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2007 Futbol Internacional Soccer Festival to Pump \$2.84 million into Six Alabama Cities

(Birmingham, AL) – Alabama’s largest soccer event outside of the Olympic Games will pump more than \$2.84 million into six local economies across Alabama, all while further polishing the state’s image internationally.

Futbol Internacional 2007 kicks off April 22-28 in six Alabama cities, with national women’s teams from three continents coming to the biggest women’s soccer event outside of the Olympics and World Cup games. Futbol Internacional starts in Birmingham’s historic Legion Field, home of the 1996 Olympic Soccer matches, with opening ceremonies and double-header games. It will end with triple-header finals, including the championship match, in Mobile’s Baker High School stadium.

The festival features national women’s teams from Argentina, Canada, China, Mexico, Trinidad & Tobago and the USA’s Under-21 national team. The games will take the women’s teams to venues across the state from Birmingham, with stops in Huntsville, Montgomery, Tuscaloosa, Decatur and finally Mobile

The event benefits the Alabama Youth Soccer Association, which is organizing the event. “Every soccer fan in the state and surrounding states will be able to see one of the largest international soccer events in the world,” says AYSA Director Scott Spencer.

Futbol Internacional is expected to have a statewide economic impact of \$2.84 million, with more than half of that in Birmingham. The Greater Birmingham Convention & Visitors Bureau conservatively estimates the games’ economic impact on Birmingham will be \$1.475 million, says David Galbaugh, its national sports marketing sales manager.

International Image

SilverStone International’s role is to bring outstanding international sporting opportunities, like Futbol Internacional, one of the world’s premier women’s soccer events, to the United States. SilverStone International President Nichelle Gainey, is hosting the games with AYSA. She is using the international connections she’s made through her involvement with the 2006 World Cup to bring in dignitaries to cheer for their home teams as well as broaden their business contacts.

“Soccer is truly a world sport that brings the nations’ community and business leaders together like no other sport,” Gainey says.

The teams will be accompanied by business leaders and public officials from their countries, she says. “So whether we have 200 or 200,000 people in the stands across the state, it will be a success because Alabama leaders and officials can make lasting social and economic connections at this event.”

Gainey is especially excited that China's women's team is part of Futbol Internacional, since she will be traveling to China where the FIFA Women's World Cup 2007 soccer tournament will be held Sept. 10-30.

Supporters of the 2007 Futbol Internacional youth soccer fund-raising event includes Governor Riley, U.S. Senator Richard Shelby, and U.S. Rep. Artur Davis.

"Alabama is fast becoming the destination of choice for foreign corporations looking for a talented workforce and a hospitable place to do business," Gov. Riley said.

Proceeds from 2007 Futbol Internacional will aid in the development of a youth soccer scholarship fund. In addition, this event will use proceeds to build a healthy outreach soccer program to underserved children in the Black Belt in conjunction with Governor Bob Riley's Black Belt Action Committee and inner-city soccer programs.

General admission tickets for \$16 per person; children under age 4 are admitted for free. Tickets and game information are available online at <http://www.2007futbolinternacional.com/>.

For more information on sponsorship opportunities, please contact info@silverstoneintl.com.

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