

Local Coach Named 2007 US Youth Soccer Boys Coach of the Year

Mike Elster from Sutton, MA has been named US Youth Soccer adidas Boys Competitive Coach of the Year. Recipients of the Competitive Coach of the Year awards are selected by the US Youth Soccer Board of Directors on the basis of sportsmanship, player development, personal coaching development and community involvement (citizenship).

Mike Elster began his soccer career at age 12 as a player for the then new Shrewsbury Youth Soccer program in Shrewsbury, MA. He continued his passion to play soccer as the co-captain of the first St. John's High School Soccer State Champion team in 1986. Mike then went on to play at Connecticut College in New London, CT.

Upon graduation from Connecticut College, Mike moved to Virginia and began his coaching career in the National Capitol Soccer League. When he returned to Massachusetts in 1998, he became the Junior Varsity coach for Shrewsbury High School.

More recently, Mike has been a long time board member and coach with Sutton Youth Soccer, board member and coach with the Fuller Hamlets Soccer Club, District Select Coach, player on a men's indoor team at the Habitat and outdoor Fuller Hamlets team, and the Boys Varsity Coach at Sutton High School for the past 2 seasons. One of Mike's proudest accomplishments is the creation in 2002 of an annual charity soccer tournament with his wife and Sutton Youth Soccer where all proceeds have gone to the Kicks for Cancer program on behalf of leukemia and lymphoma and more recently working closely with the New England Revolution in support of their new foundation.

As a result of a nomination submitted in December 2006 by Tom Costa, President of Sutton Youth Soccer, which included letters of support from colleagues, parents, and players, Mike was named Massachusetts Boys Soccer Coach of the Year in the late Spring of 2007. Then in December of 2007 he was notified by Massachusetts Youth Soccer that he had been chosen as the Region 1 Boys Coach of the Year in the Competitive Division. Region 1 extends from Maine to West Virginia.

As Region 1 winner, Mike was one of 4 finalists for the national award and invited to the US Youth Soccer National Conference that was held in Pittsburgh, PA this past weekend. The national Boys Competitive Coach of the Year was announced at the US Youth Soccer Awards Gala on Friday, February 8, 2008 as part of the US Youth Soccer adidas Workshop in Pittsburgh, PA.

The quote from US Youth Soccer sums it up best, "These coaches have committed to continued education and self-sacrifice to give back to the sport they love with the hope that they might enhance one of their players abilities and quality of life. US Youth Soccer and adidas are proud to highlight these Competitive Coaches of the Year for their time and efforts in contributing to America's youth through the great game of soccer. By promoting teamwork, discipline, fitness and fair play these coaches are making a difference." Mike Elster has spent his entire coaching career giving back to the sport he loves and making a difference in the lives of the kids he coaches.

Mike Elster will be recognized by the New England Revolution professional soccer team at their home opener against the Houston Dynamo on Saturday, March 29, 2008 at 7:30 pm at Gillette Stadium.

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