

UCD AFC picked up the second trophy of the season following victory in the CUFL final.



UCD took their place in the final of the Colleges and Universities League Final, less than a week after the club's Freshers had picked up the Harding Cup. With the chance of a double on the cards IT Carlow were always going to be in for a fight if they wanted to ruin the Belfield Students' party. As it was goals from Cillian Morrison and Dean Clarke gave UCD the double they craved.



UCD controlled the opening exchanges in a fiercely contested match and could have opened the scoring with only a few minutes on the clock. Robbie Benson was played through and rounded the keeper but failed to connect properly with the finish and the defenders were able to clear the ball before it would have dribbled over the line. It was then the turn of Carlow to try their luck when an Eric Molloy strike from just inside the box looked destined for the top corner

with McGinley stranded only for it to cannon off striker Dean Broaders and to safety. McGinley will be sure to point out the UCD goal was never in danger.

Almost immediately, UCD took the lead thanks to the highly impressive Dean Clarke. The move started with a short kick out from McGinley to Tristan Dent who clipped a lovely ball into Cillian Morrison. The Donegal man flicked the ball on for Clarke to chase. Clarke left the defenders in his wake before lifting the ball delightfully over the advancing Carlow keeper to put the Students in Blue ahead. Clarke's pace was causing the Carlow back four all sorts of problems. Only for the heroics of the Carlow goalkeeper UCD would have gone two nil up. Robbie Benson's inch perfect through ball to Clarke was sure to bring a goal only for him to be denied by the Carlow keeper's outstretched foot.

Carlow came out in the 2nd half all guns blazing and dominated the half without every really creating any clear cut chances. Any chance they had they looked



to their tricky wingers who were well defended by Niall Wright and Conor Butler for the entire game. The tireless work of both Belhout and Morrison on the wings for UCD halted many Carlow attacks. UCD seemed happy just to clear their lines and soak up as much pressure and

catch Carlow on the break. The midfield combination of Murray, Benson and Molloy covered every blade of grass and were constantly getting the better of their midfield counterparts. Mark McGinley was doing his best to frustrate Carlow by taking his time with kick-outs and free-kicks. The proverbial snail would move quicker than McGinley.

With 20 mins remaining Morrison dampened Carlows hopes further with a second goal. Clarke crossed an inviting ball into the box and Morrison was in the right place at the right time to finish into the corner. With a mountain to climb now, Carlow put 3 up top and threw everything at UCD in the hope of clawing the game back. The centre back pairing of Tristan Dent and Tomas Boyle dealt with every onslaught and were solid throughout ensuring a clean sheet.

Samir Belhout nearly curled in a speculative free kick from 30 yards only to be denied by the post. If that had of gone in, nobody would have heard the end of it from the UCD captain. UCD saw out the remaining minutes of the game and were crowned champions.

Next up, UCD take on the monumental task of winning the Collingwood Cup on Belfield soil.