

Austin Hudson

Inducted February 5, 2016

Austin Hudson enjoyed a long run in Oklahoma Soccer. He first came to Oklahoma from the Kansas City Comets (MISL) in March 1982, as a professional player to play with the new ASL franchise known as the Oklahoma City Slickers who played at Historic Taft Stadium. The OKC Oklahoma City Slickers (also known as the OKC Stampede in its last year of existence) enjoyed 3 successful years (1982-84) with Austin being a mainstay in the squad during the team's time in OKC. Austin was known by the fans as the "Tiny Terror" for his relentless style of play. The OKC Slickers Stampede captured the hearts of a developing soccer community who experienced high level soccer for the first time ever. The team didn't disappoint as they lost in the Cup final in 82 to the Detroit Express (home leg was sold out at Taft and away leg was played before 42,000 in Detroit) and in 84 they lost in the league playoff Semi-Final to the Houston Dynamo. Austin went on to play another 6 years in the U.S.A. along with training stints in England, Germany, and France before retiring from the professional level in 1990.

After retirement Austin made his permanent residence in OKC (he was the only former OKC pro to stay in OKC) and raised his family with native Oklahoman, Teri Brown-Hudson. He jokes how he met his wife Teri in 1982 at her and her father's jewelry store (Floyd Brown and Daughter Jewelers), gave her tickets to the OKC Slickers game at Taft Stadium to come watch him play, went on a few dates, and they have been together ever since. Poor girl! They have two sons: Keegan Jet Hudson (31) and Trevor Michael Hudson (23). He and his wife shared the passion of soccer with both of their boys who also played. Upon retirement from the pro game, Austin stayed involved with the game by creating his own youth competitive Soccer Academy-OKC ROYALS FC and continued playing at the Semi-Pro level with the OKC Warriors. The Warriors won multiple national USISL Championships with Austin once being named the League MVP. With ROYALS FC, Austin created an Academy that was built on a platform of a sound Coaching and Player Education System and a Club Management System not seen before in Western OK. As a Director, Austin guided the Coaching Staff and membership to great heights having achieved 3 National Championship Final Fours (1 USYSA - 2 Superclubs), 3 Regional Champions, 2 Regional Finalists, 4 Regional Semi-Finalists, 25 OK State Champions, and 23 State Runner-Up titles. To this day ROYALS FC is still the only Western Oklahoma club on record to develop a USYSA National Championship Final Four boys' team (ROYALS FC 84-85).

Austin coached both his sons, Keegan and Trevor, and both he and Teri enjoyed the experiences of watching them successfully develop as players, young men, and contributors as they grew into proper people. They both love the game and had the good fortune of experiencing club soccer (ROYALS FC): State/Regional • National Championship events: High School and College Soccer: International events abroad: and Pro Soccer, as well as giving back to the game. They are very proud of Keegan and Trevor! His wife Teri was also instrumental in helping him run the club and she also got her coaching license to be a part of the ROYALS FC coaching staff. Austin says, "My family is my world."

Austin first became involved in soccer when he was an Air Force brat growing up while stationed in England during the mid-late 1960s. He was introduced to the game at the Catholic school he attended. Once his family returned to the United States, he started playing organized soccer in 1970 in Seattle and Tacoma, WA. He was a natural at the game and was hooked. In 1974-78 they were then stationed at Scott AFB in Belleville, IL (his hometown) and he joined the renowned St. Louis youth club, Busch S.C., where his development really intensified. Austin was exposed to wonderful and knowledgeable coaches during his youth career and he is forever grateful.

After his youth career he went on to realize his dream of becoming a professional soccer player. He signed as an amateur in 1978 with the Seattle Sounders (NASL) right out of High School: was then a two-time College All-American at Southwestern Illinois, was drafted in the 3rd round after his 2nd year of college to the Cleveland

force (MISL) in 1980 to then go on and play for several teams in the MISL, ASL, AISA until retirement in 1990, and finally he played with the semi-pro Oklahoma City Warriors (U.S.L.). He has also trained during his career with professional teams in England (Wimbledon F.C), Germany (Rot-Weiss Frankfurt), and France (Grenoble F.C).

Some of Austin's fondest memories of soccer include: his father's and mother's support, all the teams he played with and the team camaraderie they had: Directing Coaching ROYALS FC: going to the 1994 World Cup with his family: those magical father-son experiences while coaching Keegan's and Trevor's teams: and when his oldest son Keegan scored a wicked game winning bomb in the 90th minute in the U19 Regional Final to qualify ROYALS FC 84-85 for the National Championship Final Four (You can't script it any better than that!). A lifetime moment was when Austin played against the legend Diego Maradona in Bueno Aires, Argentina (1995) at an international tournament.

Austin is currently a youth coach with the Forth worth FC, the Residential Camp Director at Coastal Carolina University (NCAA Men's D-1), and Project Manager for Legends Contractors in Dallas, TX. He is a former OSA Coach Education Instructor and ODP Staff Coach. He also serves as Region III ODP Staff Coach and is the Technical Consultant for Melbourne HS, FL, where they have won 3 Florida State High School Championships in the past 7 years.

He says as an American player, he had to work hard at proving himself, particularly back in the 1970's-80s. Playing alongside proven and experienced foreign players was a test. Americans really had to earn respect back then. As a coach, he faced challenges with his Soccer Academy in Western Oklahoma. ROYALS FC, who were on the forefront of introducing professional training, coaching/player development, and proper club development models, which was new to the OKC Metro Area. He believes he has contributed to soccer through his passion and excitement for the game. His eagerness has helped to educate people who want to learn about the great game, respect the game, respect the history of the game, and love playing the game. (Austin still plays at 57!) As an American player during the 70's and 80's, all who played then became pioneers to develop the game of soccer into what it is today. He says, "We all had to bring enthusiasm to grow the game everywhere in the USA! Pass it on was our motto."

His advice to future soccer generations is "RESPECT! Respect the history of the game. Find out everything you can about it. Respect those that came before you; respect character; find a proper and respectful soccer star to emulate; respect refs and volunteers that make things happen so you can enjoy playing/coaching, and respect and love your country for what it stands for. Proper actions will gain you RESPECT; it will grow you and grow the game we love."