

## York United hanging on to playoff spot

Following a 1-1 draw against Atletico Ottawa ahead of Thanksgiving weekend, the Nine Stripes are currently hanging on to the fourth and final playoff spot with six matches to go in the regular season.

Since the Nine Stripes' 3-1 loss to Forge FC on August 28, the boys have not dropped any points in the table, giving them a two-point cushion on top of the fifth-place HFX Wanderers.

With a 7-10-5 record on the year, this Thursday will be a tough task heading out on the road against Cavalry FC before taking on FC Edmonton, Atletico, Pacific and a final back-to-back against Forge FC to cap off the year.

Following the draw against Ottawa, head coach Jimmy Brennan was asked about the playoff picture and if the latest result was a disappointment.

?I think every game you play for three points, don't you? Yeah, we got a point. But I think when it's this crucial and this tight, it's about picking up points and not walking away with nothing,? Brennan said.

?Yeah, we're disappointed, pissed off, because I wanted to win today and the players wanted to win today. At least we got something out of the match. Overall a failure? No, I don't agree with that. Where my players are, this young squad and where they are in the league and where everybody thought they would be, I give them full credit for the work they put in every single day and they're holding their own, these guys.?

With an average age of 22.8 years, according to transfermarkt.us, York United is currently the youngest squad in all of the Canadian Premier League.

With most players hovering between 18 years of age to 20, this group has had one of the most resilient campaigns. Their play has been relentless and their efforts have put them in this type of position.

But, of course, with just six games remaining there is one element of play that the Nine Stripes can take with them. It's a go-for-it-all mentality moving forward.

The boys have had ample opportunities to finish off matches and get three points instead of settling for one. It comes down to finishing, yes, but it also comes down to wanting it all as opposed to settling for some.

Of course, as head coach Brennan alluded to, some points is better than none.

That is absolutely a fact. But when you have the HFX Wanderers just two points behind and Valour FC just six points away, these last six games are crucial.

York United have to find out ways to finish off games and come away with three points because everyone knows the Wanderers won't settle for anything less and nor will Valour.

Now is a true test of character and these last six matches will showcase what these young lads are made of.

**By Robert Belardi**