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Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bennett lifts Reading United past rivals Ocean City, 2-0

United claim seventh consecutive win & sole possession of second place in division

READING, PA (June 29, 2017) – Reading United (8-1-0) used two goals from in-form forward Khori Bennett to earn an important 2-0 victory over the visiting Ocean City Nor'easters (7-4-0) at Wilson High School's Gurski Stadium in the 44th all-time meeting between the long time rivals. The win extended Reading's current winning streak to seven games and propelled United into second place in the Premier Development League's Mid-Atlantic Division.

Bennett, wearing the captain's armband for the match, got United out in front early. In the 4th minute, Jelani Pieters started an attacking move down the right flank, slipping past Ocean City midfielder Ignacio Tellechea to reach the end line before playing a low, hard cross into the six yard box. Bennett got a thigh to the cross to send the ball into the back of the net to stake United to a 1-0 lead.

Following the goal, the match became quite physical. Daniel Nimmo left the match in the 17th minute after picking up a lower leg injury following a challenge by Reading midfielder Jorge Guinovart. Just after play resumed, Ocean City's Max Hemmings cut down Guinovart near midfield, forcing the United man to leave the match with a knee injury. Hemmings was shown the first of five yellow cards the Nor'easters would pick up in the match.

United continued to control play through much of the first half, putting the Ocean City backline under considerable pressure. Reading's attacking play finally got the best of Ocean City as defender Nikola Fimic was sent off in the 43rd minute. Bennett collected a ball in behind the Nor'easters defense and was one-on-one with Todd Morton. Fimic, the 14th rate prospect in the PDL, fouled the pacey Reading forward from behind as the last defender leaving the match referee no choice but to show the red card.

Coming out of the halftime break, Bennett, who has been in tremendous form since returning from a leg injury that cost him to miss much of the season, bagged his second goal of the match in the 50th minute. Evan Finnegan found time and space down the left channel and lofted a delicious cross into the area. Bennett, streaking down the middle of the pitch, beat everyone to the ball and thumped his headed effort into the net to double Reading's lead. It was Bennett's third goal in two games and his fourth of the season.

Reading's defense, which has conceded just eight goals, the lowest total in the PDL Eastern Conference, took control of the match over the final half hour of the game, effectively dealing with Ocean City's rare forays into the final third of the pitch. Ben Lundt was only called on to make two saves as United kept their fourth clean sheet of the season.

The 2-0 win extended Reading's current win streak to seven games and pushed United into sole possession of second place in the Mid-Atlantic Division with 24 points. United are now 11-2-4 against Ocean City since 2010 when the series resumed after a two year hiatus.

Coach Stephen Hogan was proud of his side's gutsy performance against their fierce rivals, saying, "This is our biggest week of the season because of the rescheduled games. They came through it well. They need to prepare, mentally, for another war against Ocean City on Sunday. We need to keep winning, that's just flat out the truth. We're building that ruthless, winning mentality."

United's next regularly scheduled home match will take place on Wednesday, July 5th when they host local rivals Lehigh Valley United at Don Thomas Stadium. Kickoff is set for 7:30pm with tickets available online. Tickets for the all regular season matches are available at www.readingunitedac.com. Contact our ticket sales team at sales@readingunitedac.com for all your group needs.

ABOUT READING UNITED AC

Reading United A.C. is the Greater Reading area's premier minor league soccer team. Led by the ownership group of Berks Professional Sports, Inc. the club was founded in 1995 as the Reading Rage. As the club entered its 15th season a name, logo, and color change was made to better feature the ties to the local and state community as well as the soccer goals of the team and its partners. Now in its twenty-second season, Reading United's commitment to professional player development has produced over fifty players currently on the rosters of professional clubs throughout the United States, Europe and Latin America. Reading United is the official Premier Development League affiliate of Major League Soccer's Philadelphia Union. For more information about Reading United AC, visit www.readingunitedac.com.



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