HOPE THRASH CHESTER TO EXTEND UNBEATEN RUN

Hope Men’s Football 3rds moved up to third and extended their unbeaten run to three games with a convincing 5-2 win over University of Chester 2nds.

Four goals in the final 20 minutes saw the hosts overcome a stubborn Chester side in a game, which was low on quality and chances for long periods.

Both sides had to work against inclement conditions at Wyncote, with high winds and rain coupled with a poor surface preventing them playing their best football. Despite this, Hope opened the scoring in the first few minutes through a close range finish.

Chester battled back admirably. Their high pressing prevented Hope from capitalising on their early lead and were rewarded for their efforts with an equaliser midway through the first half. A delightful ball in from the left caught the hosts napping, leaving an unmarked Chester forward to head home at the far post.

Neither side could gain a grip of the game as the first half went on, with both teams struggling to maintain possession amid worsening conditions. Chances were few and Hope went close with a sliding finish brilliantly kept out by the Chester keeper. Against the run of play, Chester won a penalty, however, a wonderful stop by the Hope goalkeeper ensured the sides went into the break level at 1-1.

The game opened up in the second half, Chester missed a gilt edged opportunity to take the lead as their forward dragged his shot wide from 10 yards as he was one on one with the keeper. Hope managed to punish the visitors for their missed chances, taking the lead as a cross-cum-shot cannoned off the post into the path of the Hope midfielder on hand to poke home the rebound.

The floodgates opened as the game entered the final 15 minutes. Hope extended their lead through a fine finish one on one with the keeper as the forward was sent clear by a wonderful through ball. The hosts created a flurry of late chances as the Chester keeper was forced to create a series of fine saves.

Hope were able to add gloss to the score line as they scored twice during the closing stages, with the first coming through a neat header at the far post and a late penalty converted by the goalkeeper to seal a resounding victory.

Liverpool Hope defender Alex Platt

“We’re delighted to get the win after that first half. We weren’t ourselves as we struggled to play the conditions and we let them press us. The second goal was massive for us as we could take control of the game and we were clinical after that”