

As we enter the last week of fall soccer, players are registering for the indoor season that starts next month and finishes before the winter holidays. You can keep your child active and engaged in the sport by signing up at [www.rcysl.com](http://www.rcysl.com). Rules and descriptions are located there.

Today marks the opening of the South Dakota State High School Soccer Tournament, the Toyota Cup, being hosted by Aberdeen and South Dakota Soccer. The brackets are posted at [www.southdakotasoccer.com](http://www.southdakotasoccer.com) and consist of the top 8 teams in each division.

In the boys AA division, Stevens meets SF Lincoln today at 10:30 AM MDT. The other teams competing are SF O’Gorman vs. SF Roosevelt; SF Washington vs. Pierre; and Aberdeen vs. Yankton. In the girls AA, Stevens takes on SF Roosevelt at 3:30 PM MDT this afternoon ; Spearfish vs. SF Washington at 1:00 PM MDT; SF O’Gorman vs. Aberdeen Central; and Yankton vs. Pierre. The scores will be posted as they are received.

The A Division boys teams put Custer against Huron at 3:30 PM MDT today and Sturgis against Groton at 1:00 PM MDT. In addition, there is SF Christian against Vermillion and Harrisburg against the JV Christian Vikings. The girls side of the A Division has St. Thomas More vs. SF Christian (10:30 AM MDT); Groton vs. Belle Fourche at 10:30 AM MDT; West Central Trojans vs. Sturgis at 8:00 AM MDT; and Harrisburg against Vermillion.

As the tournament enters its second decade, there are now two divisions and more than 28 schools that participate. It has quickly transformed from an initial group of large and small schools playing at similar levels to increasingly competitive teams attracting interested students and expanding team organizations. More kids want to play and more schools are interested in making soccer part of their sports programs. South Dakota Soccer has worked to make the playing field level and keep the tournament accessible to all sizes of schools.

Soccer is attractive to athletes because of the speed and independence of play. Players must make decisions instantly, reacting to the unfolding game. There are no time-out moments for consultation with coaches. It is up to the players to respond based on what they have learned. Not surprisingly, soccer players also tend to be more independent in other ways and more often than not, team GPAs are the highest in athletics.

As teams begin play today, they would do well to thank some long-serving volunteers who sat down across a table in Rapid City just over 11 years ago to design a state high school tournament and league. Jackie Borr, Cynthia and Patrick Clinch, Greg Stone, and Gordon Hollenbeck along with others put their shoulders to the task to make this a reality. There have been tweaks and adjustments over the years but the folks who refused to wait for the SDHSAA started the process without which there would be no high school league. It was a good vision.

The US Men's National Team has a World Cup qualifying game on Saturday against Honduras. The game will be played in Honduras with an 8:00 PM MDT start. Information on a television feed from Honduras has not been forthcoming. The October 14 game will be on ESPN2 at 6:00 PM MDT when the US meets Costa Rica. A win against Honduras would put the US into the next round and on its way to South Africa. Anything else could be interesting math.