



Fraser Valley Soccer League



October 17, 2020

From the Media Desk of the Fraser Valley Soccer League...

After an uncertain and tumultuous off season, the top division of the Fraser Valley Soccer league is back with an all-new look. The brand-new Adidas Premier League has a number of new faces after an off-season of change and the league is pleased to welcome Trinity Western University Spartans, as well as the University of the Fraser Valley Cascades to the FVSL's top flight. They will line up alongside defending champions Abbotsford United and test their mettle against perennial powerhouse Coastal FC. The league is also pleased to welcome Chilliwack FC back to the top flight after their very successful championship winning season in Division 1. They will be reunited against old foes Langley United, Greater Vancouver United, Surrey United Firefighters and the rebranded Langley FC SAFC.

Of course, the greatest change of all this offseason was the Covid-19 Pandemic. Despite a delayed start the FVSL is happy to now be up and running, although there have been some adjustments. For the foreseeable future there will be some minor rules modifications as well as some scheduling challenges due to the cohort framework that will see a number of mid-week games. This will also affect how we bring you all the latest news about the APL and the FVSL as our regular publishing timelines will require a slight tweak. Despite all these adjustments, the on-field product in the APL remains in top form and we look forward to keeping you apprised of all the action in the Adidas Premier League this season!

Here's a recap of everything that has happened so far...:

Chilliwack FC 0-7 Abbotsford United – Friday Oct. 2 @ Tzeachten Turf

After a triumphant season in Division 1 last year, Chilliwack FC returned to the top flight and were quickly put on notice that they were back amongst the FVSL's big boys with a visit from defending APL champions, Abbotsford United. The teams spent the opening 20 minutes feeling each other out and exchanging half chances until Abbotsford found the opener and never looked back. Two of last season's stand out players in Abby's title winning campaign, **Tyson Hunter** and **Brady Weir**, combined to open their side's account with Hunter slipping in Weir who slotted on the half hour mark. Minutes later it was the same combination once more with Hunter this time crossing for Weir to nod home as that partnership showed little rust after seven months between competitive fixtures. Chilliwack were likely hoping to be able to steady the ship and collect themselves at halftime, but there was to be no respite. A lovely team effort saw Abbotsford pass the ball around seemingly at will before new boy **James Najman** cut it back to the returning **Daniel Davidson** who slammed it home. Davidson is returning to United after two seasons away and he right away showed that he still has the same nose for the net that made him a Golden Boot winner in his final season before departing. As soon as the second half began, Chilliwack were on the back foot straight away again and **Colton O'Neill**, another standout from the championship winning side, worked his way in before Weir set him up to make it 4-0. Things went from bad to worse for Chilliwack when **Dan Goodey** saw his in-swinging corner go straight into the net before Goodey and Davidson then combined to set up O'Neill for his second of the evening. Weir then capped off the romp for Abbotsford by setting up Davison for his brace. Goalkeeper **Mike Haldin** chalked up the shutout and Abby got their title defense off to a flying start, leaving Chilliwack to lick their wounds and regroup, though **Malcolm Stafford** was a bright spot for the visitors, despite the loss. "So good to see our guys back on the field playing a game after such a long," said Abbotsford Coach Alan Alderson post-match, "we are excited to be back!"



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Langley United 2-1 Langley FC SAFC – Friday Oct. 2 @ Willoughby Turf #4

During the off-season SAFC Red Bulls merged with Langley FC and took on the new moniker of Langley FC SAFC. SAFC are still led by coach Brock Fraser and after a season that saw his group make progress getting established in the APL, he and his squad will be looking to take a further step forward under their new structure this year. They began their campaign against their new derby rival Langley United. Despite this being a new rivalry, the intensity did not take long at all to ratchet up with the bad blood growing between the two sides and the referees having their hands full. SAFC found the back of the net via a rebound given up by newly acquired Langley United goalkeeper **Nuno Jesus** that was pounced upon by Jared Crane who was making his debut for SAFC. It was one of only a few mistakes from the debutant for United on the night as Jesus provided solid backstopping on this occasion. Fortunately for Jesus, the SAFC goal was cancelled out by a tally from United player-coach, and wily veteran, **Azad Palani**. The teams considered their lively battle, particularly in midfield where new SAFC signing **Junhyung Lee** was going toe-to-toe with United talisman **Connor Hildebrant**. SAFC looked to have the best chance for a second goal when **Riley Reid** snuck a low, hard shot under the outstretched arm of Jesus, only to see it cannon back off the post. The tipping point came late on in the second half when SAFC midfielder Duncan Grainger was shown a second yellow card and became the first player to be sent off in the APL this season. SAFC battled on courageously, including via top performances from defender **Christian Mendoza** as well as the always dangerous **Emmanuel Ekeh**, and through substitute goalkeeper **Kevin Picard**, who had been called upon to replace the injured **Cameron Frost** when he was injured during the second half. However, they would not be able to hang on for a point as a late penalty was expertly converted by Hildebrant to claim all three points for United. **Jordyn Field** also turned in a top effort for United in their season opening win.

Greater Vancouver United 0-6 Coastal FC – Saturday Oct. 3 @ Newton Athletic Park #3

After a second consecutive runner-up season, Coastal FC looked to strengthen during the off-season in a bid to return to the summit of the APL. The league was saddened to lose stalwart side Port Moody Gunners this year, but Coastal were quick to pounce landing perennial Golden Boot challenger **Graeme Meers** to bolster their already renowned offence. Meers join a now three-headed monster up front for Coastal alongside fellow All-Stars **Isaac Kyei** and **Jake Starheim**. The three got straight to work as well in this one with Starheim running rampant and scoring a hat-trick to begin the season. He also drew a penalty, but offered the ball to Meers who duly converted to open his account. **Taj Sangara** and **Kyle Gibson** rounded out the scoring on the night as Coastal sent out a statement to the rest of the league that they mean business right from the off this season. **Yeshua Silwamba** had the clean sheet while **Amar Mander** pulled the strings in midfield all night for the visitors. For Greater Vancouver, they are left to pick up the pieces from yet another slow start, but they will hope that good performances from **Vikram Puri** and **Rajvir Basi** will give them a foundation to build upon.

Coastal FC 5-0 Surrey United Firefighters – Tuesday Oct. 6 @ South Surrey Athletic Park #10

Surrey United had to wait until mid-week to raise the curtain on their new APL campaign and, unfortunately for them, it came against a Coastal side that had spent the weekend ramping back into top gear. With their three-headed monster in attack, it was **Isaac Kyei** who took the bull by the horns and did the heavy lifting for Coastal on this night. Kyei did the hard work to create Coastal's first goal before sliding the ball to **Graeme Meers** who slammed it home. Kyei would then add two goals of his own before Meers stepped up and slammed a clinical free kick in to complete his own brace. **Adam Staschuk** completed the scoring with a goal that slipped through the Surrey keeper's legs in an effort



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that was emblematic of the struggles for Firefighters in this one. **Daniel Smyth** claimed Coastal's second consecutive shutout and was tidy in net for the visitors and, while he did not get on the scoresheet on this occasion, talisman **Jake Starheim** was a menacing force going forward all game. New signing **Gagan Josan**, as well as **Abulmakik Ali**, played well for United, but Surrey simply could not contain Coastal's vaunted offence in this match and will look to regroup ahead of the weekend.

Langley FC SAFC 1-2 TWU Spartans – Tuesday Oct. 6 @ Noel Booth Turf

APL newcomers TWU Spartans took their opening bow in the APL mid-week when they traveled away to Langley FC SAFC. SAFC had lost their opening match of the season to rival Langley United at the weekend and were now out to try and claim their first points of the season from yet another local side. SAFC were handed an injury boost ahead of this one, with first choice goalkeeper Cameron Frost shaking off an injury that had forced him off at the weekend in time to take his place between the stick for this one. He was needed as well as Frost made several top saves throughout to give his side a chance to win. The ever-dangerous Emmanuel Ekeh opening his account for SAFC when he slammed home an absolute screamer from 30 yards out to put SAFC on the board. However, Caleb Johnson scored for Trinity to cancel that marker out before Charles Freddy Tchouya Nana capped off a top performance with a goal of his own. It was only one game, but Tchouya Nana has already made a case as one of the players to watch this season in the APL. He and his teammates were able to enjoy a win on their debut as they get ready for a quick turn around and a match with Langley United on the weekend.

Surrey United Firefighters 0-3 Greater Vancouver United – Friday Oct. 10 @ Cloverdale Athletic #2

After a rather inauspicious start to their season during a mid-week away trip to face Coastal, Surrey United were hoping some home cooking back at Cloverdale Athletic Park would be exactly what they needed to get their season up and running. Unfortunately for Firefighters, Greater Vancouver were thinking the exact same thing, having also been routed by Coastal in their opener. While the teams looked to be evenly matched, as so often is the case in football, it was GVVU who took their chances and that made the difference in this one. New signing **Ronnie Johal** capped off a lovely move by the visitors when he slotted home from just inside the area to open the scoring and he would then double his and Greater Vancouver's tally when he curled a delightful free kick into the top corner. Just before halftime **Jassy Sanghera** showed a touch of class with a delicate lobbed finish to extend the score to 3-0. Surrey United likely struggled to comprehend how they were behind by this score line at the break and they regrouped, coming at GVVU with everything they had during the second half. Led by **Gagan Josan**, Surrey carried the play in the second period, but a strong Greater Vancouver backline, led by goalkeeper **Jaskaran Dhillon** who notched the clean sheet, managed to bend, but not break. Ultimately, chances emerged on the counter and both **Rajan Thind** and **Vikram Puri** had chances to extend GVVU's lead further. **Simran Tiwari** also came close to scoring and Johal nearly completed his hat-trick via another free kick that beat the goalie but clanged off the crossbar. It was a great team effort for Greater Vancouver who got top efforts from Rajvir Bassi and Baljit Thankkar, along with Arshan Grewal to help them claim their first win of the season.

TWU Spartans 3-2 Langley United – Friday Oct. 10 @ Willoughby Turf #4

Following a successful start to life in the APL, Trinity Western welcomed long time APL mainstays Langley United "away" to Willoughby. As both teams share the same home pitch, it was hardly a trek for the visitors and they looked sharp right from the off. United pressed high had created plenty of chances with **Cole Almond**, signed from the now defunct Port Moody Gunners, opening his Langley



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account and **Luke Lay** also getting on the scoresheet. **Scott Barling** was putting in a dominant midfield performance for United as they took a two goal lead into half time. After winning their inaugural APL game, Trinity Western were looking overmatched in this one, but they showed their credentials by regrouping at the break. In a classic “tale of two halves” it was all TWU in the second frame, with United seeming to tire as the match wore on. The Spartans would claw a goal back part way through the half before a pair of late goals completely flipped the script and saw the university side continue their perfect start to the season. **Jacob Low** had a top performance for Trinity, scoring a brace, and **Alexander Roxburgh** was also on target to help complete the comeback!

Abbotsford United 2-1 Chilliwack FC – Saturday Oct. 11 @ Mout Turf #3

There was to be no rest for the weary for Chilliwack FC who were forced to shake off the drubbing they had received from Abbotsford just eight days earlier and gear up for round two, this time at Mout. Whatever it was they had spent the week working on in training, it seemed to work for Chilliwack as they were up for this one and looked to be the better side to start the match. After carrying the play and earning a number of attacking set pieces, the visitors made their pressure tell when Trent Horne scored their first goal back in the top flight and gave them the lead. This seemed to rouse Abbotsford out of their slumber however, with brother Colton O’Neill and Connor O’Neill suddenly seeing much more of the ball and beginning to put their mark on the match. Right before halftime, Reece Branion thought he had Abby back on level terms, only to be denied by the offside flag. The trend continued in when play resumed in the second half with Abbotsford pressing and Chilliwack, perhaps somewhat naturally, looking to defend deep. Abbotsford’s Daniel Davidson slammed an effort off the frame of the goal and Jeevan Dhillon failed to convert on a pair of great chances. Chilliwack, led by yet another strong effort from Malcolm Stafford, were managing to hang on and it was beginning to look like it would maybe be “on of those days” for Abby, where the ball simply would not go in. With ten minutes to play though, Atle Koellmel played a lovely ball that split the defenders and released Brady Weir on the wing. Weir sent a low cross into the area and Davidson was first to it, absolutely smashing the ball into the goal to level things up and, quite possibly, release some tension among the Abbotsford players! Within minutes Abbotsford would complete their comeback thanks to Mohit Bhattoa playing a lovely ball down the wing to James Najman who set up Davidson for his second goal in as many attacks. It was a truly harsh score line for Chilliwack, who had put forth a fantastic effort, however, that is life at the top level. Hopefully they can take heart from a much improved performance and carry that into their next matches. Certainly Abbotsford coach Alan Alderson had nothing but complimentary things to say about his opposition on this evening, noting “Chilliwack showed a tonne of heart and came out tonight committed to work incredibly hard while also showing a willingness to be assertive when they attacked.” Of his own side’s performance though, there were mixed emotions with Alderson saying “we weren’t real sharp tonight; however I was incredibly proud of the way we just committed ourselves to trying to play good football and trying to find our way through a resolute and committed opponent.” In the end it is two wins from two for the defending champions as they get ready for their next challenge against the University of the Fraser Valley Cascades, who are yet to debut in the APL this year.



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Here's how the APL Table looks as on October 16:

#	Team Name	GP	W	T	L	GF	GA	PTS
1	Coastal FC A	2	2	0	0	11	0	6
2	Abbotsford United A	2	2	0	0	9	1	6
3	TWU Spartans A	2	2	0	0	5	3	6
4	Langley United A	2	1	0	1	4	4	3
5	Greater Vancouver Utd A	2	1	0	1	3	6	3
6	Langley FC SAFC A	2	0	0	2	2	4	0
7	Chilliwack FC	2	0	0	2	1	9	0
8	Surrey Utd Firefighters	2	0	0	2	0	8	0

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After two weeks of play the league as a pair of player to recognize as the Brown's Social House Player of the Week. First is **Brady Weir**, who absolutely rampant in Abbotsford United's opening day win over Chilliwack. Brady had a pair of goals along with playing a integral role in the build up to most of Abby's other goals on the day.

Also, congratulations to **Isaac Kyei**, who's performance in Coastal's 5-0 demolition of Surrey United was sensational. Isaac had a pair of goals as well as an assist as he and he teammates in Coastal vaunted attack laid down a marker for the rest of the league following two top outings.

Congratulations Brady and Isaac, you've both won a \$25 gift card to Brown's Social House!



THIS UPCOMING APL SCHEDULE:

Sat 10/17/2020 2:00PM

Sat 10/17/2020 4:00PM

Sat 10/17/2020 7:30PM

Tue 10/20/2020 8:45PM

Tue 10/20/2020 9:00PM

Wed 10/21/2019 8:00PM

Langley FC SAFC vs. Langley United

Coastal vs. Greater Vancouver United

UFV Cascades vs. Abbotsford United

Surrey United Firefighters vs. Coastal FC

Chilliwack FC vs. UFV Cascades

TWU Spartans vs. Langley FC SAFC

Noel Booth

South Surrey Ath. #10

Mouat Turf #4

Cloverdale Ath. #2

Tzeachten Turf

Trinity Western Park



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Last but not least, the University of the Fraser Valley will begin their APL campaign with a pair of matches against Abbotsford United and Chilliwack FC respectively. Elsewhere, Coastal FC will try and remain hot in their rematches with Surrey United and Greater Vancouver United, while Trinity Western will look to complete an early season double over Langley FC SAFC. SAFC will also get a chance for revenge against new derby rivals Langley United before the cohorts are shuffled and we get a whole new batch of fixtures!

Send NEWS to media@fraservalleysoccer.com

And for more information on the FVSL go to fraservalleysoccer.com



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