

e of Australia's finest eration...



days and did not get the exposure the boys enjoy today. There was no marketing but it is what it is. We played the game with a passion. Money was never an issue ... we just loved playing and competing."

How was the season you spent with Larissa in Greece?

"I went there in 1985 as a playmaker to find out that there were three other players fighting for the same position. One of them was Polish international Kazimierz Kmiecik, who was bought in by the coach and another was a local product so I had little chance. I still managed a few games, though.

"I wanted to play in the country where I was born but unfortunately it did not work out and had nothing to do with ability. It was however a great learning experience in life."

Which are the best and most important goals you ever scored?

"I scored a hat-trick for Olympic against

APIA at Lambert Park in a 3-0 win in 1982 and the first goal was something I will never forget. It was a half-volley that went into the top right-hand corner. My most important goal would have to be a penalty in a shootout in the 1988 grand final between Marconi and Sydney Croatia. The guy before me had just missed so the pressure was on me to convert, which I did."

There has always been a negative side to the beautiful game. What annoyed you most in football?

"The thing I hated most back in my days was the mass media's lack of respect for our game. They did not give us enough time and had the game in the back burner all the time. The other thing was the negative people in football and the politics surrounding the game. You had to question the motives of some so-called 'football people'. Of course, this problem still lingers today."

Is the game in Australia in a good place at

the moment?

"Football has come a long way from the days when we used to play. The grounds, pitches and exposure are better. Football is now an accepted sport in the national landscape. These are all positive factors that took the game to a new level which we all hoped for in our days. It is also great to see the national team being watched by the masses. From a playing point of view, I think the game lacks technical and creative players which is something that needs to be looked at. It has some challenges going forward but the game is on the right track."

Who are the best players you have played with and against?

"Marconi's Nastevski is up there with the very best I've played with. His football intelligence was amazing and the way he finished was sublime. We read each other's mind incredibly well. Olympic's Marshall Soper too was an amazing player. He could

score goals from anywhere.

"Defender Alan Davidson and playmakers Zarko Odzakov and Oscar Crino were probably the finest players I came up against."

PETER KATHOLOS FACTFILE

Club career

1979-1980: St George

1981-1984: Sydney Olympic

1985: Larissa

1986: Sydney Olympic

1987: APIA Leichhardt

1988-1991: Marconi

1992: Sydney Olympic

1993: Parramatta

International career

1981-1983: Australia (14 matches)

Honours

NSL championship: APIA 1987, Marconi 1988, 1989. NSL Cup: Sydney Olympic 1983, 1985.