



Ohio Soccer Hall of Fame

CREW STADIUM HOSTS 2009 OHIO SOCCER HALL OF FAME INDUCTION

The Ohio Soccer Hall of Fame (OSHOFF) honors 10 Hall inductees at Crew Stadium's Huntington Club

GIOVANNI CAPURRO

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One of the founders of SAY, Giovanni Capurro played with Italia (later the Cincinnati Bruins) in the OKI (Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana) League in the mid-to-late 1960s. Ohio Kentucky mid to In 1972, Capurro obtained a coaching license from FIFA, conducted by Dettmar Kramer, and served as an Assistant Coach and Director of Youth Development with the Cincinnati Comets professional team. He developed two boys teams, the U-16 Asteroids and the U-14 Meteors and both teams went to State Competitions.

From 1973 to 1976 Giovanni became Chairman of the Advisory Council on Soccer for the Cincinnati Recreation Commission. During that period, the following programs were initiated for youth soccer: mass registration with USSF, spring leagues (at that time, youth soccer was limited to fall season), start of a select league, first Memorial Day, Independence Day and Labor Day Tournaments with national exposure and benefit games for youth soccer between the Cincinnati Comets and College All-Stars.

In the summer of 1976 he was named head coach at Xavier University. At that time, the program had a meager budget but he built a competitive Division I team that was undaunted by financial woes. By the time he left, there was a substantial budget increase, including four scholarships. He also continued the youth benefit game that pitted Xavier against a national top ten team (including Indiana among others).

During the above periods, he tirelessly organized clinics for both coaches and players at all levels in the Metropolitan Cincinnati Area, including guest speaking engagements at soccer events, the Kolping Society, Knights of Columbus, The Optimist Club, South East Soccer Association in Anderson Township and many more organizations that requested help with soccer programs.



GUILLERMO CARRASCO

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Guillermo Carrasco was born on August 16, 1944 in Santiago, Chile, and he was a member of the 1964 Chilean Olympic team. He began his professional career playing for Audax Italiano. In 1970, Carrasco made the decision to come to the United States and he settled in Northeast Ohio. In 1974, he began playing with the Cleveland Stars, while also getting involved with the youth soccer programs in the area. He started coaching and volunteering his time to Hudson soccer and in 1978 he also coached at Cuyahoga Community College.

From 1982-84 he was the director of the Kiwanis Saturday Soccer Program. At the same time, he also organized and directed Hudson's first indoor soccer program at Hudson Middle School through the recreation department. Carrasco would also assist Dee Phillips in creating Hudson's first girls high school program. During these years, he met and coached with Tim Patter, who became a good friend and without whom much of what Carrasco accomplished would not have been possible. They coached together at Hudson High School for almost 30 years.

Carrasco met another person who would make an impact in his life. His name was Gary Nawrocki. In 1985, Carrasco and Nawrocki became partners and built the N.C. Soccer Club in Hudson, Ohio. Before that, the only true indoor soccer facility was in Warrensville, Ohio. Their philosophy was to make it inexpensive enough so that more youngsters would participate and soccer could grow.

Throughout the years, youngsters and adults have shared their love of soccer by playing at the facility. During that time, Carrasco started N. C. Soccer Club premier teams and with other coaches played under the jurisdiction of OYSAN. He later teamed with Timo Liekowski to start Emerald Soccer Club and also helped with the reconstruction of the Olympic Development Program in the early 1990s. In 1997, Carrasco and Nawrocki expanded N.C. Soccer to Seville, Ohio, where there was no other facility in the area at that time. That facility includes 150 acres with over 30 outdoor fields and two indoor fields. More recently, Carrasco, now 65, has been coaching and teaching players about the game. His love of the game, and passion for it, has made a difference in his life and he is an inspiration to others.



ENRICO GRAZIA

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Enrico Grazia emigrated to the United States from Castel DiSangro, Italy, in 1956 and started playing soccer in Cleveland in 1958 with the local Italian Soccer Club that was coached by Mariano Urbaz. In 1963, the Italian Soccer Club moved to the Major Division, where it won championships in both 1964 and 1965. The success of the Italian Soccer Club could be attributed in large part to the efforts of Grazia, who served the club in many capacities, including President, General Manager and coach. One example of his hands-on approach was the early partnership he formed with St. Paschal Parish in Highland Heights, Ohio, to use their soccer field in return for coaching the students at the school.

With his new team, Italian Sons and Daughters of America, he won a Second Division Championship in 1966 and 1967 and the First Division Championship in 1968. Winning the First Division title in 1968 earned ISDA promotion to the Major Division and the name of the team was changed to Inter Italians. It was under the Inter Italians name and Grazia's leadership that the club flourished during the 1970s. He was the Major Division Manager when the team won the Eastern Division Championship in 1970. In addition to his work with the Inter Italians, Grazia was instrumental in laying the groundwork for the rebirth of professional soccer in Cleveland in 1972 with the Cleveland Stars after the demise of the Stokers in 1968. The Stars played in 1972, 1973 and 1974 as a member of the American Soccer League (ASL) and Grazia served as President, Vice President and General Manager and was also a founding member of the team.



Grazia helped revive the tradition of Cleveland's professional teams hosting international games, and on July 17, 1973 the Stars played Israel's Ramaet Gan Hakoah at Finnie Stadium. The Stars lost 2-1 before a Finnie record soccer crowd of 5,388. Throughout his involvement in professional soccer, Grazia continued his prominent presence in the Lake Erie Soccer League (LESL), as well as coaching his youngest daughter's North Olmsted Soccer Organization (NOSO) team to two championships. Now 70, Grazia is the current president of the Home Family Club soccer team, which was promoted to the First Division of the LESL, where it remains today.

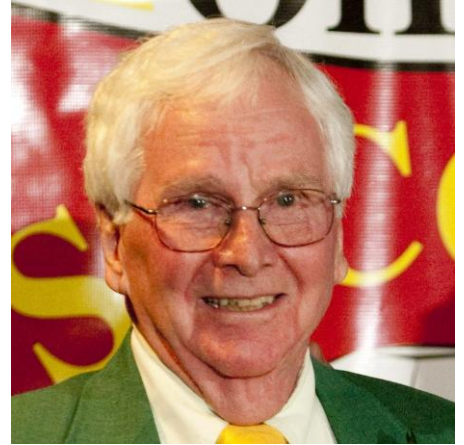
PAUL HEALY

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Paul Healy's involvement with the Incarnation athletic department began at a football game in 1967. It was difficult to see the action on the field, as the players all had to stand for the entire game on the sideline. He mentioned it to the coach, who told him to make some benches and the team would use them. Paul created a 30-foot-long collapsible bench and it was used the next game.

Healy was then sent to the Dayton CYO meeting as a representative of the Athletic Board at Incarnation. The CYO noted that Incarnation was the only parochial school in the area without a soccer team. Paul would then go back home and look up soccer in the encyclopedia. He recruited Ron Gatland and Ron Meijerhoffer to coach defense and offense, respectively, and the Incarnation team was started. Frequently, no one was available to coach on Saturday, so Paul did it, which lasted for two years.

Paul would eventually go to the Centerville school board to organize a "round-up" of those interested in starting a soccer program there. At that meeting he was able to appoint the coaches for that new program. When looking at the scope of soccer in the area – both at Centerville and Alter – it all got started with Paul and the vision that he carried out.



HEATHER MITTS

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A native of Cincinnati, Ohio, Heather Mitts attended St. Ursula Academy, where she was a first-team All-State selection as a junior and j senior. In her time at Ursula, the team went 70-5-10, winning the 1993 state title. In addition, she won two Ohio state titles with Club Cincinnati. Mitts was also a member of the Cardinal Premier squad that won a national championship in 1997.

In her collegiate career at Florida from 1996-99, Mitts finished as the school's all-time leader in games played (95), starts (94) and minutes played (7,547). She helped the Gators to their first and only NCAA Championship in 1999, and was also named to the NCAA All-Tournament team in that year. She earned All-SEC first-team selections in her junior and senior years and was twice named All-American, including a first-team selection in her senior year and third-team honors as a junior. She helped Florida earn the SEC title in each of her four years and was named the team MVP in her senior season.

After representing the United States at youth level, including a 1999 Nordic Cup win with the Under-21 Squad in Iceland, Mitts began her senior U.S. National Team career in 1999 with a call-up against Finland on Feb. 24 of that year. She experienced a breakout year in 2004 as a member of the USA's Olympic Residency Camp, making 28 appearances, including 17 starts, and scoring the first two goals of her international career, the first of which came against Canada on July 3. She was named to the 2004 U.S. Women's Olympic squad and saw action in two matches, helping the U.S. to a gold medal finish in the competition. She continued as a regular member of the U.S. National Team in 2005 and 2006, and led the team in minutes played in 2006. In 2007, she once again started in every match of the Four Nations Tournament, and started three games at the Algarve Cup, helping her squad to victories in both tournaments. A member of the U.S. World Cup residency camp in 2007, she recorded her first career international assist on May 12 against Canada in the 13th minute. Unfortunately, in the 27th minute of the match, Mitts tore her ACL after a collision with a Canadian player and was forced out of contention for selection to the World Cup roster.

Since returning from injury in 2008, she has regained her place as a regular starter for the Red, White and Blue, including all six matches at the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing, China, where Mitts earned her second career gold medal. In 2009, Mitts has made seven appearances, six of them starts. On March 11, in the Algarve Cup Final against Sweden, she became the 25th American to earn her 100th career cap. To date, Mitts has appeared in 103 games in her international career.

Mitts played for the Philadelphia Charge of the now-defunct WUSA from 2001-03, starting all 51 games and leading her team to the playoffs in her first two seasons. She was named a WUSA All-Star in 2003 and totaled 4,414 minutes and eight assists in her WUSA career.

More recently, Mitts played for the Boston Breakers of the new Women's Professional Soccer in its inaugural 2009 season, starting 19 of the squad's 20 matches, while registering one assist.



CHARLES KEANEY

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Charles (Charlie) Keaney began his career with soccer as a recreational referee (SAY) in 1977. Charlie's knowledge and love for the game grew as he progressed to a Class 1 Ohio High School Athletic Association Official (OHSAA) in 1989, a USSF State Referee, then SAY National Referee in 1992. Keaney pushed on to become an administrator, instructor, assessor and mentor for less experienced referees.

As an administrator, he became President of the Finneytown Athletic Association in 1979 and ran the recreational (SAY) and comparative (Finneytown Soccer Club) for two years. That has ultimately set him as a long-term member of the Ohio South State Referee Committee (OSSRC) in key positions as State Youth Referee Administrator and District Referee Administrator.

In 1982, Charlie began a career as soccer referee instructor training both SAY and USSF referees in the greater Cincinnati area. He continues that tradition today as a USSF State level instructor, a OHSAA referee instructor and rules interpreter, member of the SAY National board, SAY National Director of Soccer Officials and the chair of the SAY National Rules and Referee Committee. Charlie still remains active as a referee today, doing an occasional SAY or adult women's recreational match.

Concurrent with his instruction effort, Keaney co-founded the Southwest Ohio Soccer Officials Association (SWOSOA) in 1993. The association has continued for the last 16 years to provide soccer referees in and around the Greater Cincinnati Area with continuing education and practical training for all levels of officiating. As his knowledge and experience as an assignor grew, Charlie started scheduling referees for many of the local tournaments. He is still active as a State Assignor Coordinator and is the primary architect and teacher of the Ohio South Assignor Training and Certification programs.



CAROL MAAS

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Carol Maas began her involvement in soccer in 1979, when she was asked to serve on the Board of Huber Heights Recreational Soccer league. Her first duty was to gather sponsors for HH Soccer and she proceeded to garner 100 percent commitment from over 100 local businesses. In 1980, she became the President of Huber Heights Soccer and served in that capacity for eight years as the league grew in size to over 1,600 players and 108 teams, which resulted in the development of 15 soccer fields at Cloud Park within five years. In addition from 1980-87, she served as a volunteer member of the City of Huber Heights Parks Board.

In 1983, Carol, her husband Hank, and two other coaches started the Warrior Soccer Club (WSC) with three teams playing in the Miami Valley Youth Soccer Association (MVYSA), of which she served as Volunteer Registrar in 2007. Carol was elected President of the WSC in that first year and has served in that role for the last 25 years. She has also been the Co-Director of the Warrior Soccer Classic since its inception 22 years ago. From 1998-2000, she organized the Warrior Instructional Soccer League that instructed recreational players ages 6-9 years old on the basic fundamentals of playing soccer. She is a member of the Warrior Complex Development Committee that was started in 2004 with the objective of building a soccer unique complex for the Warrior Soccer Club to host its league games, host part of the Warrior Soccer Classic and to partner with the Special Olympics program in the Dayton area.

In 1986, Carol became the District 2 Commissioner on the Ohio South Youth Soccer Association (OSYSA) board, which regulates the entire southern Ohio area as part of United States Youth Soccer (USYS). In 2003, Carol assumed the role of State Commissioner in Ohio South and she continues to serve in that position today. With responsibility for over 69,000 Ohio South members, she is responsible for the approval and review of all Ohio South tournaments. For over 18 years, Carol was also part of the SOASA league – which compasses the Dayton, Cincinnati and Columbus areas – serving as the volunteer registrar for all adult leagues and volunteering at the Founders Cup each year. Along with the SOASA President she worked to develop an on-line registration system for all association teams, which helped eliminate the need to register all teams by hand.

In 2000, Carol was named one of the Top 100 Ohio Soccer Leaders, after Major League Soccer and the Columbus Crew sponsored her nomination in thanks for all the volunteer efforts that she has performed for the sport of soccer in the state of Ohio.



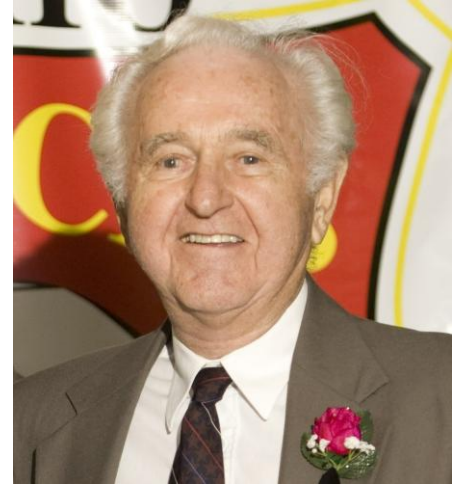
JOSEPH ROSUL

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Joseph Rosul, better known as “Papa Joe” to many in the soccer community, has been involved with soccer his entire life. His involvement began as a player and developed into an organizer, coach, administrator, referee, instructor, assessor and mentor. As a young boy in Ukraine, he learned and fell in love with the sport. He came to Cleveland in 1949 and helped found the Ukraine Soccer Club which became a member of the American Soccer League for the 1950-1951 season. In 1963, Rosul helped organize the Ukrainian Lion and Skala Wings, the first two Ukrainian-American Junior teams, and in 1968 the Ukrainian-Americans won the Ohio North State Junior State Championship, defeating Danube Swaben, 2-1.

Rosul helped the efforts being made to establish soccer in the public high schools of the Cleveland area by assisting at Rocky River, where his three sons, Roman, Alex and Emil, played. With his sons advancing their soccer careers, Papa Joe turned his attention to officiating. His career included over 35 years with the United States Soccer Federation, 20 years with Ohio High School Athletic Association and 20 years with the National Intercollegiate Soccer Officials Associations. He was a founding member of the Northern Ohio Collegiate Soccer Officials Association.

As he progressed with officiating, Rosul became an instructor and assessor. He held the titles of State Director of Instruction (SDI), State Director of Assessment (SDA) and was a USSF National Assessor for 15 years each. These positions brought him into contact with many of the current USSF National Referees and FIFA Officials. His willingness to travel, give time, share his experiences and work with many of today’s players and referees is widely recognized by many in the soccer world.



ANDREW SHEPAROVICH

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Andrew Sheparovich was born in Lviv, Ukraine, on July 5, 1942 and his family migrated to the United States in 1951. He lived in New York until 1963 when he married and moved to Cleveland. Sheparovich began playing in New York for the New York Ukrainians, starting in its youth program. He played for Brooklyn Tech High School and that team won the City Championship in 1958. Afterwards, he played at Pratt Institute (now University) for two years and that team was a perennial NAIA frontrunner.

After moving to Cleveland, he played briefly for the Ukrainian-American Sport Club, but a serious injury and surgery ended his playing career in 1963. After graduating from Cleveland State University in 1971, Andrew started coaching for the Ukrainian- ASClub (UASC) Hi American Sport Club youth program. His team won the Lake Erie Championship in 1972 in the U-19 Division. He earned his National “C” license that year at Gilmore Academy and subsequently received his National “B” license at Bowling Green in 1975. In 1974, he was named an Assistant Coach for the Cleveland Stars (later renamed Cobras).

In 1984, he was asked by the Mayor of Parma to go in front of City Council and persuade them to authorize a new soccer program for the Recreation Department. Upon approval, the program began with just eight teams and 150 registrations. After serving 21 years as the Soccer Director, the program grew to 98 teams and over 1,500 registrants. In 2008, Parma City Council decreed that Nike Field #1 be named “Sheparovich Field.”

In his duties as a director, Andrew was responsible for recruiting volunteers as coaches, holding classes in coaching and the “Laws of the Game” and monitoring their progress, as well as the Referees. Due to the growth of the program, it pressured all three of Parma’s High Schools to initiate their own soccer programs. Sheparovich officiated in the high school program from 1979-91. In his last four years, he officiated two State Finals and two State Semifinals. Andrew also officiated at the collegiate level until 1991, working NCAA Division I and Division II Regional Finals, and in the MISL from 1981-84.



VOJISLAV SPASIC

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When the Serbian soccer club S.K. "Karadjordje" was formed in 1960, Vojislav Spasic was a 17-year-old starter, and he continued playing and coaching for the club well into his 40s. The club won several division championships in the Lake Erie Soccer League of Cleveland, but he is most proud of the 1970 championship season, when it went undefeated, while he played defensive halfback.

As he got older, the native of Belgrade, Serbia, played in several 30 and over leagues, including five years with the GFS Eagles of Akron, who were the powerhouse of the Greater Akron League. After 25 years of outdoor soccer, Vojislav turned to indoor soccer where he played and coached 30+ and 40+ championship teams at "Force Fitness Center" of Warrensville, Ohio, and "Springside Soccer" in Akron, Ohio.

From 1964-68, Vojislav played collegiate soccer at Kent State University, where he established several school records, leading his team in assists in 1965 and captaining the team in 1965 and 1966. He was named Honorable Mention All-Ohio in 1965 and subsequently selected for the U.S. Olympic Trials in Chicago and St. Louis. After graduating from the University of Akron in 1970, Vojislav was hired as an elementary teacher in Stow, Ohio. That same year he was named Head Coach of Tri-C Metro Community College of Cleveland.

During his tenure at Stow, Vojislav was the boys assistant soccer coach in 1972 and 1973 and the following year he coached the Stow girls to their best record ever. The Lady Bulldogs went 16-2-2 under his leadership and five of his starters went on to successful college careers. In 1974, Vojislav started his soccer officiating career and went on to referee high school and NCAA collegiate soccer for 20-plus years. With his coaching and playing days behind him, Spasic was elected secretary of the Lake Erie Soccer League in 1997, and continues to serve in that capacity.

