

SEDIN MUSTAFIĆ

- EASY TO READ LIFE STORY



HOLOCAUST
MEMORIAL
DAY TRUST



Key words

Bosnia: A country in south east Europe.

Muslims: People who follow the religion of Islam.

War: A conflict between different countries or different groups within a country. Wars normally involve the use of weapons.

Srebrenica: A small mountain town in the east of Bosnia.

Refugees: People who have been forced to leave their country to escape danger.

Sedin was born in 1986 in **Bosnia**. He lived with his parents, grandparents and older sister. The family were **Muslims**. Sedin's father, Hamdija, worked away from home a lot. When he came back he brought presents. Sedin and his father both loved football and Sedin's favourite present was a rubber ball.

When Sedin was six, a **war** started in Bosnia and his family had to leave their home to try and get somewhere safer. They walked for days, sometimes through snow that came up to Sedin's waist.

Lots of other families were travelling like them. They slept in forests and didn't have enough warm clothes. They ate whatever they could find, such as mushrooms, leaves, fruit and snails.

Finally, Sedin and his family got to **Srebrenica**. People were told this was a 'safe area' where they could be protected from the war. Men had to go and live in one part, and women and children in another. They still didn't have enough to eat, but Sedin's father brought them food whenever he could.

In 1993, Sedin and his mother, sister and grandparents had the chance to go to a new, safer place called Tuzla. His father and grandfather had to stay behind. Sedin felt much less scared there and even received two letters from his father.

In July 1995, the Bosnian Serb army came into Srebrenica, even though it was marked out as a safe area for people. They killed 8,000 Muslim men and boys. Sedin's father was one of the people they killed.

After the war ended life was still very hard for Sedin and his family. There was not enough food and people were starving. Sedin's mother encouraged him to work hard at school, but he had to walk for several hours every day to get there.

When Sedin was 18 he met Selma - a Bosnian girl whose family had moved to the UK to escape the war. She was in Bosnia visiting family when they met. Sedin and Selma fell in love, and Sedin moved to the UK to be with her. They got married in 2007. They now have two children and have fostered young **refugees** for the past few years. Sedin still loves to play football and plays for a local team.

Sedin says 'When I first arrived in the UK, life was not easy as I didn't speak any English and had to start from the beginning. However, football and the community made it feel like my second home.'

Find out more... Genocide in Bosnia: hmd.org.uk/bosnia
Other resources for educators: hmd.org.uk/educators