



## READING COMPREHENSION

Read the following text and do the exercises below.

### JOHAN CRUYFF

**March the 24<sup>th</sup> 2016 saw the passing of one of the greatest footballers ever,  
Johan Cruyff**

This week, Johan Cruyff passed away. He was diagnosed with lung cancer in 2015 but died peacefully with his family next to him. As recently as last week, he was tweeting his thoughts on Dutch football, and his passing will not diminish his lasting influence on the game. This influence is summed up in some of the following quotes:

Pep Guardiola, a player for Cruyff at Barcelona, said Cruyff “painted the chapel and, Barcelona coaches have merely restored or improved it since then”. England player and World Cup winner, Bobby Charlton, said Cruyff was “one of those great footballers that made you excited whenever he got the ball”. And Argentine international and World Cup winner, Osvaldo Ardiles, tweeted, “Johan Cruyff: A revolutionary player. Best ever Dutch player. The talisman of one of the best teams ever: Holland 74. Total football.”

Here is our report on one of the great World Cup stars and all time great footballers. Cruyff’s career can be divided into three broad periods: playing for Ajax, for Barcelona and, then, his time as a coach.

#### Ajax

First at Ajax, Cruyff joined the Amsterdam team as a youth player of 10 years old. The Ajax team of the late sixties and early seventies introduced the style of play known as total football, where players’ positions were fluid and interchangeable, and the focus was on quick passing, movement and attack. Cruyff was perfect for this style of football, as he could read the game beautifully and seemed to have the ball glued to his feet. With Ajax, Cruyff, wearing the number 14 (it was rare at the time for any first team player not to wear a number from 1~11 at that time), won just about everything there was to win, but the three European Cups in succession in 71,72, and 73 stand out, as well as the treble of 72 (League, domestic cup and European Cup).

## Barcelona

Such a player inevitably drew the interest of other big clubs around Europe and, at the end of 1973, he moved to Barcelona, where he spent five seasons. In his first year at the Spanish giants, he was also part of the Dutch team which dazzled the world in the World Cup of 1974, losing to Germany in the final, but winning over most neutrals with their flair and invention. At Barça, the Dutch helped the Catalan side win their first championship since 1960, won footballer of the year twice, adding to the title he won at Ajax in 1971, and was part of the side that destroyed Real Madrid 5-0 at the Bernabéu. The Barcelona fans loved him and he returned the compliment by giving his son a Catalan name, Jordi.

## Coaching

After hanging up his boots in 1985, Cruyff turned to coaching and became manager of his boyhood club, Ajax, in 1985. As a manager, Cruyff continued where he had left off as a player: winning. He won the UEFA Cup with Ajax and, then, as manager of Barcelona, he went on to win it again in 1989 and then the European Cup in 1992, as well as dominating La Liga with four titles in a row from 1991 until 1994.

He rose to prominence in the era of total football at Ajax and with the Dutch national team, and was perhaps the most complete attacking player of his day.

## Worksheet

1. **Pep Guardiola said “Cruyff painted the chapel, and Barcelona coaches have merely restored or improved it since then”. This sentence means...**
  - a. Cruyff created a special style of play in Barcelona which is radically different to how current footballers play nowadays.
  - b. Cruyff created a special style of play in Barcelona which is still very similar to the nowadays one.
  - c. Cruyff didn't influence the style of play of Barcelona.
  
2. **The concept of “total football” was associated with...**
  - a. England player and World Cup winner, Bobby Charlton
  - b. Argentine international and World Cup winner, Osvaldo Ardiles, who was an expert on it
  - c. Johan Cruyff and his style of play
  
3. **The expression “seemed to have the ball glued to his feet” means...**
  - a. To be in complete control of the ball and be able to dribble with it
  - b. To trip over the ball and fall down
  - c. To lose control of the ball

**4. Johan Cruyff played for Barcelona until...**

- a. 1973
- b. 1978
- c. 1994

**5. In which country did he start his career as a coach?**

- a. In Spain
- b. In Dutch
- c. In Holland