

Testimonial for Bobby Graham

It was Thanksgiving in 1985 following my first season as Head Coach at Dartmouth College and I was attending a youth tournament in Washington D.C. when I stumbled across a Canadian team. I liked the way they played and was pleasantly surprised that their coach was a fellow Scot. On our first conversation I happily realized that he was someone who really loved soccer but most importantly he loved his players. The way he talked about his team demonstrated that he had a wonderful blend of passion for the game and love of coaching. Out of that first meeting I recruited a young lad who finished his time at Dartmouth as an All American but most importantly as the team's top scorer in the year that saw us winning the Ivy League. The real bonus in all this was that I began a rewarding friendship with Bobby Graham, a truly amazing youth coach.

From that time Bobby Graham has become a wonderful resource when I was looking at Canadian players. He was someone I could call and get honest opinion of any youth player in Ontario. He knows the US College game and has a good feel for differing academics and soccer standards across the wide spectrum of universities from D1 through to NAIA and that was why he has been able to place somewhere around 400 young soccer players in the right situation. I do not know anyone in Canada or America that has placed young players into college in such great numbers.

Putting great numbers of players into college soccer does not just happen because he took teams down to the US. It happened because he took down good teams, ones that played the game at a very high level. These teams not only participated in a variety of tournaments, but who played outstanding soccer winning many trophies but, most importantly, playing well and winning friends by the way his teams handled themselves on and off the field.

Sport, and in this case soccer, is a wonderful medium to teach its participants about how to handle life's hurdles. Add that education can be a part of this and it is easy to see that Bobby Graham has helped many, many, young Canadians get a very solid beginning in life. There certainly have been trophies along the road, but his true legacy is the foundations that his coaching has laid over the years for all his players and not just the ones that travelled over the border into the US College system.

Thanks for being my Canadian friend during my time at Dartmouth College, Stanford University and the University of Notre Dame.

For Auld Lang Syne!

Bobby Clark