



2019 Dr. Thomas Fleck Award

Timo Liekoski

Coming over from Finland in 1964, it did not take Timo Liekoski long to get involved here with the beautiful game. Starting as a player shortly after he arrived in the United States, he played in college as a goalkeeper. After breaking his wrist before his senior season, he took on a different role within the team and transitioned to defense. At the conclusion of his senior season, he was named as a second team All American.

Moving forward, he became a very experienced coach, coaching many teams across high levels of play, ranging from college, professional, and national teams. As head coach of the Hartwick College men's soccer team, he ended his two-season stint with a 30-9-7 record, taking his team to the 1974 NCAA Final Four. Some of his professional coaching career was spent with the Houston Summit of the Major Indoor Soccer League and the Houston Hurricane, in the North American Soccer League. In each league, he was named as Coach of the Year. Liekoski was brought on to the U.S. Men's National Team coaching staff as an assistant and helped lead them to the second round of the 1994 FIFA World Cup.

Dedicating so much of his time to soccer, Liekoski was also Director of Coaching for U.S. Soccer. During this time, he collaborated with Tom Fleck and Ron Quinn to bring the National Youth License to life in the 1990's. This has played an important role in developing the way youth players are coached. This license emphasized the importance of understanding players, and developing age, and ability related training sessions. The National Youth License is regarded as one of the most impactful coaching courses created.

Liekoski has impacted many lives, young and old, throughout his 25+ years of coaching soccer.