



Soccer Coach Ken Lolla

J. Dean Carro

Few people succeed in every endeavor they undertake. Ken Lolla, The University of Akron's soccer coach from 1993 to 2005, was one of those rare individuals who had exemplary achievements in everything he attempted. Stu Parry started the school's men's soccer program in 1954 and had remarkable success for a new program. Lolla brought the program to unprecedented levels of consistent success. He had been an exemplary student athlete at Duke University, played professionally at several levels, and moved the soccer program during his tenure to previously unseen levels. Oddly enough, he was selected by the acting athletic director at the time, Richard

L. Aynes, who knew very little about soccer. But what Aynes did know was people. It was evident that Coach Lolla would succeed at the Division I level, coming from Belmont Abbey, a Division II school. He won three conference championships at Belmont Abbey and later eight Mid-American Conference championships at The University of Akron, compiling a 160-68-25 record, the winningest coach in our history. His teams made five NCAA tournament appearances.

Leaving The University of Akron, he coached the Louisville Cardinals to a 155-77-39 record. Lolla's soccer camps at Akron taught unprecedented numbers of young soccer players. He amazed them with his juggling skills, but more importantly he emphasized that honor and integrity are the most important things they could learn.