



Fraser Valley Soccer League



March 7, 2019

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

With the snow finally gone play was able to resume in the Fraser Valley and this meant it was time for cup season! The action got underway for Umbro Premier League and Division 1 teams in the Pakenham Cup, the oldest challenge cup on offer in British Columbia, which has been highly sought after since 1909! Before the action on the pitch could get underway though, a pair of teams already advanced to the Quarter Finals. Division 1 sides, Westcoast FC United and Langley FC, withdrew from competition, meaning there were free passes for two other Division 1 teams, SAFC Red Bulls and Coastal FC B. The rest of the field returned to the pitch to begin the quest to become the 2019 Pakenham Cup Champion!

Here's a recap of all of this round's action:

PRELIMINARY MATCH

TWU Spartans B 0-5 Langley United – Sunday 8pm; Yorkson Turf

It was over a month between games for Division 1 TWU and the rust was apparent. It was always going to be an uphill battle against a top UPL side in Langley and the Spartans were on the back foot almost immediately. That being said, the Division 1 side did not back down and showed the form that has made them a potential promotion contender from the lower tier this season. Alas, leading scorer **Sebastian Wingfield** could not find a way to goal in this match and as a result, TWU's fate seemed somewhat inevitable. A pair of goals in quick succession just past the hour mark would put the game beyond their reach, with the eventual final tally being five goals against and none for. **Brett Wiens** and **Liam McAllister** both had braces, with the latter turning in a man of the match performance. **Devin Gilroy** rounded out the scorers on the day, while **Jordyn Field** gave a good account of himself for the Spartans, despite ultimately coming away with nothing to show for his efforts. Langley took the chance to get both of their keepers some game action following the long layoff caused by the snow. Both **Colton Keam** and **Andrew Hicks** played a half and split the shutout. Langley now enters the main draw and will fancy their chances of a deep run given the number of Division 1 teams on their half of the bracket.

ROUND OF 16

Port Moody Gunners A 4-0 Port Moody Gunners B – Saturday 4pm; Trasolini Turf

The cup draw served up a classic local derby in this fixture, pitting these two clubmates against each other. It would have surely been particularly strange for players such as **Mony Dharjang** who have spent time playing in both squads throughout this season. Unfortunately for Dharjang, he and his "B" teammates could not pull off the upset in this one, succumbing fairly placidly to their big brothers. UPL leading scorer **Graeme Meers** continued his good goal scoring form with a brace in the cup while **Cole Almond** and **Tyler Leonard** also netted for the "A" boys. **Liam Arthur** put in a solid performance for the Premier group and **Miguel Hof** recorded the clean sheet. The "A" Gunners certainly have their sights set on silverware this season and will be legitimately dreaming of pulling off the nigh impossible quad, which would involve winning the UPL title along with both cup competition and then bringing home the FVSL's first ever Provincial Cup Championship. This victory was yet another small step toward achieving that goal. For the "B" side, **Hani Dbouk** played well, putting in a performance in a competitive fixture that he will hope caught the eye of the senior team staff.



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Coastal FC A 3-2 Surrey United Firefighters – Saturday 4pm; South Surrey Athletic Turf #10

One of two all UPL fixtures to come out of the hat in the first round, this one may well have served up a match worthy of a final. Firefighters came out blazing from the start and Coastal were clearly still digging out from the snow. **Sean Einersson** returned from UBC to take his place in the Surrey squad and he made an immediate impact. United's would make their early pressure count when Coastal were unable to clear following a series of blocked shots. Eventually Surrey got a cross into the area and Einersson nodded in from close range. Einersson would then double his and the visitor's tally in short order when **John Kasper** headed a Surrey corner back across the face of goal for him to get on the end of and put the Firefighters well in control of this match early doors. For Coastal, it seemed like the only player who had turned up was talisman and leading scorer **Jake Starheim**, who was everywhere and generated what little offense the home side mustered during the first period; though little of it troubled **Nuno Jesus** in the Surrey goal. Just when it looked like Firefighters would get to the break with their two goal lead intact, Coastal were handed a lifeline. A poorly struck shot from the top of the area that may well have been hooking out for a throw-in struck an alert **Louis Genty**, who had stuck out a shin, and went in to half the deficit. This was the break that Coastal seemingly needed as they emerged a team with purpose in the second half. Surrey were still gamely attacking however, so the match wise finely poised. The turning point would be a rare goalkeeping error from the usually steady Jesus as he stumbled when coming to collect a cross leaving a tap in for **Taylor Richardson** who was Johnny-on-the-spot to level the match. It was now Surrey who seemed most affected by the long layoff as they struggled to get their legs going through the final quarter of the match. One man showing no ill-effects at all was Starheim, as he continued to be his usual beast of a player. In the build up to Coastal's winner, he refused to surrender the ball, powering down the wing and breaking no less than three tackles before crossing. The Surrey defenders got a head to it, but could not turn it clear and while the first couple of shot attempts were blocked, a third from **Sean Northcote** found its way into the bottom corner. Surrey tried to push for an equalizer but were unable to create much in terms of offense. In fact, goalkeeper Jesus spent most of the last few minutes redeeming himself by making a slew of great saves to even give the Firefighters a chance. It was a cruel twist to go out of the competition and Assistant Manager Dave Hleucka knew it, describing it as a "brutal collapse after being up 2-0 inside the first 25 minutes." Indeed it will be a full year before Surrey get another chance at Pakenham glory while Coastal are moving on!

Abbotsford United 2-0 Langley United B – Saturday 6pm; Mouat Turf #3

A plucky Langley United B side from Division 1 showed up to put in their best attempt at slaying Premier giants Abbotsford and almost took advantage of the East Valley side's lack of training and game time during all the snow. While Abbotsford had the majority of the ball, they were sloppy in the final third, with plenty of rust from the layoff showing. In fact, it was Langley who had the best chance to open the scoring, only for the seemingly omnipresent **Colton O'Neill** to pull it off the line. One player who benefited from the weather delays was Colton's brother **Connor O'Neill** who was able to return to the lineup after a lengthy injury layoff. His class in the middle of the park was evident and he was able to link up with another Abby player who has spent time in the injury bay this season, **Parman Minhas**. After a scoreless first half Minhas began the second half by cutting in from the winger and unleashing a drive that took a slight deflection before hitting the back of the net to open the scoring. Five minutes later **Dan Goodey** sent **Brady Weir** in on goal and Weir put on a bit of a dribbling display for the lower



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league defenders to enjoy as he skipped past them to finish off a beautiful goal to double the lead. It was pretty much lights out at that point, but fair play to Langley who continued to push to get back in the match. **Moosa Ashrafi** and 14 goal man **Kris Robazza** tried to find the keys to unlock Abby, but were turned away at every time of asking by UPL Golden Glove leader **Mike Haladin** who added a cup shutout to go along with his six league clean sheets. Manager Alan Alderson knew his side were not at their sharpest but was happy with the result, saying he was “really pleased with our work and attitude today and our commitment to defending as a team and of course continue to be excited at the abilities of our attacking players to find ways to score beautiful goals.” He was quick to tip the hat to Abby’s lower league opponents though, adding “Langley did a really good job at being difficult to break down and also forced Mike to come up with a couple of key saves and our defenders to come up with some big blocks.”

Chilliwack FC 5-1 Burnaby Firefighters – Sunday 2pm; Tzeachten Turf #1

The other all UPL match was a chippy affair between a pair of teams who are dueling in the league to avoid any potential threat of relegation that would accompany finishing second bottom. This match though turned their attentions towards a potential back door into the Provincial Cup, as Langley is the only other UPL team on their side of the draw. Only one side could advance however, and you could tell both teams knew exactly what was on the line in this one. The match took a turn when Burnaby’s Cole Rosenlund was sent off just before half time. This put Chilliwack in the ascendency and they certainly took advantage of the situation with Malcolm Stafford registering a hatrick. The ever stalwart Tyler Epp also popped up with a goal for Chilliwack while Nathan Olson rounded out the scoring for the home side. Trevor Hallam had the lone reply for Firefighters and John Clune put in a solid performance, but it was a day for wondering “what if” for Burnaby. Chilliwack, however, can continue to wonder “what if” themselves as their Pakenham and Provincial Cup dreams remain alive following arguably their biggest win of the season.



What’s Coming Next...

There are still two more matches to play in the Pakenham Cup Round of 16:

Wed 03/06/2019 9:00PM
Sat 03/10/2019 6:00PM

PoCo FC Royals vs. Temple VAN United
North Delta SC vs. Langley United A

Gates Turf #1
Mackie Turf



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Meanwhile...

This weekend the Umbro Premier League sides will begin their quest for the third piece of silverware on offer to them this season: The Soccer City Premier League Cup.

SOCCKER CITY PREMIER LEAGUE CUP – QUARTER FINAL SCHEDULE:

Fri 03/08/2019 9:00PM	Chilliwack FC vs. Abbotsford United	Tzeachten Turf
Fri 03/08/2019 8:45PM	Surrey United vs. Temple VAN United	Cloverdale Ath. #2
Sat 03/09/2019 4:00PM	Coastal FC vs. Burnaby Firefighters	South Surrey Ath. #10
Tue 03/12/2019 8:30PM	Port Moody Gunners vs. Langley United	Trasolini Turf

It will be worth keeping an eye on that Pakenham Cup match between North Delta and Langley this weekend. North Delta are contending for back to back Division 1 titles and knocked off Premier competition during cup play last season. Langley is the only team on this half of the draw capable of finishing in the top three of the UPL and, therefore, qualifying for the Provincial Cup via league placing. That means if any side can be giant killers and knock them off, whichever team then reaches the Pakenham final from this half will be playing not only for the trophy, but for the Provincial Cup spot that accompanies it. Langley will certainly not be pushovers however, as they more than proved that in the Preliminary Round win over TWU Spartans B, another top Division 1 side. United will have their own trophy ambitions, especially given their “weaker” draw on paper!

In the SC Cup, the standout fixture is a top of the UPL table tilt between Port Moody and Langley. It sets up as a busy couple of days for Langley as being drawn into that Pakenham Preliminary match means the games are coming thick and fast in order to keep everything on schedule following the snow. United are set to come up just short once again in their pursuit of the UPL title and will be hoping to take home sort of trophy this season after finishing runners up last year in the UPL, the SC Cup and the Provincial Cup. They might have an easier path in the Pakenham, but they surely have no plans on rolling over in this competition. They held the powerful Gunners to a pair of hard-fought draws during league play, before losing 4-1 in their last meeting due mostly to Golden Boot leader Graeme Meers potting a hat-trick, with Port Moody clearly on the march to the title. This one sets up as another close affair and it is likely to once again come down to which team’s big guns can deliver on the night!

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