



2009 Elon Men's Soccer

Awards & Honors of 2009

Best Wishes for a Happy and Healthy New Year

For the final newsletter of 2009, we look back at the many accomplishments of the Elon men's soccer student-athletes and all they did to advance the program. Have a safe and restful holiday season and thank you for your continued support of Elon soccer.



#1 Clint Irwin

2009 Highlights:

- Tied the single-season school record and led the Southern Conference with 10 shutouts
- Shares first place in Elon's career record books with 19 shut-out performances
- 0.88 GAA was tops in the So-Con and 44th in the country
- First-ever Elon soccer player to earn first-team NSCAA All-South Region honors
- First-team all-league selection

- Named to SoCon All-Tournament team
- Recognized first-team NSCAA Scholar All-South Region
- Selected second-team NSCAA Scholar All-America



#7 Brad Franks

2009 Highlights:

- Scored three goals and tallied one assist
- Two of his strikes were game-winners, including golden goal in Elon's 2-1 victory over Davidson
- Named second-team All-Southern Conference



#10 Erfan Imeni

2009 Highlights:

- Tops on the team and second in the SoCon with seven assists to his credit
- Scored three goals, including one game-winner
- Second-team all-conference honoree
- Named to the SoCon All-Tournament team



#15 Justin Wyatt

2009 Highlights:

- Scored five goals and tallied five assists to bring his career totals to 31 goals and 79 points
- Both marks rank second in Elon's career record book
- Knocked in a team-best four game-winning goals
- First-team All-SoCon selection
- Named second-team NSCAA All-South Region
- Recognized on NCCSIA All-State team



#18 Steven Kinney

2009 Highlights:

- First-ever Elon player to be invited to the MLS Player Combine
- Named to the *ESPN The Magazine* Academic All-America third team after earning first-team all-district honors
- Selected first-team All-SoCon
- Critical part of Elon back line that posted 10 shutouts
- Recognized on the NSCAA All-South Region second team
- NCCSIA All-State honoree

- One of 30 finalists for Lowe's Senior CLASS award
- Recognized first-team NSCAA Scholar All-South Region
- Netted three goals and tallied two assists
- Selected second-team NSCAA Scholar All-America



#19 Chris Thomas

2009 Highlights:

- Named Southern Conference Freshman of the Year
- Recognized on the TopDrawer-Soccer.com All-Rookie Team
- Netted 10 goals, the fourth-highest single-season total in school history
- Ranked second in the league in goals scored
- Earned second-team all-conference honors
- NCCSIA All-State honoree

- Selected to the SoCon All-Rookie team
- Named to the SoCon All-Tournament team

2009 Elon Men's Soccer Season In Review

September 1 • Rudd Field

HIGH POINT	0	1	1
ELON	0	0	0

ELON, N.C. -- Despite dominating the attacking end of the field for the majority of the game, Elon dropped its season-opener, 1-0, to the visiting High Point Panthers in front of a rowdy crowd at Rudd Field. Elon (0-1) outshot the Panthers, 20-11, but High Point (1-0) brothers Karo Okiomah and Fejiro Okiomah teamed up for what proved to be the ultimate game-winner in the 49th minute of action.

September 4 • Rudd Field

CHARLOTTE	1	1	2
ELON	1	0	1

ELON, N.C. -- The Elon men's soccer team could not hold off a feisty Charlotte attack, dropping a 2-1 decision to the 49ers at Rudd Field. The Phoenix struck first on a strike by freshman Chris Thomas, but Charlotte battled back to score two unanswered goals and earn the victory. Elon's lone goal came when Steven Kinney drilled a long pass from the opposite end of the field, finding the foot of Thomas. Thomas outran two defenders and touched the ball behind Charlotte keeper David Martin to give Elon the early lead.

September 16 • Rhodes Stadium

CLEMSON	0	0	0
ELON	2	0	2

ELON, N.C. -- Two first-half scores propelled Elon to its first-ever win against the visiting Clemson Tigers, a 2-0 victory under a steady rainfall at the annual Jimmy V Classic game at Rhodes Stadium. Freshman Chris Thomas scored his second goal of the season and sophomore James Carroll netted his first career strike to lead the Phoenix to back-to-back wins. Thomas and Erfan Imeni teamed up for a give-and-go goal to put the Phoenix on top. Elon wasn't content with just the one-goal lead and less than 10 minutes later Carroll added to the Phoenix advantage. Senior Justin Wyatt sent a through ball to the middle of the box where Carroll beat his defenders and sent the score past a diving Bendik. With his first assist of the season, Wyatt moved into sole possession of second place in the Elon career record books with 65 total points.

September 29 • Koskinen Stadium

ELON	0	1	1
#15 DUKE	1	1	2

DURHAM, N.C. -- Although Elon held a decided advantage in the shot tally, it was the No. 15 Duke Blue Devils who earned the 2-1 victory in non-conference men's soccer action at Koskinen Stadium. The Phoenix outshot the Blue Devils, 18-11, in the contest, but struggled to finish its chances. Despite the many opportunities, it wasn't until the final seconds of the game that the Phoenix was able to get on the board. Erfan Imeni headed a ball to the right side of the box where senior Steven Kinney volleyed a perfect ball just over the hands of James Belshaw into the top of the net with two seconds remaining in the contest.

Mark Your Calendars! 2010 Summer Camp Dates

Day Camp	June 21-25	Ages 7-15
Half-day Camp	June 21-25	Ages 5-8
Elite Camp	June 27-30	Ages 11-18

RESERVE YOUR SPOT NOW!
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September 11 • UNCG Soccer Stadium

ELON	0	0	0	0	0
LONGWOOD	0	0	0	0	0

GREENSBORO, N.C. -- Defense was the story in the first game of the UNCG Kickoff Classic as Elon played the Longwood Lancers to a scoreless tie at the UNCG Soccer Stadium. Elon moved to 0-2-1 on the season and Longwood went to 1-1-1 overall. Elon outshot Longwood 19-10 in the contest and took eight corner kicks compared to five by the Lancers. Phoenix keeper Clint Irwin notched his first shutout of the season, the 10th of his career, making three saves in the effort. Longwood goalie Joel Helmick made five saves in the game.

September 19 • Summers-Taylor Stad.

ELON	0	3	3
ETSU	0	0	0

JOHNSON CITY, Tenn. -- After a scoreless first half, Elon let loose in the final period, striking three times to earn a 3-0 victory against East Tennessee State at Summers-Taylor Stadium. Senior Justin Wyatt headed in his first goal of the year, the ultimate game-winner in the 66th minute of action. With the tally, Wyatt moved past Robert Latimer (1998-2001) for second place in the Elon record books with 27 career goals. With a fourth straight clean slate performance, Elon (3-2-1) tied the school record for consecutive shutouts. The last time a Phoenix squad held opponents scoreless for four straight games was in September 2007. Daniel Street and Chris Thomas also scored goals for Elon.

October 3 • Rudd Field

APPALACHIAN ST.	0	0	0
ELON	0	1	1

ELON, N.C. -- A Chris Thomas goal in the 77th minute of action proved the difference as Elon posted a 1-0 win over Appalachian State in Southern Conference action. Elon extended its league regular-season winning streak to eight games, including an undefeated 2008 campaign. After a quiet first half that featured only three total shots, Elon managed to break down the ASU defense late in the final period. Justin Wyatt served a long cross from the right side of the field to the middle of the box. Thomas used his body to bump the ball and direct it into the far corner of the net to give the Phoenix the advantage at 76:12.

September 13 • UNCG Soccer Stadium

MARSHALL	0	0	0
ELON	2	0	0

GREENSBORO, N.C. -- Behind the strength of two first-half goals, Elon got in the win column with a 2-0 victory over Marshall in the UNCG Kickoff Classic at the UNCG Soccer Stadium. Junior Brad Franks netted the ultimate game-winner at the 24-minute mark and senior Steven Kinney added a strike just before the half to help the Phoenix improve to 1-2-1 on season. Elon got on the board when Stephen Miller sent a pass to Franks who put the ball home from about 25 yards out for his first goal of the season. The Phoenix added an insurance goal with just over a minute to play before the break. Kinney intercepted a Marshall pass and took three dribbles before sending a rocket into the back of the net at 43:56.

September 23 • Spry Stadium

ELON	1	0	1
#6 WAKE FOREST	1	1	2

WINTSTON-SALEM, N.C. -- Early goals to begin each half of play were the difference as Elon fell 2-1 to the sixth-ranked Wake Forest Demon Deacons in non-conference action at Spry Stadium. Wake scored in the seventh minute of play and again just over seven minutes into the final period to move to 4-1-1 on the season. Elon's streak of consecutive shutouts was halted at four as the Phoenix dropped to 3-3-1 overall. After Wake's early score, Elon got the equalizer in the 19th minute of play. Senior Erfan Imeni pushed the ball forward to a streaking Justin Wyatt. Wyatt beat his defender and curled the ball over the hands of Fitzgerald into the far corner of the net.



2009 Elon Men's Soccer Season In Review

October 6 • Patriot's Point Field

ELON	1	0	1
COL. OF CHARLESTON	0	0	0

MT. PLEASANT, N.C. – A first-half strike by Elon senior Justin Wyatt proved the game-winner as the Phoenix knocked off host College of Charleston, 1-0, in Southern Conference soccer action from Patriot's Point Field. The win was only Elon's second ever all-time against the Cougars and its first-ever victory on CofC's turf. In the 41st minute of action, Wyatt found the back of the net for the third time of the season. The forward chipped the shot over keeper Michael Flato's head as the Phoenix took a 1-0 advantage at 40:21.

October 18 • Snyder Field

ELON	0	0	0
WOFFORD	0	2	2

SPARTANBURG, S.C. – Elon suffered its first Southern Conference loss of the season as the Phoenix dropped a 2-0 decision to the host Wofford Terriers at Snyder Field. The Phoenix had not lost a regular-season conference game since the 2007 season, a span of 10 matches. Wofford remained unbeaten in league action, scoring both goals in the second half to earn the win. Elon was unable to find the back of the net for only the third time this season and the first time since a September 11 contest with Longwood when the teams played to a 0-0 tie.

October 27 • Cupp Stadium

ELON	0	2	2
RADFORD	0	0	0

RADFORD, Va. – The Phoenix netted two second-half goals en route to a 2-0 victory over the host Radford Highlanders in non-conference action at Cupp Stadium. Elon recorded its eighth shutout performance of the year. After a scoreless first half, Elon broke the tie in the 70th minute of action. Chris Thomas rocketed a shot on goal, forcing Highlander keeper Ryan Taylor to make the stop. Taylor was unable to cover the ball and senior Justin Wyatt was there to finish for the Phoenix. The score ignited the Phoenix and in the 80th minute, Taylor dove to get a hand on an attempt by Elon's Stephen Miller. This time, Brad Franks was there to knock in the goal off the rebound from about 12 yards out.

October 10 • Rudd Field

DAVIDSON	1	0	0	1
ELON	0	1	1	2

ELON, N.C. -- Junior midfielder Brad Franks knocked in the golden goal to give the Elon men's soccer team a 2-1 overtime victory over the visiting Davidson Wildcats in SoCon action at Rudd Field. With the win, Elon remained undefeated in league action while handing Davidson its first conference loss. After getting the equalizer in the second half, the Phoenix continued to dominate the attack in the opening minutes of overtime. Senior Erfan Imeni rocketed a shot from the far right side, but Wildcat keeper Chip Sanders deflected it back into the field of play. Imeni regained possession and touched the ball to Franks who took two dribbles and drilled the game-winner into the far corner of the net past a diving Sanders. Steven Kinney also scored for the Phoenix.

October 24 • Stone Soccer Stadium

ELON	0	0	0
WOFFORD	0	2	2

GREENVILLE, S.C. – Caleb Suri's goal in the 74th minute was the difference as the Furman Paladins pulled out a 3-2 victory over the visiting Elon Phoenix in SoCon action from Stone Soccer Stadium. Furman took an early 2-0 advantage before Elon could get on the board. Elon managed to cut the Paladin advantage in half in the 27th minute when Chris Thomas netted his team-leading fifth goal of the season. Justin Wyatt crossed the ball from the right side in the box to Thomas who slid the shot past Furman keeper Alec Kann. Minutes later Elon evened the score on an own goal at the 32:43 mark, but it was Suri who notched the game-winner late in the second half.

October 14 • Dick Dlesk Soccer Stadium

ELON	0	1	0	0	1
WEST VIRGINIA	0	1	0	0	1

MORGANTOWN, W.Va. – The Elon Phoenix and the host West Virginia Mountaineers played to a 1-1 draw in double overtime in non-conference men's soccer action under cold, drizzly conditions at Dick Dlesk Soccer Stadium. With just over a minute to play in the contest and the Mountaineers still clinging to a 1-0 lead, Elon's Erfan Imeni took a free kick from just outside the corner of the 18-yard box. Imeni's shot was deflected and the ball rolled among the players in the goal box before a WVU defender knocked it over the line for a score that tied the game and sent it into extra minutes.

October 27 • Rudd Field

WINTHROP	0	0	0
ELON	3	1	4

ELON, N.C. – Elon coupled a strong offensive performance with an impressive defensive showing to earn a 4-0 shutout over the visiting Winthrop Eagles under a steady rainfall at Rudd Field in non-conference soccer action. The Phoenix put a halt to Winthrop's scoring streak, which ranked first in the country at 21 consecutive games. Erfan Imeni and Chris Thomas each netted two goals in the victory as Elon improved to 7-6-2 on the year. Winthrop suffered its first loss in eight games. The Phoenix got on the board quickly as Imeni scored the ultimate game-winner in the 10th minute of the contest. Elon netted two more strikes before the break and Thomas finished out the scoring in the 62nd minute.



2009 Elon Men's Soccer Season In Review

November 3 • Rhodes Stadium

#2 NORTH CAROLINA	1	1	2
ELON	0	1	1

ELON, N.C. – Billy Schuler scored a goal in each half to lead second-ranked North Carolina to a 2-1 win over Elon in non-conference men's soccer action from Rhodes Stadium. UNC finished its non-conference slate with an unbeaten record for the first time since 2005. After UNC took a two-goal advantage, Elon cut the lead in half in the 75th minute. Imeni centered the ball to James Carroll in the middle of Elon's offensive third. Carroll served the ball to the right side where Thomas lofted the score over Goodwin into the far corner at 74:42. However, the Phoenix could not managed the equalizer despite a flurry of late-game shots.

November 13 • Snyder Field

Southern Conference Tournament

ELON	2	0	0
COL. OF CHARLESTON	0	0	0

SPARTANBURG, S.C. – Elon freshman Chris Thomas knocked in two first-half goals to lead the Phoenix to a 2-0 win over College of Charleston in the semifinals of the 2009 Southern Conference Men's Soccer Tournament at Snyder Field. Elon (10-7-2) advances to the league championship game for the first time in program history. The Phoenix will battle top-seed and tournament-host Wofford for the league title and automatic bid to the NCAA Tournament on Sunday at 2 p.m. The shutout was the Elon's 10th of the year, tying the school record set by the 1987 and 1988 squads. Junior goalkeeper Clint Irwin moved into a tie for first place on Elon's career shutout list with 19 overall. Irwin posted three saves in the winning effort. Thomas made his presence known with back-to-back goals within five minutes of each other to give the Phoenix a commanding lead before the half. The rookie scored the ultimate game-winner in the 36th minute of action, knocking in an attempt from about 10 yards out off a deflected shot by fellow freshman Gabe Latigue. Shortly after, Thomas found the back of the net again. CofC goalie Clark Hankins was drawn out of the box and Thomas took advantage, cushioning the Elon lead at the 39:14 mark. The goals were Thomas' ninth and tenth of the season.

November 7 • Rudd Field

UNC GREENSBORO	0	0	0
ELON	0	1	0

ELON, N.C. – Justin Wyatt's goal in the 53rd minute of action propelled Elon to a 1-0 victory over local rival UNC Greensboro in a key Southern Conference matchup at Rudd Field. With the victory, Elon clinched one of the three remaining spots in the upcoming league tournament. After seeing several opportunities snuffed out by the Spartans, Wyatt finally landed one of his game-high seven attempts at 52:33. Junior Brad Franks played a beautiful ball to an open Wyatt in the box. The senior hooked the ultimate game-winner into the upper right corner from about 10 yards out for his fifth goal of the season.

November 15 • Snyder Field

Southern Conference Championship

ELON	0	1	1
WOFFORD	0	2	2

SPARTANBURG, S.C. – Back-to-back second-half goals by the Wofford Terriers proved the difference as Elon suffered a 2-1 loss to the Terriers in the Southern Conference Championship match at Snyder Field on Sunday afternoon. Down two goals, Elon (10-8-2) managed to cut the lead in half with 20 minutes remaining in the game, but Wofford (12-2-3) held on to win its first conference title and the league's automatic bid to the NCAA Tournament. Elon didn't go down easily after Wofford took a two-goal advantage. The Phoenix continued to pound away at the goal. Elon forced Wofford goalie Thomas Hunter to make five saves, including four in the final period. At 74:27, the Phoenix got within a goal on a score by senior Erfan Imeni. Rookie Chris Thomas sent an attempt on net and Hunter came out to try and cover the ball. The ball slipped out of his grasp and Imeni was there to knock in the loose ball to the right corner. Elon raced to get the equalizer as the play clock wound down. Thomas headed numerous balls at the goal but Hunter continued to clear away any Elon threat and Wofford hung on for the win. Thomas, Imeni and Clint Irwin each earned all-tournament honors for Elon. Seven Elon seniors played in their final Southern Conference match. This class has earned 38 victories during its four seasons in the maroon and gold.



Clint Irwin — SoCon All-Tournament team honoree



Erfan Imeni — SoCon All-Tournament team honoree



Chris Thomas — SoCon All-Tournament team honoree