

O Kosmos were fortunate enough to have caught Valkanis for an exclusive one on one chatting about how the Greek offer came about amongst a whole host of other questions that has seen the ex-South Melbourne Hellas defender proving the critics wrong.

VALKANIS REBOOTING GREEK FOOTBALL

It's been a whirlwind 2019 for current Greek National Team Assistant Coach Michael Valkanis.

The 45-year-old has been responsible along with first team coach John Van Schipp in changing the fortunes of the Greek National Football team.

The former Socceroo and Melbourne born star has hit the ground running as his connection and partnership with Van Schipp has sparked up a new era for the Greek National Football side.

OK: It's been an amazing few months for you Michael, firstly, talk us through how you found yourself as the current Greek National Football team assistant coach?

MV: I had just signed a contract extension with PEC Zwolle in Holland. I was really enjoying my time working there when JVS (John Van Schipp) called me up to tell me there could be an opportunity to work with him again. It was not confirmed as the Hellenic Football Federation were going through the process of interviewing candidates. I was excited at the possibility of being his assistant, coaching the Greek national team, but tried not to think about it too much because football works in funny ways.

Funnily enough, it was during my vacation with my family in Zakynthos that I received a phone call to confirm we had the job. My holidays were cut short. We had a big job to prepare for. The next morning, I caught the first flight back to Athens.

OK: Going to Greece, what were your expectations?

MV: I've lived in Greece before having played for Iraklis, Larissa and Panetolikos. I know the football culture and I know the football landscape. I knew very well this was a huge responsibility and expectations would be very high and demanding to coach the national team. The national team in the past 5 years