

## BU-14 House League All Star Team Sub-Champion in Oshawa NASC All-Star/Select Invitational Tournament held on the weekend of August 12<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup>.

Before we get started, we the coaching staff of the Unionville Strikers BU-14 All Star Team would like to thank each and every player and their parents for their great effort and support in last weekend's nail biting, nerve-racking Oshawa NASC soccer tournament. The boys were all very nervous as we met the evening before their very first tournament. They only had three weeks to prepare for this weekend and felt that they were not ready. We assured them that we had a great deal of talent on our team and our road to winning would be to play our game and not get caught playing the other teams game.

Saturday morning with nerves on end and with only two subs, we started the first game against a well-prepared and undefeated Oshawa BU-14 team. Our team struck first and Ryan Singleton scored our first goal of the tournament. The Oshawa team came on strong and in the dying minutes of the game. They took a shot that was heading straight for the upper corner of the goal, an unstoppable shot, when out of nowhere the hand of our goalie, Michael Muzzatti, deflected the ball wide of the goal preserving a 1-0 win in our first game and earning him the Most Sportsman Medal from the other team coaching staff.

The players were pumped up for our second game that afternoon against the Tweed Titans. It was a nervous start for both teams but our boys settled in and playing their game, were able to score 5 times while keeping our goal undefeated. The goals were scored by Robert Kardaras (Bobby) – 2 goals, Jonathan Suckling - 1 goal, Rajakeirthan Arunthavaraph - 1 goal and Terrance Yiu - 1 goal. Joshua Lowe played an excellent game earning him the Most Sportsman Medal.

With 2 wins, 6 points, 6 goals in favour and 0 against we were in first place and waiting for the winner of the wildcard game later that afternoon to see which team we would be playing Sunday morning.

Our Sunday game was against the Oshawa BU-13 team, the score was 1-0 in our favour after the 1<sup>st</sup> half. We went on to win this game 3-0. The goals were scored by Michael Gismondi, Ryan Singleton and Bobby Kardaras. The Most Sportsman Medal was awarded to Rajakeirthan Arunthavaraph.

This win, gave our Strikers a birth in the finals against the Oshawa BU-14 team whom we had faced on Saturday morning, we all knew it was going to be a tuff game.

Unionville struck first once again with the goal being scored by Raj and we were up 1-0 by the end of the first half. The Oshawa team kept pushing and finally was able to score the equalizer in the second half, five minutes later on a failed attempt by our team to reject the ball from a corner kick the Oshawa team scored again putting them up 2-1. The boys were devastated but we, the coaches, knew the talent we had on this team and encouraged them to not give up and this was their game. Regrouping, they went right

back at their opponent and in the last 5 minutes of the game Andrew Sulaiman, hungry for a goal, scored off a cornerkick, which tied the game, sending it into overtime. We should mention that once again our goalie, Michael, came through in the second half saving his goal from defeat in 3 or 4 opportunities, which earned him the Most Sportsman Medal again from the Oshawa team.

At the end of two 5-minute overtime periods the game was still tied 2-2. The game came down to 5 penalty shots per team, after which we were still tied with both teams having scored 3 goals a piece. It was now sudden death penalty shots. It took 10 players from each team before the game was decided by the winning goal from the Oshawa BU-14 team.

All this time, the parents and spectators on the sideline were cheering on both teams and groaning on every fail goal attempt, everyone was nervous.

It was a gut wrenching loss and the boys were depressed. We told them that they were winners and they should hold their heads up high for they were the only team to give the Oshawa team a loss this year, and our team was the only undefeated team in the tournament.

The coaching staff made sure the players were aware of this and how proud we were of all of them, we had won this tournament no matter what the outcome was after the penalty shots.

Upon awarding the trophies, the Oshawa NASC officials commended both teams for the excellent playing. "It was the longest, most exciting and nerve racking game that has ever been played in the history of our tournament."

On a very sportsman note on behalf of the BU-14 UMSC Strikers they parted with a "See you in Unionville".

The coaching staff, Philip Kardaras, Pat Gismondi and Andy Fuentes, would like to thank all the players:

Andrew Sulaiman, Kenny Fuentes, Alan Ang, Kent Leslie , Darien Pun, Joshua Lowe, Ryan Singleton, Jonathan Suckling, Robert Kardaras, Michael Gismondi, Rajakeirthan Arunthavaraph, Terrance Yiu and goaltender Michael Muzzatti.

For their time and dedication to their team mates and their efforts to improve their skills at the game.

We would also like to thank all the parents once again for their continuous support by getting their children to practices and games on time.

We would also like to thank Philip Chow, who without his expertise and patience to get our paperwork in order with the region, made it possible for the team to participate in this tournament.

All the players on this team are truly ALL-STARS.