

UCD AFC took all three points from their clash with Sacred Heart on Friday night.



Sund

UCD AFC climbed back up the Leinster Senior League Sunday Senior 1 table with a 2-1 win over close rivals Sacred Heart. Two cracking finishes from Tyrone McNelis were enough to give the Students all three points having fallen behind earlier in the game.

UCD began the game well but could not get a good hold on the game in the opening exchanges as a bitterly cold wind played its part in impeding both sides attempts at a flowing game. UCD conceded early on as Sacred Heart sprung a surprise attack that caught the UCD back four by suprise. The defence was split and the Heart's striker finished well past McGroarty in the UCD goal.

UCD took the set back on the chin and gradually forced their way into the game. UCD's front two were instrumental in closing down the back four allowing UCD to win the ball back early. Eoin Roche was in fine form on the wing as he teased his opposite number regularly before providing quality balls into the box. Marc Whelan was combining well with Brian O'Reilly on the right wing and one such combination sent James Timmons into the box. His pulled ball flew across the box and was nearly turned into the goal by Tyrone McNelis but the Sacred Heart defender intervened just in time.

The pressure was definitely mounting on the home side and UCD looked certain to get back on level terms, and so it proved. Eoin Roche again found himself at the heart of the attack. Roche's slight of foot pulled off an immaculate nutmeg before he used that same left foot to swing an inviting ball into the box. Tyrone McNelis arrived right on cue to power a header into the back of the net and restore parity.

UCD's intense pressing game was causing the home side all kinds of problems as UCD picked up the pieces and set up attacks of their own. Brian O'Reilly was the architect of UCD's second goal as his clever play gave McNelis his brace. O'Reilly took on several defenders before slipping the ball to the feet of McNelis. With the defenders converging on him at pace he manipulated the ball to create space and smash the ball into top corner.

The half time whistle interrupted UCD in full flow and in the second half Hearts too the opportunity to regroup and begin anew, attacking the UCD defence with renewed gusto. Doyle and Dillon were having none of it at the back as they repelled attack after attack, James Timmons and Kieran Harte continued their impressive midfield partnership as UCD's team performance ensured all three points came back to Belfield.

UCD Take Heart and Three Points

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UCD AFC: McGroarty, O'Reilly, Dillon, Doyle, Curtin, Marc Whelan (Lynagh), Timmons (Campion), Harte, Roche, McNelis, Michael Whelan