



Black History Month: Jack Leslie

Citizenship & PE

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Custom lesson builder: football, player, charity, career, to score, to fight, to play, team

A **crowdfunding** campaign has **raised** £100,000 to build a statue of **former** footballer Jack Leslie outside Plymouth Argyle stadium, where he played for 14 years. So, who was Jack Leslie?

Jack Leslie was the only black professional football player in England during his career in the 1920s and 1930s. He was born in London and played first for Barking Town team. He joined Plymouth Argyle team in 1921, scoring an incredible 137 goals during his career. In 1925, Jack was called to play for the England national team against Ireland, but the invitation was later **withdrawn**. It is widely believed this was because the organisers realised he was black. He would have been the first black player to play for England.



Today, football fans and Plymouth supporters are raising money **to erect** a statue of Jack to recognise his amazing talent, but also as a symbol of past **injustices** and the continued fight against racism. Since his time as a player, football associations have done a lot of work and started many **campaigns** to fight racism in this sport and improve inclusion so that all players and fans feel welcome.

Match the words with a definition:

| | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|--|
| crowdfunding | • | • | situations that are not fair or right |
| raised (money) | • | • | something taken back or removed |
| former | • | • | to collect money from other people, often for charity |
| withdrawn | • | • | getting many people to give small amounts of money to help pay for a business or a charity project – usually on the internet |
| to erect | • | • | a plan of activities by a business, government, or other organisation to achieve something |
| injustices | • | • | in an earlier time, previous |
| campaigns | • | • | to build something, like a building or statue |

Read the text again and answer the questions:

- 1 What was Jack Leslie's job?
- 2 How many goals did he score for Plymouth Argyle team?
- 3 Why could Jack not play for England?
- 4 Why are people raising money?
- 5 What is the purpose of the statue?
- 6 How have football associations tried to improve equality in recent years?



Discuss with a friend, teacher, or your class

What historical figures have you seen statues of?

Do you think it's important to remember people from history with statues? Why?

If you could build a statue of anyone, who would you choose? Why?



Curriculum link: PE

Find at least 5 words related to the sport of football. Make a list and write their definitions.

