

PAIR REMANDED BY JUDGE

By JOHN HAND

A FOOTBALL star and a club coach have appeared before a court charged over a €3million heroin seizure.

Former League of Ireland ace Keith Quinn, 31, and Bluebell football manager Andrew Noonan, 41, were both charged with possession of drugs and possession with intent to supply.

The two men were arrested at Rosemount Business Park in Dublin on Wednesday after a joint intelligence operation by the Garda National Drugs and Organised Crime Bureau and Revenue and Customs.

The court heard that the seizure of 20kg heroin is valued between €2.8million and €3million. The court heard that the package had arrived from Amsterdam in Holland.

Dublin District Court Judge John Brennan heard that Quinn, of Monastery Gate Avenue in Clondalkin, made no reply to the charges at Blanchardstown Garda Station on Friday.

Co-accused Noonan, of Redhills Park, Ellistown, Co Kildare, told gardai "no comment" when the charges were put to him.

Both men applied for bail but gardai objected to each on the grounds of the seriousness of the alleged crimes, that they pose a flight risk and that the lengthy sentences they can face for the offences if convicted.

Quinn's lawyer Karl Monaghan appealed for bail, telling how his client has no convictions and had never been arrested before.

The court heard how Quinn, who was dressed in a black Nike tracksuit yesterday, enjoys a good relationship with his partner and his young daughter. It also heard that gardai were in possession of his passport.

Noonan's solicitor Claire Usher argued that officers have her client's passport, therefore he does not pose a flight risk. The dad-of-four was tied to the community, football and gyms.

Ms Usher also told how her client Noonan can lodge €46,000 into court and a further €30,000 which he would have by Tuesday as surety.

Mr Monaghan said Quinn had €950 he could lodge and his family may be able to secure a further €2,000.

But Judge Brennan denied both men bail due to the seriousness of the charges.

The pair were remanded in custody and will appear before Cloverhill District Court on Thursday via video link.

Quinn was previously on the books for Sheffield United and went on to play for Cork City and Shelbourne in the League of Ireland. He later played for Bluebell United in the Leinster Senior League.

Noonan is the manager of Bluebell United and was a talented footballer.

Following the bust on Wednesday, Detective Chief Supt Angela Willis, Head of Bureau at the Garda National Drugs and Organised Crime Bureau, said it had "resulted in the seizure of a significant quantity of heroin from circulation".

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BAIL DENIED

Noonan and Quinn held in custody on drugs charges

FOOTIE STAR AND COACH ON €3M DRUGS RAP