

ISLINGTON CENTRE - 9/1/23 - ERIC, CLAUDE, NEGASH

Catch-up

What is an obituary?

Have you ever read an obituary?

Of whom?

Who do you think were the most important people to die in 2022?

OBITUARY OF PELÉ

Edson Arantes do Nascimento (known as Pelé) died on 29 December 2022 at the age of 82. There is general agreement that he was football's greatest player ever.

He was born in a small city in the south east of Brazil. His father was a good footballer but suffered a knee injury that ended his career.

The family were then poor and could not afford a football. Pelé (his nickname from an early age) learnt to play football kicking around a grapefruit or a sock stuffed with newspapers. His mother did not want him to become a footballer but, by the time he was a teenager, he was attracting the attention of some of Brazil's big clubs.

By the time of the World Cup in Sweden in 1958, Pelé, then aged 17, was playing in the national team. Brazil won the World Cup for the first time, thanks in part to the two goals scored by Pelé in the final.

Pelé was a prodigious goal scorer. Top European clubs wanted to recruit him but a 1961 presidential edict in Brazil meant that he could not be exported.

Pelé's experiences in international football were not all good. At the time of the 1962 World Cup he had a groin strain and was unable to play in the final few matches. During the 1966 World Cup, he was injured and had to limp out of the tournament. At that time, he was so disheartened that he said that he would never play international football again.

In 1970 he came back and played in the World Cup, beating Italy in the final. He was seen as a footballer who brought "intoxicating joy" to many millions of football fans and who raised the spirits of his country.

Pelé was far from perfect. After he retired from football, some considered his prime motivation to be money. It was said that he did not speak out against racism and that he refused to acknowledge paternity of a child that was obviously his.

Overall, however, his influence as one of the greatest athletes of the 20th century is seen as very positive.

Vocabulary

Explain the following:

- nickname
- prodigious
- edict
- limp
- disheartened
- to raise someone's spirits
- to speak out against
- to acknowledge paternity

