

Lev Yashin: The Black Spider



1) Discussion

- a) Who are your favourite goalkeepers of all time?
 - b) What do you know about Russian football? Who are some well-known Russian players?
 - c) What do you think of the Ballon d'or award? Do you think it really shows who the best player in the world is?
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2) Vocabulary

a) Match the vocabulary to the definition.

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| 1) To Hail (verb) | a) Proof that something exists or is true. |
| 2) Steadfast (adjective) | b) Having unique and recognizable qualities that set something or someone apart from others. |
| 3) Feat (noun) | c) To acknowledge someone or something, often with admiration or approval. |
| 4) Distinctive (adjective) | d) Someone or something that is highly distinguished, admired, and characterized by great achievements, excellence, or glory |
| 5) Moniker (noun) | e) An impressive or remarkable achievement or action that requires skill, strength, or courage. |
| 6) Testament (noun) | f) A nickname or title, often informal, given to a person as a characteristic or identifier. |
| 7) Illustrious (adjective) | g) Firmly committed in purpose or loyalty. |
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b) Complete the sentences with the vocabulary from exercise 2a.

To hail

Steadfast

Feat

Distinctive

Moniker

Testament

Illustrious

- 1) Diego Simione's _____ commitment to defensive strategies played a crucial role in their victory in the world football championship.
- 2) Scoring a hat-trick in the World Cup final is considered a remarkable _____ in the history of world football.
- 3) Cristiano Ronaldo's unique goal celebration, characterised by his trademark "Siu" jump, has become his _____ celebration.
- 4) A young Lionel Messi earned the _____ "The Flea" due to his agile movements and quick acceleration, making him a standout player in world football.
- 5) The longevity of the FIFA World Cup serves as a _____ to the global passion and enduring love for the sport.
- 6) During her _____ career, Brazilian Marta won the World Player of the Year award 6 times
- 7) Gianluigi Buffon is _____ as one of the best goalkeepers ever.



3) Quick Read - Read the article quickly and answer these questions.

- a) What were some of Lev Yashin's qualities?
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The Black Spider

Lev Yashin, often hailed as the greatest goalkeeper in football history, made an enduring impact on the sport with his extraordinary skills and groundbreaking approach to goalkeeping. Born in Moscow in 1929, Yashin spent the majority of his illustrious career with Dynamo Moscow, where he played for an impressive 20 years, from 1949 to 1970. His steadfast loyalty to the club earned him the nickname "The Black Spider."

Yashin's notable achievements include winning the prestigious Ballon d'Or in 1963, a remarkable feat for a goalkeeper. His agile saves, commanding presence in the penalty area, and unmatched shot-stopping abilities redefined the goalkeeper's role. Yashin's distinctive style involved quickly rushing off his line to confront attackers and mastering the skill of saving penalties, earning him the moniker "The Black Octopus."

His impact on goalkeeping extended well beyond his playing days. Yashin's influence is evident in modern goalkeeping techniques, emphasising rapid reflexes, fearless decision-making, and effective communication with the defensive line. The iconic image of Yashin in his black goalkeeper kit, standing tall between the goalposts, continues to symbolise excellence in goalkeeping. Lev Yashin's legacy remains a lasting testament to the artistry and importance of the goalkeeper position in the world of football.



4) Discussion

- a) What did you know about Lev Yashin before reading this article?
- b) Are you surprised that more people don't know about Lev Yashin?
Why do you think that is?
- c) Do you think another goalkeeper will win the Ballon d'or? What do they need to do to win it?
- d) Are there any players in your country who don't get the publicity they deserve?

