

SSE AIRTRICITY NATIONAL UNDER 17 LEAGUE

UCD 4 (Sean McDonald 16, 52, Brandon Perry 74, 80)

WEXFORD YOUTHS 3 (Chris Phelan 15, Ivan Meegan 20, 51)

By John Hudson



Brandon Perry's winner with ten minutes remaining completed a dramatic fightback for UCD in a seven goal thriller against Wexford Youths at the AUL Complex to gain them maximum points from their opening two fixtures of the SSE Airtricity National Under 17 League.

The visitors had looked like they might be heading for their first win of the campaign when they lead 3-1 with just six minutes of the second half played.

But goals from Sean McDonald and Perry had the Belfield side level with fifteen minutes remaining before Perry bounced to grab the winner after Wexford 'keeper Adam Dunbar had saved brilliantly from a Jack Ryan penalty kick.

The sides had swapped early first half goals with defender Chris Phelan beating UCD 'keeper Finn McGowan from close in after Danny Doyle had headed on a perfectly placed Ivan Meegan corner on 15 minutes.

A minute later UCD were back on terms with McDonald firing past Dunbar before the Youths could savour their opener.

But it wasn't long before the lead was regained as the impressive Wexford left winger Meegan cracked in a classy strike from 25 yards past the helpless McGowan to give them the advantage at the break.

That lead was quickly extended shortly after the resumption when Meegan was on hand again to easily beat McGowan and the UCD wall with a well placed free kick from just outside the area.

However UCD bounced back again and a minute later Yaya Camera crossed from the back line and McDonald was on hand to grab his second of the game with the help of a deflection off full back Martin O'Connor.

UCD had their tails up now and Neil Farrugia saw his effort cleared off the goal line by Ronan Devereux and Perry forced Dunbar to tip over with a stinging drive.

And it was Perry who eventually pulled UCD level on 74 minutes with a smart finish from close range following a goalmouth scramble.

UCD manager Stephen Fox had earlier introduced substitutes Ryan Hannon and Farrugia and Hannon paved the way for the winner on 80 minutes when his goal bound drive was handled on the line by Meegan.

Referee Mark Moynihan straight away awarded the penalty and had no option but to send

off the unlucky Meegan.

Dunbar nearly rescued Wexford with his diving save to keep out Ryan's spot kick but Perry reacted quickly and darted in to hammer the ball home as UCD managed to hold out for the final ten minutes and claim the win.

The Belfield side now share top spot with unbeaten Cork City who came out on top in their derby clash with Cobh Ramblers when Cian Leonard and Cian Murphy netted the goals at St Colman's Park.

UCD: Finn McGowan; Evan Farrell, Joseph Manley, Luke Boore, Dylan Rowe; Brandon Perry, Jack Ryan, Yaya Camara, Mark Dignam; Sean McDonald, Ryan Meaney.

SUBS: Luka Lovic (for Camara 55), Ryan Hannon (for Meaney 62), Neil Farrugia (for Dignam 62), John O'Keane (for Lovic 90).

Not used: Conor Kearns, Dylan Byrne, Sean Quinn.

WEXFORD YOUTHS: Adam Dunbar; Martin O'Connor, Ronan Devereux, Chris Phelan, Jack Bates; Steve Hempenstall, Conor McGrath; Ciaran Murphy, Vinny Quinlan, Ivan Meegan; Danny Doyle.

SUBS: Michael Molloy (for Bates 34), Michael Carroll (for Doyle 75), Adam Rochford (for McGrath 82), Ronan O'Kelly (for Devereux 89).

Not used: Cormac Kehoe, Michael Gardiner, Adam Dempsey.

REFEREE: Mark Moynihan (Cork)

Assistants: Wayne McDonnell, Stephen Parnell.