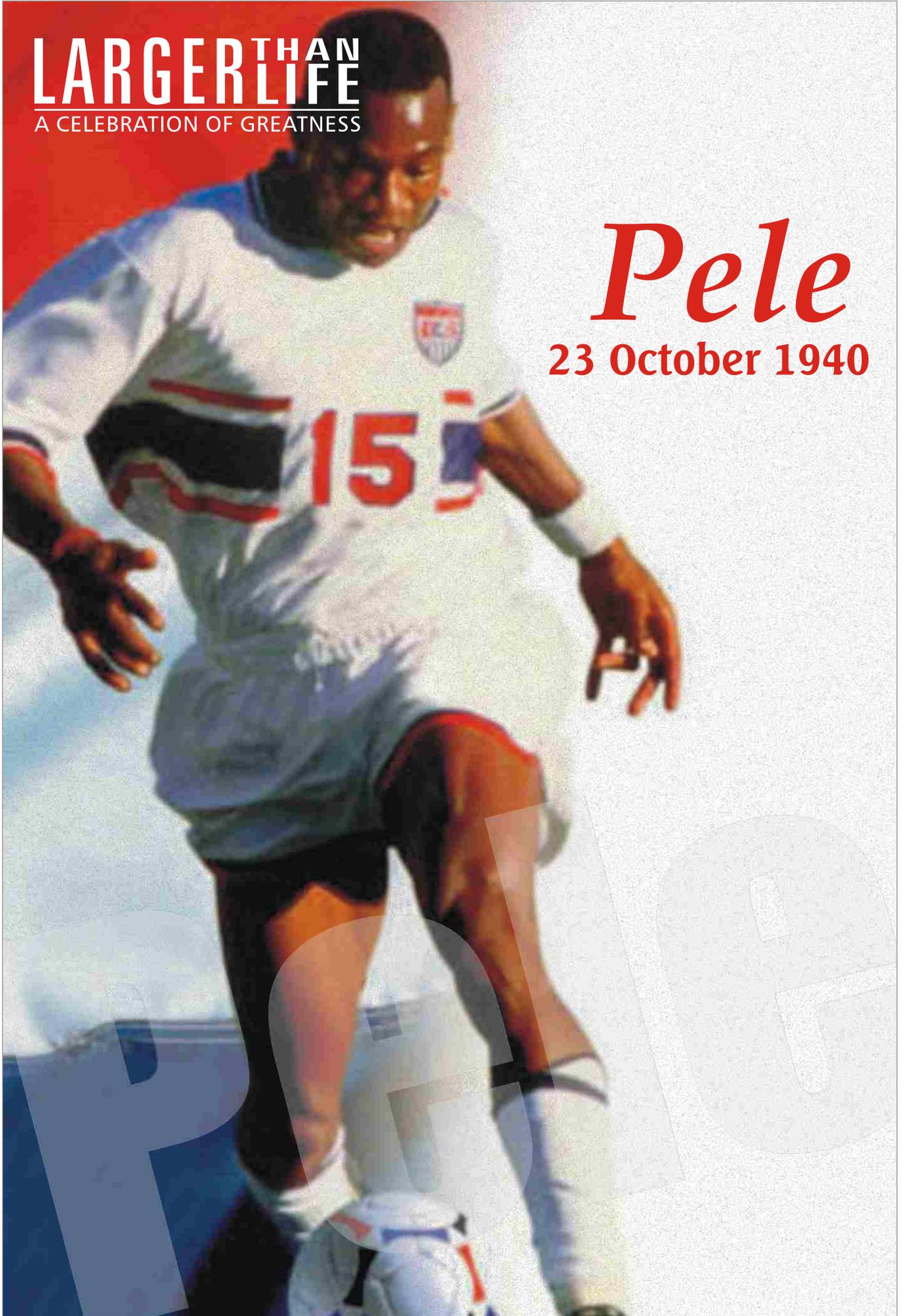


LARGER THAN LIFE
A CELEBRATION OF GREATNESS

Pele

23 October 1940



INTRODUCTION

Edson Arantes do Nascimento best known by his nickname Pele, is a former Brazilian football player. In his native Brazil, Pele is hailed as a national hero for his accomplishments and contribution to the game, in addition to being officially declared the football ambassador of the world by FIFA and a national treasure by the Brazilian government. **His playing style was marked by superb ball control and great tactical ability.** He is also acknowledged for his vocal support of policies to improve the social conditions of the poor. During his career, he became known as **'The King of Football'** or simply **'The King Pele'**. **He led his team to numerous championships and the Brazilian national team to world championships in 1958, 1962, and 1970.**

BIRTH AND EARLY LIFE

Pele was **born on 23rd October in 1940 in a very poor family in Brazil.** He first learned the game of soccer from his father, Dondinho, who was a decent center forward until his career was halted by a fractured leg. He began playing soccer for a local minor-league club **when he was a teenager. When he wasn't playing soccer he shined shoes for income. He was discovered at the age of 11 by one of the country's premier players, Waldemar de Brito.**

CAREER

Pele made his **professional debut for Santos in 1956** and had earned a starting place in the 1st team by the start of the 1957 season. He is **widely appraised for his international career, which began against Argentina on 7th July 1957 when he scored his first goal for Brazil.** It was three months before his seventeenth birthday. At the age of 16 he became the top scorer in the league and was called up to the **Brazilian national squad.**

In the 1958 World Cup he was the youngest player in the tournament and at that time the youngest player ever to take part in a World Cup. In the semi final against France he scored a hat trick becoming the youngest player ever in World Cup history to do so. On 19th June 1958 he played in the World Cup final becoming **the youngest player ever to play in a World Cup final** at 17 years and 248 days. **He had won a World Cup at just age seventeen.**

In the 1962 World Cup, he started the tournament well scoring a goal in the opening game against Mexico. However while attempting a long range shot against Czechoslovakia he injured himself and was out for the remainder of the World

Cup. In 1962 the government of Brazil prevented Pele from moving to Europe by declaring him a **'National Treasure'**.

He **scored his 1000th goal on 19th November 1969** in a match against Vasco de Gama. The 1970 Brazilian World Cup squad is widely regarded as one of the greatest football teams ever. Brazil faced Italy in the final and Pele scored the opening goal and made assists for the others. Brazil won the match 4-1 and was awarded the **'Jules Rimet Trophy'** forever.

LIFE AFTER RETIREMENT

Pele's **last international match was on July 18, 1971** against Yugoslavia in Rio de Janeiro. With Pelé on the field, the Brazilian team's record was 67 wins, 14 draws, and 11 losses, and went on to win three World Cups. He continued to play with Santos. He **retired from the Santos team in 1974** and played in the United States with the New York Cosmos during 1975 - 77. He scored 1,281 goals during his career. In 1992, **he was appointed a United Nations ambassador for ecology and the environment. He became Brazil's minister of sports in 1995, serving until 1998.**

Awards

- He was voted '**Athlete of the Century**' by the International Olympic Committee in 1999.
- In December 2000, Pele was named '**Footballer of the Century**' by FIFA.
- He received the Laureus World Sports Awards '**Lifetime Achievement Award**' from South African President Nelson Mandela.
- In 2005, he won the '**BBC Sports Personality of the Year Lifetime Achievement Award**'.

Quotes

"Enthusiasm is everything. It must be taut and vibrating like a guitar string."

"Everything is practice."

"A penalty is a cowardly way to score."