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Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Reading United shock the Cosmos *United score three goals in a six minute span to defeat NASL champions*

READING, PA (May 17, 2017) In one of the most magical night's in club history, Reading United shocked the soccer world by scoring a 3-2 upset win over the visiting New York Cosmos to advance to the Third Round of the Lamar Hunt U.S. Open Cup at Albright College's Shirk Stadium. United overcame an early setback and stunned the two-time defending North American League Soccer champions with three goals in six minutes to advance to the Third Round for just the second time in club history.

Reading United Head Coach made two changes to his line-up ahead of the Open Cup tie against New York, inserting Mo Adams for the suspended Aaron Molloy and Jelani Pieters for Khorri Bennett. The Cosmos brought a side full of decorated professionals like Jimmy Maurer, Javi Marquez and Khalif Alhassan.

The NASL Champions struck first just ten minutes into the match. Javi Marquez cut into the center channel and flicked a pass to the charging Alhassan in the left channel. The Cosmos forward made no mistake and looped his shot over United goalkeeper Ben Beaury and into the back of the net to give the Cosmos an early 0-1 lead.

After a tactical shift that saw Reading United actually drop deeper in midfield, the hosts began to claw their way back into the match.

In the 38th minute, Paul Marie capitalized on Darrius Barnes' slip near midfield and raced in behind the Cosmos defense. The Frenchman, in his third season with Reading, hit a low drive that Maurer tipped but couldn't keep out of the back of the net for the United equalizer.

Just two minutes later, United struck again. Some clever footwork allowed midfielder Hugo Delhommelle split past Marquez and find space. Delhommelle spotted the run of Marco Micaletto and chipped a ball over the Cosmos backline. Micaletto, a native of Reading, England, brought the pass down and fired past Maurer to give United a 2-1 lead.

Shirk Stadium erupted four minutes later as Frantzdy Pierrot doubled Reading's lead to 3-1. Pierrot, who earned his first call-up to the Haitian National Team earlier this year, stripped the ball from Cosmos defender David Ochieng and easily scored past the stranded Maurer. It was Pierrot's third straight match with a goal.

The Cosmos, showing the heart of a championship side, would not go quietly. The NASL champions came out of the locker room on the front foot looking to overcome the two goal deficit. New York halved United's lead in the 63rd minute in spectacular style. Alhassan found room down the right flank and sent a cross into the Reading penalty area. Danny Szetela connected on a diving header to make it 3-2.

With the Cosmos pressing hard to avoid being upset, Reading was forced to spend the final 25 minutes of the match soaking up New York's sustained pressure. New York peppered the Reading goal with eight second half shots. Making things more nerve wracking for United and their anxious supporters, Mo Adams was sent off in second half stoppage time after he picked up his second yellow card of the match.

After one final desperate push by the Cosmos, United cleared a cross and the referee's final whistle set off the celebrations from the Reading players and their jubilant fans.

Coach Hogan, who has been a part of many Reading United matches as a player and now a coach, acknowledged the sensational work of his squad, saying, "The boys are absolutely buzzing, I hope they enjoy themselves tonight. Start to finish we knew we were going to be under a lot of pressure. I think defensively, we were perfect. Mo Adams and the back four kept us tight, kept us compact. We talk about that all the time within the club and that and the six to ten minute spell of pure ruthlessness in front of goal wins us the game."

Reading United will now face the Harrisburg City Islanders in the Third Round of the U.S. Open Cup on Wednesday, May 31st at Exeter's Don Thomas Stadium. United and the City Islanders have met three times in Cup play, with the Islanders holding a 2-1 edge in the series over Reading. Harrisburg feature former Reading stars Pedro Riberio, Manolo Sanchez and Aaron Wheeler.



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Reading United will return to home on Saturday, May 27th when they welcome Mid-Atlantic Division rivals F.A. Euro to Don Thomas Stadium. Kickoff is set for 7:30pm with tickets available online. All United home matches throughout the 2017 PDL season will be played at Exeter Township Senior High School. 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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