

Onwards & Upwards For The San Francisco Glens, Celebrating 50 Years As The Best Irish Soccer Team In The US!

THIS YEAR MARKS THE Golden Jubilee of the San Francisco Glens, the most successful Irish Soccer outfit ever put together in California. Over the last half century the team has achieved near legendary status and those now at the helm are building for another glorious fifty years.

"Our youth program is a major success," enthused John McCormack and Leo Cassidy, who restarted the San Francisco Junior Glens Soccer Association in 2009 after a brief hiatus. John played for the Glens for 12 years. The original Junior Glens was founded by Kevin Reavey and Craig Graber in 1997 with a goal to provide neighborhood kids in the Sunset an opportunity to learn and develop basic soccer skills. They proved to be a successful group of players, winning the Police Athletic League and Viking Division 1 Championships in 2001. The coaching skills and the help of many volunteer coaches and parents are important factors in the success of the current team. In 2010, its first season,



the U10 and U12 teams won the division I championship in the Viking League. Coach Dan Salvemini brought his U12 team to the Division I SF Cup where they made it to the semi-finals, a huge achievement in a short space of time. The Junior Glens now has 7 teams, 120 players and more kids interested in joining these teams.

A bit of history

In 1961, the late Dr Michael McFadden founded The Glens Soccer Club. The Glens were a break away group from the Shamrock Rovers, and went on to become very active. They ran charter flights to Ireland and had two soccer teams, comprised of English, Irish and Scottish nationalities. Unfortu-

nately, in 1969, they decided to disband the soccer teams and concentrate on golf and bowling.

A few die-hardsoccer fans, namely John and Tom Frati, Tom Lochran, Peter Day, Margo and Robert McGeorge and Mary Casey decided to reactivate the soccer team. Joe Feeney was the coach, he was succeeded by Neil Hagan who had just returned from Ireland. Neil had been involved with the famous Manchester United Soccer Club, later joining the Fulham Soccer Club in London.

Under Hagan's management, with an emphasis on youth, the Glens developed into an Irish-American team who were "second to none." The team went from success to success, fighting their way from Division 4 up to the majors. The team received national prominence when they reached the US Amateur Cup Final in Georgia in 1979 and the US Open Cup Championship Northern Division. In April 1981 the Glens suffered a devastating loss with the untimely passing of their beloved coach and friend, Neil Hagan.

Sean Shannon stepped up to the plate, took over as coach and in 1984 his team achieved what no other Irish team had ever done when they won the San Francisco Soccer Football League (SFSFL) Major Championship.

Sean was succeeded by coach Gus Eadie who led his team to win the SFSFL Major Division Championship again in 1989-90. In 1990 the team once again reached the final of the US Amateur Championship in Pennsylvania.

Players memories

Over the years the Glens have been blessed with an abundance of talented and committed players. Here are some of the fond memories of two of those players.

From John Shanley: "I first started playing for the Glens in 1985 in what was called Major Division (now called Premier). It was Eamon Corry's first year as well and we were lucky to be playing with the likes of John McNulty and Tom Ryan. Little did I know I would play with these 3 guys for close to the next 10 years.

"I played with the Glens for almost 15 years and looking back it went by faster than a Wayne Rooney penalty kick.

"We had great times and some great wins. We won the Major Division Championship one year and finished second in the nation in the Amateur Cup.

I still run in to people we played against and they all say, 'we hated to play you guys.' They knew it was going to be 90 minutes of hard tackles, hustle and heart—we never gave up. We were not the prettiest team to watch but it was always exciting and the fans got their money's worth.

"The best part of the Glens was probably the people who were part of the team, they all had a love of the sport and I will always treasure thier friendship. I would like to acknowledge especially Mary Casey and Sean Shannon, whose hard work and dedication got the team through alot of tough times. Go Glens, it's a grand old team to play for!"

From Kieran Saunders:

"The SF Glens went to the Amateur cup final in 1990 led by Gus Eadie as coach. Team members such as John McNulty, Eamonn Corry, John Shanley, Tommy Ryan, John Brooks, and Robbie Neville had moved the club to another level but left disappointed with the defeat at the hands of a team from Florida. (Staying up half the night before probably did not help either!)

"Back then, all league games were played at Balboa Park and the Glens main contender was always the Greek Americans. Mary Casey was the club's guiding light. Without her generous support, the Glens would not have existed.

"John McNulty, who in my opinion was the best player to wear a Glens uniform, coached and played. Tom Simpson came on the scene and brought a wealth of experience and expertise in the coaching and personnel department and an influx of new talent, which would once again make the Glens a force to be reckoned with. The team toured Ireland under his guidance and also won the Major division twice. 2001 was another great year for the SF Glens under coach Tom Simpson, winning the SFSFL Major Division and the SF Carlsberg Cup Championship, and reaching the finals in the Western Division Open Cup and the finals in the Carlsberg National Championship."

Our apologies if anyone has been left out. Please contact us at www.sfglens.com

Glens Mission Statement

"This team is first and foremost about the kids. Our number one priority is to make this sport both fun and affordable for all families. We strive to develop the skills of all players, starting with the basics and aim to mature them into top class players. We will start in a lower division and work up to a higher division and wish to have the players continue playing through high school and hopefully come back and revive a senior Glens team. We believe we have the ability and talent to progress and become competitive at the State level. For all of the above to happen, and to keep the fees affordable for all, we will need dedicated volunteers and fundraising throughout the life of the club." (Leo Cassidy & John McCormack).

The Glens Soccer Club can be proud of their club name and proud of the club's achievements. The Glens have represented the City of San Francisco well. Good luck to the Juniors!



SAN FRANCISCO GLENS JUNIOR SOCCER ASSOCIATION

50TH ANNIVERSARY DINNER DANCE

United Irish Cultural Center

2700 45th Avenue, San Francisco

Saturday, January 28th, 2012

No Host Cocktails at 6pm / Dinner at 7pm

\$75 per person / \$700 per Table of Ten

For tickets please contact:

Billy Flanagan (415) 203-5992, Seán Shannon (415) 418-0837

or John Shanley (415) 672-9461

OR John McCormack or Leo Cassidy

under the contact tab at www.sfglens.com

For more info about the Glens
please visit our website

www.SFGLENS.com

• Tryouts January 29th •