



Under 16 National Cup Winners Civic Reception
Cobh Town Council Chambers
3rd February 2012

It was a very proud occasion for the Springfield Ramblers Schoolboys Football Club on February 3rd 2012 as the 2010/2011 Under 16 team playing under the Cobh Ramblers banner were granted a civic reception by Cobh Town Council for their magnificent achievement in winning the Under 16 SFAI Michael Barry National Cup Competition on May 15th 2011. It was a joyous occasion chaired by Cobh Town Mayor Jim Quinlan and attended by the players, coaches, parents of the players, the committee of the club, town council members and invited guests.

In his address Mayor Quinlan expressed the pride of the whole town in what this team had achieved by becoming the only schoolboys team from the town who had achieved success in a National Cup competition, unique for the town and very rare for a club outside of the Dublin stronghold of schoolboys league soccer. The mayor briefly outlined the success that the club has had since the officers of the Springfield and Cobh Ramblers Schoolboys Clubs had decided to amalgamate to form the Springfield Ramblers Schoolboys Football Club. This decision and the subsequent development of the new AstroTurf facility at John Murphy Memorial Park had contributed greatly to the promotion of schoolboys football in the town and ultimately to the success of the 2010/2011 under 16 side in their National Cup success. Having congratulated the manager Niall Abbott and coaches Mossie O'Mahony and Frank Collins on the success of the team the mayor went on to describe how it was a very personal occasion for him as he was particularly delighted to be present on this occasion because he knew most of the players in his professional capacity as their teacher in Coláiste Muire.

Mayor Quinlan then introduced Springfield Ramblers Club chairman Cathal Rasmussen to address the gathering. Cathal began by thanking the Mayor and the members of the council for the reception afforded to our victorious National Cup Winners. He pointed out that the achievement had been made possible by the hard work put in by this group of players over a long number of years. Cathal thanked and congratulated Niall, Mossie and Frank for their hard work in preparing the team and paid particular tribute to Niall who had been with the lads since they had started in the club. He described how Niall had earned the respect both of the players and the parents of the boys for his dedication to the team throughout their years together.

Cathal remembered how excited everybody had been during the cup run especially for the semi-final and final games. He recalled the night of the final and the celebrations where all the older members of the club impressed on the young lads to enjoy and savour an achievement that may never be repeated in the history of the club. That was the magnitude of this historic win. Perhaps now almost a year older and wiser they are beginning to understand just what it meant.

Cathal concluded by outlining the progress the club had made during the previous two years with the successes on the field of play and the opening of John Murphy Memorial Park. The club's playing pitches have greatly improved and this has also helped in the performance of the teams. He paid tribute to his fellow committee members, managers, coaches and groundstaff and stressed that it was the hard work of all these volunteers that ensured that the club was run successfully.

Cathal then introduced team manager Niall Abbott. Niall began by giving a brief history of the team and how he'd managed the boys since they were six years old. He described their ups and downs in the schoolboy's leagues throughout their years together. Niall also gave an account of the trips the team had made to Blackpool where they

won the Blackpool Cup and Nottingham Forest where they enjoyed a few great days coaching and a victory against a local side.

Niall thanked his coaches Mossie O'Mahony and Frank Collins for the assistance they had given him throughout the years and said that the National Cup success would not have been possible without their help. He thanked sponsors Derek Corcoran of Fanatics and Andrew Carley of Carley's Electrical for their support. He also thanked the staff of the Leisure Centre who had helped the boys with their fitness and paid particular tribute to Margo who had greatly improved the boy's physical strength through Pilates.

Niall then described the cup run. The final itself was the last chapter in a long run of successes in getting to the final. The boys emerged from the Cork side of the draw with a 2-0 victory over Rockmount. They then beat Carrigtwohill on a 4-0 score line in the round of 64, had a brilliant 2-0 victory in a difficult away tie against Clonmel Town in the round of 32 and at the last 16 stage they had a 2-1 victory against Killarney Celtic in a tough encounter at home. They then overcame a very strong Ballyheane side from Mayo in the Quarter Final at the VEC grounds on a 3-1 score line. Then came the first of two difficult trips to Dublin for a semi-final tie against St Francis in Baldonnel which was won on the dreaded penalty shoot-out on a 6-5 score line and finally the final tie against Belvedere for a history making cup win.

Niall concluded by expressing what a privilege it had been for him to be coach to such a wonderful group of players since they were six years of age and his pride in their achievement of being the first side from Cobh to win the National Cup was obvious to all present at the end of his speech.

Mayor Quinlan then concluded the reception by presenting commemorative scrolls to Niall Abbott and team captain Tony O'Donovan for the success of the team and to chairman Cathal Rasmussen for the occasion of the dedication of John Murphy Memorial Park. The gathering then enjoyed some delicious finger food and drinks to finish the celebration.



Niall Abbott & Tony O'Donovan Receive a Commemorative Scroll from Mayor Jim Quinlan

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