

Caledon soccer team captures USA CUP



The Caledon FC 2001 Boys U16 Soccer Team were victorious in the USA Cup tournament.

The Caledon FC 2001 Boys U16 Soccer Team travelled to Blaine, Minn. July 13 to participate in the USA Cup, and came home victorious.

Held annually, the USA Cup is the largest youth international soccer tournament in the Western Hemisphere, and this year it played host to 1,168 teams from 15 different countries.

Playing in the top flight A division, Caledon earned the U16 title defeating two different U.S. state champions, and teams from three different countries in the process.

The tournament, however, did not get off to a great start for the club from Caledon, as they dropped their opening game 2-1 to the defending champions from Eden Prairie, Minn. The sluggish start, after the long bus ride, put CFC in a must win situation for the remainder of the round-robin play. With plenty to play for in the second game against Magic FC, the boys, led by coaches Gaspare Clemenzi and Hardley Scott, put in a strong effort over their foes from North Dakota, dominating possession from start to finish, ending the first day of competition with a 4-0 victory.

In a loser-go-home final round-robin game for both teams, the Caledon boys were matched up against the Nebraska state champions. Caledon played a tactically perfect game, finishing their chances in this one, sending the SSC Diablos home early with a 3-0 final. In the quarter-final match, Caledon face a strong academy team from Costa Rica. In a great showcase of skill and tactical play by both sides, it took extra time before Caledon was able to come away with the favorable 2-1 result, punching their ticket to semifinals.

Twinstars Academy Elite, the Minnesota state champions, came into the semifinals undefeated and without surrendering a goal in the tournament. However, the club from Caledon was again up for the task.

This match was a very physical affair, resulting in injuries to key players and ending with a 0-0 score in regulation time. Overtime could not produce a winner, forcing the result to be decided by penalty kicks. Caledon FC goalkeeper Liam McKendry made a great diving save on one of the final Twinstars' attempts from the spot and Caledon's shooters went a perfect five-for-five, earning the right to play for the cup.

With a few players unavailable for the cup final game, CFC's depth and perseverance was on full display as they took on Thunder Bay in an all-Canadian, US Cup final. Despite taking an early 2-0 lead, it would again take extra time before scoring the 3-2 Cup winner, delighting the hundreds of supporters who watched the tense, live broadcast from home.

The CaledonFC 2001 Boys play in the GHSL Regional Elite league. They will put their current undefeated league record on the line next when they play Hamilton at home tonight (Thursday).