



NEWS RELEASE

Pickering Football Club make double head coach appointment

New coaches hired for both men's and women's League1 Ontario teams

Pickering, ON (March 09, 2022) – Pickering Football Club have appointed two new League1 Ontario coaches, with Aleks Balta leading the men's side and Dmitri Ovtchinnikov heading up the women's team. Both coaches have earned a UEFA A license from the Northern Ireland Football Association and have spent a combined total of 30 years coaching soccer in Ontario.

Balta joins Pickering having spent the past year developing the player pathway at FC Tesla Academy. His previous coaching role at North Mississauga saw him elevate the men's team to the 2019 League1 Ontario playoff places for the first time, before becoming Technical Director at Hamilton United Elite.

Meanwhile, former OPDL scout Ovtchinnikov was the head coach of the Glen Shields FC 2005, 2004, and 2001 girls' teams from January 2016 to November last year and won championships and Ontario Cups in indoor and outdoor soccer, as well as futsal. He has also coached the girls' U14 Canadian futsal team and several Ontario Soccer provincial 11-a-side boys' teams.

Balta played semi-professional soccer in Canada and Ovtchinnikov to a high standard in his native Russia, and both have since become experienced coaches who are looking forward to orchestrating Pickering's return to action in League1 Ontario.

Ritchie Jeune, the principal investor and license holder responsible for Pickering Football Club's League1 Ontario teams, said: "We would like to thank all the candidates who put themselves forward for these coaching roles; we appreciate the time and effort that was evidently invested into their applications.

"We believe that Aleks and Dmitri are good fits for this club. They share a clear passion for developing the game in Canada and demonstrated during the interview process that they have the same ambition to take Pickering's League1 Ontario teams forward."

Balta said: "I want to thank the club for believing in me. Pickering and the Durham area have a wealth of talent, and through hard work, preparation, passion, and togetherness, we will create a team that is exciting to watch and that the city will be proud to call its own."

Ovtchinnikov said: "Pickering Football Club has a long history of developing talented players and we hope to continue this in representing the club and the city. The future will bring some exciting challenges with the introduction of promotion and relegation confirmed for 2024, and I am very thankful to the organization for this opportunity."

Please visit pickeringfc.ca/league1ontario for further updates and connect with the club by following @PickeringFCL10 on social media. To learn more about League1 Ontario, visit league1ontario.com and follow @L1OMens and @L1OWomens on Twitter, and @league1ontario on Facebook and Instagram.

#PFCL10

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Notes to editors:

About League1 Ontario

League1 Ontario is the province of Ontario's pro-am, standards-based, senior league. Founded in 2014, the league began with a ten-team men's division, which has now grown to 21 teams in the men's division and includes a separate 14-team women's division.

League1 Ontario serves as a stepping stone between the high-performance youth level and elite amateur and professional levels of the game. Owned and managed by Canadian Soccer Business and sanctioned by FIFA through the domestic bodies of Canada Soccer and Ontario Soccer, League1 Ontario's primary focus is the showcase and development of Canada's future stars.

About Pickering Football Club

In 2019, Pickering, competing as Durham United, finished 14th in its last active season in Men's League1 Ontario and 10th in Women's League1 Ontario. The 2020 season was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the club opted out of the 2021 season.

The women's team were champions of the inaugural season in 2015 and won the championship via the playoffs in 2018.

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