

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

**Interview with Marty Glickman
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PREFACE

The following oral history testimony is the result of a videotaped interview with Marty Glickman, conducted by Linda Kuzmack on February 14, 1990 on behalf of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. The interview took place in Washington, DC and is part of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's collection of oral testimonies. Rights to the interview are held by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

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MARTY GLICKMAN
February 14, 1990

Q: Could you tell me your name please?

A: My name is Marty Glickman. And I'm, uh, I live in New York City. I went to school at Syracuse. I'm 72 years of age. I'm married, have four children, nine grandchildren, and, uh, two great grandchildren and a third great grandchild on the way.

Q: Okay. Mazel tov.

A: Thank you.

Q: When were you born?

A: Born in 1917 in the Bronx, New York.

Q: Tell me about your family in the Bronx.

A: Uh, my father and mother were immigrants from Romania. Uh, they lived in the town of Ia_i, where they knew each other as children, but did not, uh, really get to know each other well until they met in the east side of Manhattan, when they both immigrated over approximately, uh, in 1912. Uh, they met, fell in love and were married.

Q: And what was it like growing up in that household? What was your childhood like?

A: My childhood was, uh, I thought, uh, delightful. Uh, we were, uh, a lower income family, but I wasn't even aware of, uh, higher incomes or low incomes. I had, uh, uh, a fine time. I was a, a strong young boy. I was athletic. Uh, my grandmother and grandfather owned a tenement house in which we lived and, uh, my grandmother kept a kosher home. Uh, my grandfather was a tailor, and very often he'd bring, uh, work home to the house, and on, on Sundays, uh, I might see him at his sewing machine, uh, hunched over the machine--he was a rather large man--uh, working to support, uh, his own family. And, uh, it was a six-family, uh, tenement house in Brooklyn, and, uh, four members of the family occupied four of the six apartments.

Q: Okay. How did you, uh, as a young man, a young boy, when did you start getting interested in sports?

A: Well, I was always interested in sports. Uh, I was always the fastest kid on the block. And I, I became interested in sports, uh, when I lived in the Bronx when I was five years of age. I remember, uh, the bigger kids on the block would, uh, have me race, uh, all the other kids around the block, uh, and, uh, the race was for them to run in one direction around the block and I'd run in the other direction, and the first one back at the starting corner would be the winner, and I could win handily. I could win all the time. I was easily the fastest kid on the

block, and my father was, uh, a runner also, of sorts. Uh, not formally as I was, but, uh, he was also probably the fastest kid in his neighborhood in Ia_i, Romania. Uh, I began doing more than running when, uh, at the age of six or seven, began to throw a ball around, a punch ball, or we'd play stick ball and punch ball and all the sports that, uh, kids played in those days. Uh, "Johnny on the pony," "chase the white horse," and games like that, in the Bronx. Then we moved to Brooklyn and, uh, when I went to, uh, uh, grade school I won, uh, uh, my, uh, first trophy which was a public school's athletic league pin--a small silver pin which I still have, uh, for doing a variety of things like, uh, running quickly against time, uh, standing broad jump, uh, the, uh, rope climbing, things like that.

Q: What other kinds of sports did you do?

A: Uh, I did all sports in season. I did, uh, join the basketball season, I shot baskets and played basketball. During the football season I played football. In the spring I, uh, played baseball. I swam in the summertime. I'd take a trolley car from our house in Brooklyn on Coney Island Avenue, and go, uh, to Coney Island--which might have been twenty minutes away by trolley--and swim. And, uh, I always ran. Uh, running was part of all those sports. And I continued to be the fastest kid around.

Q: Uh, at what point did your running become serious in the sense of joining track teams?

A: I think it became seri...uh, serious in junior high school when I won, uh, various field days, uh, where the school competed within itself and I would win the sixty-yard dash or the seventy-yard dash, and I'll never forget my homeroom teacher, uh, writing in, uh, the, uh, autograph book we had when we were graduated from grade school, at the end of the sixth year in school. Uh, he'd been a track man at Yale, and he was my homeroom teacher. And sometime around, uh, 1930 he wrote, "Be seeing you in the 1936 Olympics." And here I was, uh, maybe twelve years of age. And he wrote that; and I still have it at home.

Q: What happened, where did you choose to go to college? Where did you end up?

A: Well, I...I went to Syracuse University. I was, uh, a fairly well known high school athlete in New York. I played football for an undefeated, uh, city championship and state championship team and I was, uh, the star of the team. I was a tailback in a single-wing formation and, uh, I was a triple threat: I could pass, I could kick, and I could run; particularly run. And we defeated every other team on our schedule. Uh, beat a school called Roosevelt High School in the Bronx for the city championship, and we, uh, uh, were accorded the accolade of being the best team in New York State. We were invited to play in, uh, Miami against a Miami team, but, uh, the school, uh, forbade our going down to Miami because it was too far a trip and, uh, would interfere with our school work. But we were good and, uh, I was judged, uh, the most valuable player in New York at that time as a football player. And I, uh, competed in track and field, and I won city championships and state championships and, uh, a national scholastic championship and, uh, also played a season of basketball at James Madison High School in Brooklyn. So I had a, my childhood

was fun, uh, for me. My father had a tough time; those were depression years. Uh, his business failed. Uh, he went into bankruptcy; and, uh, the family had a difficult time.

Q: Did you, uh, feel that you were different in any way because you were Jewish? What was the, what did being Jewish mean to you?

A: Being Jewish, uh, meant going to Hebrew School. Being Jewish meant, uh, uh, studying for my bar mitzvah with, uh, an aging rabbi, with a long beard down to here, coming into the house and sitting along side of him while we went over my Maftir and Haftora. And, uh, being, uh, repelled by this old gentleman, because, uh, he had such terr...a terrible body odor about him. And I, I'd have to sit right along side of him; and we'd look at the same, uh, book, the same Hebrew book, and he would point out the phraseology to me. And, uh, it was very difficult doing that. I also found it, uh, even then as an eleven-year-old or twelve-year-old, uh, almost silly, memorizing Hebrew words and not knowing what those words meant. In those days, when a young man was bar mitzvahed, uh, he read the words but, uh, there was very little meaning. Because you didn't understand what the interpretation of the words were. Certainly you knew the Brocha [**NB:** blessings] and what they meant; and, uh, the Brocha for the wine and the Hamotzi and Shema, and all that. And you knew what those meant, but to read a paragraph in Hebrew: I could read the paragraph; I didn't know what the words meant. So I was, uh, a Jewish kid growing up in Brooklyn in a Jewish environment and a Jewish house. Uh, as I said my, uh, my grandparents, uh, kept a kosher home. My parents did not. Uh, I did not eat, uh, non-kosher food. Uh (laughter), uh, the first time I had pork I was at training table at Syracuse University my my freshman year--and my first meal, uh, my first lunch. And I said, uh, "Would somebody please pass the lamb chops down to me?" (Laughter) And they weren't lamb chops. And everyone started to laugh, because of course they were pork chops. And they were delicious.

Q: Tell me about that first year at Syracuse?

A: Uh, my first year at Syracuse after, uh, uh, my four great years in high school.... I met my wife in high school, and that was, uh, a marvelous opportunity; and, uh, we're still married after, uh, 50 years, going on 50 right now. Uh, we knew each other six years before we got married, though. Uh, but the high school years, uh, were, uh, filled with success in terms of athletics. I was always a fair student. I never had trouble with my grades. I was, there was no problem in my being eligible to compete in sports. In those days eligibility was required. You had to pass your subjects in order to play on the teams. And I had no problem doing that. I went to Syracuse University because a Jewish fraternity, Sigma Alpha Mu, the ADA chapter at Syracuse, uh, combined among its alumni to provide enough funds for me to go to Syracuse. My family certainly could not send me to Syracuse, because we didn't have the wherewithall, uh, didn't have anything close to the requirements to go to an away-college. Uh, but, uh, five Jewish men, uh, banded together to send me to Syracuse so that, uh, Syracuse would have Jewish representation on its sports teams--on the track team and on the football team. I was a well-known athlete, successful. And, uh, John Bahsha, who had played football at Syracuse, a Jew, Irving Rosenfeld, uh, Mort Starobin, who was an All-American

football player, uh, who was a fraternity brother.... They were all fraternity brothers. Walter Rose and, uh, Mitch Weill. Uh, those five men, uh, would, uh, send the money to Syracuse to pay for my tuition, and then I would work my way, uh, for, uh, my board. I waited...I waited on tables at Sims (ph) Hall up at Syracuse, and I used to brag that I was the fastest waiter in America because I was a track man and, uh, could serve very quickly. And, uh, I spent my first six months living in the wrestling room of the gym, uh, and...uh, because there was no place for me to live at the fraternity house. Uh...incoming freshmen couldn't live at the fraternity house according to the, uh, university rules. So I lived in the wrestling room of the gym with, uh, a teammate and classmate named Al Handler--another Jewish boy who was sent up with me to Syracuse by the same group of five. And, uh, three of them--young men who became my very close friends through their lives--uh, Charlie Heer from New Hope, Pennsylvania; and Bob Stewart from Rochester, New York, who couldn't spell a word; and, uh, a fellow named Bob Taylor who came out of Ohio. And, uh, as both, uh, Stuie--Stewart--and uh Charlie Heer told me, uh, I was the first Jew they ever met. We had lots of fun in the wrestling room of the gym.

Q: Sounds like it. When, uh, tell me about your getting involved in track that year at Syracuse University.

A: Well, uh, I had a reputation as a track athlete from high school and, uh, it was expected that I'd go out for the track team and, uh, so I did. Uh, I ran the first indoor season after my freshman football season. I played freshman football in the fall, which, uh, went right into the track season, indoor track, and I used to practice on an outdoor board track around the snow banks of Syracuse, New York and, uh, uh, and I was easily the best sprinter in the school at that time. We had a great quarter-miler at that time, a fellow named Eddie O'Brien, who was the national six-hundred yard champion. He too made the Olympic team in 1936 as a quarter-miler. And, uh, he and I were the two best runners in school. I was a sprinter and he was a middle-distance runner. And so I, uh, competed in the indoor track meets, uh, and I had some fair success. I, uh, won medals in the Melrose Games and the New York AC Meet and the, uh, uh, IC four A's, uh, at the, uh, Knights of Columbus Meet. Uh, I was invited down to run in the Sugar Bowl Track Meet, and, uh, I competed, uh, that freshman year, uh, successfully.

Q: _____ how did the Olympics come into the picture?

A: Well, after that, uh, uh, spring season of track and field where I ran, uh, inter...intramural competition, and I couldn't compete for the varsity in those years because, uh, uh, freshmen were ineligible for inter-collegiate sports in those years--you had to be in school for your freshmen year and then compete, uh, in varsity sports starting in your sophomore year. So I, uh, uh, I ran on the freshman meets and I won all the meets and I, uh, uh, set track records at Syracuse and at Cornell, where I ran in the indoor meet and, uh, various places. Uh, outdoors I began to win, uh, uh, more important races like the Metropolitan Senior Championships in New York, uh, where I beat a great black sprinter. I beat Ben Johnson for the first time. Ben John...not the same Ben Johnson of, uh, the 1988 Olympic games, but, uh, an earlier Ben

Johnson who ran for Columbia. And he was the world's fastest human indoors. He set a world's record for, uh, sixty yards indoors. I couldn't beat him at sixty, but I did beat him at a hundred. And after I beat him for the Senior Metropolitan Championships in New York, I realized I had a chance to make the Olympic Team. Because Ben was one of the best sprinters in the...in the world, and beating him, uh, made me think that I had a chance for the team. And, uh, having, uh, won that race, I was invited to compete in the, uh, Regional Championships for the final Olympic Trials. The Regional Trials took place up at Harvard, uh, and I won up there as well. I beat Johnson again up there, along with, uh, oh, uh, uh, Billy Hopkins of Virginia¹ and, uh, uh, a fellow named, uh, Edgar Mason of Pittsburgh.² And, uh, I was the best sprinter in the Aast. Jesse Owens won in the Middle West, and, uh, Ralph Metcalfe won in the Far, uh, Middle West, and, uh, Frank Wykoff won on the Pacific coast. And by qualifying for the final in those regional meets, I qualified for the Olympic Final Trials at Randall's Island [Stadium], in New York City. When they were held, uh, uh, I, uh, finished third in one trial heat to qualify for the final. And then, in the final, I ran...(laughter), uh, in the final; we drew for lanes--they hand out a pill or, uh, uh, round marbles which have numbers on them. And you reach into a box and you pick out the the marble, and that's your lane number. And I had lane number five; and, uh, as I, with my little trowel, garden trowel, began to dig my starting hole.... In those days, you didn't use starting blocks. You used, you dug a hole. And I looked in lane number six, and there was Ralph Metcalfe, the world's fastest human in '33 and '34 and '35. And on my left, was Jesse Owens. So here I was in lane number five; and lane number four was Jesse and in lane number six was Ralph, which was just as well. And, uh, we raced, and, uh, uh, they won. (Laughter) I thought I finished third, but, uh, the judges thought otherwise. Uh, as a matter of fact, uh, they gave me fifth, finally. But in films of the race--and there was no photo finish in those years--uh, Bud Greenspan, the Olympic cinema photographer has films of that particular race. And, uh, I clearly finished fourth, but they gave Foy Draper of Southern California³ fourth, and me fifth. And I thought I was in a dead heat with Frank Wykoff, who finished third. Uh, as a matter of fact, right after the race, Ted Husing--the great broadcaster--uh, called all the sprinters over, introduced Jesse, interviewed him; interviewed Ralph, who finished second; and then introduced me, Marty Glickman, who finished third, the kid from Brooklyn. He said, "Oops, just a moment...uh, they're placing Frank Wykoff third. And here's Frank." And interviewed Frank. "And, uh, now here's Marty. Oops! Just a moment. Uh, they put Foy Draper fourth. And now Marty is fifth." Which was still all right with me, although I was slightly disappointed. I was on the team. I was going to be on the relay team. Uh, Foy Draper and Frank Wykoff were out of Southern California, the University of Southern California. And their coach was, uh, a power in the track world; and I remember his pushing his way in among the officials as they determined the order of the finish. And, uh, where I was originally placed third, uh, suddenly Wykoff was placed third and I was relegated to fourth.

¹ William B. Hopkins, from the University of Virginia.

² Edgar D. Mason, Jr., from the University of Pittsburgh.

³ **NB:** University of Southern California.

And, uh, Cromwell argued the point with the officials around him; and, uh, I was placed fifth, and Draper was placed fourth. Uh, it's...uh, I sound as though I'm making excuses; but the fact is that the film that Bud has clearly showed I finished fourth, at least. And, uh, it was as close to a dead heat with Frank as could be, and there was no photo finish. The...the camera was placed at about the eighty-yard mark, so you couldn't really tell the precise order of finish. But there was no question about my beating Foy Draper. And I beat Foy afterwards in several other races. So I...I...I made the team.

Q: You made the team and, uh.... Hold it one second. TECHNICAL CONVERSATION. Okay. You made the team. Tell me about the team.

A: I made the team; and, uh, at the time there was talk of a boycott. Uh, a boycott because of Nazi Germany. And the games were being held in Berlin, of course. The games were awarded to Berlin. The city of Berlin, mind you, not the German Republic. But the games are awarded to cities and not to nations. They were awarded to Berlin in 1931--before Hitler, a couple of years before Hitler came into power. And there was talk about a boycott. The boycott talk was not nearly as severe nor, as, uh, it resulted in 1988, in a complete boycott. But, uh, there was talk about it. And, uh, no one ever suggested to me that I don't go. Uh, no one. Uh, I wanted to go for two reasons. I wanted to go because as an athlete, it was the goal of any young athlete, uh, American athlete, a Jewish-American athlete, to make the team. That was a goal that we all strove for. Secondly, and I stress that it was second, uh, I wanted to show the world, the world that I knew, that a Jew could, uh, compete and do just as well as anyone else, and perhaps better. And, uh, both Sam Stoller⁴ and I made the team. Sam finished sixth in that race. I was judged to be fifth, and we both made the team. We were the only two Jews on the Olympic track team. Uh, there were two other Jews on the overall squad. Sam Balter was on the basketball squad--a Jew from California; and, uh, Herman Goldberg--a Jew from Rochester--uh, was on the baseball exhibition team. And, uh, Herman and I became good friends while we were overseas. So, uh, I wanted to make the team for those two reasons: first, because I was selfish as an athlete and I wanted to succeed. I wanted to win. And secondly, because as a Jew I wanted to show that, uh, Jews were just as good as anyone else and perhaps better.

Q: Tell me about the process. Just take _____

A: Uh, having, uh, qualified for the team, uh, we spent, uh, two or three days, uh, being fitted with Olympic uniforms. And there was a great deal of, uh, jubilation amongst my friends and my family that I had made the team. And, uh, my father was able to gather together--along with my mother--a total of \$30 to give me, so that I could go to Europe and have some spending money. Thirty bucks was what we could raise. Uh, and so we left; and we left on the S.S. Manhattan. It took, uh, five days to get to, uh, uh, England, and, uh, we had a wonderful time aboard the boat. I'd never been aboard a ship like that before. And, uh, we

⁴ From the University of Michigan.

trained lightly on the boat, because there was no running facility. We jogged on the track. We did exercises and things like that. And, uh, the trip was thoroughly enjoyable. And we arrived in Hamburg, and then took the train from Hamburg to Berlin--uh, perhaps a two-hour ride. When we arrived at the Bahnhof [**Ger:** Railway Station] in Berlin, there was a huge crowd waiting for the American team. We were the big powerful American team; and newspaper men and photographers and camera and newsreel people, photographers of all sorts, were waiting for us. Perhaps, uh, hundreds of them. I don't recall. But there was a huge crowd gathered. And, uh, we were all in uniform. And as we milled around on the station platform after getting off the train, uh, I was accosted by a young man in street clothes. And, uh, looked to be a couple of years older than I--smaller than me, with a wisp of a mustache. And, uh, he said, "You're Marty Glickman, aren't you?" And I said, "Yes." He said, "You're Jewish, aren't you?" And taken back a little bit, I..., "Yes, I am." He was obviously an American, because I could tell the way he spoke and the way he was dressed and the way he was familiar with me--and I with him--in a moment or two. He was an American. Uh, he said, "I'm Jewish, also." I said, "What are you doing here?" He says, "I'm going to med school here." I said, "You're going to med school in Berlin?" He said, "Yes. I could not get into an American med school, and I'm in med school here in Berlin." I asked him how things were. He says, "Well, in Berlin, particularly now during the Olympic period, uh, there was no overt sign of any antisemitism at all." He said in the smaller towns, uh, there might be signs of antisemitism. There might be some overt acts, uh, but, uh, he didn't feel it. Uh, not in Berlin. And, uh, at that time, I rationalized that things in Berlin were pretty much the way they were in America. In America, as a young college student, I was aware of the fact that there were quotas at schools-- particularly at graduate schools--uh, that there were clubs, uh, Jews could not get into, restaurants they could not go to, resorts that they were not welcome at. And, uh, there were overt and covert signs of un...of antisemitism in America. And it was my feeling, as an Olympic athlete there in Berlin, that Berlin was like the United States in that respect. Uh, I was aware slightly of the Nuremberg Laws, uh, but they were not omnipresent. Uh, they were not vocal. They were not described to me. Somewhere I had read of the Nuremberg Laws. I had never studied them. I never knew about them in any detail. Uh, I knew there was antisemitism in Germany. I felt antisemitism occasionally in the United States, even in New York; but, uh, there was a similarity it seemed to me between Berlin when I was there in '36 and New York. We, uh, were taken to the Olympic Village. Uh, I felt no compunction at all about being a Jew in Germany at that time, because, uh, I didn't necessarily look Jewish--as though anybody could "look" Jewish. Uh, I was, uh, an American athlete in Berlin. And there was, uh, no feeling, I had no sense of, uh, animosity, no feeling of, uh, indignation. I was just an American athlete in Berlin, in the Olympic Village. And we began to train for the games.

Q: Tell me about that training. Tell me about your teammates first. Who were they and what were they like?

A: Well, as a sprinter, naturally I trained with the sprinters. And they were, uh, Jesse Owens, who was a marvelous man. Uh, one of the smoothest athletes in...in function I've ever seen. Uh, perhaps the smoothest. Ralph Metcalfe, who was an experienced track athlete. He won

silver medals in 1932--should have won gold, but he made some mistakes. And, uh, the officials made some mistakes with Ralph, also. They had him run in a two hundred-meter, uh, race. And his lane around a turn was eight feet longer than the other runners in that race, so he finished, uh, third. As he came off the turn and down the straight-away, he was shocked to find himself as far back as he was. Uh, again, films prove that he was given an incorrect starting line, but that sometimes happens with, uh, some of the track officials. So we we trained together: Owens, Metcalfe, uh, Frank Wykoff--who'd been on three, uh, two previous Olympic teams. He'd been on the relay teams in 1928 and in 1932, had retired, and then, uh, came back to make the 1936 Olympic team. There was Foy Draper, uh, a student of Southern California. There was Sam Stoller, a student at, uh, University of Michigan; and there was Mack Robinson--a great two hundred-meter runner, uh, not nearly as good in the one hundred-meter run. At a hundred meters, he finished seventh in that final Olympic trial; and he finished second to Jesse in the two hundred-meter Olympic final. He won the Silver medal. Mack Robinson is Jackie Robinson's older brother, and not nearly as well known. Uh, he didn't play baseball except as, uh...a, uh...a youngster. Was a good football player, uh, Mack was. But he was completely overshadowed by his brother, Jackie, in later years. But those were the seven track men. Uh, and we spent a good deal of time together; practicing together, living near each other in...in the same, uh, Olympic, uh, uh, building--a one-story building with perhaps twenty rooms in it. And, uh, uh, each room had, uh, two beds; and I roomed with my Syracuse teammate, Eddie O'Brien⁵, a four hundred-meter runner. He was on the four...uh, sixteen hundred relay--the four-by-four hundred-meter relay. I was on the four-by-one hundred-meter relay. And because we were team mates at Syracuse, we roomed together in the same room. Uh, Eddie died a number of years ago. Uh, Sam Stoller and I were friends. We knew we were, uh, fellow Jews. We made nothing about it. Uh, you know, we were just two of the guys. Uh, he was not, um, closer to me than, uh, Foy Draper was, or Eddie O'Brien was, or Frank Wykoff was. He was just one of the boys, and I was one of the boys. Uh, I was younger than most of the guys. I...I guess I was...I was the second youngest man on the team. I was eighteen; and a hop, step and jumper from LSU named Bobby Brown⁶ was the youngest young man. He was seventeen years old. Uh, and Sam was a couple of years older than I--Sam Stoller, a couple of years older than I. A few days before, three days before the, uh, trials in the relay--to keep the three sprinters sharp who had not competed in the one hundred-meter race--as, uh, Owens, Metcalfe and Wykoff had competed; and they finished first, second and fourth. Uh, a Dutchman named Oosendork (ph) from Holland was third, a shoulder ahead of Frank Wykoff. Uh, to keep, uh, Sam and me and Foy Draper sharp, we ran a one hundred-meter run in the Olympic Village under race conditions with a German starter. "Auf die Plätze, fertig," and then the gun would sound. Uh, "on your marks, get set, go." "Auf die Plätze, fertig," and, uh, uh, the gun. And we raced, the three of us did, with judges at the finish line. And Sam won the race. I was

⁵ Edward T. O'Brien.

⁶ William Brown, from Baker High School in Baker, Louisiana, competed in the Running Hop, Step and Jump in the 1936 Olympics.

second, about a shoulder back; and Foy Draper was third. Three days after that, uh, a special meeting was called in the Olympic Village amongst the seven sprinters. The head track coach, Lawson Robertson of Pennsylvania, and the assistant head track coach, Dean Cromwell of Southern California; and in that meeting, the morning of the day we were supposed to run, Sam and I were told, with the others present, that we were going to be replaced by Jesse Owens and Ralph Metcalfe. And the reason we were being replaced was that the Germans were hiding their best sprinters and saving them to upset the American team in the four hundred-meter relay. Uh, when I heard that, being a brash eighteen year old, I said, "Hey, Coach, it's not possible. In order to be a world class sprinter, you must run in world-class competition. You can't hide world-class sprinters." Nevertheless, said the two coaches, "there is a strong rumor to that effect and so Jesse and Ralph are going to replace you and Sam." There was no question that Jesse Owens or Ralph Metcalfe were faster than Sam and I, by a yard. Unquestionably. But we had practiced passing the baton for the two weeks we were in Europe, uh, during the course of the games, the four hundred-meter relay coming near, near the end of the track competition. We'd practiced passing the baton amongst, uh, uh, Foy Draper, uh, Frank Wykoff, Sam Stoller and myself. And, uh, Jesse and Ralph had not even touched the baton until they ran that afternoon. Jesse said in that meeting, "Coach, I've won my three gold medals: the hundred, the two hundred and the long jump. I've had it. I'm tired. Let Marty and Sam run. They deserve it." And Dean Cromwell, the Southern California coach, pointed his finger at him and said, "You'll do as you're told!" And in those days, Black athletes did as they were told. So did all athletes, for that matter. So Jesse volunteered not to run. I'd always loved the man and respected him throughout my complete association with him; but for that moment...from, from that moment on, I mean, I practically revered the guy, for volunteering not to run. But, uh, the coach said, "Do as you're told." And, uh, the relay was composed of Jesse Owens, Ralph Metcalfe, uh, Foy Draper and, uh, Frank Wykoff. Unusual, too, in that they had Jesse Owens leading off. He was not the best starter. And they had Frank Wykoff of Southern California cross the finish line. 'Cause he was from Southern California, and he was white. Uh, Foy Draper ran third. Ralph Metcalfe ran second. So the two Black men ran first and second; and by the time Foy Draper got the baton, they were twelve to fifteen yards out in front. In that meeting, being as fresh as I was, I said, "Coach, we won that race, no matter who runs, by fifteen yards." And we did win by fifteen yards. The Germans didn't finish second or third. They finished fourth. They were completely out of it. A fellow named Eric Boehmeyer was their best sprinter. I mentioned that he finished fifth in the final of the one hundred-meter run. In post-Olympic competition, in which I competed, I beat Boehmeyer, and he was the best they had. I also beat Wykoff in Paris, in a track meet held in Paris. And, uh, I'd beaten Draper just a few days previously, anyhow. And so had Sam beaten Draper. If Sam, I and Wykoff ran three races, there could be three different winners. We were that close. Uh, we were good. We were world class sprinters. Uh, all three of us could beat Foy, Foy Draper; but he ran on the relay. We did not.

Q: Why?

A: Why? Uh, mostly because of antisemitism. The Blacks were winning everything, or virtually

everything--uh, the one hundred, the two hundred, the four hundred, the eight hundred, the high jump and the long jump were won by Black athletes. And it was terribly embarrassing for the Nazi hierarchy who gathered every day in the Olympic stadium. Hitler flanked by Göring and Goebbels and Himmler and Streicher, and the rest of that horrible entourage, uh, were there every day watching the events. And after Blacks would win, they'd get up and leave. Uh, they'd see the competition, but then they would go. And, uh, it's my belief that Avery Brundage, who was chief of the American Olympic, uh, Team,⁷ uh, didn't want to further embarrass the Nazis in that myth of Nazi Aryan supremacy by having Jews stand on the winning podium before a hundred and twenty thousand cheering people--Germans mostly--and the world's press and the world's radio coverage of it. There's no question we would have won. Uh, the only way we could have lost is to have dropped the baton during the race--always a possibility, but the likelihood of that happening is really remote because we were experienced runners. And, uh, we practiced assiduously, and, uh, would have won the race handily. It developed later on that I ran in a four hundred yard relay with Wykoff, Owens, Metcalfe, myself, uh, in, uh, a meet in London at White City Stadium. We set a world's record for four hundred yards, a record which still stands. Uh, not many people run four hundred yard relays anymore. But, uh, we didn't run on the, uh, on the American team. We should have, of course.

Q: When you talk about the coaches, you had mentioned another reason when we were....

A: Uh, Dean Cromwell was the head coach of the [University of] Southern California Olympic, uh, track team and the assistant head coach of the Olympic team. He wanted to make sure that his runners competed. He wanted to make sure that, uh, Wykoff ran not only in the one hundred-meter dash, in which he placed fourth, but Foy Draper was to run on the relay as well. Uh, Draper, who was beaten by, uh, Sam and me just a couple of days previous. The...the...the four of us should have run together--uh, Draper and Wykoff and Stoller and myself. That's the way we practiced passing the baton for the several weeks we were in Germany at the Olympic Village, practicing for the relay. We'd have won the race handily. That's the way the relay should have been. Uh, Mack Robinson was competing in the two hundred-meter run; and the two hundred and the four hundred-meter relay came at approximately...on approximately the same days or series of days. So that Mack would be quite busy running in the two hundred meter-relay trials, uh, uh, quarter finals, semi-finals and finals--in which he finished second. And Jesse also was quite busy during that time. Jesse did not want to run that four hundred-meter relay. And he volunteered, as I said, not to run. He was tired. After the Olympic games were ended, he came straight home--with the exception of that one track meet in in, uh, England, in which I told you he ran the relay on which I also competed. And, uh, he just wanted to get back to the States. He was tired. He was beat, 'cause he had been, you know, running virtually every day. But as I said, he was told to run and so he ran. The coach of, uh, Southern California was Dean Cromwell; and he

⁷ Brundage was President of the American Olympic Committee and of the Amateur Athletic Union.

was, uh, uh, an officious person, who later became an "America First,"⁸ uh, had no Blacks on his track team. It's remarkable [that] even in those years, when Blacks were so dominant in track and field and Southern California--USC--had the best college track team in America, there was not one Black athlete on the USC track team. All white. Uh, Dean Cromwell apparently was a bigot. Being an "American First," he would have to be. Uh, Lawson Robertson, the head coach, was an older man. Uh, had a severe limp, walked with a cane. Uh, I think he was dominated by Cromwell. He was still his own man. He was the head coach of the University of Pennsylvania, but he was an older person. He might have been in his sixties at that time. I don't know exactly how old he he was. The day following the trial heats, when the Germans qualified but were well out of contention, walking across the campus on the, uh, Olympic Village I heard a voice calling to me, and I turned. It was Lawson Robertson, the head coach, perhaps, uh, fifty, sixty yards away, uh, waving to me; and I jogged over to him. Uh, I didn't wait for him to limp over to me with his cane. And he said, "Marty," he said, "I want to apologize to you. I made a terrible mistake." And he apologized. "You should have run on the relay." And so he apologized. Dean Cromwell never said a word. Avery Brundage never said a word. Whereas my firm belief that, uh, Cromwell's desire to have his men on the team--which could have been met anyhow--and the antisemitism I engendered by, uh, uh, people on the Olympic Team, led by Avery Brundage, uh, prevented the two Jews from standing on that winning podium in front of a huge crowd and, uh, being acclaimed as the best four hundred-meter relay runners in the world. That was the reason.

Q: What about Brundage? What did you know of Brundage, if anything, at that time?

A: Brundage didn't speak to athletes. Uh, Brundage, uh, uh.... As you probably saw, motion pictures and still shots of Brundage smiling happily in the company of Adolf Hitler and Hermann Göring and people like that. Uh, he was, uh, uh, a stern, big... uh, uh, uh, obnoxious is what I'm looking to say. But, uh, in addition to that, uh, he was a truculent gentlemen. Uh, a dictatorial kind of person. Ultimately, he became, uh, president of the International Olympic Committee. At that time, he was president of the U.S. Olympic Committee. Uh, I never talked to him; as I say, he didn't talk to athletes. I never accosted him. Uh, perhaps I was, uh, fearful of accosting him. Uh, he was, uh, an officious, stern, uh, aggressive individual. And, uh, he liked to be seen in the company of all the powers that be. It was he also who decreed...decreed that Eleonor Holm be thrown off the team because she drank champagne on the, uh, uh, on the ship going over. And, uh, his word was law. I've seen him upon occasion literally brush aside people who would walk up to him. If he were walking across the infield of a...of a track, and a newspaper man--and I saw this myself--uh, wanted to talk to him, he'd literally shoulder him aside as he walked. And kept right on walking. Uh, he was very difficult...a difficult person to be with. At least, as far as the

⁸ The America First Committee, of which Avery Brundage was to be a founder, was an isolationist movement which served as an umbrella for anti-British, anti-French, pro-German and antisemitic groups.

athletes were concerned. Uh, but as I say, I never talked to him.

Q: What did you do after that defeat? Where did you go from here, after that not being allowed to run? What happened?

A: After, uh, the relay... There was the...the trial heats, which we won handily; and, uh, the final, which we also won handily--as I say, between twelve and fifteen yards out in front. Uh, uh, almost anyone could have run on our relay team, and we would have won. Uh, I was angered, uh, and determined that come 1940--four years hence from the '36 games--uh, I'd be back and win it all. I'd win the hundred, then two hundred and, uh, run on the relay team as well. But 1940 never came. The war broke out in 1939, and so there was no opportunity to, uh, show what I could do, uh, in the Olympic games. And the games didn't resume, of course, until 1948; and that was long after I was...had stopped competing. However, I was fortunate in that, uh, I had other interests. Uh, football in particular. The Games wound up in August; and we toured Europe for a short period of time. And I ran in...in England on that four hundred-yard relay. I ran in, uh, in, uh, Scotland, and, uh, I ran in Paris. Uh, I ran, uh, a number of places; and, uh, then came right back to the States and went right up to Syracuse to play football for Syracuse University. And my interest, uh, was, uh, inundated by, uh, the practice workouts and starting of classes at school, and all that sort of thing. And, uh, the Olympic games didn't fade away from me, by any matter; uh, but it, uh... uh, the other interests I had sublimated to a great extent, uh, what took place in the the summer of 1936. And, of course, I had 1940 to look forward to as well. I did well as a football player at Syracuse. I became a...a broadcaster as a result of, uh, my football playing experiences. Uh, in my junior year at Syracuse, I had a particularly good day against Cornell. We were unbeaten, Syracuse was. We were 2 and 0; and Cornell had beaten Penn State and Colgate and...uh, Columbia, I think. Uh, either Columbia or Pennsylvania. They were 3 and 0. They were a national power in those days, Cornell was. We played at Shoelkopf Field at, uh, uh, Cornell, at Ithaca; and, uh, we beat them. Upset them 14 to 6. And I scored both touchdowns. I ran a punt back for one touchdown. I bucked over for another. I intercepted two passes. I, uh, made a couple of, uh, touchdown-saving tackles. Best day I ever had by far on the football field. And the following day, because of the publicity upstate...uh, Upstate New York, and throughout the country as well, uh, I received a phone call from a local haberdasher who introduced himself to me on the phone. He said, "Marty, frankly, I want to cash in on your publicity. I want you [to] do a radio broadcast for me." I said, "You don't want me. I'm nervous. I stutter. I stammer. I've never been on the air." He said, "I'll pay you \$15.00 a broadcast." So I stopped stuttering and I went on the air. And (laughter) that's how I started my broadcast career; and I continue that since that time on. I was pretty bad, but, uh, I worked at it.

Q: What did you do during the war?

A: During the war I was, uh, a Marine Corps lieutenant. I served in the Marshall Islands, uh, on places like, uh, Kwajalein and Eniwetok, Majuro and Enjebi and so on. I was a night fighter controller. I was a lieutenant in the Marine Corps. And, uh, the Olympic situation was far, far

away. I might tell you a story about, uh, uh, the war, though. I...I mentioned running in a track meet in Paris. It was a triangular meet among, uh, Japanese athletes, French athletes, and American athletes. And, uh, we went to the starting line to dig our starting holes again with this trowel, and on my left was a fellow from Japan named Suzuki. I recognized him, because he had run in the one hundred-meter races. He was, uh, beaten in the semi-finals, didn't qualify for the final. And, uh, as we dug our starting holes, we glanced at each other and smiled at each other. I noticed his warm, lustrous brown eyes. And, uh, then we, uh, finished preparing for the race. We shook hands. I shook hands with the Frenchman along side. Frank Wykoff was the other American on the race. I got off to a real good start, and I won the race. Uh, Wykoff was second and Suzuki finished third. I jogged back to the starting line; and felt a tap on my shoulder as I jogged back for my warm-up clothes. And I turned, and I saw Suzuki. And his arm was outstretched and we shook hands, and again I noticed these warm brown lustrous eyes. And he was my friend, I was his friend, and, uh, uh, we had just competed against each other for these ten, ten and a half seconds at a hundred meters. And that was it. We couldn't speak each other's language. In the opening days of World War II, when the Japanese were landing on Luzon, I read that a Japanese Olympic athlete, Lieutenant Suzuki, had been killed in those landings. And I, an American Marine, cried for this Japanese soldier. I actually bawled. And, uh, it's just an indication of what the Olympic games and international athletics can do for an individual. I learned, uh, uh, that the other athletes from France and England and Hungary--and, uh, the athletes from all over the world--were just like me, and I was just like them. We were the same. We had the same interests. We had the same love of sport. Uh, we had the same respect for each other. And it was a wonderful experience, having been there.

Q: Tell me about an incident that you described earlier in the New York Athletic Club. And when that took place.

A: When I came back to the States, uh, I played as...uh, a season of football at Syracuse my sophomore year. And, uh, towards the end of the season, uh, when I began training for track, I was invited to race in the Sugar Bowl Track Meet. At that time, the Sugar Bowl had other activities besides the, uh, football game itself. And they had the track meet. And I was invited down to the Sugar Bowl; and I trained on the boardwalk at Coney Island in mid-winter, in December. And it was just too rough to train there. And I encountered a friend of mine, who ran for the New York AC--a fellow named Eddie O'Sullivan--uh, a sprinter. And, uh, I told him about my difficulty in working out; and he says, "Why don't you join me down at the AC, and practice with me on the indoor track there?" I said, "That would be great, Eddie! I'll join you on such and such a day." And so on that day, I took the subway into Manhattan from Brooklyn with my little satchel and I walked into the New York AC. I was walking across the lobby to the elevators to go to where the indoor track was, on one of the upper floors of the Athletic Club; and, uh, I was stopped by Paul Pilgrim, the director of athletics at the New York AC. He knew me, and I knew him. "Uh, what are you doing here, Marty?" I said, "Well, I've come down to work out with, uh...with Eddie O'Sullivan. He's asked me to workout with him. I'm training for the Sugar Bowl Track Meet." And, uh, Paul Pilgrim, this mature adult, uh, said, uh, "I'm afraid you can't, Marty." I said, "Well...well,

why not?" He said, "Well, there's no room upstairs." I said, "But I've just got my little satchel, and I'll...I'll share Eddie's locker." "I'm afraid you can't go up there, Marty. You can't work out here." "Oh. Uh, okay, Mr. Pilgrim." And I turned and I walked out. I got back on the subway. And it was then I realized that because I was Jewish I could not work out at the New York Athletic Club. And that was perhaps the second overt sign of antisemitism that I...I felt; the first, of course, being in the Olympic Games itself, and, uh, not being allowed to run there and not being allowed to work out, mind you, at the New York AC. I've, uh, been unhappy with the New York AC ever since. Oh, I...I...I ran in the Sugar Bowl Track Meet, and I, I won down there. So, uh, it didn't make that much difference.

Q: I'd like to know a little bit more about your teammates, particularly about Jesse Owens. You maintained a friendship with him, I understand?

A: Uh, early on, in 1936, uh, Jesse was, uh, almost, uh, an icon, uh, of athletics. And I looked up to him, uh, as any young man might. Uh, after we were together on the team, uh, we were friends. We became fairly close. Uh, I visited him at his home in Chicago. Uh, I saw him at various sports functions through the years. He and I became good friends. Uh, we did several broadcasts together; uh, particularly on Home Box Office, where I was, uh, the sports director, and I had Jesse come in and do some programs. Particularly the, uh, uh, Bud Greenspan Olympiad series, where Jesse was host--except for one program that I hosted, in which Jesse was the star of the program. And it wouldn't do to have Jesse introduce himself, so, uh, he and I talked on this program. And, uh...but we saw each other regularly and frequently. Our wives knew each other. Uh, I had lunch with Jesse at his apartment in Chicago with Ruth, his wife. When Jesse died in 1980, uh, I was the only white teammate of Jesse's at his funeral. Which shocked the Hell out of me. I mean, there were many many white athletes on the team; but the only athlete, white athlete, who showed up for his funeral was me. All the Black athletes were there. Uh, but, uh, I was the only white athlete. And, uh, I was, uh, shocked and I was pleased that I was there; but also, uh, astounded by the lack of other individuals not being there at his funeral. Uh, I worked for five years with the Jesse Owens Foundation, from '80 through '85. Went back to Berlin for the first time in '85, to the Olympic Stadium, uh, to help prepare for the celebration of Jesse Owen's golden anniversary of his winning those four gold medals. Uh, he had died in 1980. I went back in '85 along with, uh, uh, two men--Jim McDonald and Herb Douglas--also of the Foundation, to help prepare for the anniversary celebration at a track meet to be held in 1986--fifty years after, uh, Jesse won in the same stadium. The Olympic stadium still stands. And, uh, I went to the stadium with my two colleagues; and, uh, excused myself to walk down into the stadium proper and walk on the track to that area which...uh, where I was... where I should have run and didn't. And I walked along that stretch of a hundred meters or so, and I stopped and looked across at the stands, and saw where Hitler and Göring and Goebbels and Streicher and Himmler and Hess and all those people sat. And right along side of that was where I sat, where the athletes sat who were not competing; and our section was along side of where Hitler's private box was. And suddenly, a wave of anger swept over me so that I thought I was going to pass out. I began to cuss and fume, used every dirty word I know, out loud. Uh, to the effect that how could those dirty bastards do this to any eighteen year-old kid, or any

athlete. Keep them from competing in the Olympic Games. And after three or four or five minutes--however long it was--I finally calmed down and realized that I'd kept all that anger bottled up for forty-nine years. I hadn't been back to Berlin in all that time, and certainly not back to the stadium. And, uh, I felt purged for the first time of that anger, which, uh, gnawed at me probably all those years. And, uh, the track meet was held the following year, and celebrating Jesse's fiftieth anniversary of the four gold medals he had won.

Q: Okay. All right. Thank you very much.