



Al Shorta's Greatest Players - Number 3:

Douglas Aziz



This man is undoubtedly one of the greatest players *and* one of the greatest managers in Al Shorta's 84-year history.

Douglas Aziz started his senior career as a player at Aliyat Al Shorta after playing for the youth team of Al-Athori (also known as Assyrian S.C.). He made his league debut for the club in 1964 and the midfield general would go on to represent Al Shorta for the next fifteen years.

At Aliyat Al Shorta, Douglas won four league titles in 1967-68, 1968-69, 1969-70 and 1971-72 in the heart of midfield (he could also play in defence) and also won the Republics Cup twice in 1968 and 1969, scoring two fantastic goals in the 1969 edition. He was also a key player during Aliyat Al Shorta's run to the Asian Champion Club Tournament (now known as AFC Champions League) final in 1971.

Then, in 1974, Aliyat Al Shorta merged with other Police teams including Kuliya Al Shorta and Shorta Al Najda to form Al Shorta, and Douglas continued to be the main man in midfield at Al Shorta, winning the Arab Police Championship in 1976 and 1978 with the club

as a player.

Douglas Aziz was not only a star at club level, but he was also a key player (and captain) for the Iraq national team between 1967 and 1979 in the centre of the field, making 90 appearances for his country during that time and scoring an impressive twenty goals from midfield.

The legend retired from football in 1979 as one of the best midfield players Iraq has ever seen, but his story did not end there. He then went into coaching and his first ever coaching job was as manager of Al Shorta for the 1979-80 season. Despite having no experience in the job, Douglas sensationally led Al Shorta to their sixth league title that season as manager. He then went on to achieve something even more special - he managed Al Shorta to the inaugural Arab Champions League title in 1982 in what is still Al Shorta's only major international club competition victory in their history; only one other Iraqi club has won the tournament since.

Douglas stepped down as the club's head coach that year but would go on to manage Al Shorta three more times (1987-1989, 1990-1991 and 1992) as well as managing a few other Iraqi clubs; he was also an assistant to Iraq manager Ammo Baba in the 1980s.

The most impressive thing about Douglas Aziz is that he did not only make his name as a legend due to what he did as a player, but he went on to do equally, if not more, impressive things as the club's manager, and he remains one of the most influential men ever to be part of the Police.

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