



# Fraser Valley Soccer League



January 21, 2020

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

Winter has turned up with a vengeance and the FVSL has been all but brought to a standstill. An entire weekend of Umbro Premier League action was wiped out, so teams still have not had the chance to get started in this New Year. However, the annual VISL against FVSL All-Star Game managed to go ahead, although it was not without its own weather related hiccups!

Separate from those All-Stars, the Media Department is excited to announce the shortlist for the inaugural FVSL Media UPL Eleven, to be awarded at the end of the season. The shortlist, as well as the criteria and explanation can be found at the end of this week's UPL Report.

*Here's a recap of the All-Star Game action:*

## **VISL All-Stars 2(3)-2(1) FVSL All-Stars – Saturday 8pm; Layritz Turf (VICTORIA)**

Ferry delays meant this match was pushed back from its original evening kickoff to a nighttime affair under the lights on Vancouver Island. The delay also cost the FVSL upwards of eight players off the squad, meaning the team that ultimately arrived in Victoria was understaffed and that this endeavor might well lead to a rather uneven affair. Fortunately, as All-Star coach Alan Alderson put it, "the boys that put on the Fraser Valley Soccer League All -Star jerseys did an outstanding job of representing themselves, their respective clubs and the FVSL as they put on an exciting, entertaining and quality performance on what turned out to be a very nice evening." When the match did finally kickoff it was visitors making all the early running, with the FVSL side seemingly please to finally be on the pitch after a long travel day. However, much to the delight of the home crowd, it was the VISL All-Stars taking the lead thanks to **Koby Greaves** from Westcastle United turning home a corner kick just over ten minutes in. Undeterred, the FVSL got back on the front foot, due largely to the top play of fullbacks **Ryan Uppal** (Surrey United) and **Colton O'Neill** (Abbotsford United), as their attacking runs continued to pin the VISL deep in their own end. As the half wore on, Abbotsford United teammates **Roshan Gosal** and **Brady Weir** linked some slick passes together before finding another Abbotsford United player, **Reece Branion**, with a burgeoning through ball. Branion then clipped in an inch perfect cross that was met perfectly by **Connor Hildebrand** from Langley United and he made no mistake to tie the game. Another Abbotsford United standout in the first half was **Parman Minhas**, who looked sharp in creating a handful of chances for the visiting Mainland side, but the FVSL boys were unable to take the lead. At the other end, goalkeeper **Miguel Hof** (Port Moody Gunners) did not have a busy first half following the early Island goal, but was tidy when called upon as the match reached the interval all square.

The second half did not see the same open play as the VISL tightened up defensively and the lack of numbers began to show on the FVSL side. With fifteen minutes remaining it looked like the Islanders might well have won the match when **Blair Sturrock** from Lakehill FC got on the end of a lovely cross to restore the VISL's lead. Uppal thought he had the FVSL level once more, only for his thumping effort to rebound out off the crossbar. This led to a VISL counterattack as the home side looked to finish things off, but their effort also found the woodwork. This set the stage for a final FVSL chance. Weir launched in freekick into the Island penalty area and **John Craig** from Port Moody Gunners was the hero as he headed home the equalizer to send this match to penalties. The VISL went first but Hof denied the Island man. Unfortunately, the VISL keeper also rejected the first FVSL effort. The VISL launched their second effort high over the bar, but once again their keeper bailed them out. Finally, at the third time of



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asking, the deadlock was broken and the VISL took the lead. They then consolidated this lead when their keeper saved a third straight penalty! After another VISL goal, **Steve Gaffney** (Langley United) kept the FVSL's slim hopes alive by finally solving the Island's keeper. However, the VISL's fifth shooter made no mistake and the home side claimed this year's trophy. Despite the end result, coach Alderson had nothing but praise for his players and for the event, saying: "The heart and effort of all the players that represented the FVSL All-Star team was both commendable and inspiring. Thank you to the FVSL staff (and the VISL) for all of the work to make this event happen and thank you to the players for answering the call and doing an amazing job of playing some positive, creative and enthralling football."

## Here's how the UPL Table looks going into Week 13:

Umbro Premier (Fall) - Pool: A								
Team	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
Coastal FC A	11	9	1	1	48	13	35	28
Abbotsford United A	12	9	0	3	54	17	37	27
Port Moody SC A	12	9	0	3	37	14	23	27
Surrey Utd Firefighters	11	6	1	4	31	18	13	19
Langley United A	12	6	1	5	25	24	1	19
SAFC Red Bulls	12	3	1	8	19	36	-17	10
CCB Azad	12	2	1	9	13	48	-35	7
Vancouver United SC	12	0	1	11	4	61	-57	1

## THIS WEEK'S UPL SCHEDULE:

Fri 01/24/2020 8:45PM	<b>CCB Azad vs. SAFC Red Bulls</b>	Newton Ath. #4
Fri 01/24/2020 8:45PM	<b>Surrey United vs. Port Moody Gunners</b>	Cloverdale Ath. #2
Sat 01/24/2020 4:00PM	<b>Coastal FC vs. Abbotsford United</b>	South Surrey Ath. #10
Sat 01/24/2020 6:15PM	<b>Vancouver United SC vs. Langley United</b>	Hjorth Turf #1

There will be no easing back into things after the holidays and extended weather created break as the fixture list sees a number of crucial matches to begin 2020. At the bottom, CCB Azad have a chance to pull level with sixth place Red Bulls if they can manage a win on Friday night. That would set up a compelling race down the stretch as the teams battle to finish outside of the bottom two and ensure they have no possibility of relegation. Further up the table, Port Moody and Surrey will play again in an immediate rematch of the final UPL fixture before the Winter Break. On that night a late comeback saw Port Moody emerge with all three points, moving them into a second place tie with Abbotsford as they look to push their title defense into the next gear as we approach the final third of the season. For Surrey, they will be trying to keep pace with Langley, who visit bottom side Vancouver United, as it appear it will be a fight between those two old rivals to finish in fourth place and lock up the guaranteed Provincial Cup spot that accompanies a top four finish. However, the marquee fixture as the UPL resumes has to be Abbotsford's trip to Coastal. Abby handed league leader's Coastal their only loss to this stage of the season out in Abbotsford, but Coastal emerged victorious in the mid-week rematch. With Coastal holding a game in hand over second place Abby, this is a huge six-pointer for the Valley boys as they look to climb back to the top of the table!



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## THE FVSL MEDIA UPL XI:

The following shortlist of twenty players have been recognized through the first part of the UPL season as having been one of the top players in the league at their position. At the conclusion of the 2019/20 UPL campaign, a final eleven, or “team”, of the season will be chosen and the eleven players honoured.

Some notes on this list:

- It was selected exclusively by the Media Department (not by coaches or league executive members)
- This team is separate entirely from the travelling All-Star team that represents the FVSL against various other All-Star or top level competition
- The list is limited by position, which may exclude some players at the expense of others in a different position (ie there will only be ONE goalkeeper chosen, etc.)
- The primary factor in deciding players selected to this team are the mandatory game reports filed by each team following every UPL match in which teams assess both their own players and the opposition; along with objective, individual stats (MVPs, goals scored, clean sheets)
- The list applies to performances this season ONLY
- It is possible for a player not named to this shortlist to be named to the final Media XI at the end of the season if his performances over the remainder of the season merit inclusion

### FVSL Media UPL XI Shortlist:

GK – Mike Haladin (Abbotsford United)
GK – Hudson Nelles (Langley United)
GK – Andrew Cowan (Coastal FC)
D – Devon Gilroy (Langley United)
D – Tyler Epp (Port Moody Gunners)
D – Brandon Nair (SAFC Red Bulls)
D – Colton O’Neill (Abbotsford United)
D – Ryan Uppal (Surrey United Firefighters)
M – Connor Hildebrant (Langley United)
M – Gagan Josan (CCB Azad)
M – Connor O’Neill (Abbotsford United)

M – Roshan Gosal (Abbotsford United)
M – Cole Almond (Port Moody Gunners)
M – Raq Amijee (Surrey United Firefighters)
M – Spencer DeBoice (Coastal FC)
F – Ethan Clayborne-Collins (Surrey United Firefighters)
F – Graeme Meers (Port Moody Gunners)
F – Emmanuel Ekeh (SAFC Red Bulls)
F – Isaac Kyei (Coastal FC)
F – Jake Starheim (Coastal FC)

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