

WEST PINES UNITED F.C.**U16 PREMIER BOYS BLACK Win 2011 Disney College Showcase**

Claiming their biggest victory in over a year, the **West Pines United FC U 16 Premier Boys Black** team took the title in the top division of the prestigious 2011 Disney Soccer College Showcase played in Orlando in December. In front of scores of college coaches and the cameras of ESPN, West Pines used strong defense and timely offense for the victory and a sweet end to an eventful year.



Playing in the Black bracket of the Showcase division, WPU started the tournament against the always strong *Dallas Texans Red*. The first half showcased strong possession and some slick sequences from West Pines as both teams had chances from free kicks. West Pines finally broke through in the twenty-third minute as **Jose Novas** headed home **Gabriel Pedraza's** free kick for the only goal of the match. Strong goal keeping and solid play from center backs **Rafael Arcila** and **Samuel Vinson** preserved the 1-0 victory and a great start to the tournament.

Unfortunately that score line was reversed the next day against the *Bethesda Soccer Club*. Unable to generate much in the way of attack and despite a very strong performance from defender **Jared Heller**, WP gave up the deciding tally in the thirty-eighth minute.



The loss to the unbeaten Bethesda seemed to end any hope of a tournament title and WPU entered the last day of group play against *Beachside* of Connecticut seeing the third place match as its best option. After going behind a goal in the sixth minute, even that modest hope was in doubt. But second half goals from **Mark Simpson** and **Jose Novas** (assisted by **Albert “Kiki” Poleo**) gave WPU an impressive victory 2-1. In the other group game a Dallas Texans victory over Beachside left three teams tied with six points and WPU was declared group winner by virtue of goals scored.

That set up a championship match against a strong *Lehigh Valley United*, who had defeated West Pines in National League play earlier in the month. The Pennsylvania East State Champions started strongly and West Pines was on the ropes in the first half: Lehigh had a goal taken back due to a foul and West Pines keeper **Eric Rice** was forced into a series of stunning saves as Lehigh sent in wave after wave of pressure.



West Pines came out with more energy in the second half but again keeper **Jacob Murray** was tested by the Lehigh Valley forwards from dangerous free kicks. The game became increasingly hard-fought but remained scoreless until the seventy-third minute. A West Pines corner fell to **Bryan Gonzalez**, whose powerful volley was punched out but not cleared by the Pennsylvania keeper. **Samuel Vinson** was able push through the defense to head home the rebound and give West Pines a 1-0 lead. A furious final ten minutes saw West Pines hang on and claim the victory and one of the most coveted titles in youth soccer.



Head Coach: *Richard Jobson*
Assistant Coach: *Christopher Williams*

Top (Left ->): Gabriel Pedraza, Mark Simpson, Neicolance Regent, Jacob Murray, Austin Sandel, Alvaro Alvarez, Rafael Arcila, Samuel Vinson.

Middle (Left ->): Jacob Robbie, Aaron Braun, Bryan Gonzalez, Jared Heller, Eric Rice, Samuel Malnik.

Bottom (Left ->): Shawn Sanon, Alberto Poleo, Jose Novas, Andre Blackman