

Aurora United FC sides blanked at Sheppard's Bush



By Jake Courtepatte

Neither side of the semi-pro Aurora United Football Club could find the back of the net in a full day of action Sunday at Sheppard's Bush.

The Aurora women fell victim to the Vaughan Azzurri 2 ? 0, while the men followed up with a similar 2? 0 loss to the Sanjaxx Lions.

It was a tougher matchup for the women's squad, who were up against the recently-crowned League 1 Cup champs, a season-long knockout tournament that culminated last week.

"It was a little bit of a test for us against the Cup-winning team," said Aurora head coach Arman Mohammadi. "And I think we were able to show that we are able to play and compete against them. They had that motivation to go with them and I can't say if there was anything else in it. I feel it was a pretty balanced 90 minutes.?"

Aurora kept Vaughan off the board until the 39th minute of play, when Ashley Nater sailed in a long strike past Aurora keeper Marissa Zucchetto.

They doubled their lead after 65 minutes and held the game scoreless the rest of the way.

"First half, it was a little bit of a struggle for us to try and get our little momentum into the game and Vaughan did a good job of pressing in our half,?" said Mohammadi. "But second half I think we dealt with it a little bit. We informed the girls a little bit of what we wanted to do to change that and I think we created a lot of chances so we had momentum."

"Unfortunately we weren't able to score and in football, if you don't score, the other team will put the ball in the back of your net."

The men's side followed up by giving Sanjaxx the early lead, a corner kick that was converted in close. Sanjaxx put Aurora away for good with under four minutes to go.

Though showing flashes of brilliance from some All-Star players throughout the season, both the men and women of AUFC have struggled to find their footing in their inaugural season of League 1 football.

Sunday's loss was a crucial blow to the Aurora women, who will need to put up a combination of wins and ties in their final three regular season games to have any hope of moving up the standings ladder.

Aurora sits seventh in the nine-team league, five points back of both North Mississauga FC and the Kingston Clippers. Next

Saturday's challenging match with Durham United FA (7-1-3) could be the decider, as the women close out the season at home against the two lower-ranked teams, the Sanjaxx Lions (1-10-0) and Darby FC (1-8-2).

The men's side sits one point up on Scarborough's Masters Futbol for seventh in League 1's East division.

The final three games of the season are a three-way battle for sixth between the two and Toronto Skillz FC, currently three points up on Aurora. The rest of the East has locked in a winning season against the three.

Aurora's final road game of the season will be Sunday at 3pm against the Oakville Blue Devils (5-6-3) before contests at Sheppard's Bush the following two weekends hosting the Kingston Clippers (7-3-5) and Durham United FA (8-3-2).