

In the last three years, the Competitive Soccer Program at Lake Wales Soccer Club has been able to promote the development of soccer players beyond the recreational level with significant success. A validation of this development has been the results achieved by the Lake Wales Fury competitive teams during the 2008-09 season.

The Under-11 Fury Girls, coached by Francisco Rodrigues and Chris Daly, and managed by Christine Daly and Kathy Borders, has represented our Lake Wales area in great style in the United Soccer Association (USA) competitive league, one of the largest soccer leagues of the Florida Youth Soccer Association.

Competing against powerful soccer clubs from the Tampa Bay area, such as Largo United and St. Pete's Everton, and traveling to games as far south as Sarasota and as far north as Citrus County, the Fury Girls finished in second place during the 2008-09 season in the Division 3 Championship, a performance which earned them advancement to Division 2 next season. With their record of 10 wins, 3 losses and 1 tie, the Fury Girls finished just one win behind Sarasota's Suncoast Spartans, a team which the Fury beat 3-1 at home and tied 2-2 away.



Lake Wales Fury Girls U-11 – From left to right, at top: Head Coach Francisco Rodrigues, Mariella Zuniga, Bianca Lopez, Mariah Daly, Leah Borders, Ana Luiza Rodrigues, Samantha Hall and Assistant Coach Chris Daly; at bottom: Madison Pike, Nicole Guilbault, Sarah Owens, Brittany Kelemen and Anna Daly.

The development of the U11 Fury Girls started at the recreational level in 2006, as a U-10 team, when most of these girls were only 8 and 9 years old. "This is a special group of girls. You could feel it since then. This team was undefeated not only during the 2007-08 recreational season with 10 wins, but also became the U-10 girls undefeated champion of the prestigious Polk County's Judges Cup, in its top bracket," explains Coach Rodrigues, a native of Brazil.

In January of 2008, with the effort and support of parents, the dedication of coaches, and mainly the willingness of the girls, the Fury Girls started the transition from recreational to competitive soccer, a difficult transition which culminated in a fantastic 2nd place finish in the USA's Division 3 U-11 championship, an impressive accomplishment for a first-year competitive team.

Last weekend, the girls traveled to Naples, Florida, to compete in the first round of the Florida Youth Soccer Association's Region C Cup Tournament, one of the most prestigious tournaments in youth soccer in Florida. After losing the first game to the North Fort Myers Knights 2-1, the Fury Girls defeated the Azalea Eagles 3-2 and tied Braden River's Rage 0-0, a performance which placed the Fury in the top sixteen teams in the U-11 Girls' Division 2 bracket, and which advances the Fury to the next round of play. The Fury next play in the continuation of the Region C Cup Tournament is in Land O' Lakes, Florida on Saturday, February 28th. For further information regarding the Girls' and Boys' Competitive Soccer Program of the Lake Wales Soccer Club, contact Francisco Rodrigues at (863) 528-4707.