

## **Pike Youth Soccer Club coach earns national honor**

### **National award takes Isang Jacob by surprise**

*By Nat Newell nat.newell@indystar.com*

Isang Jacob has played soccer in front of more than 40,000 people, but he's never been as nervous as he was waiting for the announcement of the U.S. Youth Soccer Competitive Coach of the Year Award on March 6. The Pike Youth Soccer Club coach, who was so sure he wouldn't be named the organization's state coach of the year that he took his shoes off at the banquet to be more comfortable, was chosen from four regional winners by the U.S. Youth Soccer board of directors at the Youth Soccer Workshop in San Jose, Calif. The award is based on sportsmanship, player development, personal coaching development and community involvement. "I was truly humbled and surprised when I won the state award," said Jacob. He has led the Indy Burn 90 Premier Eagles to seven consecutive state championships and has had all of his players earn scholarships, 17 of them to Division I programs. "Getting the regional (award) blew me away. I opened the letter and started shaking, then I called everyone I knew. I've never been more nervous in my life (when the national award was announced). I don't deserve it. There are so many great coaches across the country."

Jacob was an assistant coach at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis after playing at Indiana Wesleyan, but while recruiting, he decided players in the Indianapolis area needed to develop better fundamentals. He quit IUPUI and started working as a volunteer coach with younger players. "I wanted to give them practical knowledge, the right technique and help them be fine young men and citizens," Jacob said. "I've been with this group since they were 11 and have retained 75 percent of them. I had everyone tell me it would not work. But I sit back and see these kids going to Harvard, Cornell, Butler, IUPUI, West Virginia. . . . I'm truly honored and humbled." Jacob, who also was named Indiana's coach of the year in 2004, serves as the head of Indiana's U.S. Youth Soccer Olympic Development Program. He was a two-time NCCAA All-American and was invited to play on the Nigerian Senior National Team in 1991.

"I believe many of us at the Pike Soccer Club are still a bit unbelieving of this award," Pike Youth Soccer Club Executive Director Tom Geisse said in an e-mail. "Oft times we don't think many folks outside Indianapolis recognize the long hours and hard work of the Pike Soccer Club coaches for the past 30 years. Today, the families of Pike Youth Soccer Club are very proud of Isang Jacob's accomplishments on and off the field during his decade of service to Indianapolis youth."

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### **Pike Soccer Club Indy Burn's Isang Jacob Named 2008 US Youth Soccer Boys Competitive Coach of the Year**

SAN JOSE, Calif. (March 6, 2009) - The recipients of the **2008 US Youth Soccer adidas Competitive Coach of the Year award for Boys** and Girls were announced tonight (early 3/7/08, Indianapolis time) at the **US Youth Soccer Awards Gala**, at the San Jose McEnery Convention Center in San Jose, Calif. The national adidas Competitive Coaches of the Year award winners were Miriam Hickey of Troy, Mich., (Girls) and Isang Jacob of Indianapolis, Ind., (Boys). Isang Jacob, of Indianapolis, Ind., builds fine young men first and skilled soccer players second. His players must excel at school, complete community service and work hard to earn a spot on the field. Through this dedication, Coach Jacob led the Indy Burn '90 Boys Premier Eagles to seven consecutive US Youth Soccer Indiana State Championships. All of his 2008 graduates play in college, 17 of them at Division I schools. Player Blake Leyden, signed a letter of commitment to play at Butler University last month. Coach Jacob's greatest accomplishment is having all former players enrolled and succeeding in college, whether or not they play soccer. The USSF "A" License and National Youth License coach also serves as the head Indiana US Youth Soccer Olympic Development Program coach. **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. For more information about the US Youth Soccer Awards Gala and award winners, go to [USYouthSoccer.org/workshop/galaawards](http://USYouthSoccer.org/workshop/galaawards).

**"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 US 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."** Geisse explained Jacob's coaching philosophy: **"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 US Youth Soccer Region II Boys Competitive Coach of the Year. **Jacob explains, "Although I am deeply appreciative to receive this honor from US 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 four Region Coaches of the Year. In January, Jacob was selected from among 14 Region II States' Boys Competitive Coach of the Year winners. US Youth Soccer Region II is comprised of 14 state associations. Annually, four candidates representing the four geographic regions of US Youth Soccer (Region I, Region II, Region III, Region IV) are submitted for consideration to be named the US Youth Soccer Boys Competitive Coach of the Year.

***"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."***

On January 22, 2009, US Youth Soccer announced that Isang Jacob (Pike Soccer Club/Indy Burn) is the US 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.

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**About Pike Youth Soccer Club** – Pike Soccer Club and its Indy Burn competitive division serves 3000 Indianapolis area youth each year with a variety of soccer related programs in two Indianapolis Parks: Northwestway Park and Mary & John Geisse Soccer Complex.

Indiana Youth Soccer serves and educates its membership through the development, promotion and administration of youth soccer in the state of Indiana. Indiana Youth Soccer is a National State Association member of the United States Soccer Federation (USSF) and the United States Youth Soccer Association. Indiana Youth Soccer has a current membership base of over 60,000 youth players, 8,000 active coaches, 3,800 referees and thousands of volunteers through its network of over 140 member clubs across the state of Indiana.

**About the United States Youth Soccer Association (US Youth Soccer)** – US Youth Soccer -The Game for ALL Kids!® is the largest youth sports organization in the country and largest member of the United States Soccer Federation, the governing body of soccer in the United States. US Youth Soccer registers more than 3.2 million players annually, ages 5 to 19, and over 900,000 administrators, coaches and volunteers in 55 member state associations. US Youth Soccer programs provide a fun, safe and healthy environment for players at every level of the game. For more information, visit [www.USYouthSoccer.org](http://www.USYouthSoccer.org).

2008  
**adidas COACH OF THE YEAR**  
**BOYS COMPETITIVE**

**National Winner**  
Isang Jacob

**Regional Winners**

Region I  
Region II  
Region III  
Region IV

Richard J. Frongillo  
Isang Jacob  
Patrick Zoete  
Emerson "Skip" Robbins





Isang Jacob.  
Picture by Pike Soccer Club, Indianapolis, IN

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