

Richard Stormsgaard Revisited

Former BU men's soccer coach Tim Schum reports that through the efforts of a former teammate, Richard Stormsgaard, has been reconnected with the Bearcat soccer program.

Seems that Ira Glick has recently retired and relocated to the San Francisco area. Through Facebook he learned that Stormsgaard was living some 100 miles East of San Francisco in Nevada City, California.

The two were teammates on three (1968-70) Colonial soccer teams. Both were accorded All-New York State honors with Glick, a midfielder, named to the 1969 team while Stormsgaard would be honored a year later.

While Glick was a solid midfielder, it was striker Stormsgaard who grabbed the attention of both BU soccer fandom (and opponents) during his career.

As a measure of his importance to fledgling then-Harpur College program, one only has to examine the number of shots taken by the Danish-born Stormsgaard to understand his impact.

As team record improved from a 4-4-1 record in 1968 to 7-2-2 in 1970, the 6-2, 190 blond Stormsgaard recorded a career total of 160 shots. That statistic is skewed by the fact that after totaling 72 shots his sophomore year, his junior year shot total was but 22 due to injuries. He would rebound to take 69 shots his senior year.

In fact, in recounting his statistics, Schum reports that the BU record book needs revision. While stats have credited Feyyaz Baskent with a career average of 4.10 shots per match, Stormsgaard's 5.16 career average makes him #1 in that category.

Meanwhile while Baskent averaged a career best 2.39 points per game during his tenure, Stormsgaard's 25 career goals and 13 career assists (63 Points) average out to 2.03 points per match. That places him #2 amongst BU soccer record-holders.

"One has to understand that to some degree Rich was about a one-man band when it came to our attacking scheme during his time on our team" stated Schum in recounting Stormsgaard's importance. "As a result he took a tremendous beating from our opponents. You only have to look at his junior year shot total to understand what took place."

Prior to attending Harpur, Stormsgaard enrolled as a transfer student and starred in soccer at East Greenbush High School located in the Albany area.

He arrived at Harpur unannounced and largely because of a scholarship granted by the school [most likely a tuition waiver then available to foreign students] and graduated with an English degree in 1971.

After playing soccer in the competitive German-American League and living in the New York City area for a time, Rich decided that urban life was not for him. He relocated for a time in the Berkshire Mountains of New England and eventually in 1978 settled in Nevada City area hard by the Sierra Nevada Mountains.

He and wife Heidi did return to Billund, Denmark from 1990-98 to care for Rich's parents, but otherwise have thrived (and raised three children) in the less hectic more rural environment.

Always a man who marched to his own drum, Stormsgaard reports that his career has seen him engage in home construction (he has built and sold 13 homes) as well as automobile restoration (completed and sold abroad). He has also spent three decades delivering newspapers to area homes ("It is a good job and pays a lot better than people would imagine").

As part of the wild 60s Stormsgaard grew his blond locks to shoulder length and provided a bit of a dilemma for the more conservative Schum. The coach was of the opinion that his star player's locks needed to be trimmed in order for him to stay on the team.

As he debated bringing the matter to Stormsgaard's attention, he talked it over with his wife. After listening to his intended action, she simply reacted by simply stating the obvious: "Do you want to win any games?" The long hair stayed.

While he played soccer until he was 55, eventually torn muscles in his buttocks drove Stormsgaard to the sidelines.

In the meantime the coach-player relationship has been rekindled and with it has come a revisiting of the Stormsgaard legacy to the BU men's soccer program.