

UCD NEWS



The UCD FC Supporters' Club Newsletter

Issue 28

March 2007

WELCOME TO THE twenty-eighth issue of UCD News. In this issue, we have a profile of new signing Matt Gregg, a look at one Student now gunning for the Premiership and another looking to stay in the league and, as usual, the Belfield Diary.

Another long pre-season is almost over, although with all the farce in the league of late, it feels like the league was never really away!

Since our last issue towards the end of November last, there's been plenty happening. For starters, the big news is that we're going to be in the Premier this year. Finishing sixth in 2006 was no guarantee of being invited to the new Super-Duper League, but scoring the second highest mark in the entire league in the off-field stuff was plenty, and after some doubt as to whether or not our face would fit (see UCD News issue 26), we ended up actually passing out a few "bigger" teams.

After that, the focus was on which players would be leaving and which would be staying. Pat Kavanagh was offered a trial at Birmingham City, which ended successfully (granted, after one of the most protracted transfers you're going to see! He ultimately signed in January after going on trial in November), and he has been joined at St Andrew's by Gary Dicker, who is on a six month loan. The best of luck to both! James Hussey, reserve keeper for last season, has joined Bray, although Ireland B international Darren Quigley has re-signed after Falkirk opted for Peter Schmeichel's son over Daz, and trials at Stockport County and West Ham United and talks with Derry City proved equally fruitless. He does, however, have a clause in his new contract to move clubs for a quoted fee should the opportunity come along. We've signed Matt Gregg as cover, with a probable view to becoming our number one once Quigley does move on to England. However, we haven't signed Pat Sullivan, despite him playing against Wayside, he subsequently surprisingly signed for Longford.

Completing the transfers out is full-back Keith Doyle, who has retired due to work commitments, and Darragh Ryan, who has gone to Cork. Brian King – son of TV3 pundit and Irish women's team manager and former UCD coach Noel – has joined, while Shels have taken John Brophy, Kieran Harte and Aaron McEneff on loan, with Stephen Hurley making a similar move to Bray. However, this just means that more of our hugely successful U-21 squad – Francis Moran, Evan McMillan, David Last, Darren Forsyth, Timmy Purcell, Damien Kelly and others – can stake a place in the squad in the coming months.

Pre-season has been much better than last year though, with a 0-0 draw against Wayside not telling the true story of UCD's dominance, while wins over Athlone and Kildare – 3-0 and 4-0 respectively – have seen some players show huge promise for the new season.

Around the league, and the big news concerns Shels, who have, to the shock of no-one but the FAI, imploded under massive debts. With their entire playing and coaching panel gone, the decision was taken to relegate them and promote Waterford in their stead. With Cork and Sligo also greatly weakened, Bray and Longford all as weak as last year and neither promoted (or "promoted" in Galway's case) side looking particularly strong, there is hope that this could be a very successful season for the College...

BELFIELD DIARY

29th November – UCD announce scholarships for 16 players, including first-teamers Ronan Finn, Conan Byrne and Kieran Harte.

3rd December – UCD seal their customary Fair Play award (or more accurately, share it with Shels) and once more await the results of the national Fair Play award to see if we'll get a chance of UEFA Cup football next season. The draw will be made at the start of May 2007.

5th December – Alan Cawley moves from Waterford to Bray.

8th December – Rob McAuley is released by Dundalk. Willie Doyle is released by Shamrock Rovers.

11th December – UCD are confirmed in the Premier Division for 2007 after an anxious two-hour wait as clubs were given the news alphabetically. In fact, the club's score of 374 for off-field criteria was only bettered by Galway and moves the club up from 9th in the on-field criteria to sixth overall.

19th December – Pat Kavanagh scores on his debut for Birmingham's reserves as they lose 3-2 to Port Vale.

21st December – Former UCD defender Clive Delaney is released by Derry, a couple of weeks after scoring to take the FAI Cup Final into extra time.

5th January – Galway release Mick O'Donnell.

11th January – Pete Mahon is rather sensationally linked with the vacant Shels job after informing the UCD board that he would be attending a second meeting with Shels supremo (and former UCD player) Ollie Byrne. Former UCD keeper (of three games) Austin O'Neill signs for Kildare. Seán Finn leaves Dundalk to return to the MLS in America. Kevin Grogan signs for Glentoran. Gary Dicker goes on loan at Birmingham City for the remainder of the English season.

14th January – After an anxious weekend, Pete turns down the Shels job and instead takes up a new full-time job doubling UCD manager with the role of head of a new UCD academy.

25th January – Former UCD forward Robbie Doyle signs for Paul Ince's Macclesfield Town.

26th January – Celebrations Belfield Park way as Darren Quigley re-signs for UCD for the coming season.

4th February – Pete Mahon is awarded a special merit award at the FAI Soccer Awards night for his work in football as a player and manager, at junior and senior level and at league, non-league and international levels.

11th February – Pat Kavanagh starts and Gary Dicker comes on as a sub as Birmingham's reserves beat Stoke 3-0.

12th February – UEFA's Fair Play update shows Ireland on 7.935, just outside the 8.000 needed to enter UCD in a draw for a UEFA Cup spot. UCD draw 5-5 with Bohs in the opening game of the new U-21 futsal tournament (technically, part a friendly round of games to help teams familiarise themselves with the rules). UCD, Bohs, Rovers, Pat's, Bray, Drogheda, Dundalk and Monaghan.

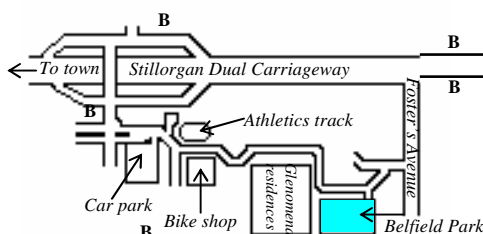
15th February – Pat Kavanagh scores to help Birmingham into the semi-finals of the Birmingham Senior Cup after a 3-0 win over Willenhall Town. Gary Dicker gets his first start.

18th February – UCD draw 0-0 against Wayside Celtic; Conor Sammon misses four one-on-ones. UCD beat St Pat's 6-5 in the opening game of the eL U-21 indoor football tournament. Conan Byrne scores twice, with Kieran Harte, Ger O'Callaghan, Greg Bolger and Timmy Purcell all score once. The league winners ultimately get a spot in the UEFA Futsal Cup. Bohs, Rovers, Dundalk, Drogheda, Bray and Monaghan are all competing.

24th February – Goals from Conor Sammon, David Last and Shane McCaul seal a 3-0 win over Athlone.

25th February – Timmy Purcell and John Brophy score twice each as Kildare are beaten 4-0. UCD lose 7-6 to Shamrock Rovers in the U-21 indoor football league. UCD's goals come from Kieran Harte, Damien Kelly (a brace each), John Brophy and Timmy Purcell.

WHERE IS BELFIELD PARK???



Buses to Belfield:

3	10
11	11B
17	46
46A	46B
46C	46D
63	84

B – Bus stop

CROSSING THE POND

A look at two former UCD players trying their luck across the water...

*From the official Birmingham City website
(www.Blues.PremiumTV.co.uk); Feb 07*

Blues have made their second raid on Irish side University College Dublin to sign midfielder Gary Dicker on a six-month loan.

The Ireland youth international has been on trial at West Hills for the last week and has impressed sufficiently for Blues to give the 20-year-old an extended chance to prove his worth.

Dicker has been attracting the attention of several English clubs in the last year, having spent time on trial at Doncaster Rovers and Bradford City.

The six-foot 20-year-old was called into the Irish Under-19 squad for the friendly tournament in La Manga in 2005.

And a good start to the 2006 season for UCD in the eircom League led to his promotion into the Republic's Under-21 squad for the Madeira invitational tournament, where he played three games and scored an injury-time winner against Finland as Ireland won the tournament.

Dicker joins up with former UCD team-mate Patrick Kavanagh, who recently signed a short-term permanent contract with Blues.

*From the official Macclesfield Town website
(www.MTFC.PremiumTV.co.uk); 24/01/07*

The Silkmen are delighted to announce the signing of 24-year-old Irish Under-21 international striker Robbie Doyle until the end of the season. Robbie was in the academy and then signed professional terms with Blackburn Rovers a few years back, but then went home and has since played in the eircom League with Bohemians, UCD, St Patrick's Athletic and Bray Wanderers.

While at Bohs, he won an Irish Under-21 cap against Finland [Ed – he won the cap while at UCD, not Bohs] and played in the Champions' League against Rosenborg. Paul Ince said "I am delighted that we have managed to get Robbie to sign for the rest of the season – he's been training with us for the last couple of weeks and has impressed us."

Robbie Doyle spoke exclusively to Silkmen Online after signing his contract today.

He said "It's great to get the chance to break back into English football with Macclesfield Town, and I'm grateful to the gaffer for giving me the chance to come over and train with the lads, and now sign a deal. I'm looking forward to getting started and trying to win a place in the team, and hopefully score a few goals!"

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FOCUS ON – MATT GREGG

Name – Matt Gregg

Date of birth –

Place of birth –

Position – Goalkeeper

Joined UCD – February 2007

Signed from – Bohemians

UCD debut – Hasn't played as yet

First goal – Hasn't scored yet and isn't likely to do so!



UCD career statistics – Hasn't played as yet

Did you know? – Matt used to play for Torquay United in the English Division Three. Before turning pro for the Seagulls, he was also given the choice of pursuing a professional cricket career! When at Torquay, he signed for Crystal Palace for a fee of £400,000. He also had spells at Swansea and Exeter.

UPCOMING EVENTS

3rd March – The club's open day, to be held in St Raphaela's School in Stillorgan from 4:00 to 5:30. See the UCD website for more details.

9th March – The kick-off of the 2007 season – home to Shamrock Rovers. A big crowd is expected for the Hoops' first game back in the Premier since...well, playing us back in 2005. Tickets are on sale at the gate, or you can get them in advance through the UCD Sports Centre.

16th March – The big games come thick and fast as we have our first trip to Drogheda to make fun of Doolin! There'll be a Supporters' Club coach heading to the game – e-mail us at stgonline@stgonline.com or text 087-9417327 for more info.

23rd March – Cork City visit Belfield, presumably for a point and a whinge.

1st April – Away to Sligo in the Showgrounds. Note Sligo are playing their home games on Sundays for the moment due to floodlight problems.

3rd April – Or thereabouts. The League Cup First Round...

Don't forget – if you can't go to a UCD game, you can keep in touch with the Students in many ways –

- Aertel page 222
- The UCD text service – text UCD to 53131 to receive goal flashes and news. Texts cost 30p each. To unsubscribe, text "Unsub UCD" to 53131.
- <http://www.FootieForums> – the UCD messageboard, which will continue to provide match reports all season – drop by and have your say!
- RTÉ Medium Wave and Newstalk 106, both of which offer regular eircom League commentary on Fridays.
- www.UCDsoccer.com, the official UCD website
- www.Eleven-a-side.com/ucd - A handy site for UCD news and match previews.
- www.STFCOnline.com - The Supporters' Club/fanzine website.