



The U18 Girls Red team played at the Region 2 Youth Soccer Championships in Sioux Falls, South Dakota June 23, 24 & 25 and came away with a solid performance overall. The team began their weekend against a very fast and athletic Minneapolis United Inferno (MN) and with a fierce wind in their faces were able to generate multiple opportunities on goal. However the wind was a factor against as a wicked shot from 30 yards found the upper corner in extra time of the first half. With the wind behind them in the second half the team did a better job of keeping the ball in the attacking end and behind a few key saves by GK Jamila H were dangerous but could not find a final scoring touch and ended the game 0-1.

Saturday, again against serious wind, the team started strong against the KC Blues Blue Angels (KS) with multiple forays forward. Marah W took on two players and was brought down in the box for a penalty which was converted by Sydney K. KC had strong strikers themselves however and were able to level the score at one a bit later. The second stanza was almost all 56ers however with numerous chances falling just short. Sophia R used the wind to her advantage though and curled in a corner kick to go up 2-1. After a very thorough build up Maya N-A fed Charlotte D for a low finish to the right side for a comfortable 3-1 win.

In the final group game the team faced a very talented Team Chicago Academy (IL) who had won their first game and tied MN the day before. The 56ers would need to win but so would TCA so it was going to be a tough game for both. The 56ers had a good game plan going in and the team went for it from the start, disrupting TCA's rhythm and getting themselves forward in the process. It was TCA who would get a leg up though as their central forward got free and finished off a cross, followed by a second after a similar build up ended up on the foot of a striker on the weak side of the 56er defense. The team came out determined to inflict their game on TCA for the final 45 minutes and were met with success. Good defensive presence and better possession resulted in a good finish by Claire M to halve the deficit then hard pressure from Claire caused the defender to foul her in the box for a penalty which was confidently put away by Chandler B. Despite additional chances the game ended 2-2.



"Overall I would say we did well on the weekend." Said Coach John Reddan. "Every team we faced had players with great speed and physical presence and we stepped up and defended them extremely well. In every game when we found our confidence we were able to move the ball around and create opportunities. In the final game v Chicago, what can I say? Down 0-2 at half against a very good team needing to win themselves and we went out and earned a tie. Every player came to this event intent on giving their all and that's what we got, contribution from every player. It was a pleasure to watch and be a part of their commitment."

"Congratulations to Coach Reddan and the U18G Red team on a strong showing at the Region 2 Championships in South Dakota, we are extremely proud of how hard this group of girls have worked and how well they have performed this year." Commented Director of Coaching Tony Wright.

