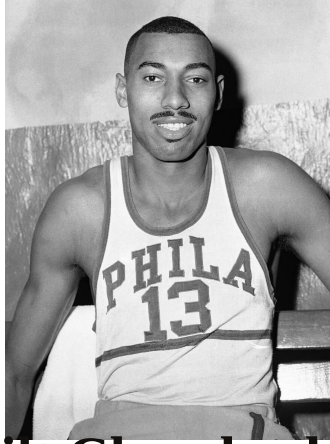




Wilt Chamberlain

August 21, 1936 - October 12, 1999

Los Angeles, California

Wilton Norman Chamberlain, the seven-foot-one center who rewrote the record book of professional basketball and remains the only player to score a hundred points in an NBA game, died of heart failure at his home in the Bel-Air section of Los Angeles on October 12, 1999. He was sixty-three.

He was born on August 21, 1936, in Philadelphia, and was already a schoolboy legend at Overbrook High before starring at the University of Kansas, where his teams reached the national championship game. After a year with the Harlem Globetrotters he joined the Philadelphia Warriors in 1959 and immediately dominated a league that had never seen anyone quite like him. On March 2, 1962, in Hershey, Pennsylvania, he scored 100 points against the New York Knicks. That same season he averaged 50.4 points and 25.7 rebounds a night, numbers that still look like misprints.

He won two NBA championships, with Philadelphia in 1967 and with the Los Angeles Lakers in 1972, the latter after years of playoff frustration against Bill Russell's Boston Celtics. He never fouled out of an NBA game. He later coached the San Diego Conquistadors of the ABA, acted, wrote, and competed in other sports with the same restless appetite that had driven him on the court.

In retirement he lived in a custom hillside house he called Ursa Major, kept private about his health, and died alone. He was buried in California. Decades later his name still anchors half the scoring and rebounding records in the NBA Guide, a ledger that, as a teammate once joked, reads like Wilt's personal diary.

Services

Died in Los Angeles, CA, October 12, 1999, aged 63. Portrait: Photograph by Bill Allen, 1960 (public domain),

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