



Contact: Troy Letherman
907.982.3459; t.letherman@coervercoachingnw.com

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Sounders FC Adidas Cup Highlights Impressive 2009 for 98 Boys

Palmer, AK – February 12, 2010 – After a series of dominant performances, scoring 24 goals while allowing only one throughout the tournament, the AKFC 98 United boys hoisted the championship trophy following the inaugural Sounders FC Adidas Cup this past June at the Starfire Sports Complex in Tukwila, WA.

The tournament began brightly, with the Alaska boys topping the PDL Division I Federal Way Storm 6-0. On the second day of action, successive 4-0 and 11-0 wins put them into the title game to face another PDL Division I team, Snohomish United Black, who also came into the match without so much as a single goal against to blemish their record. Things weren't to be for the top Washington club, however, as AKFC 98 United raced out to a 2-0 advantage at the interval and then after Snohomish pulled one back, salted the game away with a late marker to seal the 3-1 victory.

Following the trophy presentation, the boys had a chance to meet the current Sounders FC players and have their new replica jerseys bought for the occasion signed by stars like Freddie Ljungberg and Fredy Montero.

From there, the AKFC squad and their coaching staff traveled to Camp Brotherhood in Mount Vernon, WA, for a four-day residential training camp with Coerver® Coaching NW instructors. With an impressive lodge and three private soccer fields at their disposal, the camp proved a resounding success, highlighted by the arrival of U.S. under-18 international and UCLA-bound Kelyn Rowe, who not only assisted with the training sessions but also jumped in to participate in the 3v3 tournament games that were held nightly.

US Club Soccer's National Championship Series, Region G Finals, was next on the docket for the boys, who traveled the short distance up I-5 to take on the region's best in Burlington, WA. In their first game in the Super Group, the boys outshot Crossfire Premier 97 Black 14-2 but poor-to-unlucky finishing and some great saves left them on the wrong end of a 1-0 score line. It took some time for the effects of the heartbreaking loss to wear off—too long in the end—as Crossfire Premier 98A jumped out to an early lead in the following game and then held off a spirited rally to run out 4-2 winners. In the final group game, the AKFC squad finally returned to winning ways, downing the top U12 Gold boys team from Oregon, Eugene Metros FC 97 Boca Juniors, by a score of 4-0. Denied a slot in the semifinals by virtue of goal-differential, the team returned to Alaska to prepare for a jaunt to Southern California.

Before that, though, and consistent with AKFC's mission to provide individual development opportunities at the highest levels, one AKFC regular was picked up by Crossfire Premier to guest-play in two following tournaments – the Nike Crossfire Challenge and the prestigious Surf Cup. In all, the player subsequently

reported, the additional opportunity was a good one, with experience gained that he was able to bring back to his team as they prepared for their own fall trip.

Reconvened after summer club play in Alaska, Labor Day weekend was spent in sunny Huntington Beach, CA, where the premier teams from much-vaunted CalSouth gathered for the 31st Annual NHB Cup. As a warm-up, AKFC 98 United took part in a pre-tournament friendly against a team one-year older (U13), NHB 97 Gold, winning 4-2. The tournament proper began with a tough test, the boys facing perennial national powerhouse West Coast FC and then the Nevada State Champions, Las Vegas United 98.

Acquitting themselves very well in the heat and on the fast surface (with only 12 players!), AKFC 98 United managed a pair of 0-0 draws before dropping the third and deciding match of pool play 4-1 to Legends FC, the current number-one ranked U12 boys team in the country. The last match began poorly, with AKFC conceding a penalty kick in the first two minutes and then giving up a swift counter-attack just three minutes later. However, they pulled one back at the death of the first half and then created a number of quality opportunities as the second thirty-five played out. But in the end tactical naïveté and a lack of depth did them in, with Legends hitting AKFC on the break as the boys poured forward in search of the equalizer. West Coast FC and LV United moved onto the quarterfinals from the very tight group, with the Vegas team also advancing to the semifinals.

For AKFC 98 United, the tournament was deemed a resounding success, with the boys getting an indoctrination to full-sided play at the highest level and finding more motivation to continue their development. The week ended with the team serving as ball boys during an NCAA Div. I men's game at the University of California-Irvine, where they were also offered a chance to participate in a 9v9 game versus Pateadores during the halftime interval.

The year wrapped up with the team back in Alaska again, this time enrolled in the 2009/2010 Coerver® Center of Excellence-Elite and partaking in weekly technical training as preparation for the new soccer year and an upcoming European tour.

About AKFC

Formed in 2008, AKFC was created to offer an additional competitive outlet for the Alaskan premier soccer player, by providing innovative, advanced training opportunities in a professional atmosphere, stressing our core belief in the development of the individual player, and by promoting tournament match play in the most challenging environments. A member of US Club Soccer, AKFC is operated by the directors of Matanuska Soccer Club but accepts and encourages cooperation between all of Alaska's premier soccer clubs. Our teams are intended to both further develop and showcase the talents of the state's best young soccer players by placing them in an environment of consistent competition, where the highest standards of commitment and performance are expected.

About Coerver® Coaching AK

Coerver® Coaching concludes that any system of play is ultimately only as good as the players involved. It therefore focuses on individual development both alone and in the context of small-group team play. This curriculum is delivered through the Pyramid of Player Development and remains consistent with the core mission of all Coerver® development programs: to develop skilled, confident and creative players.

For more information about Coerver® Soccer Schools and Academies, to include the Coerver® Coaching AK Center of Excellence, or for details on AKFC teams and player opportunities, please contact Assistant

Director Troy Letherman at 907.982.3459 (t.letherman@coervercoachingnw.com) or Director TR Stoneback at 206.478.3670 (trstoneback@coervercoachingnw.com), or visit AKFC on the web at www.coervercoachingnw.com/akfc/index.asp.

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