

Aurora United draws with Vaughan in League 1 debut



By Jake Courtepatte

An experienced Vaughan squad put the Aurora United FC women's side to the test in the League 1 season opener Saturday at McNaughton Park, eventually drawing 1 ? 1 in Aurora's league debut.

Under-17 national team star and newly-signed Aurora midfielder Sarah Stratigakis seemed in control of much of the play, with the ball often landing on her foot. Her breakout pass to Megan Reynolds at the 29-minute mark allowed Reynolds to score the side's first-ever goal, using her speed to push past the defenders and knocking it in off the woodwork.

?I thought the game was very intense and the team played very well, we demonstrated some nice possessive soccer,? said Stratigakis. ?I thought my teammate finished the goal beautifully.?

Aurora goalkeeper Quinn Josiah effectively controlled the tempo in the Aurora end for much of the game, beaten only by a tap-in following a nice cutback pass in the 55th minute of play.

Stratigakis came close to giving her side the win late in the game, forcing the Vaughan keeper to stretch out in a diving stop.

Vaughan thought they had netted the winner late as well, but the finish at the back post was called offside by the referee.

?It's our first game and I thought the team worked hard for 90+ minutes and we were up against a very strong team,? said Aurora head coach Ramin Mohammed.

?There are lots of things to work on, but I thought we did well for a first game. We will go from there.?

Sheppard's Bush in Aurora will play host to Aurora's home opener on Saturday, when they take on Durham United FA. Kickoff is set for 7 p.m.

On the men's side, three goals against within the first half hour of play put Aurora in a deep hole against Vaughan, eventually blanked 4 ? 0 and still searching for their first win after two league games.

While the side looked bright in their close 2 ? 1 loss to Durham in week one, a lack of possession time never allowed Aurora to gain any momentum in the form of a comeback.

?I thought we were sloppy at the back, and had problems up top where we have a very talented striker,? said Aurora head coach

Jimmy Brennan. ?Overall we are still learning as a squad here and figuring out the league...we are a new team in this league and as a group, but we just need to sharpen up and not give the ball away too easily around the box.?

The team will visit the North Toronto Nitros this Sunday, and are gearing up for their home opener against the Woodbridge Strikers in late May.

For stats, schedules, and more information, visit www.league1ontario.com.