

# HUGE STASH FOUND FOOTBALL OVER €3M

# AT INDUSTRIAL UNIT DUO HELD HEROIN

DISCOVERY: The €3 million worth of heroin seized by gardai at industrial unit on Wednesday

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**EXCLUSIVE**  
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Chief Reporter

**A FORMER** League of Ireland footballer and a football club's manager were both in garda custody last night in connection with the discovery of a massive €3 million stash of heroin.

Dubliners Andrew Noonan (41), the manager of Bluebell United FC, and Keith Quinn (31), a former player for Shelbourne FC, were arrested by elite gardai at an industrial unit in Dublin on Wednesday night.

Mr Noonan is the current manager of Bluebell United FC, and is the son of well-known ex-Provo John Noonan — who once worked as a bodyguard for U2's Bono.

Noonan and Quinn were both arrested at the unit where the massive consignment of heroin was discovered by gardai from the Garda National Drugs and Organised Crime Bureau (DOCB) and Revenue officers.

**They remained in custody in Blanchardstown Garda Station Under Section 2 of the Criminal Justice (Drug Trafficking) Act last night after gardai announced they had seized 22kg of heroin in the operation.**

The pair can be held for up to one week.

## Shooting

Apart from being the son of John Noonan, Andrew is well known to gardai, having previously been arrested and questioned in relation to the shooting of Dubliner Robert Delaney in 2008.

He was never charged for any offence in relation to that shooting, which left postman Robert Delaney in a vegetative state in hospital.

Andrew Noonan also has a criminal conviction for firearms offences dating from 2000 and he was also once fined €2,000 for possession of an imitation firearm that was seized by gardai carrying out a search of his home.

**Keith Quinn meanwhile has not come to garda attention before, but is well known in Irish football circles as a former player for Shelbourne FC — and Sheffield United in England.**

He also previously played for Bluebell United, Longford Town and Cork City football clubs. He is the younger brother of Republic of Ireland internationals Alan Quinn and Stephen Quinn.

And speaking to *The Star* last night, chairperson of Bluebell United Andy McNulty said: "We just can't comment on it at the moment. There is still an investigation pending and at the moment we don't have all the details so we wouldn't like to comment on it much further."

Spokespersons for the FAI and the Senior Football League, meanwhile, refused to comment on the arrests.

- **Manager and former player both in custody**
- **Ace is brother of two ex-Ireland internationals**



HAUL: Part of the seizure

lengthy investigation by gardai and the Revenue's Customs Service. And speaking yesterday, Detective Chief Superintendent Angela Willis — who is in charge of the DOCB — said: "The outcome of cooperation between Revenue and Customs and An Garda Síochána, has resulted in the seizure of a significant quantity of heroin from circulation within communities that are suffering the consequences of drug trafficking."

Revenue, meanwhile, said the "collaboration between both agencies, as well as international colleagues, was significant in the successful outcome of this operation."

## Importation

"This operation was part of Revenue's ongoing joint investigations targeting the importation of illegal drugs."

"If businesses or members of the public have any information regarding drug smuggling, they can contact Revenue in confidence on Confidential Phone Number 1800 295 295," a Revenue spokesman said.

**Andrew Noonan previously faced protests when he was named manager of Bluebell United in 2011 — due to the fact that he had twice been arrested in connection with the shooting of Robert Delaney.**

Mr Delaney, a father of two, intervened in a row outside a Dublin pub and over a period of months he was then followed and intimidated before he was shot at his home in Tallaght in October 2008.

When a caller rang the bell to his apartment, Mr Delaney looked over the balcony to see who was calling and was met with a shotgun blast to the face. While he did not die he suffered catastrophic injuries and he has been in a vegetative state, with no hope of recovery, since the shooting.

The gunman who shot him, Daniel Gaynor from Dublin, carried out the shooting for a sum of money.

Gaynor was later shot dead in Finglas in north Dublin in August 2010.



CATASTROPHIC INJURIES: Noonan was questioned over the 2008 shooting of Robert Delaney (above)



PROBE: Det Chief Supt Angela Willis



ARRESTED: Current Bluebell United manager Andrew Noonan was taken into garda custody