

COSMOS

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MEDIA RELEASE

DUTCH STAR NEESKENS SIGNS WITH COSMOS

Johan Neeskens, one of the finest midfielders to ever set foot on a soccer field, has signed a contract with the Cosmos, it was announced today by Nesuhi Ertegun, Chairman of the Board, and Ahmet Ertegun, President of the North American Soccer League Champions.

"Johan Neeskens is a quality performer, the kind of player the Cosmos must have in order to make our club one of the finest in the world. Neeskens is one of the major reasons Holland rose to world prominence in soccer. . .and we're confident he'll help do the same for the Cosmos," Nesuhi Ertegun said.

The 5-9, 170-pound Neeskens, a central midfielder noted for his strong shot, signed his first professional contract with Ajax of Amsterdam in 1967 at the age of 16. Frequently pushing the attack up from his center spot, Neeskens formed the cornerstone of Ajax' formidable midfield which helped carry the team to three straight European Cup championships--in 1971, 1972 and 1973. Ajax was also Dutch Champion in 1967-68-70-72-73 and captured the Dutch Cup in 1967-70-71-72.

Neeskens scored a goal in the second leg as Ajax won the World Club Championships in 1972 over Independiente of Argentina. He followed Johan Cruyff to Barcelona for the 1974-75 season and played in Spain until deciding to join the Cosmos, who secured his services in direct competition with Arsenal of England and Strasbourg of France.

Neeskens, who helped lead Barcelona to the Cup Winners Cup over Fortuna Dusseldorf this year, also played for Holland against Argentina May 22nd at Bern, Switzerland in a replay of the 1978 World Cup Final to help celebrate FIFA's 75th anniversary.

Excellent in the air and a penalty kick specialist, Neeskens played in two World Cup Finals (1974 and 1978). He scored Holland's goal from the penalty spot against West Germany in 1974, the year in which he first came to worldwide fame. Neeskens has 46 caps for Holland,

and his five World Cup goals are second only to Robbie Rensenbrink's six among all-time Dutch performers.

Neeskens, who first played organized soccer at the age of ten, was born in Haarlem, Holland, on September 15, 1951.

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