



## **The Donigan Family**

The Donigan Family consisted of their late father Patrick, mother Joan and four boys, Patrick, Joe, Mike and Dan. Along with the Fink Family, they have been a household name in Mercer County and beyond since the early 1970's. Mr. Donigan coached all four boys for many years from recreation teams to all-star teams to travel teams. He led several local youth soccer teams in which all four boys played for to multiple New Jersey State and Eastern Regional soccer championships. He coached and had a positive influence on hundreds of Mercer County players, some of which are probably in this room tonight. Both Mom and Dad were the backbone of the Donigan boy's successes throughout their playing days. Dad coached all four of them for many years and Mom drove them all over the place to tons of soccer games throughout their playing careers, which continued through their collegiate and professional levels as well. The four boys were not only All Mercer County selections in high school, but All State selections as well. Dan, the youngest of the four boys, reached All American status in both high school and college. The Donigan's are the only family to have four boys inducted into the Steinert High School Athletic Hall of Fame and only the second family ever to be inducted into the Mercer County Soccer Hall of Fame, the infamous Fink family being the first. What's amazing is the seven Fink brothers and four Donigan brothers lived walking distance away from each other growing up and played together on many teams as youths as well as Steinert high school and beyond. All of them continue to be very good friends today.

Patrick, the oldest brother started it all. He became one of the best goalkeepers around at the youth level as well as becoming an All-County goalkeeper for Steinert High School and a member of the Hall of Fame 1977 Steinert Soccer Team that went undefeated and ranked #1 in the country by Playboy magazine. As the oldest sibling, he deserves a lot of credit due to the fact he had a major influence on his three younger brothers growing up.

Joe won four youth state cup titles and also became a three-year starter and All-County and All State performer as team captain at Steinert. He went on to be a four-year starter at Temple University. He also captained the team in his junior and senior years and was selected to the All Philadelphia Soccer Seven team both years. Fellow captain and Hall of Famer Nick Weiner had 18 points and Joe had 17 points from their central midfield positions in 1983, in which they were ranked in the top 10 in the nation. He has coached and trained numerous local youth teams and continued his playing career in Mercer County into his 50's. He currently officiates local high

school and Mercer County men's league games as well as manage the Bob Smith Soccer Academy along with National Hall of Famer Bobby Smith.

Mike, as well as his older brothers won multiple state championships as a youth player. He was also a three-year starter and All-County and All-State performer at Steinert High School. As the team captain, he led Mercer County in scoring his senior year. One of his finest memories as a player was helping his brother Joe lead the Garden State Tire soccer team coached by Charlie Inverso & Dennis Kinnevy to the 1982 Under-19 Maguire Cup New Jersey State title by scoring 29 goals in 15 games. He went on to captain the United States Naval Academy men's soccer team, in which he was a four-year starter and led them in scoring both his junior and senior years.

Dan, the youngest brother was a National Soccer Coaches, Parade Magazine and Adidas All-American player at Steinert High School. He led the team to the NJ State Championship in his senior year in the fall of 1984. He broke fellow Hall of Famer and All American Tom Fink's Steinert single season scoring record of 34 goals in the state final game in which he scored two goals. He finished with 36 goals which is still the current record for goals in one season at Steinert. He went on to be a three-time All-American at the University of Connecticut, earned the Adi Dasslar Award as the nation's Most Outstanding Senior Soccer Player, and led UConn to three NCAA tournament berths. He was also named the Big East Player of the Decade and was selected as one of New Jersey's all-time 10 best players of the 1980's. Dan played indoor professional soccer with the Wichita Wings, St. Louis Storm, St. Louis Ambush and St. Louis Steamers, and outdoor with the Boston Bolts, Penn-Jersey Spirit and Tampa Bay Rowdies. He was inducted as an individual into the Mercer County Soccer Hall of Fame in 1999. He coached D1 men's college soccer for 26 years at the University of Connecticut, Saint Louis University and most recently Rutgers University where in 2015 was named the Big 10 Coach of the Year. He is currently the Technical Director of the PDA Hibernians soccer club and was just recently named the new Notre Dame High School head soccer coach.