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## Insinga Retiring as Manchester Community College's Men's Soccer Coach

Career spanned 12 seasons, 139 wins, seven New England championships and three national tournament appearances.

By [Paul Ofria](#) | [Email the author](#) | June 5, 2012

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[Manchester Community College](#) announces the retirement of men's head soccer coach Jim Insinga after 12 seasons and the appointment of former MCC All-American Darren Foster as interim head coach.

Insinga's teams won seven New England (NJCAA Region XXI, Division III) titles and made three national championship appearances (2008 and 2011) while producing 10 National Junior College Athletic Association All-Americans. Insinga led the Cougars to national championship last fall in his final season.

"I'm sort of officially retiring now from business and soccer," said Insinga, who retired from United Technologies after 31 years in Florida with his wife and former MCC women's soccer coach, Jean Insinga. The Insingas coached simultaneously at MCC and are planning on doing a lot of vacationing and spending more time with the grandkids and the kids. It was a difficult choice, but I think it's the right one for me right now."

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Insinga (139-72-11) maintained throughout his tenure that recruiting was 80 percent of his job and it was arguably one of his greatest strengths. Players and player's coach and they responded well to his demeanor and leadership both on and off the field.

"It was great to play for Jim," according to 2009 captain Kevin Battista, who's goal in the penalty kick round of the district championship was to Dallas for the 2008 national tournament. "He really knew how to recruit players who fit his style of coaching. I knew I was going to be a first time I talked to him."

Insinga's other strong suit was player placement. His phone bill offers evidence of the many hours he spent talking with families about scholarship money for players such as Foster, who played at Hartford Public and was an NJCAA Division III All-American in 2008. Foster played at Southern Connecticut State University on scholarship, while 2009 NJCAA All-American Hami Kara (Wethersfield), a former player at Pittsburgh in the Big East the past two seasons, joined a list of student athletes who continued their academic and athletic program.

"It was a great run," Insinga said. "I came in in 2000 and by 2002 we were an established top 10 team and we stayed a top 10 team from that point on. I've seen a lot of kids come into the program and leave with scholarships and becoming successful former players is very rewarding for me."

Insinga was hired to coach the women's team in March of 2000 by MCC athletic director Cynthia Washburne, but moved on to coach the men's team in 2001 and practices began.

"We actually hired him to be the women's coach and then the men's job opened up and he said he would like to give that to me. I then hired Jean Insinga to fill the void on the women's side. "12 years later, he built what had to be the best men's soccer program we've had soccer at MCC."

Insinga's teams played in the New England championship game in 10 of his 12 seasons. MCC had just one New England championship game in 12 soccer seasons.

"Jim and his program became the team everybody chased," Washburne said. "They measured their season by how they did in the New England championship game. MCC became the model program of Region 21 in a short time."

Insinga was highly regarded among the other coaches in the region.

"He was my biggest rival in the region," said Scott Benjamin, the head soccer coach at Bunker Hill Community College for 12 years. "Whether he won or lost he was always respectful to me and my team and was gracious either way. He was coaching for the right reasons for the kids. He was a mentor to me and helped make the league stronger. The league will miss him."

Citing the timing of Insinga's retirement and the need to maintain continuity and consistency for the program, Washburne named Foster as MCC as an assistant last fall, as interim head coach.

"I have seen Darren grow from when he was a player to the man he is today," Washburne said of Foster, who had his college career interrupted twice by active military service. "It is an interim position for the season and we will conduct a search at the end of the year, turning it over to Darren."

On Foster's end, taking over the MCC soccer program from his mentor is a dream come true.

"Having the opportunity to be an assistant after being a player and move from assistant to head coach is just remarkable," said Foster, a veteran of operations Noble Eagle and Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. "I'm going to do the best I can for the student athlete program continues to succeed."

“Jim has always been a mentor to me,” Foster continued. “I played here in 2002 and shortly after that was deployed overseas with me and sent me care packages. He would call me, but sometime at the wrong time, like when we were getting shot at to you right now, I’m getting shot at.”

Insinga’s famous phone bill won’t be shrinking anytime soon as he will continue to help with recruiting, placement and scheduling.

“This thing is part of my blood so I will be thinking of you guys all the time,” Insinga said.

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