

## **Julius Roth, 2008 US Youth Soccer Hall of Fame Inductee**

Julius Roth was one of the first organizers and founders of US Youth Soccer. His greatest contributions to soccer were his persistent and generous efforts to grow the game.

A visionary, Roth was one of the first to recognize the value of youth and women's soccer programs and their impact on the future of soccer in the United States.

When helping to start and expand US Youth Soccer, Roth identified and organized the US Youth Soccer State Associations throughout the Midwest and lobbied to have women's soccer recognized by the U.S. Soccer Federation and provide female teams the opportunity to play regulation, scheduled games. Through his efforts at this critical time, soccer gained its widespread, grassroots popularity.

Born in Forberg, Czechoslovakia, Roth came to the United States in 1951 and began playing for Hansa Junior, one of eight German-American clubs in Chicago. The team was the U.S. Junior Champions from 1953 to 1954 and he continued playing on the first and reserve teams of the club until 1965 when he became their coach.

He attended the first US Youth Soccer annual general meeting in Alaska in 1972. The association had 80,000 registered youth players. Roth was a member of the Illinois Soccer Association. In 1974, he became the first US Youth Soccer Region II Director on the board of directors, serving until 1976.

In 1975, he began serving as the chairman of the James P. McGuire National Challenge Cup, now part of the US Youth Soccer National Championships Series. He held the position for two years. For the next two years, Roth served as the Chairman of the Appeals Committee for US Youth Soccer Region II. In 1981, he served on the US Youth Soccer Region II Planning Committee.

In 1990, Roth was recognized for his efforts to expand and improve soccer and was inducted into the Illinois State Soccer Hall of Fame. He served as Illinois State Soccer Association's historian from 1997 to 2001 and has since served as the Chairman of their Hall of Fame Committee.

Roth received a meritorious service award from the Illinois Youth Soccer Association in 2003. In 2006, Roth was inducted to the United States Adult Soccer Association's Hall of Fame.

