

FC UNITED OF MANCHESTER 4, NANTWICH TOWN 0

Marsh 23, 31, 63

Mack 84

It was quite apt really that this match should be switched to Ewen Fields as Nantwich's Jekyll and Hyde season continued. This time it was Mr Hyde who turned up as lacklustre Nantwich were out fought and outplayed by a slick FC United side who cruised to a 4-0 victory. In truth, it could have been more as Phil Marsh's hat-trick fired the Rebels to the biggest win of the season with ten man Nantwich crumbling after missing an early penalty.

It could have been all so different. The match started at a fast and furious pace and Ashley Carter tested FC keeper Sam Ashton as the Dabbers matched their hosts. On 18 minutes, Dave Whittaker set Michael Lennon free on the right and as he raced towards goal he was challenged by Adam Tong. It seemed a harsh decision as referee Mr Hilton pointed to the spot but Ashton flung himself to save Lennon's spot-kick and when the ball ricocheted back to the Nantwich captain, he fired against the bar.

It proved to be the turning point as FC stepped up through the gear box to take a stranglehold on the game and shot after shot rained in on Lee Jones' goal.

The Dabbers were caught out on 23 minutes with a quick break down the right and Adam Carden's deep cross was headed home at the back post by Marsh. Eight minutes later Marsh added a second, latching on to a long ball before drilling past Jones into the corner of the net. Jerome Wright missed a golden opportunity to make it 3-0 as an energetic FC midfield threatened to overrun the Dabbers. Marsh's cross-come-shot drifted wide of the upright and then Ben Deegan flicked Wright's driven cross over the bar.

The home pressure continued after the interval with Tong cracking a 25 yarder against the post. It was game over on 62 minutes when Darren Tinson was shown a straight red card for hauling down the tricky Marsh as he was free on goal. To rub salt into the wounds, Marsh dusted himself down to blast the free-kick onto the post and into the net off the back of Jones.

The over-worked Jones made a terrific block from Deegan but was left clutching at thin air as Simon Garner's long ranger whistled past the post.

Dabbers' Man of the Match Dave Whittaker manfully tried to hold together the Nantwich rearguard but FC added a fourth goal seven minutes from time. Dave Neville's shot from distance was blocked by Jones but substitute Jamie Mack was on hand to prod home the loose ball to make it 4-0.

Rebels' Manager Karl Marginson declared after the game that it was the best FC had played all season. For Nantwich, Pete Hall must be hoping that it will be Dr Jekyll that turns up for today's clash against North Ferriby.

Nantwich: Jones, Reeves, Tickle, Whittaker, Tinson, Sedgemore, Mahmoud, Blackhurst, Rhead, Lennon, Ashley Carter. Subs: Mellor, Jack (for Mahmoud, 15mins), Gibson (for Blackhurst, 89), Flynn (for Rhead, 68), Aaron Carter.

Attendance: 1650