

Major League Soccer season begins today. Seattle hosts the first game of the season showcasing the expansion team, Seattle Sounders, against the New York Red Bulls. The game is an early sell-out due to some creative marketing by part-owner Drew Carey and others in Seattle. You can watch the game on ESPN2 at 7:00 PM MDT.

This is the 15<sup>th</sup> team in the professional league with an additional expansion team to be added next year. Seattle has had United Soccer League soccer for many years and going back to the 1970's, was part of the first professional soccer league. The Sounders have a strong fan base that should transfer easily to the MLS team, utilizing the name used by the USL team. Seattle will also be the site of the MLS Cup Championship in the fall.

American star Landon Donovan has returned from a winter stint in Germany to resume playing with the LA Galaxy while his teammate, David Beckham has worked a multi-million dollar swap that allows him to stay in Italy until the European season ends in June and then resume play with Los Angeles in July. Beckham becomes a free agent in the fall of 2009.

Locally, coaches will be getting the spring rosters and making some phone calls in the next couple of weeks. When your child's coach calls with information, take notes, offer to help with anything, and make a commitment to have your child arrive for practice and games at the time indicated by the coach. Additionally, commit to picking your child up on time. This is not child care.

Rapid City has been fortunate to have very good, dedicated coaches who donate their time to our kids. Even the competitive club coaches accept very little reimbursement for the travel but no salary. Organizing practices and communicating with all of the team parents can be very time-consuming. Your help can be easily utilized and will allow the coach more time with your children.