



1963 TRENTON JUNIOR COLLEGE

The history of Mercer County Community College's many accomplishments on the soccer field is well known. What is less well known is that the genesis of those successes was with the 1963 Trenton Junior College National Championship side. Boasting a number of Hall of Famers among the roster of local boys, the 1963 championship team laid the groundwork for a program that has been recognized as one of the finest in the country. As a pioneer in local college soccer, we welcome the 1963 Trenton Junior College team into the Mercer County Soccer Hall of Fame.

Fielding a team on the varsity level for the first time in 1963 after starting as a club program, the original Vikings had Mercer County in their blood, practicing and playing at old Stacy Park as well as venerable Wetzell and Hetzel Fields, dodging glass and rocks in less-than-perfect conditions. But it didn't keep them from putting together a 13-2 regular season record on their way to the NJCAA National Tournament in Buffalo, N.Y., outscoring their regular season opponents by 68 goals scored to 20 allowed.

Led by Hall of Famers and co-captains Jim Dill and Ron Hoch, along with Joe Bianchini and coach Stan Dlugosz, the booters from Trenton won a semi-final matchup against Warren Wilson Junior College from North Carolina, coming away with a convincing 5-0 victory. A matchup with undefeated defending champion Mitchell College from Connecticut lay before them in the finals on a snowy, muddy Buffalo field. Playing to a 3-3 tie after regulation time, a 10 minute overtime saw them still scoreless before, in a sudden death situation, Dill took a ball from teammate Steve Doczy and struck a 40 yard shot that ended the deadlock and gave the team from West State Street the title, the first for the school that matured into one of the strongest junior college programs in the nation. But for the teammates, 55 years does not dim the memories. Dlugosz remembered, "I've seen them over the years and we've been good buddies. We've watched Mercer doing a great job with their soccer program. It was my first national title as a coach and it was quite an honor".

Dill and Bianchini both garnered All-Region 15 and All-American honors, Doczy also received All-Region 15 recognition and matched Dill with 20 goals for the season, and Hoch and keeper Buddy Edolo, a standout shortstop, anchored the Viking's defense. But it was a total team effort. John Massiello, one of Dlugosz's standout defenders, recalled that "we didn't have the best talent, equipment or fields, our success was more through grit and grind. It was a real good group of players. There were teams that were more talented, but I think that we were tougher", a statement about the character of Mercer County teams that still rings true today. Already members of the MCCC Athletic Hall of Fame, we are proud to have the opportunity to welcome the 1963 Trenton Junior College national championship team into the Mercer County Soccer Hall of Fame.