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## Press Release

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Honors even at first ever Philadelphia Union Festival** *Reading United & Bethlehem Steel play entertaining 1-1 draw*

**READING, PA. (June 12, 2016)** – Youth was served at the first ever Philadelphia Union Festival. Union affiliates Reading United A.C. and Bethlehem Steel FC played to a 1-1 draw on a glorious early summer evening at Exeter's Don Thomas Stadium.

Coming off a hard fought victory versus the Baltimore Bohemians on Friday, Reading United Head Coach Stephen Hogan shuffled his line-up. Bradley Fountain and Khori Bennett were the only regular starters to see action as Hogan looked to give minutes to many of the players on Reading's large squad.

Steel Head Coach Brendan Burke also played a very different group from the team that earned a 1-0 victory on the road in Charlotte. Bethlehem's squad was filled out by the Union's gifted Under-18 squad that features many of the organization's top prospects, with player-coach Fred as the only Steel regular on the field.

With Union Sporting Director Earnie Stewart on hand to scout the young sides, players were looking to impress.

As they have throughout the 2016 season, Reading struck early.

In the 7<sup>th</sup> minute, Khori Bennett sprinted past the Steel back line and sent a shot on frame. Steel goalkeeper C.J. Dos Santos watched helplessly as the ball zipped past him and clanged off the back post. Ismael Noumansana pounced and calmly slotted home to give Reading the early 1-0 lead.

The goal brought the young Steel side to life, but it was the oldest player on the field that nearly tied the match in the 16<sup>th</sup> minute. Off a Bethlehem corner that fell to his feet, Fred sent a shot across the face of the Reading net that struck the far post and was scrambled away by the United defense.

At the stroke of halftime, Steel FC was denied by Reading goalkeeper James Coyle. Bethlehem sent a shot low and to the far post off a corner, but Coyle made an acrobatic diving save to keep Steel off the scoreboard.

Midway through the second half match, Fred helped get Bethlehem on the scoreboard. The 36 year-old midfielder collected a long diagonal ball in the left channel and broke in to the Reading penalty area. Backtracking defender Jordan Wilson looked to have the wily veteran corralled, but the Brazilian deftly played a ball off Wilson's arm. The referee called for a handball and pointed to the penalty spot.

Freddy Gill stepped up to the spot and sent Coyle the wrong way to equalize for Steel FC in the 68<sup>th</sup> minute.

In the 90<sup>th</sup> minute, Reading had one last chance to find a late winner off a free kick, but Dos Santos made an easy save to end the game.

Coach Hogan was pleased with Reading's performance saying, "I thought the game was good. We had Steel under pressure, they had us under pressure. We took our chance well. Ismael Noumansana finished his run and put the ball in the net after Khori Bennett did most of the work." He continued, "The teams moved the ball well. It was fun to see and it was some nice soccer."

#### **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 15<sup>th</sup> 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-first 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 South 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](http://www.readingunitedac.com).



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