

## York United draw FC Edmonton on the road

Many fans had thought York United sealed three points when Osaze De Rosario fired home his first ever Canadian Premier League goal of the season in the 82-minute, with a tantalizing shot from outside the box.

In snowy conditions at Clarke Stadium last Friday, United had been the far better side. The Nine Stripes dominated the match, holding 63 per cent of possession and had been knocking on the door on numerous occasions prior to the goal.

But hanging on to leads could be either a team's biggest strength or a team's kryptonite. And in Martin Nash's second game as Manager, he'll be able to see that United's habits must improve inside the last 10 minutes up by one.

A failed clearance from Diyaeddine Abzi inside the danger area fell to Courtney Smith. The FC Edmonton man easily set up Mastanabal Kacher who tucked the ball in the corner past Niko Giantsopoulos for the tying goal.

"I felt we panicked a little bit. Maybe a little bit rushed. Once the goal went in, we didn't calm ourselves and get grips in the game. They had great energy and enthusiasm trying to get back in the game. We didn't deal with it too well ? that's my thoughts right now but I'll have to look back at the video," said York United head coach, Martin Nash in the post-match press conference.

Early in the first half, United began to play well, generating scoring chance opportunities. Abzi lined up a free kick just outside of the 18-yard area. With his majestic left foot, Abzi struck the ball sweetly towards the goalkeeper's side of goal, forcing Andreas Vaikla to tip the ball over the bar.

On the cusp of halftime, it was Abzi at the end of another excellent chance.

The United fullback whipped the ball low across the box from the left-hand side of the pitch that somehow managed to get past a streaking Isaiah Johnston and De Rosario, heading into halftime level.

In the second half, Noah Verhoeven's corner was headed back central towards goal by Roger Thompson. Jordan Wilson was there to head it on towards goal, but Wilson unfortunately headed the ball straight at Vaikla.

De Rosario began inching his way into the game. In the 66th minute, his long-range effort was well struck and well saved by Vaikla to keep the score level. De Rosario had been lurking and looked like he was bound to score in this match ? and, of course, he did.

"Osaze is his own man ? a different type of player. He holds the ball really well. He's very physical, good in the air, and as you can see, that good strike he had," Nash said. "He's got a ton of upsides; a very young talent, a great kid with a great work ethic."

It will be a rematch at Tim Hortons Field this Saturday as United head back out on the road. Forge FC, defeated York United in the semifinals last season.

Kick-off is at 4:00 p.m.

**By Robert Belardi**