



CLIVE SULLIVAN



A Welsh sportsman who was 'adopted' by Hull and became rugby's first black captain.

Born: 9th April 1943, Cardiff, Wales

Died: 8th October 1985, aged 42 years, Hull, England

Family: Married Rosalyn. Their son Anthony was born in 1968.

EARLY LIFE

Clive's father was Jamaican. His family was the only black family in the area where he grew up. Clive began playing rugby at school but suffered so many injuries as a teenager that he had to have operations on his knees, feet and shoulders. The doctors said that he would most probably never walk normally again.

Clive joined the British Army aged 17. Whilst working for the army, Clive's rugby career took off. Shortly after joining up, he was spotted playing brilliantly in a game at the army barracks and was given a trial at Bradford Northern. This trial was not successful and he was not signed by Bradford. However, after the game he was offered a trial at Hull.

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

In 1961, aged 17, Clive accepted the trial for Hull FC. He scored three tries and was signed as a professional the following day. He was determined to serve in the Army **and** play professional rugby.

The first three years of his Hull career were disrupted by Army commitments and injuries. In 1963 a car crash almost killed him...but he was back on the rugby field three months later.

Clive left the army in 1964 and went on to play 352 games for Hull FC, scoring 250 tries.



In 1974, Clive moved to Hull FC's rival rugby club, Hull KR, (Kingston Rovers) and played 213 games, scoring 118 tries.

In 1967, Clive played rugby for Great Britain for the first time.

In 1972, Clive became the first black captain of any British sporting team and led Great Britain to become World Champions. In this same year, he was awarded the MBE (Member of the British Empire).

Ten years later, in 1982,

Clive returned to the Hull FC team.



He retired from the team, and from rugby, in 1985.

Just six months after he retired, Clive Sullivan tragically died of liver cancer, aged just 42. The city of Hull mourned his death together. His funeral was a mass of red and white and black and white team colours.

“He was one of us” – **Hull Daily Mail**, 1985.

The fact that Clive was black and had not been born in the city did not matter.

*The people of Hull adored Clive and renamed a section of one of the city's main approach roads **The Clive Sullivan Way** in his honour.*



FIND OUT MORE



EXAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. How old was Clive Sullivan when he died?
 2. Tell me something about Clive Sullivan's early life.
 3. Why was 1972 such a special year for Clive Sullivan?
 4. Name two of the teams Clive Sullivan played for?
 5. What did the city of Hull do to honour Clive Sullivan?
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