170 Teams Compete In Soccer Tournament

Little Caesars Sun Bowl International

Soccer Tournament To Feature 170 Teams

Tournament Schedule

EL PASO, Texas (June 6, 2008) - The Little Caesars Sun Bowl International Soccer Tournament will hit El Paso again this weekend for the ninth time. The tournament has now become the largest youth soccer event in the region.

By the time the weekend is over, approximately 2,500 boys and girls will compete in 300 matches over two days. This tournament has steadily grown from 42 teams in 2000 to 170 teams this year.

"For the third straight year, we have reached 170 teams and we could have easily gotten to 200 teams," said Bernie Olivas, executive director of the Sun Bowl Association. "Nine years ago we struggled to just get teams and now we cannot accommodate all of the teams that want to participate."

This year's field includes teams from Texas, Arizona, New Mexico and Mexico. It also includes 43 teams from out of town, a number that reached 40 for the third straight year. In the tournament's first year, just 14 teams came from outside of El Paso.

"Our growth depends on soccer fields and with the addition of the new 13-field complex in West El Paso, it only helps us provide a top-notch tournament for the city," said Olivas. "At the Sun Bowl Association, we strive to enhance tourism in El Paso through sport, adding to the overall economic impact of the city. But beyond that is the fact that we are getting quality out of town competition, which helps make El Paso soccer stronger."

The tournament will be played at five El Paso parks this year - the new Northeast Regional Park, Nations-Tobin, Sue Young, Todd Ware and Veterans Park.

"We are really excited where this tournament can be this time next year," said Olivas. "With help of Paula Powell and the El Paso Parks and Recreation and the addition of the new Westside complex and the expansion of the Northeast Regional Park, I really feel like we can get the tournament over 200 teams in 2009."

This year's field features eight returning champions from last year - El Paso America Jr. (U10 Boys), Inter Chihuahua (U11 Boys), El Paso AYAX (U12 Boys), El Paso Jaguares (U13 Boys), El Paso Desert Rats (U15 Boys), El Paso Atletico (U17 Boys), El Paso Heat (U11 Girls) and El Paso Lady Arsenal Gunners (U12 Girls).