



January 21, 2020

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

The weather has not cooperated at all during the early parts of 2020, but a few games have been played. Despite the elements trying to wreak havoc on the annual FVSL vs. VISL All-Star games, those too were able to be played. The winter conditions do not seem to be forecast to let up any time soon (games for the weekend of January 17-19 have already been entirely wiped out), but while we wait for action to resume, here is the latest on what football has survived the seasonal disruptions so far...

## **ALLSTARWEEKEND**

Both the UPL and Masters All-Stars headed to Victoria to take on the best the Vancouver Island Soccer League had to offer. For more info on the UPL All-Star game, which needed a shootout to decide, check out [the UPL Review](#) which has a complete breakdown. As for the Masters group, it was a long day. Ferry cancellations meant that instead of being on the 11am sailing, the FVSL representatives ended up on the 3pm boat. This pushed the kickoff time back to a 6pm start, as well as taking a toll on the number of players able to make the journey at all! Fortunately, the FVSL was able to eventually make it to the field and assemble a squad to give the Islanders a game, in spite of all the challenges.

Perhaps the travel had left the FVSL lads with some cobwebs to shake off, but, whatever the case, it was the VISL lot who made all the early running. **Sean Battistoni** of **UVic Alumni** and **James McQueen** of **Castaways Juniors** banged in goals to give the host side an early advantage. For the FVSL, this was now quite the uphill battle down two goals on enemy turf. Enter the seemingly ageless **John Collins** from **Surrey United SC A** who provided not one, but two goals to knot the match up and give the FVSL a fighting chance. That chance was ultimately taken by **Wes Halliday** from the perfect record holding **Port Moody Rangers**. Halliday unleashed a 30-yard screamer worthy of winning any match that arrowed into the top corner to fully complete the FVSL comeback and get the party started for the Masters squad! Perennial All-Star team selection Collins would go on to be named the match MVP.



*Masters All-Star MVP John Collins (left) with the trophy alongside Masters All-Star player/coach Dave Fletch of Port Moody Rangers*

Congratulations to the team and the league for the win, and for persevering through all the hurdles placed in your way to get there. The after party at the Strathcona Hotel lived up to the usual legend, however, the ferries Sunday were all cancelled after the 9am sailing, meaning those who were not up early and on that boat were stranded for an extra night on the Island. Certainly a frustrating situation at the time, but, hopefully, after some time passes that will become just another layer of the lore that surrounds this fantastic annual event!



## 2020 FVSL RECAP TO DATE

So far the New Year has produced just a small handful of games. The first week back after the holiday break was set aside for **Bradner Cup** play, however, only two matches ended up going ahead, both in the **Open Competition**. A pair of Division 2 sides met when **Langley United Dragons U21** were drawn against **PoCo FC Royals**. Being in different pools for league play, these sides had not yet had a chance to face each other this season and it was PoCo who came out on top as 3-1 winners. **Say Eh Say** scored his team leading eleventh goal of the season for the Dragons, but it was not enough as **George Zaspal** netted a brace with **David Morin** scoring as well to advance PoCo to match against Division 1 side Juba FC in the next round. In the other match to be played, former Division 1 champions **North Delta SC NEWWAY** were upset by defending Division 2B Champions **Abbotsford SA Red Devils** by a 3-1 score as well. It was talisman and leading scorer **David Vanderhoek** who did the heavy lifting for the Devils, scoring a pair while **Brad Peetom** also banged one in to secure the win; **Nikko Williams** had the lone reply for North Delta. Abbotsford will now wait to learn their next opponent as they are set to face the winner of the match between Div. 2 **Surrey United Elite U21** and Div. 1 **Port Moody Piranhas**.

As the winter weather worsened, very few games went ahead the following week in league play. One important result was in **Division 1** where first place **Chilliwack FC** survived a scare against **Port Moody Gunners B** and emerged 3-2 winners. **Robert Bond** had a brace for Port Moody, but that was cancelled out by two goals from **Malcolm Stafford** with a tally from **Spencer Whitehead** making the difference for Chilliwack. Two other results from that division had bottom side **North Surrey Mustangs** forfeiting to **North Delta SC NEWWAY** while **TSS FC Rovers II** got braces from both **Joshua Bhandal** and **Henry Cromack**, as well as a goal from **Nikola Crnjak** and a third clean sheet of the season for **Baz Cox** in a 5-0 win over **Abbotsford United U21**. Two **Division 2** matches were played with 2A leaders **Abbotsford United B** and **Westcoast FC United** starting the New Year with identical 6-0 wins over **TSS FC Rovers III** and **SAFC Hawks** respectively. **Justin Sekhon** had a hatrick for Abbotsford in their win and **Josh Pap** led the way for Westcoast with a brace. In **Division 3**, promotion hopefuls **Tri City FC** were denied the chance to beat up on last place **TWU Spartans C** when TWU forfeit, but Tri City are likely just fine to bank the points as they are now just two points back of **Westcoast FC Rowdies**, who did not play, and hold a game in hand. Fellow promotion contenders, **Langley United Impact**, got their game in and goals from four different players, including co-leading scorer **Jason O'Hara**, saw them beat **PoCo FC Rockets** 4-1 and move into second place. Impact sit a point ahead of Tri City and one behind Rowdies, but have played more games than both their rivals. Newly promoted **Westcoast FC Juventus** climbed into fourth place and kept their slim promotion hopes alive when a hatrick from Golden Boot leader **Zach Romeo** led them to a 4-1 win of their own over **Port Moody Rangers U21**. The only match in 3B to go ahead saw **North Delta SC Royals** claim bragging rights over their derby rivals **North Delta SC 91s** in a 2-1 win. A few **Division 4** fixtures also survived, with two important matches atop 4A among them. Leaders **Westcoast FC Misfits** almost slipped up against **Westcoast FC Strikers B**. Misfits would win 4-3 but needed a hatrick from **Tyler Carlson** and a goal from **Jeremy Carlson** to overcome a brace by **Tobias Jakowski** and a goal by **Nehant Singh** for Strikers. Second place **Port Moody Grizzlies** ensured that the pressure remained on Misfits with a 3-0 defeat of **PoCo FC Rangers** keeping the Grizz three points back with just two matches left to play in an ultra-tight promotion battle. The other results in the division saw derby rivals **Westcoast FC Folly** and **Westcoast FC Black Sheep** settle for a 2-2 draw and, in 3B, **Latin Strikers** forfeit to **North Delta SC Pirates**.

*Got a player whose performance you think deserves a mention? Was your team part of an epic game worth highlighting? Do you have some cool pictures of your team in action?*

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