

# UCD NEWS



## The UCD FC Supporters' Club Newsletter

Issue 31

July 2007

**WELCOME TO THE** thirty first issue of UCD News. In this issue, we have a profile of midfielder Brian King, news of a welcome return from injury from Podge McWalter and, as usual, the Belfield Diary.

We've had an up and down time of it of late – losing form in the league, but still making progress in the cups. We've lost to Bray for only the second time in six years in the league, lost to Sligo at home for the first time since 1986, and the first time at home in the league since 1981 and lost at home to Drogheda in the league for only the second time ever. All this has seen us drop to eighth in the table, with a gap now developing to sixth. With Longford 13 points adrift at the bottom and seemingly doomed, and only one other team entering a promotion/relegation play-off, we do at least seem to be fairly safe from any trouble at the wrong end of the table.

In the cups, however, we've made progress. Salthill Devon were without six players due to holidays when we arrived last month and weren't really in training, as their manager admitted in the local paper, noting some were going down the gym and some were just lazy. A very comfortable 4-0 win was the almost inevitable conclusion, with a Goal of the Season contender from Derek Doyle, a casual 25 yard volley on the turn on his weaker right foot – an exact replica of one scored in the friendly against Wexford Youths at the start of the season, so it certainly wasn't a fluke!

In the League Cup, we're into the semis now after a harder-than-it-should-have-been 2-1 win over a Harps side who'd won five league games in a row without conceding a goal. Two up inside half an hour, we never built on that despite several chances and almost let Harps back into it, but held on for the win in the end. Bohs, Rovers and Derry are the sides left in the tournament, so it's certainly a strong semi-final line up. The final will be shown on Setanta as is now customary, with the winners playing off against the First Division winners for a Setanta Cup spot. The semi-final draw is on on Thursday lunchtime.

The U-21s appear fairly determined to regain their league title – with a ridiculously strong squad as noted opposite, they've blown away Ballinasloe, hammered St Pat's in the Cup and gained some vengeance for the league quarter final defeat in Bray which ended our season last year. Definitely worth keeping an eye on as the season progresses; we'll have regular updates on [www.fut.ie](http://www.fut.ie) and in the match programme.

Finally, work is continuing on the Belfield Bowl developments – keep up to date with progress on the UCD forum [here](http://www.fut.ie).

## BELFIELD DIARY

**19th May** – UCD lose 1-0 to St Pat's in the last group game of the U-21 Shield to miss out on a place in the semis by a point.

**25th May** – Not even the resignation of Pat Fenlon a couple of days earlier can spur Derry to a win against UCD; Alan McNally's first half injury time equaliser sees the unbeaten run extend to ten.

**26th May** – Brian Shortall re-signs, having been in America since the end of last season.

**27th May** – Ireland lose to Scotland and England and draw with Wales in the annual semi-pro Four Nations tournament. Shane Fitzgerald plays all three games, while James O'Sullivan starts one and comes on as a sub in the other two.

**29th May** – Bray (yes, Bray!!) end the 10-match unbeaten run with a 2-1 win in the Carlsle. Derek Doyle scores for UCD.

**1st June** – Waterford succumb to third degree Byrns (one of the best UCD-related media puns ever!), losing 3-1 at home to UCD. For the second time this season, Paul Byrne scores two and Conan Byrne gets the other. UCD are awarded two penalties in a match for the first time since playing Waterford away in October 2003; Byrne scores one and misses one, although Byrne scores the rebound.

**12th June** – As the league resumes after the one week mid season break, Setanta announce that Shamrock Rovers v UCD is to be covered live, being moved to Monday 16 July. Bogdan leaves the club to return home to Romania.

**17th June** – UCD cruise through the FAI Cup Second Round with a 4-0 away win against U-21 champions Salthill Devon. Conan Byrne scores twice, with Derek Doyle and Conor Sammon also adding goals.

**22nd June** – Sligo win in Belfield Park for the first time since 1981 with two clinical finishes against UCD's poor finishing of a litany of chances. Highlights can be viewed [here](http://www.fut.ie) (YouTube)

**23rd June** – In the U-21s league, UCD win 3-2 away to Bray, with Darren Forsyth, James O'Sullivan and Timmy Purcell scoring. The huge strength in depth in the UCD squad is underlined by the line up – Darren Quigley; David Last, Evan McMillan, Brian Shortall, Killian Gallagher; James O'Sullivan, Brian King, Greg Bolger, Fran Moran; Timmy Purcell, Darren Forsyth. All bar Moran have played for the first team this season.

**30th June** – Target practice at Belfield as the U-21s rack up an 8-0 win against hapless Ballinasloe. Forsyth gets four, Shane Fitzgerald two, James O'Sullivan one and Ronan Finn, returning from injury, gets one.

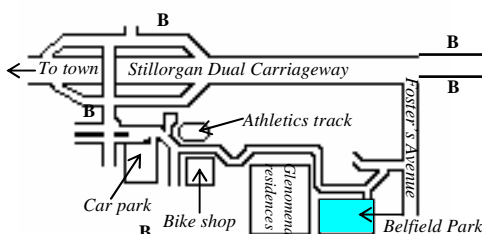
**2nd July** – UCD beat Finn Harps 2-1 to reach the League Cup semi-final. Conor Sammon and Derek Doyle are on the mark again. Former Students are on the move as the transfer window opens – John Martin joins Shamrock Rovers and Pat Kavanagh joins Bray

**3rd July** – The Irish Universities squad travelling to Thailand in August features nine current and one former UCD player – Billy Brennan, Darren Forsyth, Killian Gallagher, Kieran Harte, David Last, Séamus Long (the one former player), Evan McMillan, Francis Moran, Declan O'Donnell and James O'Sullivan.

**5th July** – The FAI Cup Third Round draw sees Dundalk man Steve Staunton draw UCD away to Dundalk.

**6th July** – A 92nd minute goal seals a 1-0 win for Drogheda in the league. Paul Crowley received the first red card for a UCD player in Belfield Park since Hugh Davey back in Pete Mahon's first game in charge back in 2003.

## WHERE IS BELFIELD PARK???



### Buses to Belfield:

3	10
11	11B
17	46
46A	46B
46C	46D
63	84
B – Bus stop	

## PODGE BACK!

*From eleven-a-side.com – link is [here](#)*

UCD received a huge boost on Tuesday night when midfielder Pat McWalter played his first game in nine months. The Wicklow man played the first half in a friendly against English side Stockport County at Belfield Park - a game that finished 1-1 with Conor Sammon scoring the UCD goal.

McWalter's last game was on 1st October 2006 when he limped out of a League Cup game in Derry. He suffered a cruciate ligament injury which kept him out of action until this week.

McWalter is delighted to finally be nearing a return to first team actions, "It was brilliant to be back. It's only when you are out of the game that you realise how much you miss playing".

He recognizes that he still needs some work outs before returning to the first team, "I still have a few weeks to go before I'm ready for first team action. I've the Under 21s game on Saturday and few more after that and then hopefully I'll be ready," he said. "I was happy enough. I thought I would be a lot less fit than I was but could have done with a few hard tackles all the same".

Although hopeful of a quick return, McWalter knows competition for places will mean it won't be easy to go straight back in, "The lads have been doing very well, especially Conan (Byrne) on the right but I'm going to give it my best shot".

UCD are scheduled to play Shamrock Rovers in a live televised game on Monday night.

## GARY GOT

*From the Stockport Express – link is [here](#)*

DELIGHTED County boss Jim Gannon appears to have finally got his man this week. Republic of Ireland under-21 international midfielder Gary Dicker is flying into England tomorrow [Thursday] to undergo a medical ahead of a move to Edgeley Park from Dublin outfit UCD [University College Dublin].

Gannon said: "The deal has been agreed in principle, Gary will be flying in on Thursday for a medical, after which he will sign a two-year contract.

"Chasing Gary has been a long process, but we're now getting a man who I feel is more than capable of making his mark with us next season. His profile was perfect for us. He's got good experience despite his age, he's got good mental strength, and above all he's got tremendous potential."

Dicker is a 6ft 1in midfielder who has already made 68 senior appearances for UCD over in Ireland. He will turn 21 on July 31.

He has represented his country at under-21 level on four occasions - scoring one goal - and actually spent six months of last season on loan at Birmingham City.

Dicker is believed to have been courted by a number of rival clubs, so the capture will be seen as something of a coup for the Hatters. County are believed to be preparing to part with a small transfer fee for the 20-year-old.

"Gary has been playing in the UCD first team from a very young age," added Gannon. "Gary's hungry and very driven, and he's very competitive and very combative. He's a good, exciting player, and I'll be delighted to work with him next season."

Meanwhile, Gannon has been working on two other potential incoming transfer deals this week.

Negotiations are at a 'delicate' stage with another club in Ireland regarding a goalkeeper - as hinted by Gannon in last week's Express - while the Hatters boss has also spoken to Oldham Athletic about Gareth Owen.

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## Focus On – BRIAN KING

**Name** – Brian King

**Date of birth** – 8 January 1987

**Place of birth** – Derry

**Position** – Centre mid

**Joined UCD** – February 2007

**Signed from** – Shelbourne

**UCD debut** – H v Shamrock Rovers, 09/03/07

**First goal** – None yet

**2007 stats** – Played 6 (5 league, 1 League Cup), scored none

**UCD career statistics** –

Played 6 (5 league, 1 League Cup), scored none

**Did you know?** – Brian's dad is Noel King, the current Irish women's international team manager and former UCD coach. Brian was born in Derry because Noel happened to be Derry City manager at the time.



## UPCOMING EVENTS

**7th August** – Away to pace setters St Pat's in Richmond Park, where we've already won this season. The game has been moved to the Bank Holiday Monday for live coverage on Setanta.

**7/8 August** – The dates set for the League Cup semi-final away to Derry, although this will obviously be moved due to the Pat's rescheduling. The Bohs v Rovers semi should go ahead on one of these dates, and the official website will have details of our tie when details are announced.

**10th August** – The second round of games comes to a close (already!) with a visit from Galway United.

**16th August** – A tricky trip north to face Dundalk in the FAI Cup. This one's on the Thursday. Dundalk are one of a number of clubs housing numerous former UCD players, having Neil Gallagher, Aidan Lynch, Rob Dunne, Philip Hughes and Robbie Doyle in their ranks. Again, a bus to this one – probable departure is 6:00 from the Montrose.

**24th August** – Home to Shamrock Rovers in Belfield.

*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.FootieForum> – the UCD messageboard, which includes 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](http://www.UCDsoccer.com), the official UCD website
- [www.Eleven-a-side.com/ucd](http://www.Eleven-a-side.com/ucd) - A handy site for UCD news and match previews.
- [www.STFConline.com](http://www.STFConline.com) - The Supporters' Club/fanzine website.