAIDE FC	23	5	34	8	47	2.043
ST. MICHAELS FC	18	15	18	4	37	2.056
S.A. RAMBLERS FC	20	5	30	8	43	2.150
MONA STAR FC	18	5	32	4	41	2.278
RUSHLIGHT FC	23	5	40	12	57	2.478

## A HISTORY OF BOCA SENIORS

Boca Seniors FC is a successor to the Royal Ascot team that was part of the Sunday League from its inception almost ten years ago. Back then the Ascot would have been one of the teams to beat along with Charles Hurst, Morrisson's and Belfast Lions.

The league at that stage was made up largely of pub/works teams, but the standard of football was very good and the competitions well organised.

The Ascot team then consisted of players who either came from the Carryduff area or drank in the Royal Ascot bar, the club's sponsors. In one season, the team was pipped to the league by Charles Hurst and finished runners up in the Cup to the Lions, the Final played at Richardson Park.

Since then, much has changed at the club, but the ethos has remained pretty much as it was; a cross community club that is enjoyable to play in and has remarkable team spirit. The club continued with mixed success over the years, and thanks to sterling work from John Cullen (known to many as Johnny Hero, known to us as 2-Tone) and particularly Norman Boyd, the club remains on the go to this day. The Ascot retained its connection to Carryduff, but more and more players joined from various parts of Belfast, including West and East Belfast. This gradual happened around the same time as the league began to garner a reputation for a high standard of football coupled with strict discipline and leadership from the Committee, which at this stage saw a change as outspoken Lions man Mark Rossi left and Gabe Devlin joined.

Gabe had been manager of Dunmurry league club Lockview Star, and many of the Ascot players played for him in the gladiatorial ring that was the Dunmurry League every Saturday afternoon, including goalscorer Hero and captain Stevie Looney, who was also secretary of

Lockview and spent much of his time writing complaints to the League about the standard of refereeing on instruction from Gabe! Poacher turned gamekeeper?! make your won mind up.

As many people in the BSPL will know, the Dunmurry League, whilst having some smashing teams, did not have enough officials and was perhaps a contributory factor in the burgeoning success of the Sunday League.

Back at the Royal Ascot, the club was struggling a little. New teams like St Matts and latterly Rushlight were raising the standard and leaving us behind, and an element of disillusionment set in.

Some Sundays the team was a victim of players hitting the bottle on a Saturday night scraping a team together was a regular occurrence, although on one blustery Sunday afternoon a few years back, an eight-man Ascot team led the mighty Rushlight 1-0 for the first half hour before eventually falling to heavy defeat.

For a period things looked bleak for the Ascot, until a couple of years ago the club merged with Lockview Star, at this stage managed by Hero and utterly fed up with getting a raw deal in the Dunmurry League. The Ascot had lost its close connection with Carryduff and so when the new team was formed, a new, neutral name was needed. Boca Seniors was picked with reference to both the famous Argentinian club and the fact that one or two of us still playing were at that stage no spring chickens.

The amalgamation breathed new life into the club and was one of the factors for the club's relative success this season. Talented younger players like Hugh Malone, Benny Butler and David Hampton immediately clicked with sage old heads like Willie Mc Cart and Stevie Looney with Hero having taken over from Norman Boyd as Manager.

Family commitments forced Johnny to hand over the reins to Stevie last season, having forged a close bond between the two new sets of players and pointing them in the right direction.

Since the amalgamation, Boca Seniors have been on the up and up, moving from Second Division mid table battlers to a serious force within the division, and at the time of writing, the only team in either division still undefeated in the league campaign.

Seniors have enjoyed a fantastic tussle with respect rivals Dub FC, and the turning point for both clubs could have been the first league clash this season. Dub had already stuffed Seniors 5-0 in the Shield and looked set to repeat the humiliation when leading 4-1 at half time at Cherryvale. However, Boca called on the team spirit that has kept this team going through thick and thin and came back from the dead to claim an unlikely but famous 5-4 victory.

Dub may or may not get their chance for revenge in the last league fixture and also in the Cup semi-final next week, but whatever happens, this has been an incredible season for the players at the club, now hailing from all parts, Shankill, Twinbrook, the Village, Divis and beyond. Two Seniors players, Malone and Hampton have this term been signed by Glentoran FC and are making good progress at The Oval.

Despite the odd protest, the club is very happy being an integral part of the BSPL and, contrary to what some might think is delighted with the professionalism of the league and the organisational aspect. The Second Division has been a pleasure to play in this term, all the teams playing in the true spirit of the game with no rancour or vendettas. Long may it continue.

By Stevie Looney

## LEAGUE TABLES

### Standings up to and including 4th April, 2004

DIVISION 1					
	Pld.	Won	Drawn	Lost	Points
<b>ST. MATTHEWS FC</b>	11	9	1	1	28
<b>RUSHLIGHT FC</b>	11	6	2	3	20
<b>TURFLODGE STAR FC</b>	11	5	2	4	17
<b>TRINITY LODGE FC</b>	11	4	2	5	14
<b>MONA STAR FC</b>	11	3	3	5	12
<b>S.A. RAMBLERS FC</b>	11	3	1	7	10
<b>ST. MICHAELS FC</b>	12	3	1	8	10

DIVISION 2					
	Pld.	Won	Drawn	Lost	Points
<b>BOCA SENIORS FC</b>	17	14	3	0	45
<b>DUB FC</b>	17	13	2	2	41
<b>BROOKVILLA FC</b>	18	8	5	5	29
<b>KNOCK FC</b>	17	8	3	6	27
<b>ADELAIDE FC</b>	16	7	4	5	25
<b>FORT FC</b>	16	7	2	7	23
<b>GLENCOLIN SWIFTS FC</b>	17	7	4	6	25
<b>C.F.A.N.I. FC</b>	17	3	0	14	9
<b>COLLINGWOOD SKUNKS FC</b>	18	1	3	14	6
<b>APOLLO ATHLETIC FC</b>	17	2	2	13	6

Apollo FC deducted 4 points for fielding ineligible player

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