

was released. The 1964 team was almost a new team. I did not understand why the Committee would tamper with a team that was already relatively strong enough to make the finals. The Committee did not have experience in the management of a football team; they suddenly came onto the scene and their inexperience showed. Club Secretary, George Pappas, was a good administrator but a successful team needs an efficient group of administrators to maintain its order and progress. Club President, Andrew Carr, and later Angelo Mallos, may have been enthusiastic and willing to spend lots of money to help the Club, but experience and expertise was needed to ensure their generosity was reaching places where it was really needed.

For a couple of seasons, I was in the players' wilderness but I continued going to training and was still very fit. I was happy to play 2nd Grade; it did not worry me. Off the field, the birth of daughter, Maria Christina, brought Eleutheria and I great joy. I had other priorities to really worry about- other than the decisions of the coaching staff. However, I did become disgusted by the manner some of the Greek players were treated when our new coach, Manny Poulidakis, brushed them aside. He decided to release club stalwarts, Omeros and Sotiris Patrinos, and Fotis Dakouvanos. I was the best player in 2nd Grade, and I would be invited to play in 1st Grade; but I continued to turn up for the 2nd Grade matches. This was my personal protest against what I believed were poor coaching decisions. I had absolutely no problems with any of the Pan-Hellenic players- Greek or non-Greek. I fondly remember going to a pub after training with players such as John Cole, Roy Blitz, Doug Logan and Jimmy Pearson and they would teach me English. I only had problems with the coaching staff. When Pan-Hellenic was on the verge of relegation in 1965, I openly expressed my appalled feelings to Poulidakis; I would turn up to training and ask him, "Are you still here?" He did not see out the season.

The arrival of our new coach, Walter Tamandl, changed our fortunes; he was a coach that made me enjoy playing for him. Playing for F.K. Austria and Prague in their hey-day made everyone listen up. However, the team still found itself in play-offs against a strong Polonia for relegation. Whoever lost was relegated. We were down 1-0 when our half, Johnny Sanchez, instructed me to move up front. Blitz made a dash down the sideline and crossed the ball, which I headed the ball into the net to equalise- we survived with a 1-1 draw. At high school, I could jump 1.85cm in the high jump, so it was only natural to jump for such high crosses. In the next relegation play-off, Tamandl instructed me to play forward and I scored a double in our 5-4 win. We celebrated our victory at the Hellenic Club; I cannot remember that night! From this point I was Pan-Hellenic's striker. Over the next three seasons, I would be the Club's top scorer and in 1967, I was third in the whole competition- after Giacomo Giacometti and Johnny Warren. The player who I attribute my success as striker was Blitz; we really complimented each other because his precision crosses needed someone to put the ball into the opposition's net. It was as though Blitz and I were a couple; we both made each other look great on the field. I remember going together Paddy's Markets once and all the Italian fruit stall owners gave us all these bags of fruit; it was their way of showing Blitz and I their appreciation of what we were

achieving on the field- it did not matter if they were A.P.I.A. supporters.

When certain players begin to shine on the field, it is mostly because they are surrounded by in-form players: George McCulloch was workaholic; John Cole was a classic defender and Brian Smith never stopped running. In 1968, Tamandl returned for his second-stint as coach at the club and Greek legend, Takis Loukanidis, arrived to a team already playing well which needed a classy player, such as him, to cap it off. Our confidence was up throughout the season, but I feel the team was

executive instructed Tamandl to change his tactics. Naturally, I was upset. I walked out of the Club; I was not going to give anyone the satisfaction to humiliate me. It was an abrupt exit.

However, my football career continued. I went down to Canberra Olympic as player-coach for one season, before playing for the local Juventus- where we won the local Championship and Cup double. I received an offer to play for New York's Greek-Americans by their coach at the time, Alketos Panagoulis. Suddenly, I found myself a migrant a second time and moving to another country again; I suppose it was much easier this time because I could communicate (i.e. English). It was in the United States that Eleutheria gave birth to our second daughter, Angela Patricia. I enjoyed myself playing there, as the team was practically filled with former Greek 1st Division players such as Kyriakos Hasekidis, Lolos Hasekidis and Kostas Kouyioukas. In 1974, we won the U.S.A Championship and Cup double, and I retired on a high note. I still remained close to the team- coaching it several times over the years- until my family and I returned to Greece in 1989.

For two years I was not involved with sport in any way. An opportunity did arise when A.E.K. legend, Andreas Stamatiades and I were asked to become involved with A.E.K.'s Academy; between Apostolos Toskas, George Karafeskos and Stelios Serafidis, we all rotated in coaching the different age groups. My association with the Academy lasted until 2002. I remained General Secretary of A.E.K.'s "All Stars"- organising friendly matches against other "all stars" teams to help other players who were not as fortunate as us- in health and finances.

I spent almost six seasons at Pan-Hellenic; it was disappointing to leave behind so many friends. The years at the Club coincided with so many developments in our lives- experiencing personal growth and my young family. Our supporters were incredible; my daughter, Maria, used to come to watch some of our matches; our supporters would care for her until the final whistle and return her to me after the match. In 1968, she was actually Miss Junior Pan-Hellenic, and one of my proudest

moments was escorting her onto the stage. Such are my wonderful memories at the Club. Both our daughters grew up in football circles; whether at training or at matches- it was a way of life for our family. I love Pan-Hellenic the same way I love Ethnikos Asteras because I experienced all the joys and sorrows of what it meant to be football player. I am a happy retired grandfather who looks through photo albums of my football career and... I would not change anything. Pan-Hellenic and Sydney always have a separate part in my heart- with the fondest memories.

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tired in final few rounds. The Minor Premiership slipped through our fingers; we did not finish the year on a high- losing to Prague 1-0, and drawing to Melita Eagles 1-1. Everyone remembers Loukanidis' failed penalty against Hakoah; I always took our team's penalties but this time he asked me if he could take it. I saw no problem with it. The rest is history.

The match against Melita was my last match for Pan-Hellenic. During the 1st half, I had missed some opportunities and I was having an unlucky day. At the interval, Tamandl informed me I was being substituted. I could not believe this. This decision also deprived me of any chance of being the competition's top goal scorer. I later found out certain members of the Club's