

Two pitstops in Oz for Stavros

CHANCE has played a big part in Stavros Yallouridis' two stints at living in Australia. At the end of World War II his Greek parents were meant to catch a boat out of Egypt to America but came to Australia instead to start a family.



Stavros Yallouridis takes a spin in a BMW a Z4.

And after a stellar 23-year career in Europe with a number of car brands, he was originally assigned by BMW to lead its Canadian operations but at the last minute was diverted to be managing director in his native Australia.

Now, after finding his feet after leading the local operations for six months through

what has been an annus horribilus for the world car industry, the affable Stavros is leaving nothing to chance as he starts to push down hard on the BMW accelerator.

While he doesn't specifically mention sales targets, it is clear that boosting local sales past the previous 2008 record of 17,263 to more than 20,000

cars a year is a personal goal.

And he has plenty of form on the sales front, having turbocharged Alfa-Romeo sales and more recently ramping up BMW sales in the static Greek car market from 3800 in 2003 to 8100 last year.

Sales of Mini and BMW motorbikes also roughly tripled under his reign in Greece,

which is an indication that he won't settle for the status quo.

Stavros is more than just a salesman though, having been in his words "brought up in a workshop."

His father was a Porsche mechanic and after spending time at Burwood Primary and Secondary Schools he studied automotive/mechanical engineering at what is now Box Hill Institute before working in the family business importing cars and bringing them up to Australian standards.

That background together with the virtual collapse of several large car firms has led Stavros to predict a radically different future for personal mobility.

"You have the big players in the world financially devastated and they don't have money to invest so how can they produce an innovative car?"

He won't name them but Stavros thinks some car makers

are producing "sunset brands" that will literally disappear because the larger players don't want them and sees companies such as BMW and Toyota that invest heavily in new design, technology and greater fuel efficiency getting much stronger.

"We are still investing 3.5 billion a year in development and that is a very big statement."

While he doesn't have a crystal ball, Stavros mentions BMW's prototype three-cylinder diesel Vision hybrid as the sort of car we can expect in the future.

Most of all Stavros is looking forward to pushing hard a large number of product launches in the next three years that will include the new tall X1, the GT5, X3 and X5 and new cars in the 1, 3 and 6 series ranges. There will even be an electric motorbike and a smaller version of the Mini, among others.

From Herald Sun

Ioannina Hosts Successful High Level Course for Greek Students

From Friday 6th to Sunday 8th November in Ioannina, the biggest city in Epirus and the capital of the Greek prefecture; the first Level B Coaching Seminar to be held under the auspices of the Development Programmes of the European Table Tennis Union and the International Table Tennis Federation was held.

Greece has a rather different classification system for coaches' courses than many other countries. Level C is the first stage, Level B is the second stage and so on.

The course conductor was Aleksey Yefremov.

Aleksey Yefremov is from the Belarus capital city of Minsk.

Recently he was the national coach for India and now the head coach at the El Ahly club in Cairo, where such players as El Sayed Lashin, Dina Meshref, Omar Bedeir plus Omar and Khaled Assar, all members of the Egyptian National Team practise.

Positive Response

A total of 22 students of whom six were women from the Athens and Ioannina areas attended the course.

All were very positive, perhaps more so because it was the first such high level coaching seminar to be held in Greece, explained Aleksey Yefremov. "The schedule was three days with two sessions per day, six hours daily; much discussions taking place during free time.

A chat over dinner, ideas exchanged and the problems of the world solved; it's true whatever the course.

Topics Covered

The most important topics were the techniques required for offensive and defensive strokes, movement and footwork, advanced services, training exercises for different stages of preparation, multi-ball training and the aspects of different style of players, said Aleksey Yefremov. "We completed all aspects of the programme and I am very satisfied with the achievements of all the Greek coaches.

Theologus Kapetanidis

It was a sentiment endorsed by Theologus Kapetanidis, the man who is moving table tennis forward in Ioannina and is the coach of the local club Friends of Table Tennis Ioannina.

We are had very productive time together, it was a very interesting seminar for all and I am sure this gives for all us great motivation to improve our knowledge about many aspects of table tennis and work hard with younger

players, he said. "Also, there was a very good balance between theory and practical sessions and a very interesting video analysis by Aleksey of the best players of the world."

Katerina Spanou

A good response from those present and there was help.

Katerina Spanou, former Greece national team player from 1975 to 1989 and now a teacher of physical education in a high school was the translator for the non English speaking coaches, explained Aleksey Yefremov. "She played a vital role as she understood the language of table tennis, having conducted a Level C Coaches Seminar in Ioannina in June 2009."

Understanding Impressive

Furthermore, she was impressed by the understanding the coaches possessed. The knowledge of national coaches is much better than before, the

Hellenic Table Tennis Federation has made great job in developing national coaches; we plan three more Level B seminars and one more Level A level seminar, continued Katerina Spanou. "We are very grateful to European Table Tennis Union's Development Programme for their support and for the efforts of Aleksey; it was my first experience as a translator and I am very pleased.

Grateful for Support

Equally Aleksey Yefremov was pleased with the efforts of everyone who had combined to make the course and similar courses possible.

I am very grateful to International Table Tennis Federation and the European Table Tennis Union for the great work for Development of Table Tennis around the world, said the Belarus coach. "Also, I think we are have very strong team led by Glenn Tepper, the ITTF Executive Director- Development, Polona Cehovin Susin, ETTU Youth and Development Department Coordinator and Leandro Olvech ITTF Co-ordinator of Development Programmes; also I must thank the Hellenic Table Tennis Federation and in particular Dimosthenis E. Messinis, Honorary General Secretary of Hellenic Table Tennis Federation and of course Katerina Spanou.

A very successful course thanks to the co-operation of all concerned was completed.



Photo By: Courtesy of Aleksey Yefremov