

Finn Harps U19 0-2 UCD AFC



UCD went back to the top of the U19 Elite Division with this convincing win in Donegal on Saturday night.

After a four hour drive and on a freezing night on an almost unplayable waterlogged pitch an upset could have been on the cards but UCD started the game well.

The boys in blue took the lead thanks to a penalty from Captain Colm Crowe. The impressive Dean Hurley was taken down in the box and Crowe stepped up confidently to send the goalkeeper the wrong way and give his side the lead.

UCD's second goal came courtesy of a Kilian Cantwell header. He rose highest to head in with the help of the post, it looked like the Harp's goalkeeper had been fouled but the goal stood.

UCD 'keeper Conor O'Donnell was called into action a couple of times in the first half, he made an excellent double save to deny Harps before Cantwell missed a good chance before half time to make it 3-0 to the away side at half time.

As they say in football 2-0 leads are dangerous but UCD held onto their lead and could have added to their tally. Cantwell again went close while to excellent Ola Adeyemo almost got his first goal for the club.

Tiredness began to creep in and UCD coach Jamie Moore made three second half changes, Adam Whelan replaced the injured Dean Hurley and almost had an instant impact going on a brilliant mazy run down the left.

Adam Zayed came on for Robbie Slater while late in the game Ciaran Quinn replaced Adeyemo who had taken a knock.

All in all a good confident performance from UCD after two defeats in their last three league game, and they go back to the top of the table on goal difference with 21 points from 11 games so far.

The season is now at the halfway point but there are a number of teams in with a shout of the title with 8th placed Cobh Ramblers just six points behind leaders UCD.

Following away trips to Shelbourne, Dundalk, Drogheda and Finn Harps, UCD are on the road again on Saturday when attention switches to Longford Town in the cup before a trip to Tallaght Stadium to take on title rivals Shamrock Rovers the following Saturday.

Coach Jamie Moore was happy with the performance; “I’m delighted for the lads, it was a very difficult place to come and the pitch was terrible but we played well at times and tried to pass the ball all night which the players deserve huge credit for as they could have hoofed it on that pitch but we tried to play.”

“It puts us back on top and in a good position at the halfway point but it’s more about the development of the players, Martin (Russell) was here tonight having a look as he is putting together his squad for next season and a few of the lads will have done themselves no harm at all.”

“ I would also like to wish left back Sean Coyne the best of luck, he was excellent as always on Saturday, he met up with the Ireland U18 squad straight after the game on Saturday night for a 6am flight to Switzerland for two internationals this week.”

UCD team – O’Donnell, Traynor, Cantwell, Byrne, Coyne, Malone, Hurley (Whelan, 60), Crowe, Mahon, Slater (Zayed, 70), Adeyemo (Quinn, 87)