

SOUTH SOCCER--A SHORT HISTORY

1976 (9-3-1) Soccer, previously a club sport organized by players and parents, becomes a varsity sport. John Wicklund is South's first coach. The team finishes second in District 5, and loses to Sunset in the State playoffs. Derek Johnson and goalkeeper Frank Lawson are All-District.

1977 (10-2-1) South is first non-Portland team to win prestigious Catlin Gabel tournament. First District championship, giving up only 5 goals in 9 league matches. Loses sudden-death OT thriller to Sunset at Autzen Stadium in State quarterfinal. League MVP Bob Stephenson and leading scorer Don Remlinger are among 5 All-District selections.

1978 (7-2-1) Having lost 12 seniors, 1978 is a building year. South hands eventual state champ Lakeridge its only loss in 18 matches. Frank Lawson becomes first three-time All-District selection in league history.

1979 (12-1-2) South scores 84 goals while giving up only 4 in regular season, goes undefeated before losing 3-2 to champion Lakeridge in State quarterfinal. 7 Axemen are All-District, including co-MVP's Ron Vogel and Tim Bricker. South makes season-end trip to Hawaii. Coach Wicklund retires.

1980 (12-1-3) Scott Metcalf is head coach. 5 All-District players, including All-Staters Eric Nill and Joe Wright, lead South to third District title, and defeat of South Salem in thrilling shootout in State playoffs. South loses to Centennial in quarterfinal.

1981 (12-3-0) Mark Weinrott succeeds Metcalf as coach. Churchill upsets Axemen for first time since 1976, South's first league defeat in 28 matches, but South recovers for fourth league title. Highlights include first trip to San Francisco area, stunning OT win over undefeated Catlin Gabel in State quarterfinal, and heartbreaking OT shootout loss to Beaverton in semis. Dave Peterson, Tom Everett, and Eric Zimmerman receive All-State recognition.

1982 (12-2-1) Coach Weinrott's final season. South loses to only one team--Lakeridge--in both its opener and in the State Championship final, South's first appearance at Portland Civic Stadium. In between, another league title, a quarterfinal victory over Catlin Gabel, and an astounding OT shootout upset of highly-ranked Central Catholic before the largest crowd in South history--a match many observers consider the best ever played in Eugene. 5 All-State players.

1983 (11-5-1) Bruce Palmbaum is head coach. South Eugene Soccer Club is formed in spring to serve as booster club for South soccer and provide off-season club experience for players. All-State midfielder Jim Kelley leads a young and inexperienced Axemen side to a sixth league title, highlighted by a championship playoff victory over Churchill. South hammers Ashland 10-0 in State playoffs before falling to champion Centennial in quarterfinal.

1984 (13-3-1) Led by All-Staters Paul Schmidt and Dan O'Brien, the team known as "The Brothers" because of their cohesiveness rolls to a seventh league title (6 in a row). After defeating Medford in State playoff action, the Axemen score twice in the final eight minutes to stun South Salem in the quarterfinals, before losing to champion Beaverton in semis. Schmidt breaks Ryan Morrow's ('79) league scoring records for a single game (7) and single season (27).

1985 (11-2-4) All-Stater Kevin Trexel leads the Axemen to another league title, but South falls to eventual co-champ Beaverton in State quarterfinals. The spirit of "the twelfth man" carries team to such season highlights as South's 100th victory (over Centennial), wins over state power Jesuit, previously undefeated Alcalanes in California, and a 3-0 drubbing of Sheldon in District championship playoff.

1986 (11-3-4) Tom Rowney becomes head coach, as Bruce Palmbaum moves up to college coaching. Having lost 15 players from previous varsity, South overcomes inexperience and key injuries to share league title. League playoff victory sends the Axemen to State for the 10th time, where they prevail in the first two rounds before being upset in quarterfinals. Highlights include last-second victory at North and wins over State finalist Lakeridge and undefeated Klamath.

1987 (14-4-2) A rocky start costs South two league games and the league title for the first time in nine years, but the Axemen rally to go 14 games without a loss before falling to defending champ Jesuit in the State semifinal, 2-0. On their way to the final four, South romps through 2 league playoff matches and 3 at State to record the most wins in the program's history.

1988 (11-1-4) Two ties cost South the league title by one point, but Axemen win state berth in exciting shootout in league playoff. However, South draws nationally-ranked Jesuit in first round of State, and the Crusaders blank the Axemen on way to third straight championship.

1989 (14-2-0) South equals its all-time single-season win total and rolls undefeated through league, winning its 10th title. One team is South's nemesis: top-ranked Tigard, which defeats Axemen

early in season and eliminates South in State quarterfinal. Chris Meier becomes only the second player in history to achieve All-District status three times.

1990 (8-6-1) Mark Amor takes over as head coach. A young South side struggles in pre-season play, but makes strong bid for league title before being upset by Sheldon on a late goal in double OT. Overtime once again proves South's undoing as a shocking, come-from-behind victory by Springfield denies the Axemen a trip to State for the first time in 13 years. All-District senior striker T.J. Matteri paces the team, but is lost to injury for the last six matches.

1991 (12-4-0) An early-season upset by Sheldon costs South the league title, but the Axemen defeat North in league playoff to advance to State for the 14th time, where they are eliminated by powerful Lakeridge. South is led by 4 All-District players.

1992 (13-2-1) Benjy Kent takes over the coaching reins, and a stifling defense, led by League MVP and All-State sweeper Viet Nguyen, allows only one goal in league play and four in regular season to win undefeated league title (South's 11th) and State playoff berth for the 15th time. South dominates powerful Corvallis in first round before falling to State finalist Barlow 1-0 in quarterfinal. 6 All-District selections.

1993 (13-3-2) The Axemen complete a second straight undefeated league season, claiming their 12th league title. Despite facing the toughest draw in the state playoffs, South sweeps three old nemeses--#5 Centennial (1-0 OT), #3 Lakeridge (2-0), and #2 Sunset (3-1) to become the first non-Portland area team in the state final since South was there in 1982. The Axemen score first against #1 Jesuit (ranked 9th nationally), but fall 4-1 as the Crusaders win their 3rd straight championship. The South defense is led by 3-time All District GK Colin McMillen and 2-time all-leaguer Peter Jewett, while league MVP Jen Carroll paces the offense.

1994 (11-2-3) After losing eleven seniors from its State runner-up team, a young South squad, led by All-State striker and league MVP Josh McAdam, cruises through another unbeaten district schedule (7-0-2) and into the state playoffs for the 17th time, the 13th as league champ. After topping Ontario in the opening round, the 5th-ranked Axemen are upset by Wilson in the quarterfinals, on a muddy field in Portland.

1995 (11-4-2) The young Axemen allow only two goals in league play en route to their fourth straight undefeated championship. In their eighteenth trip to State, South tops Ontario and then knocks off undefeated, second-ranked South Medford, before being upset in the quarterfinals by undefeated Canby 3-2, in a match

dominated by the Axemen. Benjy Kent's 4-year coaching tenure ends, as he moves to Minnesota, having never lost a league match.

1996 (13-4-2) Under new head coach Stephen Studley, the Axemen sweep through the league undefeated, but a last-game tie with North Bend gives them a co-championship with the Bulldogs, their fifth title in a row. South overcomes Glencoe, Mountain View, and Barlow on its way to the State semi-finals, where, despite their domination in the match, the Axemen are upset by North Medford.

1997 (16-1-2) South loses only once – in the state final. After running up the most wins for a season in the program's history, the Axemen are stunned in the championship match 5-0 by South Medford, a team they had beaten earlier in the season. Season highlights include a sixth straight undefeated league title, a shut-out of former nemesis Jesuit in the first round of the playoffs, and overcoming a 2-goal deficit to defeat Canby in a thrilling OT shootout to advance to the final for the third time. League player-of-the-year Tanner Ralls leads the Axemen to their 16th league title and 20th trip to the state playoffs. Stephen Studley is named State Coach of the Year.

1998 (18-0-1) STATE CHAMPIONS! Led by State Player of the Year and All-American, Nate Jaqua, the Axemen record the greatest season in school history: an undefeated season and their first state championship. After marching unbeaten through the league for the seventh straight time, South enters the state playoffs for a record 21st time, boosted by the return from a season-long injury of former league MVP Tanner Ralls. South dispatches Grant, Canby, Westview, and Sunset in the state playoffs, before meeting undefeated Jesuit in the final. Tied 1-1 at the end of regulation, the Axemen fall behind by a goal in OT, but Jaqua buries two goals to give the title to the purple and white. With the most wins in school history, the team finishes the season ranked fifth in the nation. Steve Studley and Connie Jaqua are State Co-coaches of the year.

1999 (14-1-2) Andrew Gregor joins Connie Jaqua as co-coach, and the Axemen, led by two-time State Player of the Year Nate Jaqua, complete a third straight undefeated regular season, and eighth consecutive undefeated league championship. After destroying LaGrande and Reynolds in the first two rounds of the state playoffs, Oregon's season-long top-ranked team (eighteenth nationally) is upset in the quarterfinal 1-0 by South Medford, despite dominating all aspects of the game. Jaqua breaks Paul Schmidt's record with 31 goals in a single season.

2000 (6-7-2) Steve Elliott takes over as head coach and inherits a young, sophomore-dominated squad. The Axemen endure a disastrous pre-season, going 0-5-1 against some of Oregon's toughest teams. Adversity continues in league play, as South loses for the first

time ever to Willamette, and sees its 77-game league unbeaten streak ended. But South perseveres and turns its season around, arriving at the final game with a shot at the league title. Playing with more heart than experience, the Axemen score late against Sheldon to defeat the Irish 1-0 and claim their ninth consecutive league championship. In the state playoffs, South and Crescent Valley battle to a scoreless tie, and the Axemen are eliminated in a shoot-out.

2001 (8-4-3) South's nine-year reign as league champions comes to an end as third-ranked Sheldon defeats the Axemen in a thrilling overtime match. In South's twenty-fourth trip to the state playoffs, overtime again proves their undoing as the Axemen fall to Lakeridge in a shootout in the first round, after dominating the Pacers for most of the match.

2002 (15-3-1) STATE CO-CHAMPIONS! South struggles some in the regular season, finishing 11-3, and losing the league title to arch rival Sheldon, but turns it around in the state playoffs with successive wins over Gresham, Lakeridge, Cleveland, and Crescent Valley, to advance to the first all-Midwestern League final in state history. South's fifth trip to the final pits them against Sheldon. The Axemen fall behind the undefeated Irish at half 1-0, but, playing shorthanded, tie the score on Nick Leonard's (League player-of-the-year) goal with 10 minutes to go. Despite playing a man down, South dominates the last 10 minutes and the overtime, shutting out the high-scoring Irish and coming away with a share of the state title.

2003 (13-2-2) Despite losing 13 seniors from the 2002 team, and 2 more key players to injury, South reclaims the league crown with a 1-0 defeat of Sheldon. In their 26th venture into the state playoffs, the Axemen shut out McNary and North Medford to get to the quarterfinals for the 21st time, where, despite thoroughly dominating Centennial, they fall in a shootout.

2004 (14-1-1) South's only loss comes in the state quarterfinal, as the top-ranked Axemen are upset by Lake Oswego, after victories over Tualatin (6-0) and Southridge (3-0) in the first two rounds. Despite losing national pool midfielder Ryan White to a knee injury early on, South's defense, anchored by all-district defenders Sam Moulton and Eric Imamura, and GK Brian Rowe, shuts out the entire league for the only time in history. Leland Wright breaks Nate Jaqua's single season scoring record, with 33 goals.

2005 (14-3) A young Axemen squad featuring only 3 seniors, led by League Player of the Year Ryan White, breezes to a third consecutive league title, as all-district GK Brian Rowe gives up only 2 goals in league play. OSAA re-districting ends South's reign atop the Midwestern League (and its predecessor, the South Valley Conference) after 22 league championships. In its 27th

trip to the state playoffs, South is upset by Woodburn 1-0 in OT.

2006 (15-1) Playing in the new Southwest Conference, the Axemen humble the league, scoring 57 goals to 1 against (a PK), going 10-0 in league, and compiling their first undefeated, untied regular season at 14-0. Top-ranked South defeats Westview in the state playoffs, but are upset by eventual state champ McMinnville in the quarterfinal. The Axemen are led by SWC player of the year, Aden Farina-Henry, and all-state GK, Brian Rowe. Coach Colin McMillen retires, having coached the Axemen to 4 league titles and a state co-championship.

2007 (11-3-1) Under new coach Jurgen Ruckaberle, the inexperienced Axemen go 9-1 in SWC Conference play to repeat as league champs, but fall to Hood River Valley 5-4 (OT) in the second round of the state playoffs. South is led by SWC Player of the Year Andrew Meyer.

All games 384-85-51, League 236-17-22, Regular season 329-54-51, League playoffs 11-2, State playoffs 45-28-1.