

Appalachian State University men's soccer head coach Matt Nelson announced the hiring of assistant coach Jeff Bilyk on Tuesday. Bilyk comes to Appalachian having served as an assistant at Southern Conference-rival Davidson and Director of Coaching for North Meck Soccer Club

in Cornelius, N.C.

"When I began my search for an assistant coach, I was looking for a specific type of personality and understanding of the game," commented Nelson. "Jeff fits every criteria that I wanted to find."

Bilyk's collegiate soccer experience began at his alma mater, Clemson. The Bayport, N.Y. native played four seasons with the Tigers and earned all-ACC, all-South region and all-ACC Tournament honors after captaining his squad to an Atlantic Coast Conference championship during his senior year.

Bilyk went on to play for several teams in Major League Soccer (MLS) and United Soccer Leagues (USL), including the Miami Fusion, Milwaukee Rampage, Virginia Beach Mariners and Charlotte Eagles. In 2001, his Fusion team captured the MLS Supporters' Shield as regular-season champions, while his '02 Rampage squad were the USL A-League playoff champions.

Bilyk began his coaching career in 2001 as a youth coach in Florida and Virginia, and from 2007-09, he served as assistant at Davidson. While with the Wildcats, he coached four all-conference selections, including the 2009 SoCon Player of the Year, Charlie Reiter.

Most recently, Bilyk worked with the North Meck Soccer Club as a youth soccer coach for three years before taking over as director of coaching in 2010.

"Joining the coaching staff at Appalachian is an honor," explained Bilyk. "I feel that the coaching staff and players are building something special. I'm excited to get to work with the current group of guys to continue to build on the solid foundation that has been laid. It's exciting to think of what the future has in store for myself and our program."

Nelson added, "his success at the professional level, knowledge of the game, high-energy personality, ability to connect with players and his personal integrity and character make him an exceptional fit for Appalachian State University's soccer program. I'm truly excited to have a coach of his caliber join our coaching staff."

The 2011 season saw the Mountaineers advance to the SoCon Tournament semifinals for the second-straight year, and Nelson was named Coach of the Year leading the Apps to an unbeaten streak of 11-straight games. Appalachian finished sixth in the nation in goals-against average and shutout percentage and had three Mountaineers named to all-SoCon teams. Appalachian begins its spring season in late March. Details will be posted at GoASU.com once they are finalized.

ASU Men's Soccer Names Bilyk New Assistant

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Photo Courtesy: Jeff Bilyk, Davidson Athletics