

[TONE] Marty, I'd like you to begin by telling me your name, where you were born, date of birth.

My name is Martin Irvin Glickman. I'm usually referred to as Marty Glickman. I was born in the Bronx. At the age of six, I moved to Brooklyn. I was raised in Brooklyn.

And what year were you born?

I was born in 1917. My parents came from Romania. They came over about 1912. I don't remember exactly when. I wasn't around when they got here. But I was born in 1917, lived originally in the Bronx.

Could you tell me a little bit about your childhood and your family?

My father was not an extremely religious person. As a matter of fact, he was Jewish. We observed the high holy days. Occasionally on Shabbos, we'd go to synagogue, only occasionally. My grandfather and grandmother on my mother's side kept a kosher home with the two sets of dishes and silverware and things like that. I was a bar mitzvah. I went to Hebrew school. And I raised my own children in the Jewish faith. And my two sons were bar mitzvah. My two daughters were not bat mitzvah. But we have a Jewish background, a Hebrew background.

Was that very important to you as a boy?

It wasn't very important in terms of my grand feeling about Judaism. I was like any other kid. I was brought up in Jewish neighborhoods, mixed neighborhoods actually. We lived amongst Italians and Irish.

Why don't you start that again, because you sort of conflicted yourself?

What kind of a neighborhood were you brought up in, demographically?

I was brought up in a mixed neighborhood. I was brought up in a mixed Irish, Italian, and Jewish neighborhood. There certainly were as many Jewish boys around with whom I played as there were people of other faiths. And I didn't feel unusual about being a Jew. Many of my friends went to Hebrew school with me. And many of my classmates in school were Jews. It was nothing out of the ordinary being Jewish in my neighborhood.

And you didn't feel any antisemitism from the non-Jewish kids?

Occasionally, we'd get into a fight. I had an older cousin, , who was a big strong young man. And he fought with an Italian boy one day because he was called a Jew bastard. And he got into a fight. And I'm pleased to say, that my cousin won the fight. But I never actually struck a blow because I was called a Jew bastard or anything like that. As I say, I was amongst Jews most of the time.

I want to fix this Band-Aid. Would you stop for a second.

Five seconds.

So you really never felt in any way slighted because you were Jewish or you never saw that as something that you have to rally against?

I never felt as though I had to overcome the fact that I was a Jew. I was aware, however, that I was Jewish. And the great athletes of the day, Benny Leonard was my father's hero. Another great prizefighter named Leach Cross was a man that he admired greatly. And Hank Greenberg was one of my early heroes. So I was aware of Jewish athletes and Jewish competitors who did well. I wanted to do well also to show that a Jew could do just as well, perhaps better, than anybody else.

So there was that distinction. How important were sports? And how did you get involved in sports?

I got involved in sports because I was always the fastest kid on the block. I could run faster than anybody else could run. And I found this true until I ran against Jesse Owens. He was the one fellow I couldn't beat, never did beat him. But other than that, I was, as I say, the fastest kid around.

And because of that I had an advantage in any sport I played. So I played punch ball and box ball and ringolevio, the games kids played in the Bronx and Brooklyn in those days. And when I started playing basketball or baseball or football, because I had the speed, I had an advantage. And so I could be perhaps better than some of the other guys. I could almost steal first base in baseball.

So you started sports at a fairly early age?

I started sports, I started my first running when I was five years of age, I think. We used to run around the block. And we'd start in opposite directions. I and my opponent would run off around the block. And we'd come back to the same spot. And the first one returned to that spot was the winner. And the older guys in the neighborhood would match me against some of the older boys there, because I could beat the fellows my age rather handily. And I almost never lost. I don't remember losing a race, until I ran against Jesse.

Now when did this running and sort of neighborhood sports become sports in a more organized fashion?

Sports for me became more organized when I went to junior high school, Montauk Junior High School in Brooklyn. And I played on four different teams. I was a catcher on the baseball team. I played on the basketball team. We won a city championship in basketball, also won a city championship in baseball. I ran on a track team, and I was the field day champion. I was the fastest runner in the school. And of all things, I swam on the swimming team. And in those days, athletes played all sports in season. In the spring and summer, you played baseball. In the fall, you played football. In the wintertime, you played basketball. And all year round, you ran.

I don't ever remember walking as a young person. I always ran. It was just my nature to run.

So sports were very important to you it seems.

Sports were critical to me. My life was built around sports. And I think it began when I started reading the Merriwell books. Now, those of you who are my age may well remember the Merriwell books. They were written by Burt L. Standish. And Frank Merriwell was the premiere hero.

He had a younger brother named Dick Merriwell, who also was a great athlete. And Frank Merriwell married and had a son named Frank Merriwell Jr, who also was a great athlete. And I wanted to be like Frank Merriwell, junior or senior, or Dick Merriwell. And the exploits of the book I started reading them, I guess, when I was 12 years of age. And I wanted to duplicate those exploits.

He ultimately went to Yale, became an All-American football player, basketball player, a champion in all the sports he participated in, and a well-rounded All-American type person. I wanted to be Frank Merriwell. I still remember his girlfriend's name whom he married, her name was Inez. I married a person named Marjorie, but I met her in high school. So it was my goal to be like Frank Merriwell, this fictional character.

And your goal was to be this quintessential All-American guy?

Yes that's right. I wanted to be the as good as I possibly could be in sports and also be a good student, because Frank Merriwell was a good student. I wound up being, I would say, a B student. I never had problems passing courses in school. I was a fair student.

So there is actually one story I'm curious about. When you talk about how active you are in sports and how they really were your life at that point, did you think that you had a future in sports, that you might be thinking in terms of Olympics or an athletic career?

I never thought in terms of having a future in sports. I never aspired, for example, to be a sports announcer. That came through the good day, I had the best day I ever had, on a football field. But the only reference I recall as to having aspirations in sports was in my junior high school graduating year when I was all of 14 years of age. My homeroom teacher, a man named Hugh Brown, who is an alumnus of Yale, wrote in my yearbook, "Be seeing you in the 1936 Olympics." And I thought that was very nice. I was a fast runner in school. But I was only 14. I didn't think in terms of the Olympic games. But he predicted it.

After you read that, did you think, aha, maybe that is where I'm going or is that something I should aspire to?

I didn't think in terms of the Olympic games until I was well into my freshman year at Syracuse University. I was a schoolboy champion. I was a sprinter. I was the city champion, the state champion, the national sprint champion. But I didn't think in terms of the Olympic games, because I was still a kid. I was 17. And only in my freshman year when I began to win against important competition did I realize I had a chance to make the team. And when I won the Metropolitan Championships in New York City and then the Eastern Olympic trials up at Harvard against a great sprinter named Ben Johnson, when I beat Ben-- he was the world's record holder at 60 yards indoors-- and when I beat him I realized then, just, a month before the Olympic games, that I had a chance to make the Olympic team.

I want to ask you to repeat one sentence about the whole thing when you said something about not until I was in my freshman year. Can you say not until I was in my freshman year in college?

Not until my freshman year in college did I realize that I had a chance to make the Olympic team. I was a high school champion, New York City sprint champion for several years, and New York state champion. I was also the National interscholastic schoolboy champion. And I knew I could run fast, but I didn't know how fast until I ran against some of the better sprinters in America and was able to beat them, particularly a fellow from Columbia named Ben Johnson, an outstanding sprinter. He was the world's record holder at 60 yards indoors. And when I beat Ben, beat him a couple of times, I realized I had a shot for the Olympic team. And that was at the end of my freshman year at Syracuse.

Now having all of a sudden this thought or goal, was there anything different about being a Jewish American athlete than just being another great athlete?

In my high school years and my junior high school years, there was nothing different about being a Jewish high school athlete, certainly not in New York City. I competed against everyone. And I felt no different than other athletes in school.

It was only in my freshman year at Syracuse University that I became aware of the fact that I might have been a little bit different when at my first training table meal as a freshman, I asked, at lunch, the very first meal, please, pass the lamb chops. And everyone laughed at the table, because they weren't lamb chops. They were pork chops. So I realized then I was a little bit different than most of the other guys on the football squad.

Did it motivate you differently? Did you think about it differently when you competed?

I was always aware of the fact that I'm a Jew, never unaware of it under virtually all circumstances. And even in the high school competitions and certainly at college and for the Olympic team, I wanted to show that a Jew could do just as well as any other individual, no matter what his race, creed, or color, and perhaps even better. And it wasn't until the circumstance developed in the Olympic games when I was refused the opportunity to run in the games because of the fact I'm Jewish.

Now at this time, you're a little bit older, you're a little bit smarter about what's going on in the rest of the world. Were you more aware of the restrictions applied to Jews? I mean, in your community growing up, it was very mixed. It didn't seem to be an issue. But were you aware that there was antisemitism in America, that you couldn't go everywhere you wanted to, and that sort of thing?

I was certainly aware of the fact that there was antisemitism. My grandfather and my father, my uncles, told me about

the pogroms in Europe, in Romania. They'd heard about the pogroms in Poland as well and in other parts of Europe and Russia. And I was aware of antisemitism.

In New York City, I was also aware of the fact that there were certain places I was not welcome. I might go into a hotel, for example, and see a small sign where you registered, which read, "restricted clientele," which meant in effect no Jews, no Blacks allowed. There were certain areas around New York City where you couldn't live, like Darien, Connecticut, for example, was a place where Jews were not permitted to own homes in Darien. And I was aware of that.

My folks would tell me, my in-laws later on told me about the reservations they made at hotels. And my father in law's name was Dorman, and neither Jewish nor Gentile, he would try to check into a hotel having made a reservation at some resort and being turned away when they found out he was Jewish. He might check in as Jack Dorman, which he was. But his friends and associates might have names like Golberg or Cohen or Goldstein, and the group was turned away upon occasion. So I was aware. I was aware of antisemitism in New York and throughout the country as well.

How much in the early '30s did you know about what was going on in Europe and Germany in particular?

I knew practically nothing about what was going on in Germany specifically and in Europe generally, except that I'd heard about the pogroms in Eastern Europe, basically, as I mentioned, in Romania and Poland and Russia. But I was not specifically aware until my freshman year at Syracuse when, as a political science major, I began to learn of the antisemitism that some of the fascist countries were subjecting Jews to, particularly in Nazi Germany. There was antisemitism in Germany, I knew that. And there was antisemitism in America.

The Nuremberg laws, as I understand it, were passed in 1933. I was aware that there--

I think '35. There were restrictions from '33--

I'm sorry.

I'll let you start over.

Yes. I was aware of the Nuremberg laws, which were passed in 1935. Hitler had come to power in 1933. As a political science major at Syracuse University, I was aware of those antisemitism laws. But these were merely on the books, like the laws perhaps of not going to certain hotels, not going into certain areas, the unwritten laws, or the law about not crossing against a red light if you're crossing the street. They were not seriously spoken of nor seriously taken in the States. We were aware of it. But how they affected individuals, I didn't know.

And you didn't have any family in Europe still?

At that time, the family I had in Europe were my father's brothers, who lived in Romania and were still there. But I didn't know how they were affected by it at all.

OK. It's just interesting to know what you knew before going over to Germany. Tell me about qualifying for the Olympics. How did that come about?

I qualified for the Olympic games by winning a series of races to qualify for the final trials, which are held at Randall's Island in New York City, the first use of that Randall's Island stadium for track and field championships. I qualified by winning the Metropolitan Championships and then the Eastern qualifying round up at Harvard stadium in Boston. There were Eastern, Near Midwestern, Western, and Far Western trials. And I was the winner of the sprint in the East. So I qualified for the final round. It was a series of qualifying rounds. And I and about, I would guess, 14 other sprinters qualified for the final round. And in that final round, I qualified and made the team.

How did you place in final rounds? What happened there.

The placement in the final round, in the actual finals, I qualified by finishing second in that semifinal heat at Randall's

Island. And I'd like to tell the story of my first race against Jesse Owens and Ralph Metcalf. These were the two great Black sprinters of the day.

We drew marbles, which were numbered, for the lanes in which you ran. I drew lane number 5. Jesse Owens was in lane number 4. Ralph Metcalf was in lane number 6. And I'm in number 5. So here is Owens the world's champion alongside of me, Metcalf who'd run and won a silver in the 1932 Olympic games on the other side. These two magnificent athletes on either side of me, and I'm scared stiff.

I mean I was shaking so that when the starter called us to our marks, to put our feet in the starting holes-- we didn't use starting blocks in those days. You dug holes with the trowel. When I started to put my front foot my left foot in the hole, my foot was shaking so, I could not put my foot in that starting hole. It was just vibrating so. I couldn't put it down.

And all six additional sprinters on either side of me were on their marks getting ready to go. And I'm still standing there shaking. And the starter called everyone up and called me over to him. I knew the man. He started me in some of the high school races I had run. And he said, Marty, walk up and down a bit, take a few deep breaths, relax, jog up and down, relax, and we'll try to start again. And after several minutes, I was calmed down sufficiently to get my foot into that starting hole, both feet in, and we raced.

I don't remember the gun going off. We were set, terribly tense of course, on a marks, and then set. And then I was running. And there was Owens on my left and Metcalf on my right. And for 40 yards, I'm running even with them. And then suddenly, as though they were on an escalator and I was not, they were pulling ahead and moving ahead. And I fought as best I could. And I kept dropping back.

And then I realized I wasn't going to catch either one of them. And I thought I finished third in the race. So much so that, Ted Husing-- he was broadcasting the race on the infield in the track. He was the leading track and field broadcaster at the time. Ted called me over after the race and said here's Marty Glickman, the kid from Brooklyn who finished third. Oh, wait a second, he said. I see they've placed Frank Wykoff third. Marty finished fourth. And he interviews Frank. And then he says, now, here's Mart-- oh-- just a moment, he says. They've placed Foy Draper in the fourth place. Marty finished fifth. So interviewed Foy Draper and then he interviewed me finishing fifth, which is where I was placed.

I was a bit upset about that. Films of the race indicate that I beat Foy Draper by a foot, very little question about that. As for Frank and myself, you could choose the winner between the two of us, but I didn't know whether I beat Frank or not, nor did he. Later in Paris, in a post-Olympic meet, I beat Frank. But we were virtually in a dead heat for third place. So I do remember Dean Cromwell finishing-- it's too long already.

Yeah, I guess I'm asking like was there something that happened there that was--

Well, Dean Cromwell leads to another story, which has to do with the selection, my ouster from the team. So if you can fit this in--

As we finish the race, I noted that Dean Cromwell, the assistant head track coach of the American Olympic team and the head track coach at the University of Southern California was in amongst the officials, arguing with them that Frank Wykoff had finished third and Foy Draper had finished fourth, because he was the coach of Southern Cal and Wykoff and Draper ran for Southern Cal, or had run-- Wykoff was graduated-- had run for Southern Cal. These were his boys. And he pushed them amongst the officials as finishing third and fourth. And I was placed fifth. I don't know whether I finished third, fourth, or fifth. I just don't know. But I do know that Dean Cromwell had a hand in the placement of the order of finish.

And you think it was clearly favoritism, not the fact that you were a Jew?

I think it was clearly favoritism that he wanted his boys placed third and fourth. The fact that I was Jewish I think did not matter at that time. He wanted his boys in there. And I had made the team anyhow, because the first seven men were to make the team. The first three finishers running the 100 meter run, and the next four finishers making up the 400

meter relay. So I had made the team.

Any other Jews on the team?

The other Jew on the track team, one other Jew, was Sam Stoller. Stoller was placed sixth in the 100 meter final. He finished behind me. He ran a poor race. Later Sam beat me in the Olympic Village in a trial race we had amongst the three of us. Sam Stoller finishing first, I was beaten by a shoulder by Sam. And we both beat Foy Draper. Foy Draper wound up running on the team.

We'll get to that.

OK.

Now, after you qualify for the Olympic team, what sort of preparation was there between those qualifying rounds at Randall's Island and going to Berlin?

We qualified for the Olympic team on a Friday. And we were on board the ship, I believe, on Tuesday heading for Berlin. It was almost immediate. We were measured for our uniforms. There were several events we attended, several ceremonies we attended. And we were aboard ship within three days after making the team. It was very quick. There was no training period or anything like that. We stayed in shape, of course. We kept working out every day to make sure we were in good condition. And we took the SS Manhattan for Berlin.

I mean this sounds pretty exciting. I don't know how much you traveled before then. But winning these rounds and then a few days later being on a boat going to Europe sounds like a big deal.

This was quite an experience for me. I had been no farther north than Boston. I'd been no farther South than Philadelphia until that time. I was this 18-year-old kid from Brooklyn. I was the second youngest kid on the team, on the track team. And here I was aboard this magnificent liner heading for Europe. And it was a most exciting time. It was wonderful. It was thrilling. It was great. It was fulfilling my Frank Merriwell dream partially.

What was it like on the boat?

The boat was informal. It was fun. We trained aboard the ship. It was a 5-day crossing and a sixth day getting to Hamburg and then down to Berlin by train. But we had no opportunity to really sprint aboard ship. So we did calisthenics. We jogged up and down. We did a good deal of walking aboard ship. We watched our diet fairly carefully. There was no specific training regimen, because we were all pretty good athletes, had our own different coaches and coaching techniques applied to us for months and years beforehand. So we were not concerned with being directed by the coaches who were on the team.

It was a fun time. It was a time that was loose and easy and pleasant and we look forward with great anticipation to getting to Europe and getting in competition.

Change the tape.