

York 9 FC planning on run at Voyageurs Cup

By Jake Courtepatte

York 9 FC bench boss Jimmy Brennan knows a thing or two about winning a Canadian championship.

In an unprecedented move by the Canadian Soccer Association, members of the inaugural season of the Canadian Premier League will have the opportunity to vie for this year's Voyageurs Cup, the Canadian championship only ever won by Major League Soccer clubs.

"I won a few with TFC as a player and coach, and I'd love to win one with York 9," said Brennan, who will be the only member of a CPL squad, player or coach, to lift the Cup.

Awarded since 2002 by the Voyageurs, a national organization of Canadian soccer fans formed in 1996, the Voyageurs Cup has annually pitted the best of the best in Canadian soccer against each other throughout a season-long format.

This season's participants, announced on Monday, will include first-year teams for the first time in the tournament's history.

"Because it's the first year of this format, everyone is gonna have a go at it," said Brennan. "We're keen to show our value in the CPL by getting into stages with MLS teams and showing them what we could do.

"We're taking all competitions seriously. We'd love to have a great run in the Cup, even to win it. Same goes for the league."

With the CPL set to kick off its inaugural season in April, a revamped Voyageurs Cup schedule has been in the works for months, more than doubling the number of participating clubs.

A trip to the semifinal rounds could have York9 FC possible facing off against a trio of MLS teams, the top North American league, all who have experience success in the tournament.

The Montreal Impact have lifted the Cup a record nine times, while the Toronto FC are runners-up with seven wins. The Vancouver Whitecaps FC close out the winners' circle with a single championship.

Quarterfinal action kicks off May 15, with York 9 likely facing the local Vaughan Azzurri FC club of the League1 Ontario. A win in round one could have York9 face Hamilton's Forge FC in round two, in the clubs' second meeting after playing the season opener in Hamilton on April 27.

In the meantime, Brennan and his crew have recently added three more names to the opening roster, including former Aurora FC captain Morey Doner, of League1 Ontario. Brennan and Doner worked together in the 2018 season, Brennan's last with the club.

"He's an energetic fullback that loves to get up the line," Brennan said. "I don't think I've seen a guy with that much energy getting up the field as a fullback. He has electric pace. I think he'll cause a lot of problems."