

## Wilbert Maximore

Inducted February 7, 2014

Arriving in Oklahoma in 1980 to work for Amoco as a computer programmer Wilbert Maximore quickly found a way to continue doing what he really loved: coach soccer. From a family of 17 children, Wilbert began playing soccer at the age of 4 in Paynesville, Liberia using a soccer ball of rubber and cloth, sometimes even a grapefruit. After graduating high school from Rick Institute in Liberia, he joined relatives in the United States and attended college at Hunter College in New York and then Black Hills State College in South Dakota where he coached a club team.

It did not take Wilbert long to find an opportunity to coach in the Tulsa area after moving to Oklahoma from Indiana. Shadow Mountain Soccer Club's Jim Hildebrandt offered an assistant coaching position with Hildebrandt's son and their U10 boys' team. That became a springboard for Wilbert to teach young players the game he loves. "The skills and development of the players are important," says Wilbert. "Each player is different and I want them to utilize their potential for their best."

Along the way Wilbert has coached boys, girls, adult men, and adult women and had success at nearly every level he became involved with. He coached the Tulsa Rowdies to a Region 1 championship in the Over 30 women's bracket and guided his U16 boys' team, Sandien, to defeat of Club American in the spring of 1988. Those accomplishments led to his selection as National Soccer Coaches Association of America to name him National Youth Coach of the Year in 1988 and to the US Youth National Coach of the Year in 1988.

His skills at player development have been recognized by US Youth when they requested his input in the development of a curriculum for the U7 through U10 player.

As the Tulsa soccer scene changed, Wilbert created the Blitz United Soccer Club in 1993. A competitive club within Tulsa United Soccer Club to match his philosophy of teaching players soccer skills, a love of the game, and to believe in themselves. His leadership as coach, club head coach, and Director of Coaching for his club has led the club to years of accomplishments in both league play and state tournaments. Blitz United has won championships at OSA's State Cup for 6 consecutive years, President's Cup championships for 7 consecutive years, and had finalists in the state cup for 12 years.

A tireless worker for the development of soccer in Oklahoma, Wilbert is a constant fixture at nearly every soccer event in the state where his club's teams are playing. He enjoys discussing the game with nearly anyone who wishes to talk to him. All of this is Wilbert's way of making the game of soccer something that players will love and will share with the generations of soccer players to come.