

Chch Utd pull off surprise draw

Brendon Egan

Bottom of the table Christchurch United delivered the shock result of the round in Mainland Premier League football on Saturday.

United held two-time defending champions Cashmere Technical to a 2-2 draw at Tech's Garrick Park home. It was a vital point in United's bid to avoid relegation, with just five games left.

United's afternoon got even better when news filtered through of Halswell United's 7-0 drubbing by Western, which narrows the gap at the bottom of the table to two points.

Experienced Christchurch United defender Gary Bint said it felt like a win for the team after the game.

"We were totally chuffed. It's a confidence booster. We were well happy with that.

"We wanted to show that Christchurch United, we're not finished yet."

Former Nomads goalkeeper Duncan Reed was the hero for United, pulling off several outstanding saves throughout the game. He was deservedly named United's player of the day.

United's Andrew Tuckey scored the equalising goal, 15 minutes from fulltime. He broke away from the Tech defence and lobbed the ball over the head of goalkeeper Danny Knight.

Bint said United wanted to play a positive brand of football against Tech, using three attackers up front.

They were rewarded for their

AT A GLANCE

Mainland Premier League results:

Cashmere Technical 2 (Roddy Lockhart, Sho Mathieson) drew with Christchurch United 2 (Chris Costanti, Andrew Tuckey) HT: 1-1

Ferrymead Bays 4 (Michael White 2, Renta Yamamoto, Mark Peers) beat Universities 0 HT: 2 - 0

Western 7 (Jacob Allen 2, Sam Miles 2, Fraser Angus, Andreas Wilson - pen, Jeremy Adams) beat Halswell 0 HT: 4 - 0

Nelson Suburbs 3 (Ben Wright 2, Omar Guardiola) beat Coastal Spirit 1 (Meysum Shafahi) HT: 2-1

Points after 16 rounds: Cashmere Technical 39, Nelson Suburbs 37, Ferrymead Bays 30, Coastal Spirit 24, Western 17, Universities 15, Halswell 10, Chch Utd 8.

Women's results:

Cashmere Technical 2 (Monique Barker, Mia Daniell-Cook) lost to Coastal Spirit 3 (Annalie Longo 3) HT: 0 - 1

Parklands 3 (Emma Fellowes 2, Meike van der Meer) beat Western 0 HT: 2 - 0

Selwyn 1 (Ashleigh Leonard) lost to Universities 6 (Gabrielle Brodie 3, Emma Johns 2, Aynsley Martin) HT: 0 - 2

FC Twenty11 the bye

Points (games in brackets): Coastal Spirit 28 (11), Cashmere Technical 22 (9), Universities 22 (9), Parklands 10 (9), Selwyn 7 (9), FC Twenty 3 (9), Western 3 (10)

attacking mindset when Chris Constanti opened the scoring after 15 minutes.

The ball was flicked into the penalty box after a free kick on the halfway line and dropped to Constanti, who volleyed the ball into the net.

"We wanted to go out there and try and give it a go from the start and not just defend," Bint said.

Tech were missing two of their stars, Aaron Clapham and Dan Terris through injury, but were outperformed by a United side.

Their lead at the top of the table has been reduced to two points after Nelson Suburbs beat Coastal Spirit 3-1 in Sunday's clash in Nelson.

English player-coach Ben Wright netted twice for Suburbs.

United take on Western in their next game on Saturday, before playing Halswell on August 1, in a game which should decide who finishes last.

Third placed Ferrymead Bays continued their hot goal-scoring form, easily beating Universities 4-0.

The competition's top goalscorer Michael White scored two goals, one in either half, to take his tally for the season to 17.

Canterbury United English midfielder Mark Peers and youngster Renta Yamamoto also scored for Bays in the win.

Bays have scored 17 goals in

their past four MPL games, without conceding, but have left their run too late to challenge Tech and Nelson.

Western produced their best result of the season, thumping Halswell 7-0 at ASB Football Park.

They turned it on in front of goal, after not having scored in their previous five games. Western were in complete control at halftime, scoring four first half goals.

Sam Miles netted twice in the first half, while Jacob Allen and Fraser Angus also got in on the act. Allen added a second after halftime to make it five.

Halswell's day went from bad to worse on the 60-minute mark when goalkeeper Nathan Roberts was shown a straight red after bringing down Daniel Thoms in the box.

In the Mainland women's Premier League, leaders Coastal Spirit are on track for a fourth straight title after beating second-placed Cashmere Technical 3-2 in a vital top of the table clash.

Football Ferns' midfielder Annalie Longo was an influential figure for Coastal, scoring all three goals as they built a 3-0 advantage.

It could have been 4-0 but Mel Cameron's penalty attempt was kept out by Tech 'keeper Megan Andrews. Tech pulled two goals back, but it was a case of too little, too late.

Coastal have a six point buffer at the top of the table, but Tech and Universities both have two games in hand.