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Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Reading United stay hot, hammer Evergreen, 6-1 *Four goals from Kieran Roberts powers United past the Hammers*

READING, PA (June 29, 2018) – Reading United A.C. (10-0-1) may be the only thing hotter than the summer heat wave setting in over Eastern Pennsylvania. United (10-0-1) barely broke a sweat on the way to an emphatic 6-1 victory over the struggling Evergreen Hammers (0-9-1) at Wilson High School's Gurski Stadium. The win helped Reading extend their lead at the top of the Premier Development League's Mid-Atlantic Division to nine points over the New York Red Bulls U23s with just three matches to play.

United wasted no time seizing the advantage in the match. In the 8th minute, newcomer Austin Amer hit a lofted, diagonal cross that picked out Nico Solabarrieta in the left channel. The United midfielder took a quick look up before sliding a pass to Kieran Roberts who hit a low shot near post to beat Evergreen netminder Nick Conklu.

Showing why they are the top rated team in the PDL's Eastern Conference, United doubled their advantage just after the midday point of the first half. In the 28th minute, Reading launched a counterattack down the right flank. Leading the charge, midfielder Ezana Kahsay blazed past the Evergreen defense and played a cross to a wide open Khori Bennett, who passed the ball into the back of the net to make it 2-0.

Evergreen struggled to deal with the Reading onslaught and conceded a penalty kick in the 35th minute. Defender A.J. Sheta clumsily fouled Solabarrieta in the box, leaving the match referee no option but to point to the penalty spot. Bennett, wearing the captain's armband for the match, opted to take the kick and sent Conklu the wrong way to make it 3-0 to Reading. It was Bennett's fourth goal of the season.

Moments later Kieran Roberts was bundled over in the box, sending the United forward to the penalty spot in the 38th minute. Roberts would also send Conklu the wrong way to push United out to a 4-0 lead. It was Roberts' second goal of the evening and third goal of the season, but the imposing English striker was not finished.

Kieran Roberts added to the Hammers' misery when he earned his hat-trick in the 63rd minute. Roberts took a pass from Gilbert Waso and sprinted past the Hammers defense before slotting a low shot that Conklu was helpless to stop. Roberts' third goal of the evening put him level with teammates Aaron Molloy and Felipe Hideki for the team lead in goals.

In the 75th minute, Roberts would strike yet again. Substitute midfielder Zach Zandi played a long diagonal ball that found a wide open Kahsay on the right side of the penalty area. Kahsay did well to control the ball before playing a pass back to Roberts, who was making a late run. The Englishman blasted a shot into the back of the net for his fourth goal of the match and fifth of the season.

Evergreen would grab a consolation goal in the 80th minute as Valdir DeSouza played a slick ball behind the Reading defense that Tyrone Madhani powered past Reading goalkeeper Bennet Strutz. Evergreen's goal spoiled Strutz's chance at a sixth clean sheet in 2018 and was only the third goal Reading conceded from the run of play this season.

Head Coach Alan McCann praised Roberts' performance in front of goal during the match, saying, "It's fantastic for him. From the second half of the Long Island match he was superb, he did exactly what we asked of him. This puts him in the shop window. Fair play to him, he set himself a target in the dressing room before the game. He wanted four and told me not to take him off until he got four and that was the challenge we set for him and well done to him."

Roberts credited his teammates and remained humble about his performance. "Coach said go for the throat. We've been doing well, but haven't been scoring that many. He just said get some goals on the board, be hungry. Luckily, today I was on the end of a few so congrats to the other guys. We did well as a team."

Reading United will hit the road for two games in four days beginning with a pivotal showdown with the New York Red Bulls U23s on July 3rd that has major implications on the division title race. United then face a trip down the shore to face their old rivals, the Ocean City Nor'easters, one final time in 2018. Reading will return home for the regular season finale on Saturday, July 14th where they'll face in-state rivals, Lehigh Valley United.



Official Premier Development League Affiliate of the Philadelphia Union





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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-third 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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