

Playing injured just part of the game for Yeomen goalie

By JAMES HOGGETT

In an injury plagued season for the Yeomen soccer team, the goaltending position is no exception. But because of a shortage of netminders, Paul Bottos had to play the first three games wearing a cast on his left hand because of a broken wrist. It was only after the team acquired Rafael Torres that coach Norm Crandles was able to lessen Bottos' load and give him a game off against Queen's.

Bottos, who graduated last year with an undergraduate degree in geography, is now in his first year at Osgoode. During the off season while playing summer league ball, Bottos came out of his goal for a ball that was travelling along the ground. He challenged an opposing player for it and instead of making contact with the ball, his opponent made contact with Bottos' unprotected face. The result was the loss of a front tooth and half of the accompanying front tooth. Bottos is still receiving treatment for his injury.

Just recently in preseason practice, Bottos sustained a broken wrist. "It was a funny kind of an injury," Bottos said. "I guess those are the worst ones, though. It was just a regular shot on goal and I went to catch it and it snapped my thumb and index finger backwards."

Originally the injury was diagnosed as strained ligaments and tendons, however, a week later it was discovered there was a small fracture.

Bottos now plays wearing a removable cast which allowed him to play against RMC last Saturday. "Basically the hand will just swell up and there's some pain when I catch

the ball, but the doctor said there's no real possibility of furthering the injury," Bottos said. "I'm not favouring it much now, but in our first game against Carleton there was some pain. The only real problem

with the cast is with catching the ball as it (the cast) restrains the movement of the two fingers."

Like coach Crandles, Bottos is confident they can turn the Yeomen's dismal 1-3 record around and

make the playoffs. "At the outset of the season the team looked exceptionally strong," Bottos said. "We suffered some heartbreaking losses against Carleton and U of T and all of that set us back, and this weekend it was like black and white. Saturday against RMC we came out with a beautiful effort. It was a strong game and we displayed the type of soccer this team is capable of by winning three-nil. Then the next day against Queen's we drew some hard luck and they managed to capitalize on their opportunities. In the first half we knocked one off the post and I think if that had gone in, the tables would

have been turned and we would have taken a 1-0 lead."

Bottos maintains that one has to stay optimistic about the team's playoff chances this year. "The team is there, the team is set, I think it's just a matter of getting the team to gel and blend together," Bottos said. "There's quite a few new faces on the team and we have to keep the spirits up and we'll be there come playoff time."

The only question remaining is how long it will take for this gel to mould together. If the Yeomen continue to slide it could be too late.



JAMES HOGGETT

IF THOSE SOCKS COULD SPEAK: Goaltending for the Yeomen can be a dirty job, but someone's got to do it. Paul Bottos has played with a broken wrist and chipped teeth.

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