

# **Pelé (1940-) Encyclopedia Article**

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## Pelé (1940—)

Pelé, born Edson Arantes do Nascimento on October 23, 1940 in a small village in the Brazilian state of Minas Gerais, is recognized as the greatest, and most popular, soccer player the world has ever seen. Pelé played professional soccer for Santos Football Club in Brazil from 1956 to 1974. Between 1958 and 1970, he played in four World Cup finals, is the only person to have won three world cups as a player, and scored an astonishing 1,280 goals in 1,362 professional games. In April 1975, the New York Cosmos of the North American Soccer League signed Pelé in an attempt to popularize the sport in the United States. Although thousands came to see him play in New York, only a minority of the American public saw or appreciated his unique skills.

### Further Reading:

Arnold, Caroline. *Pelé: The King of Soccer*. New York, F. Watts, 1992.

Murray, Bill. *Football: A History of the World Game*. London, Scholar Press, 1994.