

Great To Be Back!!

It was over 20 years ago when I last wrote a column for this fantastic publication "O Kosmos Sport". I am quietly confident that those early inroads into sports reporting with "O Kosmos" was the grooming that loured me into my love affair with Australian Football.

While my initial desire for writing all those years ago was to be close to my beloved Sydney Olympic Football Club little did I realise what other wonderful contacts and professional opportunities would open up for me.

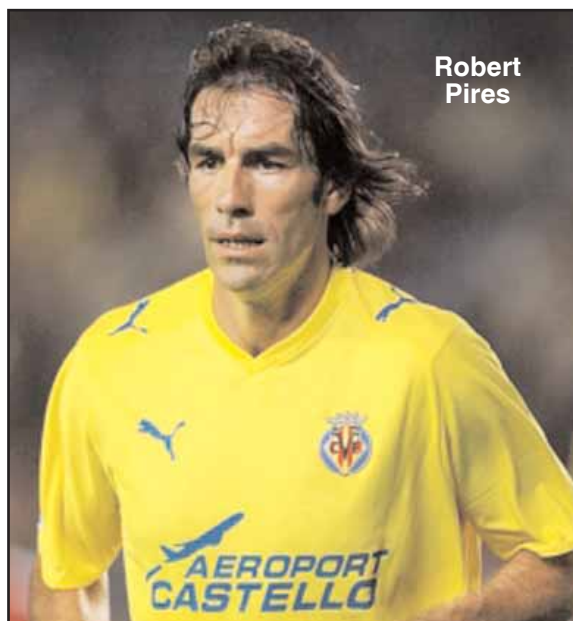
Executive roles with Sydney Olympic, current player management consultancy business and countless friendship and association have come about through my association with "O Kosmos Sport" and Australian football.

So when former Sydney Olympic player, coach, director and friend Nick Theodorakopoulos asked me to pull out the Parker pen - I thought why not. Today I begin another chapter of football reporting and together with my aspiring sport journalist daughter Xanthie we hope to provide an interesting and informative column where exclusives and some of the highest profile names of Australian football are brought to you direct.

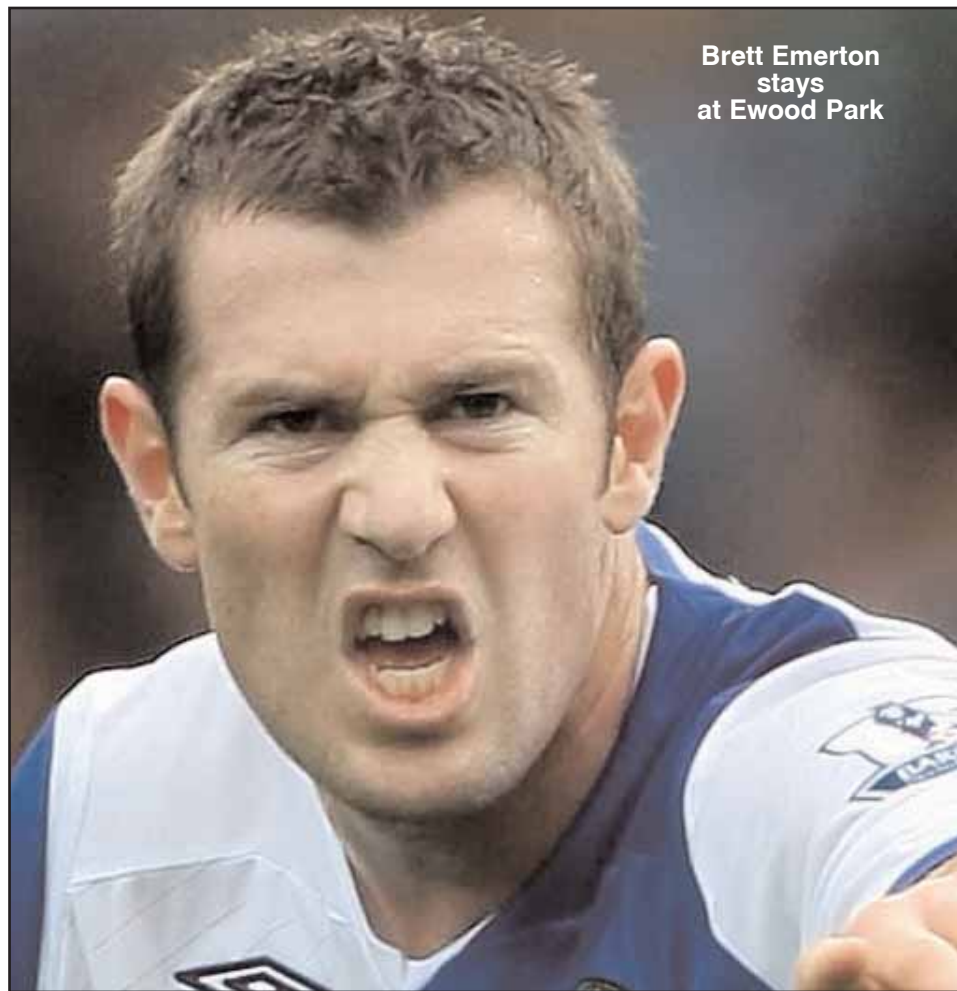
Pires and Raul on Gold Coast United FC Radar

Last Tuesday night I received a telephone call from one, Clive Palmer, Chairman of Gold Coast United FC. Clive was in transit on his private jet in Europe when he asked, "Hey Tony, it's Clive I have just secured some Chinese investment for Gold Coast United and I want you to go and get me the German player that Chelsea released last month."

Of course Clive was referring to Ger-



Robert Pires

NEWS AND VIEWS*with Tony and Xanthie Rallis*

Brett Emerton stays at Ewood Park

man International, Michael Ballack. I responded by telling him that Ballack had already agreed terms with German Bundesliga club, Bayer Leverkusen. "Who can you get me?" Clive snapped back. I informed Palmer that I had heard that Real Madrid superstar Raul Gonzalez Blanco commonly known as Raul, was leaving Madrid and was courted by MSL clubs. "Go get him. I am prepared to spend millions," said Clive.

One week later and after offering \$4 million US, Raul informed me that he wanted one last attempt to play European Champions League. We can now confirm that Raul is currently assessing whether to join an English or German club.

Both respective English and German clubs are involved in the forthcoming European Champions League. Clive Palmer never being one to give up on his desires has now authorised me to make an offer

for former Arsenal and current Villarreal FC midfielder, Robert Pires.

Pires' management is currently considering a multi-million dollar offer to join Gold Coast United FC. Money is an issue but we hope to keep you posted on the outcome of this potential deal.

Emerton not released

Contrary to the Daily Telegraph article by Dave Lewis, Brett Emerton has not been released by Blackburn Rovers FC. The only Australian informed that he can leave the club was fellow Soccerroo, Vince Grella. Emerton is two years into a four year deal and at this stage will be a resident of Ewood Park for at least another year.

Cahill to be Western Sydney franchise investor

We can confirm that Everton FC and Australian International, Tim

Cahill, will soon be unveiled as a financial stakeholder of new A-League franchise, Sydney Rovers. Sydney Rovers FC executive board members Ian Rowden and former Soccerroo Charlie Yankos, were in Melbourne a few weeks ago talking to Tim Cahill before and after Australia's game against New Zealand.

Unlike the Neill bid, Cahill will be s-tumping up his own hard-owned cash in the establishment of the Western Sydney Franchise. There is no doubt his involvement will attract many of his commercial partners to the club thus making for a successful platform.

Cahill should be congratulated for his support and involvement of the A-League and the opportunities that a Western Sydney club offers to young aspiring players in the West of Sydney.

Adelaide Courting Herbert

Adelaide United management are very keen in talking to recently returned and successful New Zealand coach Ricki Herbert. Herbert, who also coaches the Wellington Phoenix FC in the A-League has been identified as coach of interest for the South Australian club.

Herbert who still has a year to run on his contract with the Wellington Phoenix FC, has informed me that he is keener on continuing in his dual role as New Zealand National coach and Wellington Phoenix FC.

Ricki did confirm that he has had a few enquiries for his availability by some overseas Clubs, like for assistant management roles in the UK.



Tim Cahill

• Το Γκολντ Κοστ ενδιαφέρθηκε για την απόκτηση του Μίκαελ Μπάλακ και του Ραούλ. Ο Γερμανός θα συνεχίσει την καριέρα του στη Μπάγερν Λεβερκούζεν κι ο Ισπανός σε σύλλογο της Αγγλίας ή της Γερμανίας που θα συμμετάσχει στο προσεχές στο Τσάμπιονς Λιγκ.

• Πάντως, το Γκολντ Κοστ δεν έμεινε άπραγο και κατέθεσε πρόταση στον Ρομπέρτ Πιρές της Βιγιαρεάλ. Ο Κλάιβ Πάλμερ κι η ομάδα του περιμένουν την απάντηση του Γάλλου.

• Ο Μπρετ Έμερτον δεν έμεινε ελεύθερος από την Μπλάκμπερν, όπως λανθασμένα γράφτηκε στη Daily Telegraph. Στην πραγματικότητα ο

ΕΝ ΣΥΝΤΟΜΙΑ*(για όσους δεν καταλαβαίνουν καλά αγγλικά)*

• Βινς Γκρέλα ειδοποιήθηκε να αφήσει τον σύλλογο. Ο Έμερτον έχει άλλα δύο χρόνια στο (τετραετές) συμβόλαιό του με την Μπλάκμπερν και παραμένει στο Ίγουντ Παρκ.

• Ο Τιμ Κάχιλ θα είναι οικονομικός μέτοχος στη νέα ομάδα (Σίδνεϊ Ρόβερς) που θα δημιουργηθεί για να συμμετάσχει στο Α-Λιγκ και θα προέρχεται από τα δυτικά προάστια του Σίδνεϊ.

• Με τον διεθνή Αυστραλό ποδοσφαιριστή συναντήθηκαν οι Ίαν Ράουντεν και Τσάρλι Γιάνκος, μέλη της διοίκησης της Σίδνεϊ Ρόβερς, πριν και μετά το φιλικό της εθνικής Αυστραλίας με τη Νέα Ζηλανδία πριν το Μουντιάλ.

• Η Αντελάντ Γιουνάιτεντ ενδιαφέρεται για τον Ρίχι Χέρμπερτ, για τον οποίο υπάρχει ενδιαφέρον κι από ομάδες του εξωτερικού. Ο Νεοζηλανδός τεχνικός έχει έναν ακόμα χρόνο συμβολαίου με τους Ουέλιγγτον Φοίνιξ και τον ευχαριστεί ο διπλός ρόλος του προπονητή της ομάδας από το Ουέλιγγτον αλλά και του τεχνικού της εθνικής της Νέας Ζηλανδίας.