

From the desk of Tommy Wheeldon Jr:



@FoothillsSoccer

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## Press Release: Foothills Girls make it to the Final of the Global Youth Soccer Tournament

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**Calgary, AB – July 24, 2016** – Calgary Foothills Girls U14 team have progressed to the final of the Gothia World Youth Cup, in Sweden, the world’s largest and most international youth soccer tournament. They lost 4-1 in the final to win a very impressive silver.



The Gothia Cup football tournament, also known as The World Youth Cup, is organized by Gothenburg top flight club BK Häcken. Since its humble beginnings in 1975 with 275 participating teams, it has grown to become the largest youth soccer team in the world. This year's tournament included 1,600 teams from 75 nations all over the world and attended by about 50,000 people.

SKF Group, an international industrial bearings firm, is the Cup's main sponsor, and each year it randomly chooses 24 cities and age groups from within the 130 countries it has a presence in, to hold qualifying tournaments in an initiative called Meet the World. Last year, SKF Canada hosted an event in Montreal and this year it picked Calgary for U14 girls. Eight Calgary teams battled it out for a spot to represent Canada at this age level. The finals came down to Calgary Foothills vs. Calgary South West United, with Foothills winning 3-0. Foothills Girls U14 joined 23 other winning teams sponsored by SKF, from around the world. Every team has their flights and accommodation paid for by SKF, and they all stay in the same building, for the nine days of soccer and cultural exchange.

At the Girls U14 level, the Gothia Cup included seventy-five teams from eleven different countries. There were eighteen groups in the round robin stage, Foothills won all three of their games, scoring 20 goals and conceding none. In the knock out stage they beat four teams from Sweden and the US notching up a total of seven games won and 44 goals scored. The team had a tough semi-final against Sweden's largest Football club, IF Brommapokjarna, who came second in their last outing to the Gothia Cup. On Friday night, Foothills beat IF Brommapokjarna's first team in the semi-finals 5-3 in penalty kicks after a 0-0 full time score.

On Saturday morning Calgary Foothills played the final against AIK FF at the Gamla Ullevi (Centrum) Stadium; an 18,000 seater stadium and home of the Swedish Women's National Soccer Team. Älvsjö AIK FF is one of 468 clubs from Sweden that have teams playing during Gothia Cup 2016. They participated with 8 teams in [Boys 12](#), [Boys 14](#), [Girls 14](#), [Girls 16](#) and [Girls 18](#). Älvsjö AIK comes from Älvsjö which lies approximately 390 km from Göteborg, where the Gothia Cup takes place. AIK FF also participated in Girls 13 during the Gothia Cup in 2015. They reached the final in Play off A, but lost it against JyPK 02 United with 2-3 and ended up in second place.

In this year's final, AIK FF came out strong securing a goal in the 4' which settled the Swedes and put additional pressure on Foothills. Another goal ten minutes later, followed by two quick goals at 42' and 44' putting them 4-0 ahead. Grace Moore of Foothills responded in the 47' with a goal, but it was not enough to change the balance of the game and it finished 4-1, to AIK FF.

Foothills Girls 2002 coach, Jonathan Wheeldon, is also Calgary Foothills FC's regular captain, and stalwart of the team, is missing the Western Conference finals. His assistant coach Elijah Adekugbe has flown to Tucson, Arizona to play for Foothills FC.

**Jonathan Wheeldon** said, "*An emotional rollercoaster from leaving it late to win the quarter finals to a semi final penalty win.*

*The final was an incredible experience against Sweden's top ranked team which included many 01's.*

*We unfortunately suffered a little stage fright and played the occasion instead of the game itself and allowed early goals against which is uncharacteristic for my teams."*

He added, "*(The) girls have been great, the tournament set up has been unbelievable great pitches and the cultural experience with teams from all over the world being here is certainly an eye opener for the girls. This genuinely was an amazing achievement and experience for this set of girls. They have*

*represented the club well on and off the field, they will be hurt and wounded but it all adds fuel to the fire as we build for a provincial and national competitions.”*

On Friday night the Calgary Tower was lit Green & White for the PDL team making the Western Conference Finals in Tucson, Arizona, but we should extend this honour to the Foothills Girls 02 representing Canada in the Gothia Cup.

#### **ABOUT CALGARY FOOTHILLS FC**

Calgary Foothills FC has a mandate to bring professional soccer to Calgary for both Men’s Soccer (PDL) and Women’s Soccer. Foothills FC is supported by Calgary Foothills Soccer Club which has achieved success at Provincial, National and International levels to provide a solid foundation for the franchise. Foothills FC believes that Calgary is a world class city and that the youth of Calgary deserve to have professional opportunities for advancement. The team thank the following sponsors for their support, we couldn’t do it without you: Rogers Insurance, PetroTranz, The Cooperators Insurance Group, Telus, A2Z Kids Education, Strikers and #50Names.

#### **GOTHIA CUP**

**Gothia Cup** is the largest and most international youth football tournament in the world. Every year 1,600 teams from 80 nations participate. It began in 1975. The opening ceremony at Ullevi Stadium attracts 50,000 spectators and international soccer participants, while 1,100 volunteers guarantee that this will remain the international soccer tournament of all international soccer tournaments! First-class international soccer competition on first-class soccer fields is only part of this great festive week. Located on Sweden's beautiful west coast, Gothenburg offers all the excitement of a major seaport city, as well as fine beaches, water sports, boat trips, shopping and dining, making it a great travel destination for youth soccer teams. The 2016 Gothia Cup will again be the world's largest and most prestigious international soccer party for both soccer players and soccer fans.

#### **For additional information please contact:**

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