

York United fall 1-0 in first outing under Martin Nash



Just a day before the Canadian Premier League season opener between the HFX Wanderers and York United, there was a positive energy at York Lions Stadium.

In training, there was laughter fused with the element of seriousness.

It was the dawn of a new era for York United and general manager Angus McNab.

The club brought in wonderful international talents such as Brazilian fullback Eduardo Jesus and his compatriot William Wallace. It was the first time the club introduced Argentinian talents Lisandro Cabrera (who the club is still waiting for) and Mateo Hernandez to the squad following loan stints in Costa Rica.

There were a few others, but notable standouts include 18-year-old CF Montreal Academy forward Mouhamadou Kane and son of former Toronto FC man Dwayne De Rosario, Osaze De Rosario to the team.

And then, of course, bringing in former Cavalry FC assistant coach and brother of the head coach of the Brooklyn Nets, Martin Nash, introduced a new identity to the team. His intention is for the players to dictate the tempo with more possession and with an emphasis on creativity.

Since arriving from Cavalry FC, Nash said it has been easy for the players to understand what he wants.

?I think it was quite easy. I came in and right away, gave a presentation on the way I wanted to play and the why I wanted to play it. So far, they're all buying in and all working hard. It's a still a work in progress, obviously it still being early, trying to change their mindset being more on the front foot, trying to dictate the tempo of the game, instead of letting the other team do it,? Nash said, after the team's final preseason training session.

?It's exciting times. Now, we get to watch them put it in action.?

It's also exciting from a managerial perspective. York United partnered with Woodbine Entertainment at the end of March, to construct a stadium the club can call their own. This 8,000-seater stadium is set to be built right beside Woodbine Racetrack with hopes to be completed by 2023.

?Guys here (York University) are great. They're very good partners. It's just, as we look to the long term in the future, it's important to build something that's ours and something we can really build off of,? said General Manager Angus McNab.

?Everything we look to do there is ours, permanent long-term roots, but also just a phenomenally accessible site. With everything going in there from Metrolinx, proximity to the airport, it just makes a lot of sense.?

With full steam ahead and with the tailwind of the Canadian Men's National team World Cup qualification on their backs, the club was extremely excited to hit the ground running, hosting the HFX Wanderers last Thursday.

Last season, York United had not lost against the Wanderers, winning once and drawing four times.

In the first few minutes of the match, leading scorer last season Joao Morelli's cross ticked off the top of the crossbar, surprising United goalkeeper Niko Giantsopoulos in the process.

As the half went on, United began asking questions. Roger Thompson, who missed most of last season, had a chance off of a corner kick from the top of the box.

In the same breath, the Wanderers began showing some warning signs for United on the back end. Cory Bent was attacking Eduardo Jesus on the flank.

United forward Lowell Wright, who was announced to the U-20 Canada roster for the CONCACAF Championship this summer, fancied a long-range effort on the stroke of halftime. Although his shot rose above the bar, it gave the home fans an extra buzz leading into the second half.

In the second half, Thompson fouled Bent in the box and the Wanderers are awarded a penalty kick. In the 53-minute, Morelli stepped up to the spot and tucked it home.

Despite getting back into the game, playing considerably well, United could not get any luck.

Lowell Wright hit the post and moments later, York should have been awarded a penalty kick for a handball in the box by Jérémy Gagnon-Laparé

At the end of the game, Mateo Hernández was given a straight red card for controlling the ball with his arm to add salt to the wound on opening day.

York United are on the road Friday night to take on FC Edmonton.

Kick-off is at 9 p.m. EST.

By Robert Belardi