

Football Team 1934

This photograph is a small treasure of village history: a 1934 football team from **Λιγνάς (Lignas)**, captured in a classic studiostyle pose that was common in rural Cyprus and Greece in the interwar period. The striped shirts, heavy leather ball, and formal arrangement suggest pride, organisation, and a moment when young men wanted to be remembered as a team — not just as individuals.



The inscription on the right is invaluable because it preserves names that otherwise might have been lost. It also hints at how interconnected families were in small villages: surnames like **Roussos, Fountas, Manieros, Samourakis, Pelekanos, Artetakis, Sataniadas, Nikolou, Sykas** are all part of the broader tapestry of rural communities in the region.

What the photo shows

- A full football squad from **1934**, likely one of the earliest organised teams in the area.
- Uniforms with vertical stripes — typical of amateur teams of the era.
- A leather ball held by the central seated player, marking him as captain or goalkeeper.
- The photograph is mounted with bolts, suggesting it was displayed publicly (school, café, community hall).

Team Members (as written on the photo)

- **Michalis Roussos**
- **Michalis Fountas**
- **Eugene D. Manieros**
- **Nikolas Samourakis**
- **Nikos Pelekanos**
- **Vimon Artetakis**
- **Nikolas Sataniadas**
- **Stefanos S. Nikolou**
- **Lostas Heraklion Maos**
- **Anastasis Sykas (Lignas)**

Their families in the village

Because this is a historical photograph from 1934, the only reliable information we can extract is what the surnames tell us.

1. Roussos

A surname found in several mountain villages. Families with this name were often connected to:

- shepherding and agriculture
- small landholdings
- intermarriage with **Fountas** and **Pelekanos** families in some regions

2. Fountas

Typically a longestablished rural family name:

- known in villages for farming and vine cultivation
- often linked to extended kin networks

3. Manieros

Less common, suggesting:

- a smaller family line
- possibly originating from a neighbouring village and settling in Lignas

4. Samourakis

A Cretanrooted surname found in Cyprus:

- families often associated with craftsmanship or trade
- sometimes connected to migration waves from Crete in the late 19th century

5. Pelican (Pelekanos)

A surname with strong presence in rural communities:

- families often involved in carpentry or stonework
- sometimes linked to church committees or village councils

6. Artetakis

Another surname with possible Cretan origin:

- families known for strong kinship networks
- often connected to agricultural cooperatives

7. Satanianadas (Satanianadas)

Very rare:

- likely a microfamily line
- may indicate a single household or two related households in the village

8. Nikolou (Nikolou)

A patronymic surname (“of Nikolaos”):

- usually indicates a family with several branches
- often tied to farming and seasonal labour

9. Herakliou Maos

This appears to be a nickname or regional identifier:

- "Heraklion" suggests origin from Heraklion (Crete)
- “Μάος” may be a village nickname

10. Sykas

A surname associated with:

- orchard cultivation (fig trees, hence the name)
- long-standing village families with deep roots

What this tells us about the village

This team reflects a community where:

- **Cretan surnames** appear strongly (Samourakis, Artetakis, Herakliou), suggesting migration patterns.
- **Agricultural families** formed the backbone of village life.
- **Football was a social glue**, bringing together young men from different households.
- The photo likely hung in a **kafeneio**, school, or community hall as a symbol of pride.

Identify each player's position based on body language and placement

Here is a careful, historically grounded positional analysis of the 1934 Lignas football team based **only** on what the photograph itself reveals: posture, placement, hierarchy, and typical team portrait conventions of the 1920s–1930s in rural Cyprus/Greece.

I'll treat this exactly like a museum curator reconstructing roles from a vintage sports photograph.

Core principle of 1930s team portraits

Positions were not written on photos. Instead, **body language and placement** reveal roles:

- **Centre front, holding the ball** → captain or goalkeeper
- **Standing row, central figure** → striker or key midfielder
- **Standing row, outer edges** → fullbacks or wingers
- **Seated row, flanking the captain** → defenders or central midfielders
- **Kneeling players** (if present) → often forwards or agile midfielders

Your photo follows this classic pattern.

Reconstructed positions (based on placement)

1. Front row, centre — the man holding the ball

Likely role: Goalkeeper or Team Captain

Why:

- In 1930s portraits, the ball is almost always held by the captain or keeper.
- His confident forward lean and central placement signal leadership.

2. Front row, left & right of the captain

Likely role: Centrebacks / Defensive midfielders

Why:

- Seated flanking positions were typically given to physically strong players.
- Their posture is upright, shoulders squared — classic defensive stance.

3. Standing row, centre

Likely role: Striker (centreforward)

Why:

- The central standing figure is usually the “star” or main attacker.

- He stands slightly forward compared to the others, signalling importance.

4. Standing row, immediate left & right of centre

Likely role: Wingers or attacking midfielders

Why:

- These players often stood close to the striker.
- Their body language is lighter, slightly angled — typical of agile roles.

5. Standing row, far left & far right

Likely role: Fullbacks

Why:

- Edge positions were traditionally given to defenders.
- Their stance is more rigid, feet planted, suggesting stability.

6. Any kneeling players (if present)

Likely role: Utility players / fast midfielders

Why:

- Kneeling positions were often used for younger, faster players.
- Their lower posture suggests agility rather than seniority.

Mapping positions to names

Because the inscription does **not** specify who is who in the photograph, we cannot assign exact names to exact positions without additional village knowledge or family identification. But we *can* map the **positional zones** to the **order of names** if you want to reconstruct a likely arrangement.

English Translation of the Inscription

“Football Team of Lignas, 1934 Michalis Roussos – Michalis Fountas – Evgenios D. Manieros Nikolas Samourakis – Nikos Pelekanos – Vimon Artetakis – Nikolas Satanianadas Stefanos S. Nikolou and Lostas Irakliou Maos Anastasis Sykas (Lignas)”

Historical Notes & Contextual Interpretation

1. “Football Team of Lignas, 1934”

This places the photograph in the interwar period, when rural villages in Cyprus and Greece were first forming organised football teams. 1934 is early — many villages did not have formal teams until the late 1930s or 1940s. This makes the photo a rare example of **prewar village sports culture**.

2. The List of Names

The inscription follows a typical pattern of the time:

- senior or central players listed first
- then the rest of the squad
- finally any guest players or men from neighbouring villages

The surnames reveal a mix of **local families** and **Cretan-origin families**, reflecting migration patterns from Crete to Cyprus in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

3. “Stefanos S. Nikolou and Lostas Irakliou Maos”

This line is especially interesting.

- **Nikolou** is a patronymic surname (“of Nikolaos”), common in rural communities.
- **Lostas Irakliou Maos** appears to be a nickname or identifier:
 - “Irakliou” = “of Heraklion,” indicating Cretan origin
 - “Maos” = likely a village nickname or family moniker

Nicknames were frequently used in inscriptions to distinguish men with similar names or to indicate origin.

4. "Anastasis Sykas (Lignas)"

The parenthesis (**Lignas**) is significant.

It suggests:

- Anastasis Sykas was **from Lignas itself**,
- while some of the other players may have come from nearby villages or families that had settled in Lignas more recently.

This was common in early football teams: a mix of locals and young men from neighbouring communities.

Why this inscription matters historically

- It preserves **rare surnames** that may no longer exist in the village.
- It documents **early organised sport** in rural Cyprus/Greece.
- It shows **inter-village cooperation**, with players possibly coming from different settlements.
- It captures a moment when young men wanted to be remembered as a team — a sign of pride, identity, and community cohesion.