

“Believe me.. If I was to count the goals I had scored, it would exceed the number Pelé scored!!”

AMMO BABA

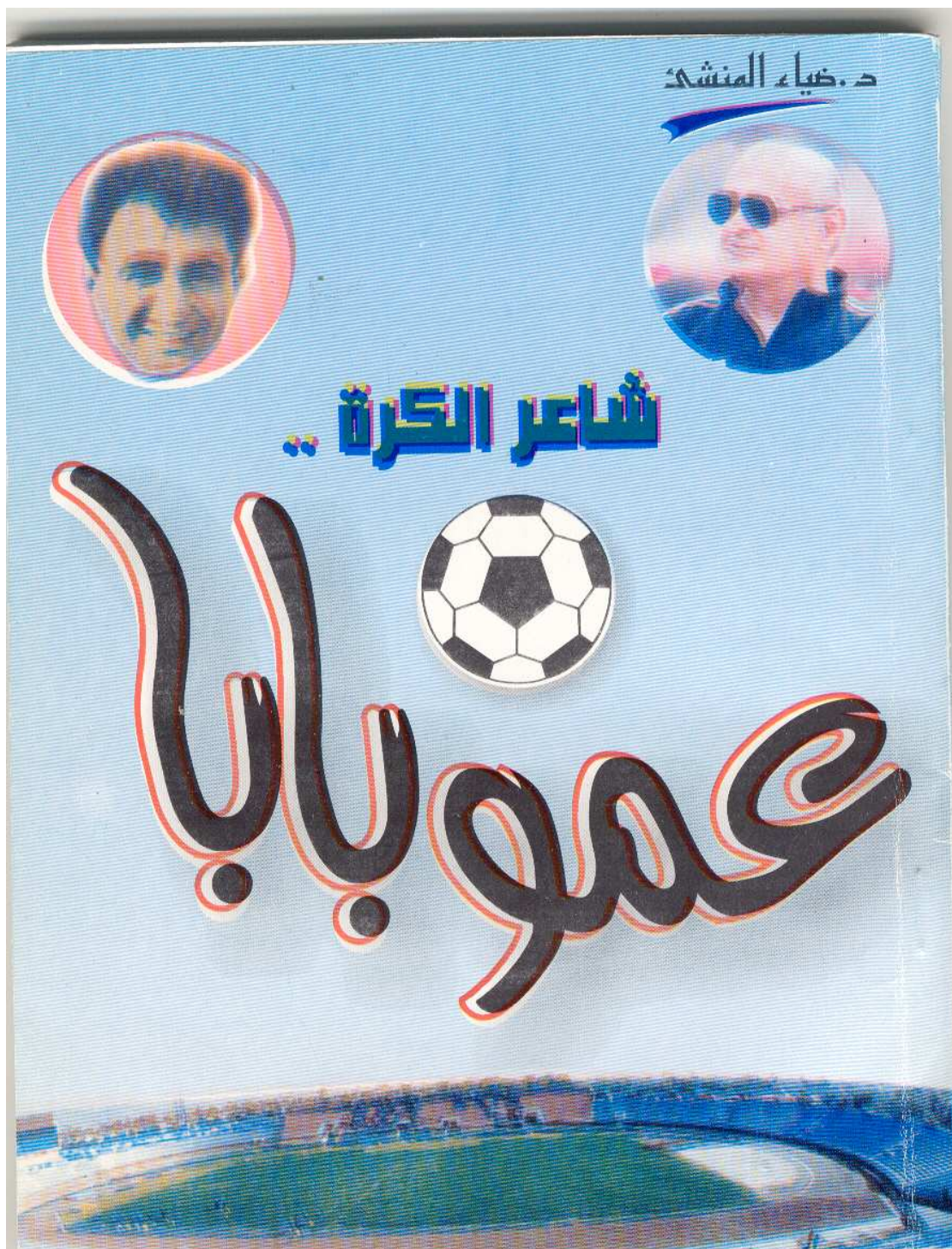


Ammo Baba is one of the greatest Iraqi sportsmen of all time. The legendary footballer exploded onto the scene at the tender age of 16 in a schoolboys football tournament in Cairo for the Iraqi schoolboys against the home nation Egypt in the early 1950s.

Ammo, who is still revered by generations who never even saw him play, was an instinctive out and out goalscorer, known for his bicycle kicks, heading ability, defence splitting pace and the power of his shooting. He had an opportunist's eye for goal but also displayed magnificent technique and virtuoso skill of a great centre forward.

At the beginning of the new century, Ammo became one of the first Iraqi sportsmen to have the honour of having a book written about his life and sporting career. The book published in April 2001, was written by the highly respected Iraqi sports writer Dr.Dhia Al-Munshi and entitled “The Football Poet.. Ammo Baba”.

“The Football Poet.. Ammo Baba”



THE GENIUS THAT IS AMMO BABA

The most prominent personal qualities of the great man are his openness and his broken Arabic. His wife once asked him “Where did you learn Arabic?, his reply to her was “This is my dialect and my style of talking and the people loves me so”

Ammo became a national hero ever since he first stepped out to make his debut for the Iraqi national team in 1955 as a fresh faced 20 year-old. He later turned to coaching, where he achieved the same success as he did in while he was playing.

Ammanuel ‘Ammo’ Baba Dawud (Ammanuel is an Aramaean word which means God is with us) was born on 27th November, 1934 in Baghdad at the R.A.F Army base in the Maharatha Lines in Hinaidi (Now known as Al-Rasheed Camp), he was one of 5 brothers, Gorgis and Yonan, Benul and Albert, Ammo was born in the middle after Yonan. His family moved to Habbaniya in 1937 along with the rest of the Hinaidi Assyrians and Armenian civilians employed by the Royal Air Force.

Ammo lived with his family in the Civil Cantonment on the military Air Base owned and controlled by the British Royal Air Force.

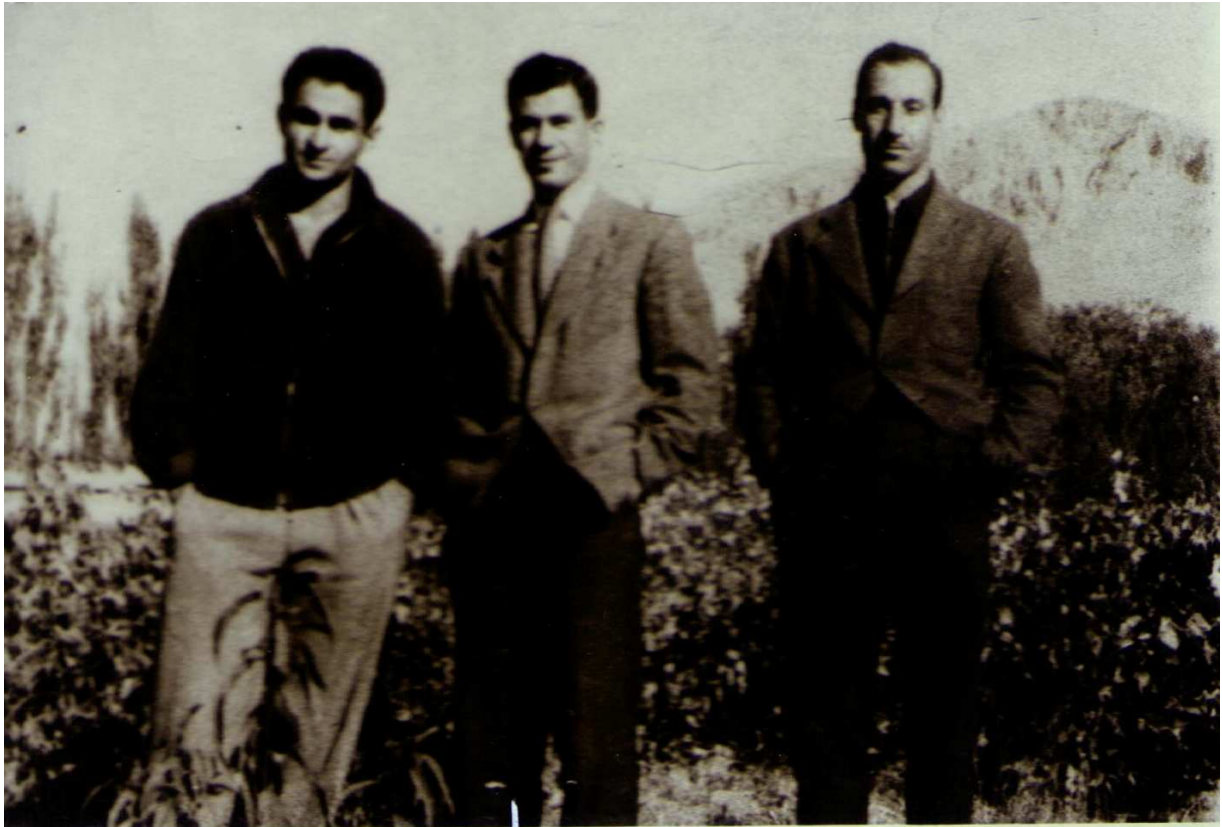
He spent his whole childhood in Habbaniya and started school at the late Raabi Yacoub's R.A.F. Union School where he first learnt to play the game of football with his class-mates. The great Iraqi international recalls his school days “I use to run out, you know, from school. I was very lazy in my lessons but I was very good in sport.”



Ammo later went onto play for his school province team ‘Luwialdalem’ against other schools in the province of Al-Anbar. After some outstanding performances for the Habbaniya school team, he was chosen to play for the C.C. select team.

The C.C. team represented the Civil Cantonment on the RAF base of Habbaniya, a 'town within a town' with about 10,000 residents, who were all employed by the British Royal Air Force. The first C.C team was formed of various Assyrian and a

few Kurdish and Arab players of disbanded earlier local Habbaniya teams, such as Eagles, Tigers, Arsenal and Blackpool, which was later disbanded in 1947. In 1951, the C.C. Select team was formed, which included the top players of the local Habbaniya teams, namely Employees, Levy Civilians, A.M.W.D., and Oriental.



Ammo Baba with Youel Gorgis(Middle) and Hormis Gabriel(Right) in 1953.

Alongside other youngsters like Youra and Edison Eshaya, Ammo used to practice his ball skills around 6 hours during the day sometimes continuously and then later in the evening they practiced with their teams. “I started very early as a player, and that time I use to practice because I know practice makes perfect.

Whilst being a talented footballer, Ammo like many sportsmen in Habbaniya excelled in a number of other sports such as hockey, basketball, swimming and tennis.

In 1951, Ammo was spotted playing for his school team by coach Ismail Mohammed and selected to play for the Iraqi schoolboys in the 2nd Arab Schoolboys football tournament held in Cairo, Egypt where Ammo made his debut against the home nation.

“I was about 16 years of age, when I traveled for the first time to Egypt in 1951, playing with the Iraqi schoolboys team in the Arab School tournament, we lost against teams that were more advanced than us but the experiment was encourageble and we did not forget it.”

Later on, the team participated in the 3rd Arab Schoolboys football tournament held in Beirut, Lebanon in 1954, where Ammo scored a penalty in a 2-1 defeat to Egypt.

Ammo owes allot to the great coach Ismail Mohammed who discovered him and transferred him from Habbaniya to Baghdad “He was the one that discovered me and polished and refined my talent, skill and also gave me that mental edge”.

“But me as I am, I was not the kind of person that depended on coaches, since the beginning I had trained by myself and adored the ball and considered to be like my wife and built-up a personality specially adapting me for playing football in my life”

In the 1951-52 season, Ammo was promoted to the RAF Employees’ (Assyrian) Club first team playing alongside Sargis and William Shimson Shallou, Youra Eshaya and Hormis Gabriel where he played for 3 seasons. He also played for the C.C select team, who participated in matches against other top teams in Iraq such as Maslaha, Haris Al-Maliki, Al-Minaa, Al-Quwa Al-Jawiya.

In 1954, while close friend and former team-mate Youra had left to play in England, Ammo moved to Baghdad to play for the Royal Guards. His first game was against the Royal Iraqi Air Force and he remembers it well.

“The match was played without any real fluidity or harmony and there was no co-operation between myself and the forwards, they did not give me the ball! But counting on my abilities by the number of goals I could score, I held out”

On the 30th of January, 1955 at the tender age of 20 and only a month after moving to Baghdad, Ammo Baba made his international debut in Iraq’s first Military match in the World Military Championship after being affiliated by CISM (Conseil International du Sport Militaire), only a few months earlier.

Iraq came up against the Egyptian Military at the Al-Kashafa (Scouts) Stadium. There was no escape for Ammo Baba as he was trusted into the limelight. He dressed up in khakis and was made a deputy Policeman so he could play for the military.

Ammo alongside with the great Nassir Chiko and Adil Abdullah led the Iraqi forward line onslaught on Egypt’s goal. The young Ammo was at the forefront of

every attack on the Egyptian keeper. The fans shouted and cheered for their new star “Ammo Baba... Ammo Baba”. By the end of the game, Ammo had demonstrated his enormous talent to the Iraqi public and had got the recognition from the fans he had hoped for before the beginning of the game. The match made Ammo Baba a household name in Iraq as he spearheaded the Iraqi attack but sadly could not prevent a 3-2 defeat.

After the game, Ammo had a problem leaving the Al-Kashafa stadium due to crowd congestion and on the fan's insistence, they carried him all the way to his car on their shoulders.

In those days the player's salary was under 20 dinars and with the fate of the game he earned 9 dinars. But with all his abilities Ammo managed to become the first footballer in Iraq to possess his own car “My car was green, an English make “Super Menkes”, a car of strong and able endurance totally like me. And the sporting public used to called her “The Nation's Car” because I used to drop off all my friends and team-mates”



On 7th February 1955, he scored two goals in a 2-0 win over Taj Club of Iran to enhance his growing reputation and a month later Ammo hit a hat-trick to outscore the great Nassir Chiko (He scored 2 goals) and help his club beat arch rivals Air Force 3-2 in the 1955 Army Cup. In the final on April 3rd against the army team 2nd Battalion, Ammo became the first Iraqi player to score 5 goals in one game helping his club to a 5-0 win to lift the cup.

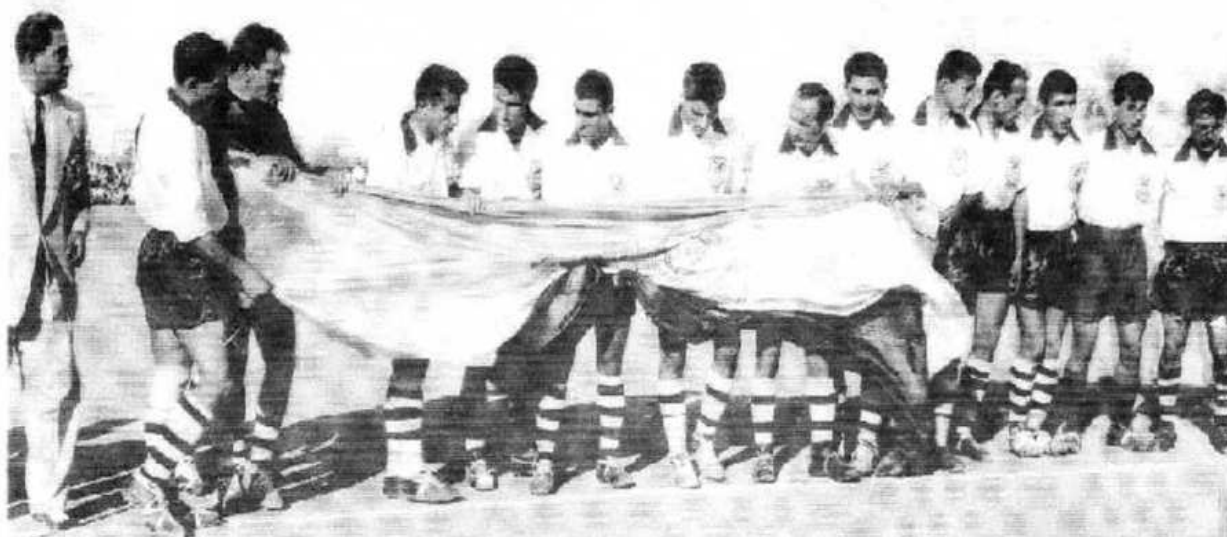
In May of that year, Iraq participated in the Asian Military Games in Tehran, Iran. Iraq played India in the first game, winning 4-1, with Ammo scoring his first goal for Iraq, their second game saw Iraq come up against Syria, whom they drew 2-2

with. Iraq then came up against the hosts Iran and played out a thrilling game that ended 5-4 in the favour of the Iranians with Ammo managing 2 goals.

On 2nd January 1956, Ammo once again teamed-up with his childhood friend Youra Eshaya, after Youra returned from his stint playing in England for the Bristol Rovers Colts. On Youra's international debut for Iraq against Mersin Idmanyurdu SK, both players terrorised the Turkish defence with Youra hitting one goal and Ammo scoring 3 goals with the other goals coming from 'the Iraqi Stanley Matthews' Abbas Hamadi and Fakri Mohammed Salman as Iraq beat the Turks 6-0 at the Al-Kashafa Stadium in Baghdad.

Eight days later, Iraq played a Tehran XI and managed to beat them 5-3 with 4 of the goals coming from Ammo. At the end of the game, the Iraqi fans surrounded the players, cheering and chanting and carried them off the pitch upon their shoulders. The headline in the Iraqi Times the next day read 'Ammo Baba Scores Fours Goals Against Tehran'.

In 1956, Royal Guards and Air Force Club played out 3 thrilling games for the Army Cup Championship. The first game was played on March 3rd and ended 1-1, the second game was on March 29 and ended 3-3 with two goals from Ammo Baba and in the third and final game on April 3rd, the Royal Guards finally won the championship with a goal from Hassan 'Al-Fiori' Karim to win the game 1-0.



Assyrian Sports Club of Baghdad 5-3 Taj Club of Tehran, Iran
May 20th, 1956 at Scouts Stadium in Baghdad.

Assyrian players holding up the Iranian flag before the game against Taj Club.

From right to left: Kaku Gorgis, Gilbert Sami, Edison Eshaya, Hormis Gabriel, Youel Gorgis, William Shimson, Sargis Shimson, Youwarish Isaac, Ammo Samsom, Shimson Gorgis, Youra Eshaya, Ammo Baba (behind the keeper), Isaac Y. Isaac, Aram Karam, Youel Baba George (Secretary)

On May 20th 1956, Ammo represented the Assyrian Sports Club (Nadi Athori Al-Ryadtha) at the Al-Kashafa Stadium in Baghdad against Iranian team Taj Club of Tehran. The selected team included all of the top Assyrians of that era and was captained by Iraqi Petrol Company of Kirkuk forward Aram Karam, a member of Iraq's first ever national team in 1951 and included Ammo Samsom, Edison and Youra Eshaya (Air Force), Hormis Gabriel, Youel Gorgis from the Passenger Transport Department team, while the 16 year-old Gilbert Sami and the Shimson Shallou brothers Sargis and William, who were all on the books of the Assyrian club also played.

The Assyrian team won 5-3 with a hat-trick from Aram Karam while Ammo and Youra also got on the score-sheet. The eventful game ended a few minutes before the final whistle, as the Iranians walked off the pitch at the protest of the 5th goal being allowed to stand. Ammo played three other games for the Assyrian team. In November of the that year, he scored the only goal in a win over Iranian club Shahin, however in the return fixture against Taj Club, he was unable to lead the team to a win as they lost 4-1 to the Iranians. A year later, he played for the team against Racing Club of Beirut. The game finished 5-0 to the Assyrians with Kaku Gorgis hitting a hat-trick and Ammo Baba and Edison getting the other goals in the emphatic win.

Ammo Baba - Scorer of Iraq's First Official International Goal

In 1957, Iraq played in the Pan-Arab Games, the national team's first international tournament. The side captained by the great Jamil 'Jamoli' Abbas and with the likes of Mohammed 'The Black Cat' Thamir, Jalil Shihab, Edison, Fadhil Abdul-Majid, Youra, Fakri Mohammed Salman and Abbas Hamadi, Iraq had a strong team.

Iraq played its first game on 19th October, 1957, against Morocco and went into the 2nd half 1-0 down, but 3 minutes after the restart, Ammo scored Iraq's first official international goal and a minute later Youra added a second to give Iraq the lead. Substitute Fakri Mohammed Salman added Iraq's third as it looked like they were going to win their first game in the tournament but two late goals from Morocco meant the thrilling game ended 3-3.

In the second game, Iraq came up against Tunisia and again found themselves 1-0 down but a penalty from captain Jamoli and a goal from Edison gave Iraq a 2-1 lead, but like their first game, their opponents clawed their way back and with Iraq

down to 10-men after Ammo was sent off for the first and last time in his career after arguing with the referee, Iraq fell apart losing 4-2 to the North Africans.



From left to right: Fakri Mohammed Salman, Ammo Baba, Youra Eshaya and Khoshaba Lawo lining up against Libya in 1957.

In Iraq's last game they came up against Libya and won 3-1 with goals from Fadhil Abdul-Majid, Ammo Baba, Youra. The win was Iraq's first victory in an official international match.

Ammo remembers a memorable game against Armenian club Spartak Yerevan played during the 60s that still sticks in his mind, he also remembers how the Armenian defence treated him from the first whistle "They targeted me from the first half and tore my shorts, the fans shouted in protest and I was forced to sit on the ground on the pitch to cover myself". That day sadly ended in a 1-0 defeat for Iraq.

Talking about the best matches and goals he remembers in his career, Ammo says.

"Why play a match that is not beautiful and all of what that entertains the fans... Rarely did I play a match without scoring a goal .. Believe me .. If I was to count the goals that I had scored, it would exceed the number Pelé scored.. But we are sorry that we did not record our goals or consolidate them!!"

He also remembers the game against Tunisia in 1960 at the Local Administration ground in Mansour, Baghdad in which he scored that famous goal.

“That day I scored a (backward) double kick (Bicycle kick) goal against the Tunisians, it is so famous that the Tunisians still remember it. It was the first time I had drilled in a goal that way for Iraq”



From left to right: Khoshaba Lawo, Youra, Ammo Baba and Edison.

Before the 1958 revolution, Ammo was offered a contract to play for English Football League club Notts County, who were in the 2nd Division at the time.

“You know” he said “that is the oldest football club in England”.

However due to the sudden coup d'a'tat led by the Iraqi General Abdul-Karim Qasim in July, Ammo was unable to play in England.

“I had to stay” says Ammo Baba.

After the revolution, Ammo's team Royal Guard (Haris Al-Maliki), one of the top teams in Iraq at the time was disbanded with many of the team's players joining Police (Al-Shurta), Al-Fareeka Al-Thalatha (3rd Battalion), Passenger Transport Department (Al-Maslaha Naqil Al-Rakab) and Air Force (Al-Quwa Al-Jawiya).

Ammo joined the likes of Hamid Fawzi, Jalil Shihab, Hussein Hashim and Youra and Edison Eshaya at one of Baghdad's top teams, the Air Force.



In August 1959, Ammo was chosen to play for the Iraqi military team in their games in Far East Asia along with his younger brother Benul. In the Far East, Iraq beat Vietnam 4-2, North Korea 4-2, Shanghai 1-0 and drew 2-2 with China, with Ammo scoring Iraq's two goals.

Many in the Far East were enthralled and amazed by the footballer 'Ali' Baba from Baghdad as Ammo scored 7 goals in Iraq's 8 games as it ended up to be more of a story of Ammo Baba and the 10 footballers rather than Ali Baba and the forty thieves.

In late 1959, Ammo was appointed player-coach of Nadi Athori (Assyrian Sports Club) and formed a formidable team that included Iraqi internationals, defender Sargis Shimson and forwards Kaku Gorgis and Gorgis Ismail.

In little under a year, the club reached the Iraqi Cup final where they came up against Ammo's former club Air Force. The Assyrian club overran their opponents winning 3-0 with two goals from Kaku Gorgis and one from Gorgis Ismail.

A year earlier Ammo had become the first Iraqi player to score an Olympic goal in a 3-0 win over Lebanon in Beirut and a month later, he scored an outstanding goal against Turkey.

“I jumped up between the players and headed the ball into the goal” Ammo recalls.

Iraq failed to qualify for the 1960 Rome Olympics but Ammo however managed to score 6 goals out of Iraq’s 14 goals in the qualifying games against Lebanon and Turkey.



1960 Assyrian Sports Club Iraqi Cup winning squad

Top (Right to Left): *Wilson Shimson, Nelson Issa, Eshaya Shalimon, William Shimson, Wilson Daniel, Shalimon Odisho, Gorgis Ismail.*

Middle (Right to Left): *Kaku Gorgis, Oeshalim Yousef, Ammo Baba(Player-coach), Sargis Shimson, Daniel Gorgis.*

Bottom (Right to Left): *William Shawel & Lawrence Batras*

In 1960, Ammo married his cousin Josephine Aziz, who he later had 3 children with, a son, Sami and two daughters, Mona and May. A year later, he rejoined the

Air Force team and led them to the treble in the 1963/64 season, winning the Army Championship, Iraqi League and Cup.

The prolific marksman was once the captain of a short-lived Arab national team during the mid-Fifties and Sixties, in a Nasser-inspired experiment in Arab unity which failed due to the fact that, which Ammo Baba puts it 'no one wanted to play against us'.



Ammo with sports writer Dr.Dhia Al-Munshi.

Ammo recalls an incident that happened during his stay with the team in the Egyptian capital Cairo. During one of the nights, the organisers of the team threw a concert in honour of the team and players, headed by none other than the famous Egyptian singer Om Kalthom. Ammo being a very shy young man, tried to skip the evening by not turning up and staying back at the hotel. When the moment came for Om Kalthom to start the concert, there were some whispers in the back of the audience that grew bigger, they were all asking "Where is Ammo Baba?" When they found out that he was not there, they first thought the people, who were in charge of transportation, had missed him and delayed the concert, until someone went to the hotel to get him. When he arrived, Salam Al-Naboulsy, the big comedian at the time was keeping the audience busy with jokes and introduced him to the audience by calling on the crowd that the great "Ali Baba" has showed up and our Alef layla wa layla (A Thousand and One Nights) can start now.

His performances attracted offers from several English clubs such as Derby County and Chelsea and even one Brazilian club, but he stayed in Iraq. Why did he stay in Iraq?

“Many have brought up the question, around the reason for me staying in Iraq, I have left and returned to Iraq several times and being so attached to my country is the main reason that has prevented me from leaving”

In 1964, Ammo moved to the Military Academy (Kuliya Al-Askariya) team in a player-coach role.

A year later in the Pan-Arab Games held in Cairo, Iraq coached by wily tactician Shawqi Aboud were one of the favourites with the likes of Ammo Baba, Qasim ‘Zawiya’ Mahmoud, Hisham Atta Ajaj and Qais Hamed in their side.

On the 4th September 1965, the tournament finally kicked off for Iraq against North Yemen after their opening game against the hosts was abandoned as it had surpassed the official capacity of the Zamalek stadium, the game had to played abandoned and rescheduled at the Gamal Abdul Nasser stadium.



Ammo talking with the great Hungarian and Real Madrid striker Ferenc Puskas in 1973.

The game against North Yemen started well for Iraq with Ammo opening the scoring in the 9th minute and Qais Hamed adding a second later on in the half. Early in the second half, Ammo scored Iraq’s 3rd goal and Iraq went further ahead through Hisham Atta Ajaj but in the 8th minute of the second half, however a reckless tackle from Yemeni defender Saeed Athab put Ammo out of the game. Iraq went onto score 2 more goals but the injury to Ammo dampened the win.

As the medical team looked at Ammo's knee, the injury was even worse than had first thought. The injury to the ligament and cartilage in his knee threatened to end his playing career, but luckily surgery in London resulted in a full recovery like it had done in 1958.

Ammo spent a lengthy spell out of the game missing both Iraq's 1966 Arab Championship win in Baghdad and the opening game of Iraq's Al-Shaab National Stadium against Portuguese club Benfica which included Eusebio, the star forward in Portugal's successful 1966 World Cup side.



Iraqi National Team 1965

Top- Left to Right: Ammo Baba, Sahib Khazal, Hassan 'Balah' Ali, Shamil Flaih, Jamil 'Jamoli' Abbas.

Bottom- Left to Right: Shidrak Yousef, Qasim 'Zawiya' Mahmoud, Hisham Atta Ajaj, Nouri Dhiab, Hussein Hashim, Hamid Fawzi.

At the age of 32, Ammo quickly rediscovered his form and returned to the national team for the Tripoli Tournament after a two-year absence.

In Libya, Ammo helped Iraq to the title over fellow Arab nations Libya and Sudan. Scoring his last international goal against Sudan and then two days later on the 12th March, 1967, Ammo made his last ever-international appearance in the 1-0 win over the hosts.

Ammo returned to his former team Military Academy in 1968 after stint as player-coach with Passenger Transport Department in 1967 and two years later in 1970, Ammo finally hung up his boots after a game against the Police Machinery team.

“We were expected to win due to the overall fitness and capabilities of our players, but we lost 5-0! After the defeat, I decided to retire from playing”

In 1971, he was appointed as the head coach of the Military Academy team after 3 years working as a coach and assistant coach at the club.

While coaching with the Military Academy team, Ammo was also learning his trade under the guidance of Iraqi national coaches Russian Yuri Ilichev and Scotsman Danny McLennan during the 70s.

In the beginning of the first official Iraqi league in season 1974-75, Ammo coached the newly created Army Sports Club, a club formed from the result of a merger of the Army teams such as Police Academy and Salah-Al-Deen (Formerly 3rd Battalion).



In 1976, Ammo coached the Youth Ministry and also the province team of Kirkuk, who won the Republic's Cup Championship beating the Baghdad team 5-3 in the final. In 1978, he finally was appointed coach of the national team and later led them to the 1979 CISM World Military Championship in Kuwait and the 1979 Gulf Cup in Baghdad. In the 1980s, Iraq won the 1984 & 1988 Gulf Cup, 1988 Arab Cup, 1982 Asian Games all under Ammo Baba while he also led Iraq to two Olympic finals in 1984 in Los Angeles and 1988 in Seoul. At domestic level, Ammo won the Iraqi league title with Talaba in 1981 and Al-Zawraa in 1994.

Talking about his time as coach of the Iraqi national team during the eighties, he remembers the Iraq's great side that included the likes of goalkeeper Raad Hammoudi, the defensive colossal Adnan Dirjal, the brilliant winger Haris Mohammed, and the great forwards Falah Hassan, Hussein Saeed and Ahmed Radhi.

“During 80s, who use to have a very very good team, and our players they were all tall and tough, which I had selected them and I use to train them very hard every day, which I can say we played many English teams, we beat them and we played in Portugal, we beat them, you know.”

To illustrate how important the ‘Sheikhs of Coaches’ was to Iraq, when the national team had lost their opening game in the final qualifying round of 1994 World Cup played in Doha, Qatar, Ammo Baba was the coach assigned to help them to the finals in the US. Under Ammo, the team stayed undefeated with 1 win and 3 draws, missing out on a place in the finals by only 2 points.

In 2000, Ammo was invited to the southern city of Karbala to give a lecture to youth coaches. They took him to visit Imam Hussein's tomb and after a few minutes, the message of Ammo's arrival filtered through the city “Ammo Baba is here” then the young and the old all came to greet him. From the affection shown by the people of Iraq, Ammo does not hide his love and fondness of a strong and united nation and adds “During half a century in sports in Iraq and the Arab countries, I have not heard anyone distinguishing my religion or discriminating me as I am an Assyrian. And this is a white as snow fact that goes without saying “

Ammo is still going strong and still coaching, having taken over as the supervisor of the Iraqi Football School run by the Iraqi FA and working as a technical director at Iraqi Premier League club Police Club. He is by no doubt one of the greatest players to have played for Iraq and also coached Iraq. Ammo Baba is a living legend.

شـيخ المدرين عمو بابا



He may be one of the greatest sportsmen in Iraq's history but he still has his flaws, but what is Ammo Baba's problem? he indicates to his tongue and says "Here is the problem.. My tongue is taller than it needs to be!"

الله أكبر

AMMO BABA

Full Name: Ammanuel 'Ammo' Baba Dawud

Born: November 27, 1934 in Baghdad

Playing Career:

Clubs:

1951-54- RAF Employees' (Assyrian) Club/ C.C team of Habbaniya

1954-58- Haris Al-Maliki (Royal Guards)

1958-59- Quwa Al-Jawiya (Air Force)

1959-61- Nadi Athori Al-Riyadtha (Assyrian Sports Club)

1961-64- Quwa Al-Jawiya (Air Force)

1964-67- Kuliya Al-Askariya (Military Academy)

1967-68- Maslaha Naqil Al-Rakab (Passenger Transport Department)

1968-70- Kuliya Al-Askariya (Military Academy)

Games/Goals for Iraq: 75 g/31 gls

Player-Coach:

1959-61- Nadi Athori Al-Riyadtha (Assyrian Sports Club)

1964-67- Kuliya Al-Askariya (Military Academy)

1967-68- Maslaha Naqil Al-Rakab (Passenger Transport Department)

1968-70- Kuliya Al-Askariya (Military Academy)

Assistant Coach:

1969-70- Kuliya Al-Askariya (Military Academy)

1969-70- Iraqi Youth Team

1972 Asian Cup in Bangkok, Thailand

1972 CISM World Military Championship in Baghdad.

1976 Gulf Cup in Doha, Qatar.

Coaching Career:

Season	Club	League Position
1971-1974	Military Academy	
1974-1975	Army SC	8
1975-1976	Youth Ministry/ Kirkuk	
1980-1981	Talaba	1
1991-1992	Al-Zawraa	2
1992-1993	Air Force	3
1993-1994	Al-Zawraa	1
1994-1995	Al-Karkh	7
1995-1996	Ramadi	4
1997-1998	Al-Zawraa	3
1999-2000	Salah-Al-Deen	7
2000-2001	Air Force	2
2001-2002	Police Club	3

National Team: 1978-80, 1981-85, 1986-89, 1990, 1993, 1996

Military Team: 1978-79, 1990

Olympic Team: 1984- 88

Under 17s: 2000

Honours:

As Player:

1955 Army Championship

1956 Army Championship

1959 Army Championship

1960 Iraqi Cup

1963 Army Championship

1963 Iraqi Cup

1964 Iraqi League of Institutes

1965 Arab Military Games in Damascus, Syria

1967 Tripoli Cup in Libya

As Coach:

1976 Republic's Cup Championship

1978 4th Place in Asian Games in Bangkok, Thailand

1979 Gulf Cup in Baghdad

1979 CISM World Military Championship in Kuwait

1981 Iraqi League

1981 Merdeka Cup in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

1982 Asian Games in India

1984 Gulf Cup in Muscat, Oman

1988 Gulf Cup in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

1988 Arab Cup in Amman, Jordan

1991 Umm Al-Ma'arak Cup

1994 Iraqi League

1994 Iraqi Cup

2000 Voted Iraqi Coach of the Century by Iraqi sports writers

Timeline:

1948 Plays for his school team before joining the youth team of R.A.F. Employees' (Assyrian) Club in Habbaniya.

1951 Spotted by Iraqi coach Ismail Mohammed and selected to play for the Iraqi schoolboys in the 2nd Arab Schoolboys football tournament held in Cairo, Egypt, plays one half of the game against the hosts. Promoted to the Employees 1st team in season 1951-52 and represents the C.C. (Civil Cantonment) team of Habbaniya.

1954 Represents the Iraqi schoolboys in the 3rd Arab Schoolboys football tournament held in Beirut, Lebanon, scoring a penalty in the 2-1 defeat by Egypt. Joins top Iraqi club Royal Guards of Baghdad.

1955 Makes his debut for Iraq in a 3-2 defeat by the Egyptian military.

- 1956** Plays for an All-Assyrian Sports Club team, which included a number of Iraqi internationals in a friendly game against Taj Club of Iran, scoring a goal in a 5-3 victory in Baghdad. He also plays in the games in Tehran against Shahin FC (1-0), Taj Club (1-4) and against Lebanese Racing Club (5-0).
Voted in Al-Bilad newspaper as one of the best 11 players in Iraq.
- 1957** Pan-Arab Games in Beirut. Scores Iraq's first official international goal in the 3-3 draw with Morocco. Second game against Tunisia, Iraq lose 4-2 and Ammo is sent off for the first and last time in his career. Scores 2nd goal in the 3rd and last game against Libya (3-1).
- 1958** Has surgery in London, England after receiving an injury in a league game in season. Moves to the Air Force after the 1958 revolution due to the dismantling of his team Royal Guards and a failed move to Notts County.
- 1959** Scores two goals in a 2-2 draw with China in Iraq's Far East tour which also included wins over Vietnam 4-2, North Korea 4-2 and Shanghai 1-0. Scores Iraq's first ever Olympic goal in a 3-0 win over Lebanon in Beirut and finishes with 6 goals out of Iraq's total of 14 goals. Joins Assyrian Sports Club in a player-coach role.
- 1960** Helps Assyrian SC to the Iraqi Cup with a 3-0 win over Air Force.
- 1961** Rejoins the Air Force team.
- 1963** Helps Air Force to the treble and plays in the 1964 Olympic qualifiers for the finals in Tokyo, Iraq lose 4-0 on aggregate to Iran.
- 1964** Joins Military Academy.
- 1965** Iraq win 1965 Arab Military Championship in Damascus, Syria. Ammo is injured (damages cartilage and ligaments in his knee) in September and has treatment in London.
- 1966** Misses both the 1966 Arab Championship in Baghdad, April and opening game at Al-Shaab stadium against Benfica while recovering from injury.
- 1967** Plays his last game for Iraq on March 12 against Libya in Tripoli. Appointed player-coach of Passenger Transport Department.
- 1968** Rejoins Military Academy in a player-coach role.
- 1970** Retires from playing after his team loses 5-0 to Police Machinery.
- 1971** Appointed head-coach of Military Academy after several years at the club working as a player-coach and assistant coach.
- 1972-2002** Worked as an assistant coach of the national team during the 70s while also working for Al-Jaish, Talaba, Al-Zawraa, Air Force, Ramadi, Al-Karkh, Salah-Al-Deen, Iraqi military & Olympic teams and a number of other clubs. Coached the national team at various times from 1979 to 1993, winning the Gulf Cup in 1979, 1984 & 1988 and 1982 Asian Cup. During the past 3 years, he has coached Air Force, Police Club and the Iraqi Under 17s. Currently works as a technical director at Iraqi Premier League club Police Club and supervisor of the Iraqi Soccer School run by the Iraqi FA.

AMMO BABA

9

(C) Copyright Hassanin Mubarak

WWW.IraqSport.com

*Thanks to Basoos Al-Munshi, Layth Jato & webmaster
Ghaith Nasrawi for all their help and contributions.*