



Hristos Dimitriou

Year of Induction: **2021**
Year of Graduation: **N/A**

Ithaca High School Men's Soccer Coach, Gilbert Antoine, once said "Johnson City is an extremely good team, well-disciplined, well-coached, and you can see that in their playing." That Johnson City soccer coach was Hristos Dimitriou whose depth of knowledge of the sport came from both his own playing experience and the knowledge gained from those who coached him as a young soccer player in Greece, his homeland. The passion he had for this sport was felt and embraced by the teammates who played with him and the student- athletes who played for him.

As a young boy growing up in Greece, soccer was the sport that tapped into Dimitriou's talents. He was captain of the Rodiakos Soccer Club in Rhodes, Greece from 1976-1978. Although his personal career statistics were lost, during his leadership as captain the team achieved two championships: Rhodes Third Division 1976-1977 and Rhodes Second Division 1977-1978. Perseverance and determination are two qualities used to describe Coach Dimitriou. When he immigrated to the United States at the age of 21 he relied on these personal qualities to adapt to a new culture with a new language. However, the common language he shared with others was the language of soccer and it helped him to become a powerhouse in the soccer world in our area.

Dimitriou's strong work ethic has been evident throughout his life. After coming to this area, he graduated from Broome Community College with an Associates of Arts degree and received his bachelor's and Master's Degree in Education with honors. This involved grit and perseverance in learning a new culture and language. His "can-do/never-give-up" attitude extended well beyond the classroom, to the playing field and to his life in general. Throughout his career he taught physical education in Johnson City for 15 years and all together for 27 total years at the 7-12 and collegiate level (including Waverly High School and Binghamton University).

But it was the depth of his 37 years of coaching experience that helped grow the sport of soccer in our community. Dimitriou coached at all levels from youth to district to state to high school and on to NCAA Division I, II, III at the college level for both men and women. With his focus on our community he served as head coach of Southern Tier Youth Soccer (1983-present), Binghamton District (Girls) Youth Soccer Association (1986-1987), NYS West (Boys) Youth Soccer Association (1995), Binghamton University Women's Soccer Club (1983-1984), Binghamton University Women's Varsity Soccer (1985-1990), Binghamton University Men's Soccer (1993-2001), Waverly High School Boys' Varsity Soccer (2002-2005), and Johnson City High School Boys' Varsity Soccer (2006-2015). He also served as Associate Men's Soccer Coach at Binghamton University from 1991-1992. His coaching experience extended deep into our community by founding and running numerous youth summer camps and coaching clinics. He served as Assistant Director of the Binghamton University Summer Soccer Camps (1988-1990), the Assistant Site Director of the National Soccer Coaches Association of America and taught coaching courses at BU (1988-1989, 1991-1993), the Director of the BU Summer Soccer Camps (1991-2000), and as coach and trainer for the BC United Fusion Premiere Club (2007-2009). However, serving as a volunteer coach for The Outreach Program for Soccer for many years for children with a disability ages 8-19 is a commitment that holds special meaning for Dimitriou.

Soccer grew as a sport in our region with Dimitriou's passion and commitment to the young people in our community. As head coach of the Johnson City boys' soccer team, the team had an undefeated season

with a 14-0 record, took two Division championships, one STAC final and one Sectional final. These teams produced a regional All-American and several All-State and All-Division players. Scholar-soccer athletes were recognized as a team by the state association nine years in a row. And the Wildcat boys' soccer team achieved NYS rankings during the 2007 and 2008 regular seasons and was as high as #2 in the state.

Awards and honors have been earned by Coach Dimitriou over his career in soccer. Besides holding several of the highest soccer coaching licenses at the national level, he was named Coach of the Year by the State University of New York Athletic Conference in 1994. He was also named the Most Valuable Player for the Syracuse District Soccer League Playoffs for the Binghamton Soccer Club in 1983. In addition Dimitriou was a member of the NY Central Empire State Soccer Team in 1984-1985 and named to the Regional Team for the National Junior College Athletic Association while at Broome Community College in 1982.

If you asked Coach Dimitriou what he taught his students and his players over the years, he would say that he expected the same from them that he expected of himself: work hard, be honest, remain loyal and respect each other. These expectations have been the key to the strong relationships he has developed and maintained with hundreds upon hundreds of student-athletes and teammates over the length of his career.

What can easily be said about this humble man is that, as an educator and a coach, he has made our community a better place for our young people and our adults. His passion and commitment has influenced so many in the Johnson City School District and in our region.

Dimitriou and Jody, his wife of 26 years, reside in Johnson City where they raised their two children, son Pepinos (Pepi) and daughter Stamatia.

It is with great pleasure that the Johnson City Athletic Hall of Fame induct Coach Hristos Dimitriou into its athletic hall of fame.