



Fraser Valley Soccer League



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

The Fraser Valley Soccer League begins its Winter Season this weekend and, while February may seem to be a long way off at the moment, the journey to crown league champions is about to get underway. In the **Umbro Premier League**, Coastal FC will look to defend their perch atop the very tip of the FVSL but will face a slew of hungry challengers, not the least of which will be reigning Provincial Cup finalists Langley United. The UPL also welcomes a new contender in the top flight in Temple Vancouver United. Just what kind of season will the new boys have and can they shake up the order in the UPL? For more on these teams and the rest of the Umbro Premier League, check out our [UPL Preview](#) article.

Elsewhere in the FVSL, **Division 1** has a new look. The Valley League has decided to forgo the often ailing U21 Division and, instead, try and place those teams in open division where they can be competitive in order to better develop their players. Thanks to new rules from BC Soccer, the U21 teams competing in the open divisions will continue to be eligible for the U21 Provincial Cup. This season both Surrey United and Abbotsford United will have their U21 sides playing in Division 1. These two make up a field of 11 teams vying for a chance to move up to the Umbro Premier League.

Division 2 has also been restructured and now consists of 14 teams, divided into two pools of seven. Joining Division 2 for the 2018/19 season are Division 3 champions Westcoast Rowdies and Aldergrove Lightning as well as Temple United and Chilliwack Reserves. Each team will play the teams in their pool home and away as well as crossover and play the teams in the opposite pool once each. Can Abbotsford United "B" and the veteran Langley Dynamo maintain their standing atop the division with an expanded field this season? The league is still determining how to allocate the Provincial B Cup spots with this new format and may introduce a year end playoff to determine how to allocate the final berths. Stay tuned for future developments.

Two pools of 12 will compete in **Division 3** with five of those teams being situated in Langley. That is trumped, however, by Westcoast who have no fewer than six teams in **Division 4**. The Langley teams are split up between the two Division 3 pools but the Westcoast teams will all play together in 4A; hopefully that will make for some spicy derbies!

The **Masters Premier** Division will get its season underway ahead of the UPL teams at Newton Athletic Park on Sunday September 9. These teams know each other very well and, given that they will play each other three more times each this season, it is certain that they will become even more acquainted. North Delta and Port Moody separated themselves from the pack last season but the rest of the field will surely be thinking that this year, it is their turn. The rest of the Masters hierarchy has also been reworked with the reintroduction of **Masters Division 2** that will allow teams to be segregated by skill level as opposed to last season where there was just one large **Masters Division 1**, divided geographically. Both lower Masters divisions will consist of nine teams and hopefully this sparks some enthralling promotion and relegation battles. Also changing slightly this season is the Over 40 Division,



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which has moved to now the **Over 45 Division**, this is in line with similar divisions in the other local amateur leagues. This season Over 45 will comprise 10 teams.

MATCH OF THE WEEK

This week's focus is the Langley Derby in Division 2 between Langley United Dynamo and Langley United Sparta. Dynamo fished two points better off in the standings than Sparta last season, but it was the team whose name pays homage to the great warriors of Ancient Greece who had the better of the head to head matches. The Spartans won their "home" fixture 2-1 over Dynamo in November before the side played out to an enjoyable 3-3 draw in March. Dynamo have some player concerns due to carry over discipline issues, as they will be missing both Captain Shane Stewart as well as Blair Roman through suspension. Forward Hassan Malik has a sight knock and is listed as questionable for Friday. These absences put the goal scoring burden squarely on Golden Boot winner Cameron Whitters, though surely Sparta will be well aware of his potency in front of goal and will be planning their defense to snuff him out.

When asked about this week's opening match of the season, Dynamo manager Chad Spurgeon had this to offer: "As usual we expect big games from their veteran players; Dynamo typically have the edge on fitness but Sparta is a team with a very high soccer IQ."

Both these teams know the importance of a good start to the season, so expect a cagey one on Friday. With the table only having seven teams the difference between promotion, Provincial Cup qualification and relegation figures to be razor thin, so a good start to the season is imperative. Despite their close proximity and storied rivalry, Dynamo versus Sparta has traditionally been an amicable affair, with few flash points or unneeded extra-curricular activities. Look for that attitude to possibly spill over to the score line as well this week and don't be surprised at all to see these two teams split the points after 90 minutes.

Langley Utd. Dynamo vs. Langley United Sparta goes Friday night at Willoughby #3, kick off is at 9pm.

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