

## CHAPTER 3

### Pelé arrives!

De Brito met Pelé and Dondinho at the station and the three took a bus to Santos. Pelé looked out of the window and saw the Atlantic Ocean for the first time. He said goodbye to his father and his new life started.

Pelé lived with other players in one of the club's buildings. It was exciting to be there, but he was far from his home and family. More than once he tried to go home. On one of these times, his new friends on the team took him and his bags back from the train station. Years after, Pelé called these new friends his 'football family'.

He practised every day and learned a lot. He played for one of Santos' young teams. Soon the manager asked him to play for the club's first team. Still only fifteen and not very big, Pelé walked out in Santos' white-and-black shirt as part of the team. The Santos fans did not know much about this new player. That changed when Pelé scored! Many years later, Pelé met the other team's goalkeeper. For all those years, the goalkeeper told everybody: 'The great Pelé scored his first Santos goal against *me!*'



Pelé was the youngest player for any Brazilian team, but more and more goals followed. He scored thirty-two for Santos in his first year. Pelé practised his game every day. He kicked better with his right foot, and so he practised with his left. He wanted his left foot to be strong too. He also practised heading the ball. Soon he was bigger and stronger.



In the summer of the next year, 1957, the club played in a tournament at the famous Maracanã Stadium in Rio de Janeiro. Pelé was the tournament's top scorer – six goals in four games! At just sixteen, he was the favourite of the Santos fans.

Brazilians started to ask, 'Maybe Pelé can play for the Brazilian team?' He played his first game for Brazil in 1957, against Argentina. Brazil didn't win, but Pelé scored their only goal.