



For Immediate Release – Thursday, September 29, 2011

Areas of Interest - Sports, Economic Development, Tourism, Community Events, Hispanic Affairs, News

Contact: Chris Keeney, chris@fctucson.com, (832) 457-4845

FC Tucson, Major League Soccer and Kino Sports Complex Announce 2012 FC Tucson Desert Cup

4 Team Tournament to be played in late February at Kino Stadium; Many Tucson civic, corporate and soccer leaders on hand to show support

Tucson, AZ (Thursday, September 29, 2011) – FC Tucson, the Kino Sports Complex and Major League Soccer announced today that the 2nd Annual FC Tucson Desert Cup will be played at Kino Veteran Memorial Stadium and feature four Major League Soccer teams starting in late February, 2012.

“FC Tucson is proud to announce that the FC Tucson Desert Cup, a tournament featuring four Major League Soccer teams, will take place at the Kino Sports Complex in February and March 2012. FC Tucson Managing Partner Greg Foster said. “The FC Tucson Desert Cup will be an important event in Major League Soccer’s growing Spring Training platform. Our community will help MLS grow in popularity and expand its national and international appeal. With our weather, world-class resorts, shopping and entertainment, and now, a dedicated training and match facility, MLS teams will want to be in Tucson to finalize their preparations for their regular season.”

This unique model of pre-season training and competition will serve the team’s needs to finalize rosters and elevate fitness as well as offer a marketing and media platform for Major League Soccer to invigorate its worldwide audience heading into the regular season. The event will feature four double-header matches during a two week span from February 22nd through March 3rd. The round-robin tournament will crown a champion on the final evening through a point accumulation system.

Kino Veterans Memorial Stadium and four baseball fields will, temporarily, be converted to first-class soccer fields to accommodate the matches and training requirements of the teams. Those fields will be converted back to baseball diamonds at the conclusion of the event.

As a visible demonstration of support and enthusiasm for soccer and the event, many important corporate and civic organizations were represented at today's announcement. Each authority brought a message of support and offered insight into the ways that the event will benefit Southern Arizona.

The tournament is expected to draw fans from across the nation and throughout Mexico. Tucson has tremendous business interest in tourism from nearby Nogales, Mexico and surrounding cities. Felipe Garcia of the Metropolitan Tucson Convention and Visitors Bureaus said: "We are taking advantage of a great opportunity because of our proximity to Mexico. Pima County enjoys over \$960,000,000 in Mexican tourism dollars as a part of the 22 million people that visit Arizona annually. Everyone knows that soccer (futbol) is extremely popular in United States and the most important sport in Mexico. We are excited that this event will continue to put Tucson at the forefront of such an important part of our economy and bridge our multi-cultural community."

Big ideas and initiatives like this require teamwork and shared vision from public and private sectors. Tom Tracy, Chairman of the Pima County Sports Authority said "The Pima County Sports and Tourism Authority has been pleased to assist FC Tucson in coordinating this project. There is no question that this opportunity holds great potential for the community. We are gratified by everyone's willingness to work together and allow Major League Soccer, international baseball, collegiate baseball and potentially, Major League Baseball events to all take place at the Kino Complex this winter."

Paul Cunningham, City Council Member added, "Major League Soccer is an idea that the County and City can both agree upon. I am excited to see our jurisdictions working together towards a common regional goal. The City of Tucson would like to extend an open invitation to soccer fans around the nation and into Mexico to plan a vacation here, take in this fantastic event, enjoy our hospitality, weather, hotels and shopping!"

The business community of Southern Arizona is also actively engaged in the opportunities that surround this event. Lea Marquez Peterson, President of the Tucson Hispanic Chamber commented, "The Tucson Hispanic Chamber of Commerce is proud to be a partner for the second year with FC Tucson on the upcoming FC Tucson Desert Cup. Soccer or football is an important sport to the Latino community in Arizona and our Sonoran friends in Mexico. We look forward to engaging our local business community in promoting and supporting Tucson's pro-soccer experience."

There are many benefits to be gained from professional sports but a fundamental strength is the chance to build pride, celebration and community spirit. Richard Elias, Pima County Arizona Supervisor commented, "The opportunity to be involved in bringing professional soccer to Southern Arizona is an important one for our region's economy. The County, without a doubt, will benefit from the visitors the Desert Cup will attract and our community will be able to enjoy a signature professional sports event."

Mr. Ramon Valadez, Chairman of the Pima County Board of Supervisors concluded, "Personally, I am excited by this opportunity. I attended the games last March and was amazed by the tremendous community support and enthusiasm for Major League Soccer. I know this is a win-win situation for everyone concerned."

The 2012 FC Tucson Desert Cup tournament will be eight games on four nights spanning a two week period and involve four MLS teams. Teams will be awarded points through performance: 3 points for a win, 1 point for a tie, 0 points for a loss.

Schedule of Matches:

Wednesday, February 22nd, 2012

Match Night 1

MLS Team A vs. MLS Team B
MLS Team C vs. MLS Team D

Saturday, February 25th, 2012

Match Night 2

MLS Team B vs. MLS Team C
MLS Team A vs. MLS Team D

Wednesday, February 29th, 2012

Match Night 3

MLS Team A vs. MLS Team C
MLS Team B vs. MLS Team D

Saturday, March 3rd, 2012

Match Night 4

(Championship and 3rd place games)
3rd place vs 4th place (TBD by point system)
1st place vs. 2nd place (TBD by point system)

About FC Tucson

FC Tucson, established in 2010, is committed to bringing the highest caliber of competitive soccer to Tucson and establishing a successful and long-lasting source of pride for city, county, state and country. FC Tucson owns FC Tucson Soccer, Tucson's top level soccer team and the FC Tucson Desert Cup, a Major League Soccer pre-season tournament. Our owners, coaches, players and staff will play to win in sport, business and community connection. We recognize that our quality, commitment and passion for the game will guide our success and establish deep bonds with our stakeholders as we strive to be recognized and respected locally, nationally and internationally.

About Kino Sports Complex

The Kino Sports Complex is the largest professional sports venue of its kind in Pima County. It includes the 11,000-seat Kino Veterans Memorial Stadium, 12 baseball fields (five with lights) and lighted softball and soccer fields. With its panoramic view of the Santa Catalina Mountains, it is a natural fit for youth, amateur collegiate and professional sports. Facility tours are available through the Kino Sports Complex by calling Mary Arvizu at 520-434-1339. To learn more, go to www.kinosportscomplex.com

For more information on this event, please contact FC Tucson at 832-457-4845.

Chris Keeney, Managing Partner
FC Tucson - 832-457-4845
Chris@fctucson.com

