



ROB TARTAGLIA

A prolific goal scorer during his playing career, Rob “Tags” Tartaglia has played with some of Mercer’s finest and many of his now Hall of Fame compatriots. A gifted player and coach, we are honored to welcome Rob Tartaglia into the Mercer County Soccer Hall of Fame, Class of 2022

A product of the Hamilton Rec leagues, Rob was molded as a player by coaches such as Pat Donigan and Ernie Tessein, who guided an early model travel team to a state championship and tournament success during the early 1970’s. It was here that he was able to join with players who would become life-long friends and rivals during epic battles later in his career when Hamilton and Steinert met on the field. He was also mentored by Monsignor Mike Walsh while playing in the CYO leagues, a relationship that left a lasting mark on him as young man. His club sides, which included the Hibernians and Mercer Rowdies, won numerous league and state championships for coach Jack Maher while playing for the Rowdies.

High school saw Rob turn out for Hamilton West where, as a three year varsity player under Hall of Fame coach Jack Bell, he earned All-County and All-State honors as both a junior and senior. He moved on to Mercer County Community College in 1981, scoring 43 goals over the next two years for legendary coaches Derek Trevis and Joe “Sec” Secretario and being chosen All-American in his second year for the Vikings. A career highlight was his game-winning goal in the JUCO final in 1982 over Lewis & Clark, the first national title for Mercer since 1968. He moved on to Fairleigh Dickinson for his final two year of college soccer.

Leaving college did not stop Rob's playing days. The many successful clubs he played for locally included the Trenton Italians and Panorama Musicale, winning numerous titles over the years. He turned out for semi-pro side DOXA in the New York Metro area, and for teams in the Northern Virginia Soccer League while living in Washington D.C. He returned to the area to play with the Hibernians under the much-missed Hall coach Rich Garton and Nino's Pizzarama with long-time friend and Hall of Famer Drew Fallon in the Mercer Men's League.

Moving to the sidelines, Rob was fortunate to coach his son Luke's Hopewell Comets travel team for six years, a team trained by Fallon and recent Hall inductee Bill Hawkey of the Pennington School. A resident of Pennington where he lives with his wife and two children, Rob Tartaglia's list of accomplishments makes him more than worthy for a place in the Mercer County Soccer Hall of Fame, Class of 2022.