

Joe Hankins

Joe Hankins joins a small list of goalkeepers to enter the Hall of Fame. A standout since his early years in Hamilton, Joe played and excelled with some of the area's finest teams. For his stellar career on the pitch, we welcome Joe Hankins into the Mercer County Soccer Hall of Fame.

Starting as many have in the Hamilton Recreational Leagues, Joe was guided in his formative years by names such as Andy Doyle, Tom Moffitt, and Frank Kane. His school career saw him have early success at Grice Junior High, a highlight being a 1-0 victory over arch-rivals Reynolds, where he preserved the victory with a stop of an Art Napolitano penalty kick.

He moved on to Hamilton High West where over his four years, he earned All-County, All-Area, and All-State honors while always crediting the players in front of him such as Mike Clendinning, Chris Barlow, and best friend Johnny Rollins for his success on the field. He joined the high-powered program at Mercer County Community College under Stan Dlugosz and Joe "Sec" Secretario where, as a sophomore co-captain with Dennis Kinnevy and the late Tom Dolan, the Vikings finished ranked 5th nationally and Joe was named 1st team All State.

The summer of 1976 had Joe in the net for the legendary Trenton Extension side during their amazing run to a 2nd place finish in the U.S. Amateur Cup in Milwaukee. He was joined on that side with players such as Hermann Trophy winners and future professionals Glenn "Mooch" Myernick and Billy Gazonas, and local stars Charlie "Ping Pong" Farrutto, Mike Angelotti and Bob Rostron to name only a few of that famous team.

Joe finished his college career playing with and yelling at his brother Toby at Trenton State as captain and Division Three All-State and All-American during his senior year. He also continued to play at the local amateur level with strong teams in the area such as the Trenton Italians, NJ Americans, Smitty's Kicks, Cranbury Kickers, and of course, the Trenton White Boys.

Coaching was next on his agenda, as he spent several years as an assistant at Trenton State, MCCC, and with the Rutgers woman's program with Charlie Ducilli and Bob Smith and at the youth level with the Mooch program and in the Hamilton leagues.

A devoted son, husband, father, uncle and one of Mercer's greats, we induct Joe Hankins into the Mercer County Soccer Hall of Fame.