

6th February 1958

United players killed in air disaster



A British European Airways (BEA) plane caught fire just after take off this afternoon with 38 passengers and six crew on board.

Seven Manchester United footballers are among 21 dead after the air crash in Munich, Germany. Some of its best young players - known as the Busby Babes - have died. They were Roger Byrne - the captain, Mark Jones, Eddie Colman, Tommy Taylor, Liam Whelan, David Pegg and Geoff Bent.



Football lost some of its most talented young players in the disaster

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The team was returning from a cup match in Yugoslavia. The plane had landed to refuel. It tried three times to take off. On the third time it went past the runway and hit a house. The body of the plane did not set on fire and some people went to help those who were trapped. Team manager Matt Busby was seriously hurt and is in hospital. Star striker Bobby Charlton has head injuries.

There was a heavy snowstorm in Munich. The pilot waited to take off for a time, because he was not happy with one of the plane's engines. This type of plane has carried 2,340,000 passengers on 86,000 flights. It has been used since 1952. This is the first time anyone has died.

Questions

- 1 What date was the crash?
- 2 Who died?
- 3 Why were they called the “Busby Babes”?
- 4 Where had the players been?
- 5 Why did they land at Munich?
- 6 Did anyone escape?
- 7 Who do you think are the best 7 players in the UK?
Make a list.