



By: Tranese Boston

Lake Wales Soccer Club's U15 Boys competitive team will begin its tournament season on Saturday, February 19 at Plant City Futbol Club's President's Day Tournament. The team is part LWSC's competitive division, the Fury. The U15 Fury boys finished their regular season in October as Division Champions in the United Soccer Association, with a record of 8-1-1. The Region C Cup is the next tournament for the team with the first round in Naples on March 5 and 6. The winner of this tournament will advance towards the State Cup. A highlight of the season will come in May when they compete at Walt Disney's Wide World of Sports in the Memorial Day tournament.

This is the fourth season for this team who began playing together as 10 and 11 year olds. The first season, the team needed eight players to field a team, and that is how many were on the team. Today seven of those eight players are still on the team!

The team has ramped up its practices and is training hard for the competition. Eric Maldonado organized and began this team in 2007 and is still the coach.



Coach Maldonado brings years of coaching experience to the team. He has Regional and State Coaching licenses through the National Soccer Coaches Association of America (NSCAA), Goal Keeper Regional and State coaching licenses through NSCAA and has attended a special topics class in technical training. Coach Maldonado began coaching at the youth level in 1992 and has coached ages U8 through U18. He coached in Winter Haven and Auburndale before coming to Lake Wales in 2004. He is an active

member of the Lake Wales Soccer Club Board of Directors (five years) and is the person responsible for the fields having the lines painted each Saturday for the games at the local fields.

His dedication and training are evidenced by the respectful, disciplined players on his team. His rule "If you are on time, you are late." has set the pace for a practice regimen that is productive and doesn't waste anyone's time. The players work hard, but they also have fun and have become good friends. He is admired by his players who say he is "encouraging" and "never gives up on them." He not only gives of his free time, but has used many vacations

days to coach and support the league. He is currently employed by Auburndale Power Partners.



This year's team members are: back row, left to right, Andrew Mulville, Nicolas Bellarde, Jonathan Smith, Jose' Orozco, Arnulfo Santibanez, Alex Montes, Juan Bautista, Tyler McKenzie and Coach Eric Maldonado; middle row from left, Lamar Bobb, Spencer Maldonado, Alan Mendoza, Miguel Mejia, Jose' Renteria and Jeremie Cima, in front is Hayes Seay. Not pictured Rolando Perez.