

John Woodruff Interview (5-15-96)  
Tape 1 of 3

(beep)

Q: I would like you to begin by telling me your name, date of birth, and where you were born.

A: My name is John Woodruff. My date of birth is July the 5<sup>th</sup>, 1915. And I was born in a small town about 50 miles south of Pittsburgh. The name of this town is Connellsville, Pennsylvania. It's spelled c-o-n-n-e-l-l-s-v-i-l-l-e. It's just a small town right, right in the mountains, about 30, about 32 miles from, from Morgantown, West Virginia. That's where I was born.

Q: Tell me a little bit about what it was like growing up, your family.

A: Well, I grew up in a uh well it was a poor family. We didn't have too much you see. And of course there was a lot of members of my family. My, my mother birthed twelve children. I was the eleventh child. Well then, it was eight girls and there was four boys. Now all the girls grew up to be adults except one that which was the twelfth child and she, and she died in infancy. Two of my brothers died in infancy, two of my older brothers. And one brother got killed hunting when he was sixteen years of age. And that's how, that's, that's how my family, family was set up. Cause my mother married when she was nineteen and my father was twenty-two. They had this large family which was too many children, too many children. But they made it.

Q: What do you remember about your family life and how you lived and what you did and in general?

A: Well uh of course my father was a laborer. He dug coal. He carried hod on, on construction work. He worked in the coke ovens there in, in uh, in my home town. And that's how he made his living. Cause my mother she did days work for some of the families there in, in the area in which we, where we were living. And that's how, that's how we survived. As I said before, we didn't have too much, but we managed to make it under the circumstances.

Q: Do you have good memories of your childhood, of some of the values that were instilled in you?

A: Well you see my, both of my parents they weren't, they weren't very well educated you see. In fact my father went, I think he went to about the eighth grade and my mother went to about fourth grade. And uh they didn't put too much stress. There was no, was never at any time that my parents would sit down

and discuss education. Because they didn't have much education themselves. And the only thing that they were concerned about was me going to school uh keeping up my attendance in school to keep the truant officer from bothering them. That was, that, that was, that was their extent as, as far as my education was concerned.

Q: But you went forward with it. You were interested.

A: Yes, well, of course, coming along, coming along in the early grades and well, of course, I, I used to play truant ever, once in a while, to, to go to the movies with a friend of mine. And uh but we never, you know, we never got into any real, real trouble, you know, uh per se. and, of course, I continued to um, not to get ahead of my story, I quit school when I was sixteen. See back there, you know, the kids when they reached the age of sixteen, they wanted to quit school and, and go to work in the factory. There was a couple of factories. There was a box factory and there was a glass factory. Well I quit when I was sixteen, but I couldn't get a job because they discriminated against blacks in the, in the, in those industries. So I, I, I sat around for a while. I guess about a year. And I decided well I better go on back to school. So I went back to school, starting in, in my freshman year. And then I tried to join the Navy. Well the Navy had a quota for, for, for blacks. And the quota was filled. And, of course I wasn't interested in the Army at that particular time because I had a couple brother-in-laws who, who was, who had gone into the Army and, of course, they'd told me some stories that was, wasn't too pleasant. So I didn't have any interest in the Army. So I continued on, continued on in school. I completed my freshman year and my sophomore year, and then I went into the city school, cause my freshman and sophomore year, they didn't have any athletics in the school at all, which I could participate in. So I went into the city school in my junior year, and I went out for football. Well I stayed out for football up until a week before the first game, and my mother made me quit because I was getting home too late to after pract uh football practice to take care of my chores around the house. So the, the line coach of the football was, was a track coach of the school and he noticed that I, I had uh quite a bit of speed when he had us running wind sprints up and down the field in our football uniform. So he asked me to come out for track. So that's how I got started in track. And, of course, I, I started progressing quite well in, in uh my track activities and he told me don't, don't go back, go out for football anymore, because he was afraid I might get hurt. So that's how I started my track career.

Q: Prior to that had you been real active in sports in your other schools or at home?

A: Well, when you, I was active like on, on like we played a little sandlot, sandlot baseball uh and uh softball, those type of sports. I nev, I was never interested in basketball. I tried, tried it but I never, never could uh never become real interested in basketball at all see. But softball and uh baseball was the thing, was the two sports that I was quite interested in.

Q: You mentioned a little bit about certain doors that were closed to you as a black person. Did you face a lot of racism in Pennsylvania? Were you aware of it?

A: Well there was some, it was some, there was some around that area see cause I grew up in a, in, in a, in an, in an environment where there's all whites. There was only two black families, my family and another family. All my playmates, all my schoolmates were white kids. So I didn't, well of course there was, there was, it was times when uh we'd, we'd get into fights with some of maybe one of the kids maybe called me nigger. And, of course, naturally, that, that was, that was a fighting word see. So we'd fight. Next day we're friends again. That's the way it was.

Q: So you were used to that banter. Were there other experiences, personal experiences that were difficult for you as a black person? At that time.

A: Well there was, there was, there was some, there was some, there was some difficulty in terms like in trying to get little jobs around that area see. They discriminated against, against the blacks. But that was, that was about all, you see. That was about all.

Q: Now you got active in sports and track. Did you experience racism in sports?

A: No. No. Not at all. Not at all. My high school coach who, who uh who uh coached me in track was a very fine man. His name is Joseph Lourou. He was a wonderful man and he was a wonderful coach. And he taught me a number of things that I did, that I wasn't taught at home, you know, about how to conduct myself. Of course I was doing a little smoking at the time. He told me to give that up, which I did. And he said if I, if I continued doing well in my track activities I had a chance to go to college. Well that was just unheard of in my family of going to college, you see. Because no, no, no member of my family finished high school. So I dropped all my little habits that I had that was, that would, would be detrimental to me achieving my goal or my goals. And I ended up getting a scholarship to the University of Pittsburgh after I was graduated in 1935.

Q: How important were sports to you? And why?

A: Well it was, well, of course, at that particular time, it was very important to me because it enabled me.

Q: I need you to say that again, at that time sports were important to me.

A: Well at that time sports were important to me and particularly the, the track activity type of sports, because that enabled me to get a scholarship to college. And that was the only way that I could go to college was through athletics. My parents didn't have the money to send me to school. I fact I didn't even have

when I, when I received the scholarship at the University of Pittsburgh. I didn't even have transportation to get to school. And the sheriff of my home town had his chauffeur to drive me to school. That's how I got to school in the, in the fall of '35. And money, I had exactly twenty-five cents in my pockets when I entered the University of Pittsburgh. That's all the money I had. Cause as I said earlier I came from a poor family.

Q: So you saw sports not just for the joy of being an athlete but as a, a way to help you further yourself.

A: That's right. Correct. And of course when I got the scholarship, and I, when I went to the University of Pittsburgh, cause I told all, all my friends at home, I said if I don't make it, I'm not coming back to Connellsville. But I made it. I made it. I worked hard and I made it.

Q: How good were you as a track?

A: Well course I was the best, I was the best in high school. And of course when I went to Pitt I was able to beat all the athletes, all the athletes that was on the track team on my that ran in my race at Pitt in my freshman year. I came along very, very fast. My junior year in, in high school, of course my races were quite slow, but they showed progress. But then my senior year, I, I just bloomed. I just came into my own. Uh I, my uh main event was the mile. That was, that was the one the event that my coach had me concentrate on see. Well the first mile that I ran in high school, my junior year in high school was four minutes and forty-four seconds. In my senior year I ran four twenty-three four. I came along that fast. And of course when I ran that race I, I ran the second fastest school boy, school boy mile in the country, four twenty-three four. Al, Al Zamperine who was on the Olympic team with me, he ran four twenty-one something. But when I won my race in my round, my mile, when I won my mile race, I won it about a hundred and twenty yards ahead of the man who was uh ran second to me. Course if I had somebody to push me, it would have been faster.

Q: So you were pretty good. Were you thinking in terms of Olympics?

A: No. No. When I completed my freshman year at Pitt, that summer I had intended to go on home and take it easy for the summer. But my coach asked me to try out for the Olympic team. Course I had no idea that he wanted me to do that, you see. So I said okay, we'll try out for it. So I tried out for it. I qualified in the preliminaries which they ran at the University of Pittsburgh. I qualified in the semi-finals which they ran at Harvard Stadium winning the event in the, in the, in the half a mile. And then at Randall's Island where they ran the finals, I, I, I won my event there and I went to Berlin, Germany, and won my event.

Q: We'll get to that in a minute. But that's. So you had no thoughts about being an Olympic star?

- A: None whatsoever. In fact I never even thought in terms of, of, of going to the Olympics. Never thought in terms of that at all. And it was the coach that uh approached me on that and said he wanted me to try out for the team.
- Q: So this was necessarily a dream of yours or anything
- A: No. Not at all.
- Q: When you were at the University of Pittsburgh, did racism enter into your school life at all there?
- A: At the University of Pittsburgh? Yes there was, there was a, an incident where race uh entered. I, when I came back from the Olympic games, the professor of my English Department didn't want to let, didn't want to let me enter it, enter the program cause I was a month late. However, I think the chancellor must have interceded and made it, made arrangements for me to get into the, get into the English program. And, of course, another thing that hurt me quite badly when I was grad, when I was being graduated from the University. They had what was known as the U, the University of Pittsburgh Hall of Fame. Well, I was the only athlete to bring the school international recognition, but they did not, they did not uh select me for the Hall of Fame.
- Q: And you think that's because you were black?
- A: I don't know what it was. But I, I, I, I can only, I can only assume that. Because now they had, they had all American football players that brought the school national prestige, national recognition. I brought the school international recognition. They made the Hall of Fame, but I didn't. They were white and, of course, I, I was black. So what, the only, only, I can only assume it was because of race.
- Q: What about in your socializing and the friends you made in college? Was race an issue?
- A: No. But of course I socialized only with my own kind, you know, my own race of people see. I didn't socialize with anybody else other than my own race of people during the, the four years that I uh was going to the Uni, going to the University of Pittsburgh.
- Q: And on the, and in athletics it was a non-issue?
- A: I had no problem as, as, as a, as a, as a athlete at all because we were all, we were all on the same team. We were all very, very close. In fact the athletes participated with me even after we left the University, we, we were very, very close. I know it, it uh in athletics you know you become, it's, you become, it, it's

stronger than a fraternity when you're working with, when you're running together, training together, trying, trying to reach certain goals in, in your, in your sport, you become very, very close. And I still, and I still have contact with some of the, some of the fellows that ran on the team with me even today.

Q: So in sports the racial lines just fade away.

A: That's right. That's right.

Q: But in everyday life you were still confronting some of it.

A: Oh yes. You were always reminded of the fact that, you know, you were, you were, you're colored, you know, and that you there was certain, certain things you couldn't do and certain things you could do as a result of your race.

Q: Sports was an equalizer I guess.

A: That's right. And I think sports has done so much in order to make uh the country a better country in terms of, of, of social relationships between peoples. And that's what the Olympics does, you know. You be, you become very, you become acquainted with a lot of people in particularly people on your team and, and you become very close with, to them. And you don't think in terms of race when you're dealing with them see. And they don't think in terms of race uh with you. I know, I know in 1950 uh I went to Georgia, to Athens, Georgia, and I made contact with uh an athlete that won, that won, that won the uh high hurdles on the 1936 Olympic team. Uh Speck Towns. Well now he was, he was a, he was a coach at the University of Georgia. And of course back in that time you know the South was running rampant with, with uh racism and discrimination. So I'm when I got into Athens, I call him up. And he took and he told me, asked me where I was, where I was stopping. And I told him. He said no you stay right there and I'll come down and get you and bring you out to the school. And that's what he did. That was in 1950, 19 when, when the racism and discrimination was running rampant in (words missing in original transcript). But that shows you the, the closeness you have with, with your fellow athletes you see.

Q: Let me ask you before we sort of talk more about the Olympics, that of course as you know is our focus. When you were at the University of Pittsburgh, were you uh aware of anti-Semitism?

A: No. No. I wasn't aware of any, of any anti-Semitism while I was at the University.

Q: How much did you know about what was happening in Germany?

A: No more than what was adver, no more than what was advertised in the, in the papers, you know. Uh we heard a lot about what Hitler, what Hitler was doing as

far as the, the Jewish people were concerned. And you know just before the Olympics, you know he's written a book Mein Kampf. I didn't, I didn't read it. Uh the book that I did read was the Rise and Fall of the Third Reich. I read, I read that some years later. But when we went, cause when we went to the Olympics, we weren't interested, we weren't interested in politics. We were only interested in going to Germany, participating in our events, and trying to win as many gold medals or medal as we could win, see, and come home. That was the, that was our interest. Cause see I was, I made the team when I was twenty. Uh and before I got to Berlin, Germany, I, I had a birthday and I was twenty-one when I actually won my gold medal. So we were young. All of us were young.

Q: So you didn't know too terribly much about the situation in Germany or that Hitler wasn't particularly fond of blacks either.

A: No. No. Not at all. I know uh there was, there was one in, there was one instance when we had a young German athlete come visit with us. And we were asking him, we were asking this young athlete, he spoke English fluently. And we asked him uh what did the peep, what did the German people think of Hitler. Well they thought he was, they thought he was a great man. First of all his reason for making that statement was the fact that the economic situation had improved tremendously under his regime, you see. Because what he did, he withdrew from the League of Nations, as you know, started building up all this war armament, opened up all these factories to build all these weapons, and it made it possible for a lot of Germans people to go to work. And that's why they thought that he, he was, he was great for the country. But they didn't realize that they had a Frankenstein on their hands, you see. Because you know they attempted to assassinate him.

Q: When you learned that you qualified to go to the Olympics, do you remember how you felt?

A: Well I was very, I was very happy and very elated I was able to make the team you see. Course not realizing what the Olympic program was all about at that time because everything came very fast to me, see. But when I, when I, when I came, when my, when I came down to earth and realized what I had accomplished by making the team, then I was most elated.

Q: You were representing the United States in a major international.

A: United States. That's right. Um mmm.

Q: That must have made you very proud.

A: It did. It made all my family very proud. And all my friends.

Q: Had you ever traveled so far before?

A: No. the furthest I ever, I, I never even traveled as far as Pittsburgh when I went to, went to the University and we, I stayed right, right there in that small town of Connellsville. And the furthest I was away from home was when I went to Pittsburgh to the University, which was 50, 51 miles away.

Q: So tell me a little bit about your trip over. What it you know what it was like.

A: It was very interesting.

Q: And actually I need you to being by saying the trip over was very nice.

A: The trip over was very, very interesting. Of course we sailed on the S.S. Manhattan which was one of the better liners at that particular time. And, of course, they had wonderful facilities for us while we traveled by boat. It took us eight days before we landed in Hamburg, Germany. Now some of us were pretty good sailors and some of us weren't. Because with many, quite a, quite a, quite a number of the athletes got sick, seasick, cause the sea was pretty rough. But fortunately for me I was a pretty good sailor. I didn't get sick. So I was able to make the trip and enjoy the food. Because once you get seasick you don't want no parts of food. But I was able to eat the food and enjoy it and enjoy the trip as a whole.

Q: Were there training facilities on board?

A: Oh yes. They made it possible, they, they equipped that ship whereby all the athletes that were participating in the various activities to be able to train while the ship was sailing. And of course with the, with the runners, you know, we did a lot of jogging on the port, port side of the ship, you see. To keep, you know, try to keep in shape that way, see.

Q: Now did you stick together with the runners primarily or did everybody get along?

A: Yes, well most of the runners pretty much stayed, stuck together. Now like the weight men, those who threw the discus and the shot put and the hammer, we didn't socialize too much with them. But, of course, but the runners we all had, we had more in common with them.

Q: Did you have a room mate?

A: I had a room mate, and my, my room mate uh in going over uh was uh, uh Mac Robinson, that was Jackie Robinson's brother. And of course he also roomed with me in, in the Olympic village.

Q: Was there any separation of black and while athletes on the ship?

A: No. No.

Q: So all of a sudden you've left port and there's no segregation anymore.

A: That's right. That's right.

Q: Can you say something to that effect?

A: Well that's, that was the way it was, that was the way everything was set up for us you see. And it was. It was very good. It shouldn't have been any segregation because we were all a member of one team, the American team. We all had one objective and there was, there should not have any segregation and there wasn't any segregation.

Q: But wasn't this, this was a slightly different experience.

A: Yes. That's true. It was a slightly different experience. But they, they, they had, there was no segregation.

Q: So you were on this boat for eight days?

A: Right.

Q: And I assume this was a pretty exciting time for you.

A: It was exciting. It was the first, first time I'd ever taken, taken a boat anywhere. And, and a, and a, and above all, a luxury liner like that you see that was set up. Cause that was the S.S. Manhattan was one of the, one of our big liners. It was the S.S. Manhattan and S.S. Washington. The S.S. Washington brought the team, brought the team members back. But the S.S. Manhattan took us, took us abroad you see to Germany.

Q: Were you pretty excited about competing at that point?

A: Oh yes. Very excited. And of course I wanted to win. And that, that's all, that was always my philosophy when I toed, when I toed the line on any race. My one objective was to win. In fact throughout my collegiate career I think I won about 90, 90 percent of every race I ever ran.

Q: That's impressive. So the mood on the boat. What was the mood like?

A: Friendly. Everybody was friendly. Everybody had a good time. Everybody enjoyed themselves. Even those who got seasick.

Q: I want to hear about your arrival and everything, but I think we're going to change tapes first.

(end Tape 1 Of 3)

(Tape 2 of 3)

(beep)

Q: I want to backtrack for a minute. There was to my understanding at the time of, right prior to the '36 Olympics, some effort to boycott the Olympics. How aware were you of this?

A: Not, no, I wasn't aware of too much about it. I heard a little bit about it. The boy uh the boycott, there was some, there was some talk about the Olympics being boycotted because of what Hitler was doing to the Jewish people in Germany. But uh there was noth, nothing made, made too much of as far as the team members were concerned cause it was never discussed amongst, amongst the team members. But we heard it and we heard something about it, but we never, we never discussed it. As I said earlier, we weren't interested in politics you see at all. We were only interested in going to Germany and winning.

Q: I want to ask you to say that again. The reason I'm asking you is because I want you to do the whole thing again without as I said earlier.

A: Oh, okay.

Q: And tell me a little bit was there talk of boycotting the Olympics?

A: There was some talk. There was some talk about boycotting the Olympics, but it wasn't, it wasn't something that was a, a, a matter of conversation amongst the team members you see. We didn't, we didn't uh go into any detail on it. So uh we didn't bother, we didn't concern ourselves too much about it. All we knew that we were we'd made the team, we were, we were on the boat, and we were going to Germany. That's all. That's all we were interested in.

Q: You weren't interested in the political situation?

A: No. Not at all.

Q: But prior to your going over, were there articles in the newspapers, was there any conversation in the black community or in the black press about going or not going to the Olympics?

- A: No. Not that I know of. In fact I, I don't, I don't recall of ever reading anything uh in the, in the newspapers, the black press or the white press concerning going as, as far as the matter of going to the Olympics was concerned.
- Q: So there wasn't much of a movement in the States before you went?
- A: Not at all. Not to my knowledge anyhow.
- Q: Now. Back to the boat. You arrived in Hamburg, yes?
- A: Hamburg, Germany. That's where the ship uh docked. And then we took a train from there to Berlin.
- Q: What was the arrival in Hamburg like?
- A: It was, it was very, it was pretty exciting. You know, the, the, the,
- Q: Can you start by saying, when we arrived?
- A: When we, when we arrived in Hamburg, it was, it was pretty, pretty exciting event for us, you know. It was a lot of people out there to, to welcome us to Germany at that particular time. And then and of course we appreciated, we appreciated the welcome that they were, they're showing us at that time you see.
- Q: Who were those people?
- A: German people. German people. They were out to welcome us, welcome the American team to uh, to uh, to Germany. They knew, they knew where we were going to go. And they, and they, they knew the reason why we were there.
- Q: Were they average citizens? Was it organized?
- A: I don't know whether it was organized or not. We just saw, we just saw a lot, lot of people you know, cheering us and what have you, when we, when we docked in, in Hamburg.
- Q: Did they have flags, was there music?
- A: I don't recall really. I don't recall. All, all I saw was a lot of people and a lot of waving of the hands and what have you, see.
- Q: You felt pretty good? And then how did you get to Berlin?
- A: By train. By train. We went to Berlin by train. After we docked in Hamburg uh they put us all on a train, all the American team members on a train, and we went to Berlin to the Olympic village.

Q: Were you welcomed there?

A: We were welcomed at the Olympic village and, of course, they assigned, they assigned us, assigned quarters for all of the team members. They had little huts that we, that we lived in, see. And, of course, there was uh two, two men or two athletes per, per hut. And, of course, I roomed with uh Mac Robinson while we were, while we were in, in the Olympic village. That was Jackie Robinson's brother.

Q: What was life like in the Olympic village?

A: It was very pleasant. Very, in, in the Olympic village it was very, very pleasant. The accommodations were very good. The food was very good. And uh the, the cooks from the S.S. Brahman, that was the German's uh luxury liner, those cooks were the cooked the food for the American team, and they did a fine job.

Q: Were there activities, were, was there a lot of camaraderie amongst the athletes? Tell me a little bit about what it was like spending time there.

A: Well, there was a lot of camaraderie amongst the American team members you see. We do, we, of course, we socialize, you know, visiting one another, visiting each, each hut you know. Talking about what we hoped to do at the, at the games. That sort of conversation. But that was about it you see. Cause you know there was nothing else you know that we could do you know under the circumstances because there was a certain amount of discipline that was exercised to make sure that uh that the team members did what they were supposed to do in preparation for their activities, their athletic ac, athletic activities.

Q: A lot of training?

A: Yes we trained. They had training facilities there whereby we, we trained in preparation for, for our race you see. And, and they had a track there that we could that, that we could run on in, in order to keep us, keep us in shape, cause you know I guess a, a lot of us got out of shape you know based on particularly those who got sick, you see, and they had to work pretty hard, had to get through their land legs back again see. So it, it was, they had, they had to do quite a bit of training to kind of get themselves together you know for their races you know.

Q: Were the training facilities separated by nationality?

A: No. No.

Q: So on the track there were.

- A: There were all, all, all nationalities who participated on the same track. Cause they only had one, one facility for us, you see.
- Q: And you'd mentioned that it was important to maintain a discipline. Were there rules that you remember? Certain things that you were told?
- A: Well uh they, they weren't spelled out, you know, rule one, rule two, rule three, and rule four. It was nothing like that. We as athletes knew that we had a certain, certain responsibility to maintain ourselves to the best of our abilities so that we would be prepared for our, for our races, you see. And we took that, we took that responsibility on our own, you see. And uh but we, we knew that was it was understood that that was how we had to react or conduct ourselves.
- Q: Now I understand this Olympic village they created was really very, very pretty. Can you tell me a little bit more about what it looked like there?
- A: Looked like a, like a beautiful college campus. Beautiful grass, laid out very, very well. I, I took some very nice pictures of that Olympic village which I have at home. Uh because I had, I owned, I had a little old box camera and I took some pictures of the village. But it was very, very nice. A beautiful place. It was a beautiful place.
- Q: Did you notice any discrimination once you arrived in Germany?
- A: No. I didn't notice any. After I. No, I did not no, I did not notice any discrimination when I arrived in Germany. After I'd won my race, won my gold medal, I went downtown Berlin doing a little sightseeing of the city, and the people, the German people were very, very cordial. They just crowded around you for autographs. Very friendly. There was nothing, I, I didn't notice anything negative at all the whole time that I participated in those 1936 Olympic games as far as we were concerned. Now you've probably heard some stories about Hitler uh refusing to shake, shake Jesse Owen's hand. Well that's, those stories were wrong. They were wrong. One time Hitler invited some of the athletes up in his, up in, up in his uh the sections that they had established for him and his lieutenants. Uh Helen Stevens who won the hundred meters for the women, the America for the, she was on the women's team. She and her coach were invited up that one particular time. And of course the, the American coaches spoke to Hitler about that. And informed him that if he wasn't going to invite all the athletes up there then he, then they wanted him not to do that uh with any, any other athletes. And at the time that he invited these athletes up there, Jesse Owens was still competing on the track. So therefore he could not have gone up there at that particular time.
- Q: So it was decided that he wasn't going to shake anyone's hand.

- A: That's right. The American, the American coaches told him not to do that because he was see if he was going to discriminate, and only have, only have certain athletes come up there, then uh they, they, they, they uh they, they said they didn't want him to do that.
- Q: So what was Hitler's decision on this?
- A: Well he, he, he, he didn't have no athletes come up there for the rest of the games.
- Q: Were you aware while you were over there, you said you personally didn't face any discrimination, but were you aware of anti-Semitism?
- A: No. Not at all. As I said he must have, he opened up, he must have declared the moratorium for the games because the things that perhaps he had been doing prior to the games, nothing like that took place during the games, you see. And of course after the games you know what happened, you see.
- Q: There were no traces? Now did you and you spent time leaving the Olympic village and the stadium and you just saw nothing?
- A: That's right. That's, we didn't see anything that was, that was out of line or that was negative.
- Q: Do you remember much about this Glickman-Stoller controversy?
- A: Yes, yes, we heard the story. You see Marty Glickman and Sam Stoller were the two Jewish boys, extra boys that was, that was selected or qualified to run on the relay team. That was the four by one hundred relay team. When we, I don't know, none of us knew who made the decision as to keep those fellows off that team. Jesse Owens wanted to give up his position on the team. And I'm sure that Ralph Metcalfe probably would have given his position up, to give Sam Stoller and Marty Glickman a chance to run, but the coaches of the American team decided they wanted Jesse and, and Ralph Metcalfe to run on that team. And so they, so they didn't select Sam Stoller or Marty Glickman to run. And they still would have won the, they still would have won the race cause they were both very fine, very fine runners, very fine sprinters. But who made the, who made the final decision? Whether it was Lawrence Robertson, whether Hitler had something, something to say about it, we don't know. We discussed it many, many times, but we never did know who made that decision to keep those two fellows from running on that team. And to this day, Marty Glickman is very, very bitter about it, you see, cause I knew Marty Glickman very well see.
- Q: Do you remember how you and some of the other athletes felt when this took place?

- A: We felt, we felt that they, we felt that they should have been given the opportunity to participate, an opportunity to win a gold medal and which they would have won a gold medal. They still would have won that relay team, regardless whether Jesse Owens or Ralph Metcalfe was on it or not. They still would have won. But they didn't give those boys a chance. And that's why Marty today, to this day, is very bitter about that, about that decision.
- Q: Describe what it was like being at the games when you weren't running. Uh the mood, the pageantry, did you see Hitler regularly?
- A: Well everything, we saw Hitler every day when he came out to the games, but you see, he was so far away just like myself, uh sitting in the, in the stand, he was too far away for us to even see, see the image of him, see. We knew he was there. We knew each time he came into the game because you know the German people you know, you know, naturally would create a commotion when he, when he entered the stadium, when he entered the stadium. But me personally, he was too far away from me to make out just, just what he looked like other than from, from those pictures that I've seen some, seen of him see.
- Q: Try to paint for me a picture of what it was like at the games, what it felt like, what it looked like, because I didn't have that option?
- A: Well at the games, at those particular games in 1936, they were a very fine set of games. That was my first experience you see. That was my first experience of, of, of being in the Olympic games. It was very, very exciting. The events were run off with precision, the athletes didn't have to wait around when their event was called, the starter started, started your event. You knew the Germans, you knew they're, they're a stick, they're a stickler for things being done just right. And that's the way they, that's the way they ran the games. Because in talking with some of the old timers who had followed the Olympic games prior to the 1936 games that, that I participated in, they said they that the Berlin games were the finest Olympic games that they'd ever witnessed. That was the, that was the statement they made.
- Q: Was there a lot of fanfare?
- A: There was a lot, there was a lot of fanfare. There was a lot of fanfare. A lot of excitement. Lot of excitement.
- Q: Were there flags, parades, music. I mean, I'm trying to get, I'm trying to imagine what it was like being there.
- A: Well, the flags, the only flags that, that was, that took place was when after the athlete's completed their event. Now, when the American, when the Americans won, the American flags went up. And of course, it was, if it was a foreign country that was part of, part of the race, took third or second, whichever the case

may be, or even first, their, the flags representing their nations went up. Those are the only flags that were waving. And of course in the, in the uh bleachers, some of the, some of the uh spectators were waving flags. Some of the Americans were waving little flags you see, showing their, their enthusiasm for, for their, for their countrymen winning or the country women winning. That was the type of fanfare that you saw during the games.

Q: A lot of cheering.

A: A lot of cheering. That's, that's always the case you see. They do a lot of cheering. Although from my experience, you know, the athletes never hear it though. They never hear what's going on. Cause they're concentrating on what they're doing. They're concentrating on that race. So they don't, they don't hear the cheering. They don't even hear what people say.

Q: Swastikas?

A: I didn't see any of that. Didn't see any of that at all. Didn't see any of that at all.

Q: Tell me a little bit about your race and how you were feeling.

A: Well I had to run three races. I had to run the preliminaries and the semi-finals and the finals. The preliminary race, the preliminaries and the, and the semi-final race. When the race was, when the race was started I got right out in front and I stayed out there and won the race on, on both of those two races. On the final race, I decided well I'm going to try to exercise a little strategy to make sure that I would win the race uh by laying back in second position, and then, of course, in the waiting until I hit the last three hundred meters and then starting my kick to try to win the race. But the fellow, Phil Edwards, from Canada, he set a very, very slow pace. And, of course, he set that pace and, and we, we ran that way for four hundred meters, that's half the race. When we hit the first turn of the last, the last half of the race or the last four hundred meters, the contestants or my opponents crowded right around me. I got boxed in. And the only way I could get out of that box was to stop. Now if I attempted to breakthrough, I would have fouled somebody and I'd have been disqualified. But I had enough sense to know that I couldn't do that. So I stopped. So I let the, let, let my opponents proceed in front, ahead of me. I ran out into the third lane and I then I ran around the field and won the race. In fact I ran more than eight hundred meters when I won that race because I was running way out in the third lane see. But I won it. That was the most important thing. And of course the old timers just said they never in the history of the, of the, of the Olympics had ever seen a race won the way I ran mine. And you see, first of all, whenever you uh stop and you break your stride, you break your rhythm, that u, that usually finishes you. But I was able to pick up even though I started the race twice and, and, and still won.

Q: What drove you? What drove you?

- A: Determine, determination. My only objective at any time I got into a race was to win. And that's what I did.
- Q: That's what it takes?
- A: That's what it takes. Determination. Lot of fire in the stomach as they say.
- Q: Were you winning for you, for your country, for
- A: I was winning for me and I was winning for the country. Me first, then the country.
- Q: When you said you won, you were very casual about this. This is a pretty momentous occasion. I don't think you probably felt that casually.
- A: Well, it, it was a momentous occasion. But I didn't realize how important it was until it was all over with because everything happened so fast, just like I made the Olympic team very fast. Didn't know that I was going to be on the Olympic team, didn't know I was going to be even try out for the Olympic team. Then going to Germany and winning it. But I didn't realize just what achievement that I had accomplished until it was all over to receive my medal. Uh we weren't, we weren't instructed as to how we were to salute you see. So at one, one point I, I, I said well should I give a Nazi salute, should I give a, or should I give an American salute. But I was very real confused, but nevertheless I finally ended up giving the American salute. Cause I was nervous, very nervous and very confused. I was a young, young man, and of course we weren't given any instructions on that you see.
- Q: When you win a medal, what's the process here. What happens? You win the race, everyone's cheering.
- A: All right. When you're up on the stand and they're playing the Star Spangled Banner for all the Americans and of course they played the Star Spangled Banner for me winning my race, you see. Then they had young girls that came over. And the girls presented the medal. They presented the medal. And somewhere, somewhere, somewhere later they presented an oak, a little oak tree, which I brought back home and that oak tree it was about 18, about 18 inches uh in height. I brought it back and then I had to send it to the Department of Agriculture here in Washington cause they had to check the dirt around it for any kind of bugs that was being brought in. So when they, when it was sent back to Connellsville, my home town, the tree was almost dead. So I turned the tree over to the Botany teacher of my high school and he worked with the tree and brought it back, and they planted it on the library at, at, at the Carnegie Library in the home town. And then of course, they, they replanted it when they built the stadium, the Falcon Stadium is the name of it. And that tree is now six feet tall. And a lot of the

acorns from that tree is being planted around different places around the United States, from, from my tree.

Q: So you went to the stands, somebody escorted you to the stands.

A: Yes. Well, you know, you know, they showed you where, where you had to go in order to uh receive your, receive your, your medal see. And that's, that's what, that's what they did you see. See, I, I, I, I, I won first. Uh Maria Lansey from Italy was second. I forget the third man who, who, who uh, no Phil Edwards, Phil Edwards from Canada, he was third. He was third. Now the two runners, two, two other, two other American runners, Charles Hornsbarsel from University of Indiana or Indiana University and Harry Williamson from North Carolina University, they came in, they came in fourth and, and fifth. They didn't, they didn't uh they didn't get a medal see. Cause they only give medals for the first three places.

Q: So what was it like standing in front of a hundred thousand people accepting this honor?

A: Very, it was, it was a very, very exciting experience. As I said, I was, I was very nervous. I was very nervous. Everybody clapping their hands and cheering etc. It was nervous for a young man twenty-one years old, had never been so far away from home.

Q: The Americans really cleaned up in these events didn't they?

A: Yes. We did very well. We did very well.

Q: Was there any irony or satisfaction to having won this, won this race as a black American, gotten all of this prestige and honor for your country that didn't always treat you so well?

A: Well, of course we were a victim, being, myself personally, we were a victim of discrimination in, in, in, in the country of America for all those many years cause I'd only lived in the world for twenty-one years at that particular time. And we understood that. We didn't like it. We never do. We never did like it and we never will like it. We still have racism in this country. This country is still full of racism as far as, as the black man is concerned. Things are better than they used to be. Much better. Economically speaking, blacks are getting better jobs than they got back in those days. They're able to go to any, any, any, any university in the country. Cause back in those days you couldn't go, you couldn't go, you couldn't go to University of Georgia or University of Mississippi and what you have back in those, back in those times. You couldn't go to the Naval Academy back in those times. Well, get to tell you a little experience in that, in that regard. We had a track meet to run at Annapolis, at the Naval Academy. Now here I am an Olympic champion and they told my coach that I couldn't run. I couldn't

come. So I had to stay home because of discrimination. Now that wasn't hap, that wasn't the situation at West Point. I ran at West point when I was going to the University of Pittsburgh, but I couldn't run at, at Annapolis. But things are better now.

Q: I just want to get back to being in Germany, having lived through this and winning this medal for your country.

A: Now what was the question?

A: Well actually we've only got a minute left on the tape. So maybe I'm going to stop and start again.

(end Tape 2 of 30)

(Tape 3 of 3)

Q: You're going to be of hundreds of athletes and that made no difference. That must have been a good feeling. That sort of inclusiveness.

(get a little mark)

(We need to hear your voice again)

A: You want to hear my voice again.

(Beep)

Q: I was asking you if there was any sort of special feeling or pride in being a black American winning the gold medal in Berlin?

A: There was definitely a special feeling in winning the gold medal and being a, a black man because here I, here I was doing something and particularly, this particular event had not been won by an American in 24 years. So and it, that was won by a white man, not a black man. So I was very proud of that, of that fact, very proud of that achievement, and I was very happy for myself as an individual, for my race, and for my country.

Q: You had started to mention something about auxiliaries. What's that about?

A: Well after the Olympics were over, I think it came at, I think it was published, it must have been published in the Ger, in, in, in the German publication, the German newspapers, that Hitler made the remark that if it wasn't for the black auxiliary the American would not have won the Olympics. That's what I, that's what I hear. I didn't read it, but I heard, heard that that was the remark that he made, you see.

Q: How did that make you feel?

A: Well it, it made me, it made me feel good because what we did, we destroyed his master race theory. That's what, it made me feel very good. Cause you know he uh he had that master race theory that you know the, the superior race, that only, only, only the pure Germans could do certain things in this world. That was what he was advocating. But we destroyed his theory whenever we started winning those gold medals.

Q: Tell me a little bit about your return home as an Olympic hero. How were you received and where did you come first?

A: We came to New York and they had a big parade for us. After the Olympics we came home, we came home on the S.S. Washington. Now, of course, Jesse Owens came home ahead of us because he, he didn't, he didn't do any running after the Olympics outside of Dresden, Germany. One week after the Olympic games, Jesse ran in Dresden, Germany, and of course he was defeated by Ralph Metcalfe who took second to him in the Olympic games in Berlin. But he had some offers that was made, some professional offers, and of course he came back on the, on the, on the, on the Queen Mary to take advantage of those offers cause Jesse came from a poor family too. Most of the blacks came from poor families you see. None of, none of us came from any wealthy homes, or middle class homes. Most all from poor families. But many of those offers didn't pan out for him at all. And of course they, due to the fact, you see he was scheduled to run in, in, in various countries. He didn't run so they declared him, they declared him as a professional. So Jesse, his amateur days were over with after that see. But I ran after the Olympic games. I ran in White City Stadium in London. Then from there I ran up in Oslo, Norway, before coming home. But we all, we all ended up in, in New York and they had a big ticker tape parade for us in, in uh Manhattan up, up Fifth Avenue. And there was a lot of cheering and of course Mayor LaGuardia who was the Mayor of the city at the time uh gave us, gave us a, a medal uh from the City of New York. And then from there we all departed New York City and we went to our various homes. And, of course, when I got back to Connellsville, Pennsylvania, they had a big parade for me in my, in my home town. And which, which was the biggest parade that ev, that ever turned out for anybody in that small town.

Q: That must have felt fabulous.

A: It was, it was, it was. I was, it was, it was a fabulous time, a fabulous occasion, and a happy time for me and for my family and for all my friends back there in Connellsville.

Q: How long did the euphoria last?

A: Well it lasted for quite a, quite a long time, you know, because you know I used to go out and, and do a lot of speaking to the young uh run uh kids after the Olympic games and, of course, I was still in school and I was still, still making records as an athlete because I won every major med, won every major er uh track meet in the country at that particular time. Right up until, right up until I stopped running in 1940.

Q: Did winning the Olympics open doors for you that wouldn't have been opened otherwise?

A: Some, some doors. Some doors, cause I, I never, you know, I, I was never made, I never made any uh never uh received any fabulous offers in terms of uh making any money because see first of all I was still in school and I had three years. I had three years to go to get my degree. And when I was graduated. Right after I was graduated from the University of Pittsburgh, then I went to New York University and uh while I was in graduate school, I got a job at John Wannamaker's running the elevator. And of course you know there was quite a lot of publicity came out about an Olympic champion getting a job running an elevator. And the only thing that John Wannamaker wanted to do was give me a permanent job running an elevator. That was all. Then I got a job as a social investigator for the city of New York, working with disadvantaged people who were on welfare. Then I, then I got a job working, working for the uh police Athletic League, director of one of their centers up in, up in Harlem, New York, working with disadvantaged kids. And while I was working in that job, I took examination for State Parole Officer for the State of New York and I became a parole officer, supervising parolees who were released from the New York State Reformatory, reformatories or state prisons. Then from that I worked for a short period of time with Shefland and Company uh advertising alcoholic beverages. I didn't particularly care for that cause I couldn't see myself making, making a permanent job pushing booze. So I got out of that. Then I got a job as special inves, uh, uh insurance agent for the Prudential Insurance Company. I worked a while in that job. Then I ended up my career with the Job Corps Program. You know about the Job Corps program. Again working with disadvantaged kids. I never made a lot of money, but I made a living. But my, but my, the compensation that I got from the work that I did was helping people. And I helped a lot of people, a lot of people.

Q: Did the, being an Olympic winner open doors in other ways?

A: Well not uh not, not, not to my experience, not from my experience.

Q: ...get you access to places that you weren't able to go into before?

A: I can't, I can't recall just looking back on, on, on my early, early career after winning the Olympics that it opened any particular doors, being a gold medal winner.

Q: Did you expect it to?

A: Well I expected that I had hope. Nut noth, nothing materialized in, in that regard. Now I'm sure many of the white Olympians were made offers, very fine offers, but I can't recall any of the black Olympians making any, any, making any great offers. Now Jesse did pretty well. He got in public relations work, but when he first came back from the Olympic games, he, he, he, he, he found it very difficult to get any decent, any decent work. He came back. He ran against race horses. You may have heard of, heard of him running against race horse. He did a number of things in order to track, try to make a living for his family. But only in later years he, he uh he started a public relation organization there in Chicago, and he did a lot of uh did a lot of he was on a lot of speaking engagements. And he picked up quite a bit of money doing that. But uh he didn't have any, any, any big jobs. He never had any real, any real big jobs, you know.

Q: What I was trying to get at here is it seems that after all of the excitement of winning this medal, winning this race, coming back to all kinds of parades, how long did it kind of take to come back to earth and realize that things hadn't changed much? Were there any moments that kind of showed you that clearly?

A: Yes. When I came back, when I came back to the University of Pittsburgh, they didn't want, they didn't want to let me into the English class because I was a month late. And of course I guess the chancellor straightened that matter out. Then when I, one, one day I went downtown Pittsburgh, and one evening, to Child's restaurant. They refused to serve me. That was, that was one instance. Then when I was graduated and they had the uh University Hall of Fame, here I'd brought international, international recognition to the school. The All American football players like Marshall Goldberg, they brought national recognition to the school. They made the Hall of Fame, but I didn't make it. In spite of the gold medal that I'd won and bringing the school international recognition. So that, that let me know just what the situation was. Things hadn't changed. But I was young and, of course, as years went on, things got better. And uh and to date things have gotten much better for the blacks. But we still have a long way to go.

Q: Ask you a little bit about what was going on, what was unfolding in Germany and in Europe. When after the Olympics did you become more aware of what was going on and you know how did you find out?

A: Well, I personally became a, aware of what was going on based on, based on the, on the publications on, on what was, what was uh printed in, in the various newspapers and, and, and, and magazines of, of what was happening in Germany. Of course right after the Olympics, in 1939, Hitler started World War II when he marched on Czechoslovakia, that was the beginning of World War II. And of course we all knew what happened after that.

- Q: How did you get that information. How did you start learning more. Is that the point at which you became more aware of the atrocities and
- A: Yes, my, become aware of those atrocities and things from what, from what was printed in the, in the, in the, in the newspaper. Newspapers through, you know, throughout, throughout the United States.
- Q: After having this glorious week in Berlin was this hard to believe?
- A: Yes it was very hard to believe. It was very hard to believe. But we knew what was going on based on the publicity prior to the Olympic games, what Hitler was doing. And as I said he declared a moratorium, opened up everything, made everything very pleasant, very accommodating for, for the visiting uh, uh Olympic team nations. But after the Olympics they went right back to the, to the things he had planned. And, of course, all these things he had planned was laid out in his book, Mein Kampf.
- Q: So the Olympics were really a propaganda coup.
- A: It was. He made it so. He made it a propaganda coup to further, to further his cause, to further his program that he had set up.
- Q: When you started learning more about all the horrible things that were happening, did you think about the Olympics in context of politics at all or were you just still feeling the same way you did at age 21?
- A: Well, I would think it was pretty much the latter, pretty much the latter. Cause we'd had some background on what was going on prior to the games, and of course it was brought out more pointedly after the games. See when after the games were over then Hitler continued with his program, you see. Marching on Czechoslovakia and starting, starting the war. And of course it was something that uh we more or less expected. We more or less expected. You know uh the world didn't think Hitler was doing what he was doing. You see they should have known what he was doing. You know, Germany was part of the League of Nations, like all the nations were, were part of that League. And the, the reason that they set that league up as you know from history was to more or less keep a tab on each nation in terms of them building up war armaments to start a war. Now Hitler withdrew from the League of Nations. They should have known then what he was going to do. But they didn't believe him. They didn't believe him. They didn't believe what he had printed in that book, Mein Kampf. Winston Churchill, the Prime Minister of England, called him the little Corporal. They down played Hitler. They didn't believe, believe what he was about to do. So therefore they, they didn't put a curb on him see. They probably could have stopped World War II if they had done so at that time. When he withdrew from the League of Nations, if they'd of put a clamp, put a clamp on him at that

particular time, there probably would have been no World War II. But they didn't do it.

Q: Do you think if we had believed what was going to happen and had exercised a boycott, it would have made any difference?

A: Exercised a boycott of the Olympics?

Q: Yes.

A: I don't know whether it would have made any difference or not. I really don't. I, I can't, I couldn't, I can't answer that question.

Q: In retrospect, cause I know how you felt at the time, learning how bad things became, do you think we should have participated in the Olympics?

A: Well in retrospect, based, based on all the training that the athletes had gone through in preparing for the Olympic games, I feel, I felt that they should have had, they should have gone on with the Olympics as they did. Because I think that would, that would have been a very bad thing to have taken place. Uh but it would have been, it would have been very hurting for the athletes who had made so much preparation, who had trained so long over the years. Fortunately for me I didn't train like that. I was more or less a gifted athlete. I came up very fast. But there was other athletes who had trained for the Olympics who had trained for years to prepare for the games, and that would have been very, very bad if they could not have gone. That's my, that's my feeling, personal feeling. Now there might, there might be others who felt who would feel differently about it based on the question you just posed to me, but that's my feeling.

Q: That the Olympics and politics should stay separate.

A: That's right.

Q: Let's take a break.

Q: There are a couple of specific questions I want to ask you. You had mentioned one incident where you had contact with a German athlete at the Olympic village. Did you have other contact with German athletes?

A: That was the only one. I remember this young man that came in. He was young like we were and uh he came and visited with us, you see. And of course when we heard all this uh this information about Hitler and naturally we posed a question. What did they think, what did the German people think of Hitler. And he said they, he said they thought he was a, a very good man because of what he'd done for the country economically speaking, made it possible for all of them to work and of course you know all of them were working in the, in the, in these

factories where they were making weapons. And that's why they felt, cause right after World War I, you know, the Germans they really were beat down. They were, they were in a bad way. And I guess they, they were, they were, they were looking, they were looking for a savior. And that's when Hitler came into, came into play. They were looking for somebody to pull them out of those doldrums that they were in, you see. And of course when he withdrew from the League of Nations, started building all, all this, all this war armament, putting all these German people to work, he was a great guy as far as they were concerned. But they didn't know, they didn't know the whole story.

Q: Did you have contact with other international athletes?

A: No. No. No.

Q: Was there much of a bond, camaraderie that should have lasted with the other athletes after the Olympics?

A: With other athletes from, from other teams.

Q: From here.

A: Oh, yes, yeah there was quite a, quite a, quite a bond, you know. We be, we became very, very close friends and we (words missing in original transcript). The other athletes on the team were very close. I was very close to them. I'm still very close to some of them that are, that are still around. I still make contact with them, you see. And uh, but of course, many of them are gone, many of them have passed. And as I said I'm the only one that's left now see. Archie Williams who won the 400 meters, he died about three years ago. And he was the last of the gold medal winners, other than myself, that were still living.

Q: So there was really a special bond?

A: Oh yes. Stronger than a fraternity. Stronger, much stronger than a fraternity because of what we go through in training and what have you, the pain, feeling of pain when we're training, the feeling of pain when we, when we race. That, that, that gives us a lot of strength and a lot of. It's something that we have in common with each other. And something that we understand. You see one athlete understands another athlete and what he has to go through. If he's a football player, a football player understands what another football player has to go through. And that's the same way with in track and field.

Q: When did you become friendly with Marty Glickman?

A: We lived in the same neighborhood up in New Rochelle, New York. His family and my family live in the same neighborhood.

Q: But you met at the Olympics?

A: We met at the Olympics. Marty Glickman and I met in the Olympics as part of the team. I didn't know him before that, but I knew him after that, after the Olympics where he resided in New Rochelle and where I resided with my family in New Rochelle, New York.

Q: Do you remember him at the Olympics?

A: I used to see him on occasion, because he was a sprinter. And I used to see Sam Stoller also. Incidentally Sam Stoller, is Sam Stoller dead?

Q: From your memory of 1936, what kind of guy was Marty Glickman?

A: A nice fellow. Very nice fellow. Very friendly, as all the athletes that were on the team were all very friendly, all very cordial, all very accommodating. Which is like one big happy family.

Q: Was there anything that set him apart in your mind/

A: No. No. He was just another, he was just another athlete like all the rest of them that were over there to win, win a gold medal and I was very, very sorry that he didn't get that opportunity to do so.

Q: Did you go to the closing ceremonies?

A: The closing ceremonies at the, at the, the closing ceremonies at Berlin? Yes. Yes.

Q: Tell me.

A: It was very, very exciting. The closing ceremonies were very, very exciting because I, because I witnessed the closing ceremonies on the, on the other, other Olympic games that I attended. But, but this one was, was much more important because I was part of it. And they put on quite a show. Quite a show.

Q: Tell me about it.

A: Well the closing, well they uh had the, had the, had the, had the athletes. Of course one thing about the closing ceremonies. The closing ceremonies are not as exciting as the opening ceremonies because a lot of the athletes after competing go home. So not the whole team, the whole team is never there at the closing ceremonies. So therefore uh it, it's not quite as exciting as the opening ceremonies when they march in, each country with their flag and of course with the Olympic flag preceding all, preceding everything, you see. The five ring

Olympic flag. But uh it's not, as I said, it's not as exciting, but it's, it's still exciting for those who participated in the closing ceremonies.

Q: What did it look like?

A: Well it looked like uh a closing ceremony. That's all I can say. I don't know what you're

Q: I've never been to one. I don't even know what the opening ceremonies look like.

A: Well the opening ceremony's when all these various nations, all these, all these uh Olympic athletes representing all these var, various nations march in. The host, the host, the host country athletes march in last. It's all set up you know, it's all set, it's all organized. And, of course, all these countries, it's, it's preceded by the Olympic flag, the five ring flag. And of course right after they march in and the games are, are declared open, they have pigeons. And they release all these pigeons and they all fly, and that's the opening of the games. It's beautiful.

Q: You were on the field at that time?

A: On the field. As part of the American team. We came in with our white trousers, blue jackets and straw hats, with a red, red, white and blue band. White shirt and, and I forget what our tie, I think our tie was, I think our tie was, I think our tie was white if I recall. We just, it's been a little while. But I remember, I remember, I remember the hat. I remember the jacket and I remember the trousers. And of course white shoes.

Q: How were you feeling marching across there?

A: Oh, felt good, felt good. You know you always, always felt good marching in a parade. Always did. It, it, it, it kind of does something to you.

Q: It must have been great.

Q: It was. It was.

Q: Is there anything else that you remember about sort of what the stadium looked like, what the track was like? Was it similar to other tracks that you had competed on?

A: It was a very beautiful track, very fine track. It was made with some kind of red uh red dirt, red cinders or something. It was different. It was very different than, than, than the tracks here in America at that particular time. And when I was over there for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary and I got a chance to, to visit the track again, that track was still in excellent condition. All the facilities that the Germans built for

the 1936 Olympic games, they did a marvelous job. A marvelous job and everything was still intact, even today, even today.

Q: Did the weather cooperate?

A; Cooperated very well. We had no, we had no inclement weather at all.

(end of Tape 3 of 3)



