



**By Jan Schultz**

***The Imperial Republican***

It is spring and that signals the start of Imperial's soccer program.

But, with snow on the ground and frigid temperatures the past week, coaches and players have been stressed in finding practice time.

But, Recreation Director Bruce Peterson has the soccer goals up and most schedules completed for the first matches scheduled this Saturday.

Temperatures are forecast to warm up Thursday, Friday and Saturday, so there are hopes the snow will be melted off the fields.

Peterson said there are 23 teams registered in the program this year involving 212 youths.

That's just slightly under last year's 218 players.

U6 (under age six as of 7-31-2012), U8, U10 and U12 teams are set to begin their seasons with matches Saturday at Schroeder Park. Peterson said unless the area gets more snow, he's fairly certain the opening season matches will be played as scheduled.



Schedules for the U14 and U19 teams, which compete in a traveling league, are still being finalized, Peterson said. Locally, their games are played at the Wellington football field, and they will travel to matches in Ogallala, Grant, Sidney and Alliance this season.

Of the 23 total teams, the U6 division has the largest number of teams with eight. U8 has five teams, while the U10 and U12 divisions each have four. Imperial has one U14 and one U19 team.

Matches will get underway at Schroeder Park on Saturday at 9 a.m.

The season concludes the first weekend in May.