

It was a wet, chilly state tournament for soccer but the MidContinent Cup tournaments provided a wonderful end to the season for hundreds of young players across the state. Thanks to MidContinent, to South Dakota State Soccer Association, Rapid City Youth Soccer League, Western Referees Association and the hundreds of volunteers who made it happen. Kids matter.

A tournament like this one is a significant economic impact over 4 days for any community. The impact for larger tournaments is even greater. Sioux Falls will host the Region II tournament beginning June 19 and because it is a longer tournament, the impact is somewhat greater. Sioux Falls, as one of 4 cities hosting the regional tournaments will share in a \$44 million dollar infusion to the local economy. Rapid City could host such a tournament easily in the new complex. It would be nice to be feeling the impact of about \$11 million this spring.

Local club and classic teams will be getting ready for summer tournaments now. The Region II in Sioux Falls June 19-24 and the Rushmore Cup, here in Rapid City June 26-29 as well as surrounding state contests. The level of play for these teams is strong competition. In baseball, it is comparable to the American Legion levels and the Rushmore Soccer Club teams hold their own in huge tournaments in Colorado, Kansas, Minnesota or Montana.

Rapid City Youth Soccer League will hold the semi-annual general meeting on June 30, 7:00 PM at the City/School Administration Community Room. The meeting is open to all parents of players registered with RCYSL and will involve some bylaw changes and election of coordinators. If you have an interest in making certain that the recreation soccer program continues to grow, take time for this meeting.

The US Men's National Team won one and lost one, miserably, to Costa Rica last week leaving the US in second place in the CONCACAF regional standings behind Costa Rica. The US meets Costa Rica again in October but this time the game is in the US. World Cup qualifying for the US resumes August 12 against Mexico, in Mexico.

The team has moved to South Africa where play begins next week in the Confederations Cup. This tournament is made up of the six champions of each regional confederation, the defending World Cup champion, and the host nation of the next World Cup. The US drew Italy, Brazil, and Egypt with the meeting with Italy on June 15 (ESPN 12:25 PM MDT). The Brazil game is June 18 (ESPN2 7:55 AM MDT) and Egypt on June 21 (ESPN2 12:25 PM MDT). These are the top teams in the world and should provide excellent soccer.