

After winter's frigid return this week, it seems premature to talk about summer camp but time speeds up when the outdoor season begins. Planning ahead makes sense.

Soccer players have a huge number of camps available nationwide or even internationally but only a couple are local. Rushmore Soccer Club's website can put you in touch with USD, SDSU, and Creighton University; all strong soccer programs with summer offerings. Check www.socceramerica.com for the national directory of soccer camps for more. The Rushmore players are encouraged to participate in at least one camp experience, if possible.

Rapid City Youth Soccer will again sponsor the Challenger British Soccer Camp, July 20-24. Rapid City is one of their largest summer camps and coaches request a return to our community because of the warm reception. Campers from age 3 to 19 are welcome and both recreational and competitive levels are available.

Challenger also offers the option of "team camp", providing a coach to work exclusively with a specific team. Your team could register together and spend a week with an international-level player/coach and not leave town.

The camp offers "First Kicks", an hour of soccer for ages 3-4 or 2-hour "Mini-Kickers" for ages 4-5. This is a great way to let your child try out the game in a fun-focused environment that blends soccer basics with just enough zaniness to keep kids engaged for a week.

Registration includes a shirt and a soccer ball. Register at www.rcysl.com now so you can plan around that time.

On another note, RCYSL coaches meetings are scheduled for next week. Outdoor games begin April 4 so pack your blizzard bag. Perhaps this spring will be kinder.

Referees should remember the re-certification class this weekend, March 14, at the RCYSL office, 306 Main Street. Contact Chad Landis with any questions at rapidcitysoccerrefs@yahoo.com. Referees are planning to offer "Soccer Laws for Parents" on April 2 and 9 at 6:30 PM. Mark your calendar and take one of these to improve your understanding of the game and your support for your child.

