

NATIONAL INDOOR SOCCER CHAMPIONSHIP ATTRACTS TEAMS NATIONWIDE

In 1994, the National Indoor Soccer Championship was founded to fulfill the need of teams wanting to play for something "Big" in winter. They were tired of playing the same teams session after session with no opportunity to move to the next level beyond their local facility. Now teams play in more leagues and tournaments; increasing practice time in an effort to qualify through a regional tournament and advance to the National Finals. An added plus is the NISC provides motivation for players to continue to improve in the winter months.

The National Indoor Soccer Championship consists of regional tournaments and National Final tournaments. Regional tournaments serve the competitive soccer community with teams traveling from all states to compete in regional competition. National Finals draw the best teams from all areas of North America; only the qualifiers from the regional tournament are eligible.

- Division I—for teams seeking highest level of competition
- Division II—for teams competing at a lower level, but striving to improve
- Sanctioned by US Soccer
- 3/40-minute games guaranteed
- Teams can play more than one Regional

Benefits:

Develop Skills Transferable to Outdoor:

- Close Control
- Quick Passing
- Finishing
- Tactical Speed (inherent to the indoor game)

Objective:

- To maximize players' learning experience and offer excitement of playing with different players.
- Div. I & Div. II teams for all youth age groups will play in 2009 National Finals Series

Players are selected from best Division I & Division II indoor teams in your region, and all teams are provided with a highly qualified coach. The teams then play against other All-Star teams, as well as other club teams from across the country. For tournament dates and more information call 1-800-877-3790. ☒

This year's Adult Division National Finals will be held for the first time in 15 years in Las Vegas, with the goal of attracting a wider variety of teams. Visit www.upper90.com for more information.



NATIONAL INDOOR CHAMPIONSHIP: Men's Open Trophy Sweet for Mayr

by Sydney Nusinov

Baltimore's Charm City Wingfoots FC rolled to a 6-1 victory over KC Rad Racing to cap an impressive sweep through the Men's Open Division at the 2008 National Indoor Championship, held in February, 2008 in Sterling, Virginia.

The Wingfoots, coached by Keith Mayr, featured a robust lineup including several former MISL players, including Lee Tschantret, Matt Tirschmann, Danny Santoro, and Billy Reinhardt.

The win was the second at the National Indoor Championship for Mayr, who first won in 2002. A year later, while defending their title, tragedy struck when Keith's father, Kenneth Mayr, Sr., suffered a fatal heart attack. The first day of the 2008 tournament was the 5-year anniversary of his death, and they claimed the trophy the next day, completing an emotional weekend.

"After winning this championship, my first visit was to the cemetery where I placed the trophy and the medal," said Mayr. "He's living through us now."

Mayr's teams have been stalwarts at indoor centers all around Baltimore, winning local and national tournaments in indoor soccer and futsal. In some cases they've even been asked to drop out of leagues when opposing teams complained about their routine dominance.

"We've been together a long time and that helps," says Mayr. "We've had quite a run with a core of 8 or 9 guys that have always been together one way or another."

Never was that dominance more clearly displayed than it was in Sterling. Wingfoots went 5-0 in the tournament and won its games by a combined score of 65-6, including a 24-2 dismantling of BUSC KIXX, also from Baltimore.

Tournament director Pat Ozburn, who said the Men's Open bracket is without a doubt the most prestigious grouping, called the Wingfoots "the most consistent Men's team we have ever had," noting their final four finish in each of the last five years.

Mayr, whose National Championship Soccer, LLC offers individual and team coaching expertise, has seen his teams bear fruit. Alumni include the Blast's PJ Wakefield and KIXX rookie goalkeeper Nick Hovaker. The next player to keep an eye on could be 23-year-old Powell Cucchiella, who plays like a young Greg Howes (Milwaukee Wave).

It was particularly gratifying for Mayr to honor his father with the victory. "Everything behind this is for my dad," he says. "My dad started this many years ago, and as I got older I got more involved. He was alive when we won the first one, but he died the next year and we changed the name to an old name (Wingfoots) he had when he was a kid."

The National Indoor Championships just finished its 14th year as "the one to win" and includes 2,000 men's and women's teams encompassing two divisions and several age brackets. Regional play for this year's just completed tournament began in September, with national play running from January through March. ☒

Sydney Nusinov is a regular contributor to GOAL Indoor.



2008 NIC Men's Open Division Champs Charm City (Baltimore) Wingfoots