



## MEDIA RELEASE

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For immediate release: **8<sup>th</sup> October 2009**

### Local Hero of Soccer

West Auckland man Greg Smith has been nominated for a Kiwibank Local Heroes Award in the inaugural New Zealander of the Year Awards, for his dedication to soccer and the communities of Ranui Swanson and Massey.

Greg is described as the driving force behind the new clubrooms at Starling Park, after the original building was destroyed in an arson attack.

“Through hard work and dedication this dream is now a reality,” says Ranui Swanson club secretary Helen Harris.

She says over the years Greg has given his time to train and support young footballers in the area, despite suffering ill health for some time.

“He has searched out sponsors for under privileged children, who could not have hoped to be able to compete in football. Some of these children are now grown to young men and have had their lives changed for the better by the sense of belonging.”

Helen Harris says this year Greg has taken on even more coaching work and is now working with four teams.

And his work gets results. This year the men’s first division team finished second, as did his under 17 metro team, while his under 13s moved up a division and his 9th grade Stormers finished their second season with Greg undefeated and in first place.

“This is our local hero,” she says.

Grant McCabe, the National Coordinator of the New Zealander of the Year Awards, says it’s great to hear stories like this.

“The committee is looking for nominations just like Greg Smith. There can never be enough thanks and appreciation for those individuals/community groups who are making a valuable contribution to our communities.”

Nominations can now be made for the following category awards:

- The Kiwibank New Zealander of the Year Award
- The Ryman Healthcare Senior New Zealander of the Year Award
- The Coca-Cola Amatil Young New Zealander of the Year Award
- The Mitre 10 Community of the Year Award
- The Kiwibank Local Heroes Awards

Winners of each of the five categories will receive \$5,000 courtesy of Kiwibank and all nominees will receive a certificate of appreciation of their achievements.

Nomination close on 20<sup>th</sup> November and application forms are available from Kiwibank and Mitre 10 branches or free phone 0508 692 927. You can also nominate online at [www.nzawards.org.nz](http://www.nzawards.org.nz)

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