

## State Cup Format Change Successful

Jim Tilley, Executive Director

The opening round of the 2007 US Youth Soccer National Championship Series, otherwise known as the New Mexico Open State Cup, was played in 3 venues around the state during May. The tournament concluded on May 19 and 20 with 14 State Championships being awarded. All in all, New Mexico sent 16 teams to the Far West Regionals in Las Vegas because the state was also awarded two wild cards. A format change to simplify the final weekend was implemented this year. The final two days were exciting and all of the focus was on the action on the pitch.

Several events were noteworthy on Finals Sunday. The U17 Boys championship game was played on a muddy field in the rain. The NM Rush Nike Premier '90 team outlasted the Classic Cougars, winning on kicks from the mark to take their first-ever state championship. The Rio Vista Del Sur '89 Boys and the AUFC '89 Boys played in their eighth straight state championship game against each other, with Del Sur coming out on top this year. The U18 Girls championship featured a thrilling Rio Vista comeback in the rain, but with Albuquerque United pulling out their second straight state championship in extra time. It was also notable that the Alameda Flash did not win the '91 Girls State Championship for the first time ever, losing to eventual state runner-up, AEFC Adrenaline in the semi-finals.

The Alameda Argonauts (U13B), Rio Vista FC Eagles (U13G), Albuquerque United FC 93 (U14G), Rio Vista FC 90 (U17G) and Admiral Elite Gladiators (U14B) each won their third straight state championship. Five teams won their first-ever state championship: Admiral Elite Titans (U15G), Rio Vista Phoenix (U19B), NM Rush Hurricanes (U19G), Rio Vista 91 Girls (U16G), and NM Rush Nike Premier 90 (U17B).

As last year, this year's state tournament indicated that parity continues to increase around the state. State Champions came from many clubs. Rio Vista won five; Admiral Elite, NM Rush and Albuquerque United won two each; while Classic FC, Striker, and Alameda all took home a Cup apiece. The runners up represented Classic (5), Rio Vista (4), Albuquerque United (2), Jornada and Admiral.

Finally, the NMYSA staff would like to thank all of the volunteers for the effort they put in to make State Cup the premier tournament in New Mexico. Tom Dickerson, State Cup Tournament Director, is a long-time NMYSA volunteer. He lends a stability to State Cup that makes all the pressure bearable. His behind-the-scenes work adds enormously to the success of the event. Alta Wisdom coordinated volunteers for both State Cup and Kohl's American Cup for the third year in a row. Like the Energizer Bunny, she just keeps going and going. There were some new faces field marshaling this year, and that's very important to the growth of these two tournaments. We had great field

coverage, excellent medical help, and the best communication that we could have hoped for. Many NMYSA Board members came from around the state to be field marshals and to help in the administration tent. But it was the parents and former parents who really pitched in to handle ice, transportation and field marshalling assignments that made the tournament run smoothly. All our thanks go to Alta and the many members of her crew.

The 2007 US Youth Soccer New Mexico Open State Cup winners, who represented NM at the Far West Regional Tournament in Las Vegas, NV:

- U-13 Boys:** Alameda Argonauts
- U-13 Girls:** RVFC 94 Eagles
- U-14 Boys:** AEFC Gladiators
- U-14 Girls:** AUFC 93
- U-15 Boys:** Striker FC V
- U-15 Girls:** AEFC Titans
- U-16 Boys:** Classic Red Star
- U-16 Girls:** RVFC 91 G
- U-17 Boys:** NM Rush Nike Premier 90
- U-17 Girls:** RVFC 90
- U-18 Boys:** RVFC 89 Del Sur
- U-18 Girls:** AUFC 89
- U-19 Boys:** RVFC Phoenix
- U-19 Girls:** NM Rush Hurricanes

The additional 2007 NM representatives filling the wild card slots awarded to NM at the Far West Regional Tournament in Las Vegas, NV (runners-up in their age/gender groups):

- U-15 Girls (Wild Card):** Classic En Fuego
- U-17 Boys (Wild Card):** Classic FC Cougars

See page 13 for a photo collage of this year's State Cup activities. 📷

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Solution to Apr 2007 word puzzle: