

It appears the economy has dealt a nasty blow to high school soccer. The fund-raising soccer camp that the program has offered for young players in the area has been cancelled due to lack of registration. If you did register your child, your money will be refunded to you. If you have questions, please contact Lorre Buhler at 394-3833 or 415-7394 or you may email [lrbuhler@hotmail.com](mailto:lrbuhler@hotmail.com). If you still want to help high school players with expenses, ask her how to send your contribution.

The local league, RCYSL, will continue to help you try to get your child into soccer this fall. Contact [www.rcysl.com](http://www.rcysl.com) for direct access to the office and administration for their advice. Teams are being formed this month and the season will open on September 12.

Referees can re-certify or upgrade their certification on August 15 and 16. Contact Chad Landis at [rapidcitysoccerrefs@yahoo.com](mailto:rapidcitysoccerrefs@yahoo.com) for details.

High school players from both Stevens and Central should remember that tryouts are next week, beginning on Monday night. Check the [www.rushmoresoccerclub.com](http://www.rushmoresoccerclub.com) website for contact information and get the details from the coaches or managers. Stevens and Central open on the road August 21.

Over the past couple of summers, European soccer clubs have found a very lucrative market for their pre-season warm-up games here in the US. This summer is no exception. While US professional soccer is in mid-season, the European season ended in June and those players have been resting, on tour, playing some world cup qualifying games, or being traded like high-priced commodities. The trading is nearly over and the teams are getting ready to open the European season but the lure of big purses in the US is hard to resist.

Barcelona, AC Milan, Madrid, Everton, and other top clubs have enjoyed huge crowds at venues like the new Cowboys stadium or the Rose Bowl. Last week, more than 93,000 fans descended on the Rose Bowl to see LA Galaxy play Barcelona. Earlier crowds tipped the counters at more than 80,000 at Cowboys field and Soldier field. The fans are willing to turn out to see top-notch soccer. MLS has got to improve the product to bring fans in these numbers to watch their games.

Next week, the USA returns to World Cup Qualifying with a highly-charged game at Azteca Stadium in Mexico City. After the 5-0 loss to Mexico last week in the Gold Cup final, the USA has a lot to prove.

The US has never won in Azteca. It is more than a mile high and the smog levels are deadly. The noise makes communication on the field nearly impossible but the roster for this game will not be

the "B" or "C" rosters that met Mexico in the Gold Cup Final. Coach Bob Bradley is calling in all the top players from their European or MLS teams to meet the Tri Colores on August 12. You can watch the game on Dish Network on 838 or DirecTV channel 410 for English coverage. Telemundo will carry it in Spanish. Game time is 2:00 PM.