

Alfred University men's soccer team plans trip to United Kingdom

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ALFRED -- The Alfred University men's soccer team will travel to the United Kingdom this summer, where the Saxons will play five matches, take in a pair of professional contests and tour Scotland and England. "We shared a similar experience as a team four years ago, training and playing while exploring Germany and Italy," said AU Soccer head coach Ken Hassler. "It was fantastic, a time that many players described as the best experience of their lives, so deciding to go again was easy. This year's team is such a positive, friendly group of young men with great talent and a passion for soccer. They will be exceptional ambassadors for Alfred University and will relish the chance to explore different cultures and connect with so many others that share their love for soccer." The 12-day, 10-night trip is scheduled for Aug. 4-15. The team will leave for Glasgow, Scotland on Aug. 4, arriving the following day. While in Scotland, the Saxons will participate in training session and compete in two matches. The team will take in the sights of Glasgow, Edinburgh and Stirling and watch a Scottish Premier League featuring legendary teams such as Celtic or the Glasgow Rangers. On Aug. 9, the Saxons will arrive in Manchester, England for two days of training with the coaching staff of the world famous Manchester United Football Club and a tour of the team's training facilities before competing in an afternoon match. Following their two days with Man. U., the team will travel to London for more sightseeing and two more matches against top rated clubs. While in England, the team will tour Manchester, Trafford and London, and also take in an English professional match in London. "Training with the Man. U. coaching staff will be amazing, a dream come true for our guys" said Hassler, "To have a chance to experience the frenzied excitement of a premiership game will be a highlight that they will talk about forever. I'm sure that that energy and excitement of watching the world's greatest players on teams like Manchester United or Liverpool or Arsenal will spill over in to their play on the field long after we return from the trip." A farewell dinner will be held Aug. 14, with the AU contingent returning home the following day. The AU men's soccer team is coming off one of its most successful seasons in years. The Saxons won the co-championship of the Empire 8 conference and earned the conference's automatic bid to the NCAA Division III playoffs. It marked the first time Alfred had competed in the NCAAs in 15 years. The Saxons look to build on their success, as all but one player returns to the team next season.