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Pike Soccer Club coach named region coach of the year

Provided by Shannon Stuart

U.S. Youth Soccer announced today that Isang Jacob (Pike Soccer Club/Indy Burn) is the U.S. Youth Soccer Region II 2008 Boys Competitive Coach of the Year. This honor is awarded to a competitive coach for both a boy's team and a girl's team in each region for his or her coaching activities, sportsmanship, player development, personal coaching development and citizenship.

"This is a tremendous honor for Coach Jacob, Pike Soccer Club/Indy Burn and Indiana Youth Soccer," said Indiana Youth Soccer Director of Education Vince Ganzberg. "Isang's passion for the game has made a positive impact both on and off the soccer field in Indiana," said Ganzberg. "He is more than just a coach. He is a role model and mentor in making sure that players learn and apply life lessons on and off the field.

"Each of these winners have committed to continuing 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," explained U.S. Youth Soccer Director of Communication Todd Roby. Jacob has made a career of giving back through youth soccer. He served for many years as the Boys' Director of Coaching for Indy Burn, the travel division of Pike Soccer Club, Indianapolis, Indiana, where he coaches the Indy Burn '90 Boys Premier Eagles. Jacob holds a USSF A license, NSCAA Premier Diploma, NSCAA Goalkeeper -- Level 1 and 2 Diplomas and the KNVB Dutch International Youth License. He is a former collegiate and professional player, two-time NCCAA All-American and was invited to the Nigerian Senior National Team in 1991. Jacob is the USSF Men's Academy Head Coach at Carmel United Soccer Club and is a member of the USSF, NSCAA, Region II ODP, and Indiana ODP coaching staffs. He is a two-time winner of the Indiana Youth Soccer Travel Coach of the Year award. Pike Soccer Club's Executive Director, Thomas Geisse describes Jacob as, "a man of strong faith and principles whose greatest accomplishment as a coach is his ability to help build fine young men and women." Jacob is known for his focus on the life skills of respect, citizenship and personal best on the soccer field, classroom and community. His coaching philosophy is "to develop all players to be technically, mentally, and tactically prepared for the next level. Most importantly, stress continuously the importance of good academic standing as a student athlete with good citizenship."

Although Jacob has experienced much success as a player and coach, he remains humble, eager to recognize the many people who have helped him develop into the U.S. Youth Soccer Region II Boys Competitive Coach of the Year. Jacob explains, "Although I am deeply appreciative to receive this honor from U.S. Youth Soccer, the team's successes off the field, in school and in the Indianapolis community matter the most. The players are champions before they even step onto the pitch."

Jacob was selected as the winner from among 14 Region II States' Boys Competitive Coach of the Year winners. U.S. Youth Soccer Region II is comprised of 14 state associations. Annually, four candidates representing the four geographic regions of U.S. Youth Soccer (Region I, Region II, Region III, Region IV) are submitted for consideration to be named the U.S. Youth Soccer Boys Competitive Coach of the Year. The winner will be announced at the U.S. Youth Soccer Awards Gala March 6, at 7:30 p.m., as a part of the 2009 U.S. Youth Soccer Adidas Workshops in San Jose, California.

"The beautiful game of soccer has been an integral part of my life since I was a child growing up in Nigeria," said Jacob. "In the years since I finished playing in college and in the pros, I've sought to give back to the Game by coaching youth soccer."