



# **PETAL PAPER**



## WHAT A MONTH IT'S BEEN

Flower City Union (5-0-8) face Club de Lyon (5-2-7) in a rematch of FCU's July 8th loss. FCU is in their best form of all time, with that loss to Leon being their only loss in the last 5 matches. Wednesday night's match is one of the most important they've ever faced, as a win for FCU will put them over Leon in the standings, in the final play-off position. There are 11 matches remaining including this one, so the season is still far from over, but the implications from this match will be important going forwards.

## TEAM FORMS

Flower City Union have been on a roll recently. In their last 6 matches (including the NISA Independent Cup), their only loss is to this week's opponent, Club de Lyon. Lyon put that game out of reach with two quick early goals, however that was the start of FCU's attempts at a comeback. Their first half stoppage time goal, along with a second early after the restart made a game of it. They lost that match, but have since had a come-from-behind victory in the NISA Independent Cup (4-3) and on Saturday against Gold Star FC Detroit (3-2). The match against Detroit was the first time they have ever taken points in a league game after having been in a losing position. Stephen Elias was notable in this match, as he scored the first goal, and later provided a perfect pass for Alioune Diakhate to tie the match going into the final 13 minutes, where Matt Bolduc put home the winner. The only worrying part of the match was that FCU gave up two very quick goals, in the 6th minute and the 14th) which was less than 2 minutes after they'd tied it).

Club de Lyon comes to Rochester in poorer form than Flower City Union. Whereas FCU has won each match since their last meeting, Lyon has lost all 3 of their matches. Two of those matches were against Maryland (whom FCU recently defeated) and Albion, teams that are in third and second place respectively. Both teams have now scored 16 goals this season, however despite their higher table position, Lyon have given up 26, to FCU's 19. Team scoring leader Ignacio Ten Lopez was mostly negated last outing in Rochester (although he had 1 of the 4 goals), but second in their scoring is Mattias Pourrain, a midfielder. For FCU to have a chance this match, they will need to negate both, and avoid the costly mistakes that led to them being behind the 8-ball early in their last meeting.



## OUTLOOK:

Flower City Union have won more games in the past month than in the whole of the 2022 regular season. They've finally scored the goals that were lacking in the opening of the season and shown the resilience to come from behind to win two matches in that period. On the other hand, Club de Lyon had a stronger 6 weeks from the start of June, but have fallen off recently. It will by no means be an easy match for FCU, but much like the recent defeat of the out-of-form Maryland Bobcats, this match could not come at a better time for them. This is the perfect time to play Lyon, as FCU is flying high while Lyon have struggled since the last meeting. It's also their biggest match of the year, as a win would leapfrog Lyon in the standings, and put FCU into the final playoff place. The start of the season was rough for FCU, and they're now playing catch-up, which puts the pressure on. If they can snag three points, they should have confidence to go the distance the rest of the season.

## WRAP-UP:

This week's match is the first of two Wednesday night home games in August (sandwiching two away games). The next month and a half is full of games, but they do not have another home weekend game until September 30th; a long stretch of away and weeknight games. Strangely, Flower City Union has been consistent in their results this season, either winning or losing, and have yet to draw a match. The last time a NISA team finished the season without a draw was in the Spring 2020 season, although that season was only 8 matches long, whereas FCU has already played 13 without a draw.

