



Fraser Valley Soccer League



October 2, 2019

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

The UPL season is still a few weeks away, but all eight Umbro Premier League sides were back in action this past weekend as they began their quest for first piece of silverware on offer this season, the Soccer City Premier League Cup. This season, the SC Cup final will take place over the Thanksgiving weekend, however, the winners will simply have to settle for just the trophy itself this year as there is no longer a Provincial Cup spot associated with becoming champions. Nevertheless, the teams all seem keen to etch their name on the silverware and to try and knock current holders Port Moody Gunners off their perch. It is still early days in the competition, but if Matchday 1 is any indication, it is going to be quite a battle this season!

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

Soccer City Premier League Cup – GROUP A

Langley United 0-0 Abbotsford United – Friday 9pm; Yorkson Turf

Both of these sides seemed to be a tad rusty in their season opener and this was most prevalent in the final third where each team struggled to produce the level of quality to which we have become accustomed. The tempo was good and the compete level of both sets of players was what one would expect at this level, it was just that everybody seemed to have left their shooting boots behind on the day. When the sides did breach the resolute defenses, the goalkeepers had the answers. Last seasons Golden Glove winner, Abbotsford's **Mike Haladin**, picked up exactly where he left off by registering his first clean sheet of the campaign, while Langley's new man between the sticks, **Ian Jones**, showed that he is ready to take on the challenge of filling the shoes of departed FVSL All-Star Andrew Hicks. As you would expect, the usual suspects were hard at work for Abbotsford, who are trying to add a second trophy to their cabinet after winning the Pakenham Cup at the end of last season. Both **Colton O'Neil** and brother **Connor O'Neil** played big roles in that championship run and they were putting in their usual level of performance in midfield along with fellow Abby stalwart **Tyson Hunter**. Unsurprisingly, in the shutout central defender **Tammer Byrne** was on top of his game in this one. For Langley, **Nicholas Cantelon** had a solid outing, but neither he, nor anyone else, could find a way to go on this day. In the end, Abbotsford coach Alan Alderson said he "felt that we had created enough quality opportunities that we deserved to win" however, he was quick to note that "we got caught a couple of times in transition and Langley could certainly lay claim that they also could have walked away with the three points." Instead, both sides pocket a point to begin their quest to reach the next stage of the SC Cup.

Coastal FC 5-1 Vancouver United SC – Saturday 4pm; South Surrey Athletic Turf #10

When last season's UPL season began, new boys Vancouver United stunned the then defending UPL champions Coastal by holding them to a shock 2-2 draw. A year on and several changes to both teams later, even though the season was beginning with a different competition, Coastal were clearly determined not to suffer a repeat of the same fate. In the offseason, Coastal parted ways with long time manager Corrado Lenzi and Shawn Parkes is now the man in charge out at South Surrey Athletic. Vancouver United also revamped their program following their last place finish in their inaugural UPL campaign. United cut ties with Temple and were then granted a stay of relegation in the UPL when Chilliwack FC and Burnaby Firefighters both stepped away. However, if they are to avoid a repeat of last



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season once the UPL competition gets under way they will need better performances than what they turned in this past weekend. **Sean Northcote** got Coastal's season up and running with a brace in this match, with **Lucas Rimmer** and **Justin Turner-Pierce** also on target. Of course, Coastal talisman **Jake Starheim** was not one to miss out on the action as he got his campaign off to a goal scoring start as well. Away from the score sheet **Sean Kamensek** also had a good performance for Coastal. On the other side of the ball **Prabhjot Mand** did his best to keep VU in the match but his lone goal and performance on the day was the sole bright spot for United.

Soccer City Premier League Cup – GROUP B

Surrey United Firefighters 1-1 CCB Azad – Friday 8:45pm; Cloverdale Athletic Turf #2

The kickoff to the 2019/20 season might have come perhaps just a bit soon for Surrey United who had many of their recognizable first team players unavailable for this one. That being said, the competition provided another opportunity to showcase the strength of the club as United dressed four youth players and three U-21 players for this match. One veteran who was in the lineup though was goalkeeper **Nuno Jesus** and he was called upon to make a handful of top saves with FVSL newcomers CCB Azad more than ready to play their first official match. CCB is a young squad but has some veteran leadership and **Gagan Josan** along with centreback **Ernesto Arteaga** put in immense performances. Despite coming out strong and taking advantage of some young defenders, it was CCB who conceded the first goal when youth call up **Malichi Emmerson** scored his second senior level goal for Surrey, having been on target during a call up appearance at the end of last season. The lead was short lived though as Arteaga would nod home the equalizer before half time. CCB remained dangerous on set pieces and Arteaga thought he had his side in front when he again nodded home from a free kick, but the goal was ruled out after one of his teammates had been whistled for a foul in the buildup. For Surrey the chances were less prevalent, but the play of 15-year-old **Jovan Sidhu** was enough to earn him MVP honours for his side in this one, which serves as a fairly significant bright spot for United. Firefighters manager Dave Hleuka surmised post match the this was a "fair result in my book," with "loads of positives for when we get some guys back."

Port Moody Gunners 1-2 SAFC Red Bulls – Saturday 4pm; Trasolini Turf

Everything started off according to plan for defending UPL and SC Cup champions Port Moody in their match against newly promoted SAFC Red Bulls. The Gunners were ahead inside five minutes after **Jordan Marini** finished off a lovely cross produced by **Cole Almond** and new signing **Dale Long** who moved to Port Moody in the summer with Chilliwack FC dropping down to Division 1. Despite this being their first official game at the top level of the FVSL, Red Bulls were undaunted. Building off a strong FVSL Spring season that saw them reach the Premier cup final where they would narrowly lose to a similar Port Moody side, SAFC went hammer and tongs after the Gunners in this one. Their hard work would pay off too, as the game leveled out and Red Bulls found an equalizer before half time through **Emanuel Ekeh**. Port Moody adjusted, as you would expect champions to do, and began to dictate things again to begin the second frame. However, just as before, SAFC's dogged determination, impressive work rate and strong physical play saw them wrestle their way back into the match. With just over ten minutes to go it would be Red Bulls who scored the winner with Ekeh again playing hero to stun the champions. Port Moody would look to find a late equalizer, but they were second best on this night, though the play of **Chris Attadia** was noteworthy in spite of the final result. Of course, this competition is far from over, and the UPL season is yet to begin, but it would seem clear that champions Port Moody are definitely going to have a target on their back this year!



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SOCCER CITY PREMIER LEAGUE CUP							
Group A				Group B			
Team	Record	Points	GD	Team	Record	Points	GD
Coastal FC	1-0-0	3	4	SAFC Red Bulls	1-0-0	3	1
Abbotsford United	0-1-0	1	0	CCB Azad	0-1-0	1	0
Langley United	0-1-0	1	0	Surrey Utd. Firefighters	0-1-0	1	0
Vancouver United SC	0-0-1	0	-4	Port Moody Gunners	0-0-1	0	-1

SOCCER CITY PREMIER LEAGUE CUP – GROUP STAGE MATCHDAY 2:

Group A

Sat 09/13/2019 8:45PM

SAFC Red Bulls vs. Surrey United Firefighters

Cloverdale Ath. Turf #1

Sat 09/13/2019 8:45PM

CCB Azad vs. Port Moody Gunners

Newton Ath. Turf #4

Group B

Fri 09/12/2019 6:00PM

Abbotsford United vs. Coastal FC

Mouat Turf #3

Fri 09/12/2019 6:45PM

Vancouver United SC vs. Langley United

Hjorth Turf #1

After losing to a newly promoted side on Matchday 1, this weekend many eyes will surely be on Port Moody's response when they visit CCB Azad. Another new team to the tournament, CCB put in a strong performance against another established side in their first game, holding Surrey United to a draw. Can they too stun the champions? Meanwhile, SAFC Red Bulls will clash with Surrey United with the Firefighter looking to douse the red hot Emanuel Ekeh after his two goals stunned Port Moody a week ago. With another win this Saturday, SAFC would take a stranglehold on the group leaving them needing only a draw in their final group match with CCB to top Group B.

It is a similar story in Group A where Coastal can control their own fate with another win this week. Certainly Abbotsford United will have something to say about the matter, especially at home. If Abby can take something off Coastal it would leave the group finely poised, even more so if Vancouver United can pick themselves up to get a result against Langley. With only three games total in each group and only the group winners advancing to play for the trophy, this competition is already heating up!

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