

UCD AFC hit the magical 100 goals scored on Saturday in the Leinster Senior League Senior 1A division.



Having wrapped up the league title with a 2-1 win over Valeview Shankill, UCD set about putting themselves in the record books. Going into the game UCD AFC's Leinster Senior League Premier 1 side were 3 goals off the century of goals scored in one season. A convincing 3-1 win away to Booth Road and UCD had that record. Alan Sutton and Darragh Culleton inched UCD closer to the record before the effervescent Philip Bourke popped up to make sure UCD hit a century.

UCD began the game brightly in attack. Alan Sutton and Daniel Connolly were linking up perfectly in the opening exchanges and the home defence were struggling to match their movement. It was the referee's whistle for offside that was curtailing most of UCD's attacks. Jack Rogers, from left back, was in marauding form as UCD looked likely to grab an early lead.

Daniel Connolly's pace was causing all sorts of problems in the defence as time and again they were left for dead. UCD looked to be all set to go one up when Connolly squared the ball for Alan Sutton. His miscued effort was straight at the keeper and the ball bounced to safety.

Sean Geoghegan had been occupying the left back spot in recent games but on this occasion he was back in his more regular left wing position. Allowing Jack Rogers to do most of the running, Geoghegan used the extra space to put his left foot to good use. An Alan Sutton cross found him on the edge of the box and Geoghegan connected sweetly but the shot flew just wide.

It was not all UCD in the opening exchanges. Booth's little and large partnership up front were causing their fair share of problems. The Booth number 9 had several efforts at goal having lost his marker but Eric Barber in the UCD goal was equal to everything. However, a long ball into the UCD box proved to be more trouble than expected and the ball bounced to the Booth striker who tucked it away smartly. UCD were one down and in need of a new injection of energy as they tried to move out of first gear.

Alan Sutton was the man to get The Students back on level terms. Another inswinging corner from the left boot of the experienced Sean Geoghegan was not properly cleared and Sutton was there to smash a volley into the bottom corner.

UCD continued to press for the go ahead goal but found their attacking play breaking down time and again in the last third. Niall Hanley and Thomas O'Brien were being well marshalled in the centre by their opposite numbers and it was clear that more imagination was required if UCD were to improve their goal tally.

Philip Bourke was determined to launch attack after attack from centre half. Striding forward with purpose before playing a one two with his more advanced team mates threatened on several occasions to pay dividends but it was not to be as the first half petered out.

UCD began the second half with more purpose and having tightened up at the back their was only going to be one winner as O'Brien and Hanley in the middle began to play their way through the home midfield with more reward. Darragh Culleton came on for Geoghegan and made an instant impact.

Pressing forward on the left hand side he picked up a perfect through ball from Sutton. Culleton lifted his head, drew back his left foot and smashed an unstoppable effort past the keeper. UCD had the goal they were looking for to win the game and now there was only one thing in the away side's mind.

Kevin Dunne was introduced to the fray and it was clear that Booth Road had no idea how to deal with his pace. He fired forward at every opportunity and if a shot on goal did not result a corner was the least UCD ended up with.

It was from one of his forays that UCD won a corner. Niall Hanley swung it into the box and Culleton expertly avoided any touch on the ball, had he touched it things could have been so different. Waiting in the shadows like an expert predator was Philip Bourke. His cat like reflexes were there for all to see as he placed a header, right amount of power and perfectly directed, into the back of the net. The keeper was left with no chance.

UCD played out the game in typical fashion. Every player growing in confidence as pass after pass dropped to a UCD player and in truth The Students could have had more than 100 goals this season.

The figures don't lie and 20 points clear of their nearest rivals, 100 goals scored, 44 more than their nearest competitor, a goal difference of plus 78, not to mention an unbelievable camaraderie, has all added up to a sensational start to most of this squad's first year with UCD AFC.

UCD AFC: Barber, O'Huiginn, Keogh, Bourke, Rogers, Matterson (Dunne), Hanley, O'Brien,

Geoghegan (Culleton), Sutton (Horlick), Connolly