

The life of Fred “Curly” Neal

By Leo

Frederick Neal was born on May 19th 1942 in Greensboro, North Carolina in America and grew up to be 1.85m tall!

He went to Greensboro-Dudley High School and then Johnson C. Smith University in Charlotte, North Carolina.

He played for his university basketball team and averaged a massive 23 points per game!

Curly was able to turn his love for basketball into a career. He received offers from four NBA teams when he left university but, instead, he chose to play with the world-famous Harlem Globetrotters.



He was part of the Harlem Globetrotters team between 1963 and 1985 and played in more than 6,000 games in 97 countries across the world. He even showed off his basketball skills to the president Gerald Ford in 1974!



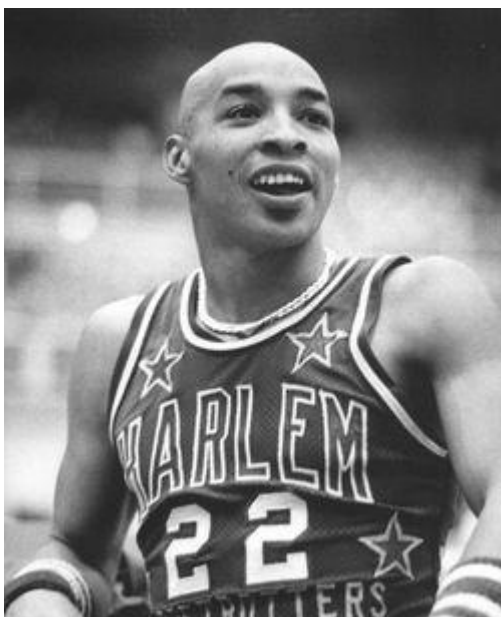
Curly got his nickname because he was bald and he was famous for his ball shooting skills and being able to dribble circles around players on the other team.



After his time with the Harlem Globetrotters, he appeared in television commercials in the 1970s an animated version of Curly appeared in Harlem Globetrotters cartoons, as well as three episodes of Scooby Doo.



The number on his basketball jersey, 22, has been retired meaning that no other Harlem Globetrotter will ever be able to use it.



He was just the fifth Globetrotter in the team's 82-year history to have his number retired, joining Wilt Chamberlain (13), Meadowlark Lemon (36), Marques Haynes (20) and Goose Tatum (50).

In January 2008 Curly was welcomed into the North Carolina Sports Hall of Fame. He was also granted the Harlem Globetrotters' prestigious "Legends" ring, given to those who have made major contributions to the development of the Globetrotters.

Curly was married to a wife called Linda, had two daughters called Rocurl and Laverne, as well as six grandchildren.

He died at his home in Houston, Texas in March 2020, aged 77.



The end