



RED BIRCH

For nearly 35 years, Red Birch has been covering Mercer County high school sports while garnering statewide recognition for his insightful reporting of the Beautiful Game. As a player, coach, writer and advocate for soccer in Mercer County, we welcome Red Birch into the Mercer County Soccer Hall of Fame.

A native of Pennsylvania, Red was a member of Ocean City High School's first boys soccer team in 1980. Matriculating to Seton Hall in 1984, Red played under coaches Ed Kelly and HOF member Manny Schellscheidt, while helping the Pirates turn from being also-rans to national contenders. The South Orange school won three straight Big East tournament titles during his time on the team, including the last two over a Connecticut team led by another Hall of Famer in Dan Donigan.

It was also at Seton Hall that Red's talent for writing first surfaced, as he started writing for the Setonian, progressing from staff writer to editor-in-chief over his time with the school publication. Following graduation, he joined the Trenton Times where, for over 17 years, he covered soccer at multiple levels, including high school, junior college, NCAA Divisions One and Two, semi-pro, and Olympic team preparations.

Red was lured to the local rival publication Trentonian following the departure of MCSHOF member Joe Logue, where, for another 17 years, he teamed with the late George O’Gorman and Rich “Fish” Fisher to form a powerhouse sports writing trio, covering boys and girls soccer at the local and state level.

Red has been recognized as New Jersey Soccer Writer of the Year on four separate occasions by the Soccer Coaches Association of NJ and Media of the Year by the Colonial Valley Conference soccer coaches five separate times. He has covered over 1,700 high school soccer games, including eleven Mercer County state champions and thirteen state runners-up over his distinguished career.

He has also shared his extensive knowledge of the game as a coach at St. Ann’s School in Lawrence for 16 years and in the Lawrence Hamnett Soccer Association. He has been on the selection committee for the annual MCSHOF/Glenn”Mooch” Myernick High School Senior Soccer games for over 23 years.

Red joins many of his colleagues tonight in the Hall and for his decades-long advocacy of the Mercer County soccer scene at all levels, we salute Red Birch and welcome him into the Mercer County Soccer Hall of Fame.