

## Aurora FC falls hard to top-ranked Vaughan

By Jake Courtepatte

The Aurora FC men drew a tough schedule when they were forced to contend with the Vaughan Azzurri in the second-to-last week of League 1 Ontario play, a team annually ranked among the best in the league.

With the pressure on from the opening whistle, Vaughan opened the scoring just five minutes into play on Saturday at McNaughton Park, never looking back in an 8 ? 2 final.

Despite the loss, Aurora head coach Derek O'Keeffe was content with his team's play, with many inexperienced players getting their first taste of the semi-pro game.

?It was individual errors, lots of them,? he said. ?We gifted them a goal after the first five minutes, our centre-backs gave them the ball. That being said, they went three nil up, we did really well to come back to 3 ? 2, showed good character, and I thought out wide we hurt them a lot.?

Aurora's two goals were scored just minutes apart right before halftime, off the feet of Ezekiel Uadiale and Basel Rashrash.

?A soft goal conceded by half-time left us going in 4-2, and we were happy enough, but the fifth goal early in the second half killed us,? said O'Keeffe. ?We didn't press high enough in the second half. We spoke at half-time about pressing them and not giving time on the ball but we just backed off and gave them space and time. When you give that to good players, they are going to punish everything and that is what happened.?

While Vaughan finishes off their season tied atop the League 1 East division standings with Woodbridge, Aurora has one game remaining on their schedule, a battle with Toronto Skillz FC for seventh spot in the eight-team division.

Toronto enters St. Maximilian Kolbe field on Saturday with one point in hand. Kickoff is set for 7 p.m.

The Aurora women return to the turf on Sunday following a two-week break, hoping to climb the ladder in the final game of the season against the 2-16-1 Sanjazz Lions. Kickoff is set for 5 p.m. at Monarch Park Stadium in Toronto.

Aurora's 9-9-1 record is currently good for eighth in the League 1 women's division.