

Stephen Nolan looks back on his time in the UCD Superleague.



With the 2011/12 Superleague just around the corner, Stephen Nolan uses his Superleague experiences to try and explain the reasons his team were successful, once upon a time!



Superleague can be summed up as the good, the bad and the very very ugly. When it's good, it's brilliant, when it's bad, its tear jerking but when it's ugly, its plain hilarious! Our four years crusading our way through the battlefields of the Restaurant pitch and Old Merville as part of the iconic DCU Dislexics showed us all this wonderful virtue had to offer.

Our first couple of years fit into the bad category. Our initial enthusiasm and resultant clean matching kit was quickly quashed after coming up against teams whose religious beliefs solely depended on how well they got on with Jesus when they were in school with him. The added complication of having to remember the name you were assigned when being booked didn't help, especially if you were the unfortunate with a female name that the last minute scramble had thrown up.

Our second couple of years turned out to be the good part. A more mature, and dare I say athletic, team took on the best the Sunday Premier league had to offer. A season of hard graft, which included unparalleled feats such as our mascot playing with a fleece hoodie under his jersey and scoring a 20 yard header in the same game, resulted in our first shot at silverware. The traditional end of year Roebuck 3 showdown pitted us against Football United for the title. Despite being underdogs, we managed to come out on top and with that the celebrations began. And of course, once you pop your cherry, you just can't stop. Four days later, we powered through to the cup final. An epic 0-0 draw was followed by the longest series of penalties in history. Six hours later, we came out on top and the double had been done.

In our fourth and final year, we showed the tactical astuteness of a beach ball and changed our name to Wet Dream Team. We figured that teams would no longer know who we were and we could enter the twilight of our careers unscathed. Of course, we failed after a local journalist foiled our plan by noting we still had the same players and jerseys.

At this stage, our team was in good shape. So much so, ashamed as I am to admit it, on one occasion we did a 10 minute warm up before a match. And



undefeated season saw us bring home another Sunday Premier league crown and the satisfaction of defending our title. The traditional end of season awards night yielded more

success with our midfield maestro crowned player of the year, although as is customary for the end of season bash, the night will long echo in the memories for what cannot be published!

And finally, there is the plain ugly. Superleague is famed for its many stereotypes and they're all spot on. Only in Superleague could you watch your centre back's Dad coming to blows with the clampers. Only in Superleague could you get a referee who insisted on relieving himself with his pants around his ankles on the astro. Only in Superleague could you shoot from your own box and watch the ball trickle in as the goalie realises he can't feel his arms from the night before, and most importantly, only in Superleague can you turn up with your mates every weekend without a care in the world, have the absolute banter and be part of UCD's greatest institution.