

ED LEIBE

Unselfish. Heart. Tenacious. All three words can be used to describe Ed Leibe's contribution to the game of soccer. A standout player throughout his career and now an outstanding coach with over 300 wins, we are proud to bring Ed Leibe into the Mercer County Soccer Hall of Fame.

Ed started playing soccer as many have before, in the youth leagues in Mercer County where his teams won several state championships. He became a standout player at Steinert, where, in his senior year, he led the Spartans to the county championship over Ewing 2-0, while providing assists on both goals, just two of his 28 for the year. He was named Mercer County Player of the Year along with 1st Team All State as the No. 1 forward in New Jersey. This was followed with McDonald's, NSCAA and Adidas All-American honors, capping a stellar high school career.

Ed was far from done on the field. After two years at ACC powerhouse N.C.State, he moved up Interstate 95 to the University of Maryland, where he helped the Terrapins to a #8 national ranking. He continued at the club level with a number of semi-pro teams around the Northeast before coming back to New Jersey and enjoying success with many, including helping one of his old clubs, Hibernians SC, capture several local titles. He was a key contributor to the Hibernian 1998 State Over-30 title run that, with a team boasting no fewer than eight future HOF members, came a game short of a trip to the National Over-30 tournament.

Ed made the natural transition to the sidelines where he coached at the high school level at several Maryland schools in the late 1980's as well as training a number of teams at the club level. His travels as a coach took him to Europe with a select team from Maryland that brought him into contact with KNVB, the Dutch National Team organization. Through this contact, Ed earned a coaching certificate from the highly respected association.

Coming home to New Jersey in 1996, Ed started as the girls varsity coach at Toms River North where his teams consistently finished at the top of their league. Moving across town, he assumed the role of head boys coach at Toms River South where the Indians have had winning records in 11 of his 12 seasons with the team. 2009 saw Ed lead the team, featuring his son as the goalkeeper, to the Group 4 State Championship, where his efforts earned him Coach of the Year honors from the Asbury Park Press, AllShore Media and the NJSIAA.

When asked about his style as a player, Ed commented "I was never accused of being lazy. What I lacked in other areas, I made up for in heart and competitive hustle. I like to think that I complimented the many great players I played with on the field". A true team player who now passes along that philosophy to his players, we welcome Ed Leibe into the Mercer County Soccer Hall of Fame.