

The Rapid City Sports Council announced its choice of outstanding sports club of the year and the winner is Rapid City Youth Soccer League. Buker Beaumont, former president and coordinator of U8 Boys was named Volunteer of the Year for RCYSL. Current president, Dan Davis, also a coach for both soccer organizations, was tapped as Coach of the Year. Congratulations to the winners and to RCYSL for promoting a healthy activity for all kids.

There are two more indoor soccer tournaments on the schedule. This weekend teams will travel to Gillette and March 7-9 will bring games back to the Civic Center for the Rushmore Soccer Club's President's Cup. If you have a child who loves soccer and has a competitive streak, this is a good opportunity to watch some of the Rushmore Club coaches deal with their players. Watch a game or two. Introduce yourself when the coach is free between games and ask any questions you might have. As you are making choices in the years ahead, it is important to have some first-hand contact and information about the organization.

The spring soccer season is just around the corner. RCYSL coaches' meetings are scheduled March 10-20. Registration continues online and at Scheels with teams being formed soon. Games begin April 1 and the PeeWee season starts April 5.

If you are tired of the soccer ball banging off the wall downstairs or in a bedroom, here's a simple, inexpensive solution that can be utilized by players of any age. You need a newspaper and a roll of masking or athletic tape (this works best). Mark Hackett who coaches U12 boys in Downer's Grove, Illinois uses these to encourage skill practice indoors.

First, take a sheet of the newspaper and crumple it into a very tight ball. Crumple 3 more sheets around this core and then criss-cross this ball with two lines of tape. Add 3 more sheets of newspaper and cover the ball with tape until you can't see any newspaper. Viola -- An indoor ball with little bounce that is easy on walls, furniture, and siblings. A player can learn as much about control and containment from this newspaper ball as from a regular soccer ball.

Encourage them by offering to reward different levels of accomplishment or by sharing the contest and learning to juggle. You will think you're just being supportive but you will be developing your own appreciation for their skill development.

US Women's National Team is in Algarve, Portugal for competition in the Algarve Cup. The US is in Group B which includes China, Italy and Norway. The prestigious tournament is a lead-up to the Olympic qualifying tournament April 2-13 in Mexico. Already qualified teams Norway, Germany, and Sweden are in other groups at the Algarve Cup

In this CONCACAF Tournament, the US will play in Group A along with Jamaica and Mexico. The top two teams will advance to the semifinals to face the top two from Group B (Canada, Costa Rica, Trinidad & Tobago). The winners of the semi-finals will advance to the Olympics in China this fall.

The US Men's National team is scheduled for two European games this spring. They will play Poland on March 26 and Spain on June 4. Qualifying for the 2010 Men's World Cup begins June 15 for the whole world.