

1
00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:54,710

2
00:00:54,710 --> 00:00:57,620
--and Jewish sports
[INAUDIBLE] the potato field.

3
00:00:57,620 --> 00:01:04,780

4
00:01:04,780 --> 00:01:06,550
Margaret, I wanted to
backtrack a minute.

5
00:01:06,550 --> 00:01:12,230
Before you went to England
and you were kicked out

6
00:01:12,230 --> 00:01:14,390
of all of the German
sporting clubs,

7
00:01:14,390 --> 00:01:19,110
were there alternative
outlets for you?

8
00:01:19,110 --> 00:01:22,460
We made our own
alternative outlets.

9
00:01:22,460 --> 00:01:23,840
We tried.

10
00:01:23,840 --> 00:01:30,800
Of course, I was being torn
into the direction of sports,

11
00:01:30,800 --> 00:01:32,330
as I said before.

12
00:01:32,330 --> 00:01:38,540

We played music, and we
tried to entertain ourselves

13
00:01:38,540 --> 00:01:40,310
as well as we could.

14
00:01:40,310 --> 00:01:43,340
But sports for
me, of course, was

15
00:01:43,340 --> 00:01:46,040
the thing I wanted the most.

16
00:01:46,040 --> 00:01:49,940
So a farmer let us have
an old potato field.

17
00:01:49,940 --> 00:01:51,680
And we tried to make it smooth.

18
00:01:51,680 --> 00:01:54,650
You know, it's a very rough
field, big clumps on there.

19
00:01:54,650 --> 00:01:57,410
And we try to smooth it out.

20
00:01:57,410 --> 00:02:01,760
And we started our own Jewish
handball team on there.

21
00:02:01,760 --> 00:02:05,420
Handball is a game like
soccer except that you

22
00:02:05,420 --> 00:02:06,440
don't kick the ball.

23
00:02:06,440 --> 00:02:08,539
You dribble it
like a basketball,

24

00:02:08,539 --> 00:02:11,630
and you pass it, throwing it.

25
00:02:11,630 --> 00:02:13,640
And it's a great game.

26
00:02:13,640 --> 00:02:18,590
And I coached all the
fellows on the team.

27
00:02:18,590 --> 00:02:20,570
And I was the only
girl on the team.

28
00:02:20,570 --> 00:02:25,880
And I shot the only goal on the
first time when we lost 7 to 1.

29
00:02:25,880 --> 00:02:28,640
And we also tried
to straighten out--

30
00:02:28,640 --> 00:02:32,540
next to the Jewish
school there was a yard.

31
00:02:32,540 --> 00:02:34,820
And we tried to
straighten that out

32
00:02:34,820 --> 00:02:37,460
to do calisthenics on
it because that soccer

33
00:02:37,460 --> 00:02:39,170
field was a little bit--

34
00:02:39,170 --> 00:02:42,740
that handball field was a
little bit out of the way.

35
00:02:42,740 --> 00:02:44,870
So we tried to

straighten that out.

36
00:02:44,870 --> 00:02:48,590
But we had to fight
the teachers' chickens.

37
00:02:48,590 --> 00:02:53,600
And they used that same
place for their activities.

38
00:02:53,600 --> 00:02:56,390
And it was not very
appetizing, so we gave up

39
00:02:56,390 --> 00:02:59,150
on that pretty fast.

40
00:02:59,150 --> 00:03:00,440
I want to ask you--

41
00:03:00,440 --> 00:03:03,470
my sense is that you're looking
a little bit toward the camera

42
00:03:03,470 --> 00:03:04,845
rather than just on me.

43
00:03:04,845 --> 00:03:06,470
If you could try to
keep your eyes on--

44
00:03:06,470 --> 00:03:07,050
OK.

45
00:03:07,050 --> 00:03:07,550
OK.

46
00:03:07,550 --> 00:03:11,150

47
00:03:11,150 --> 00:03:13,220
Were there Jewish

sporting clubs?

48

00:03:13,220 --> 00:03:14,630

Or did they exist before?

49

00:03:14,630 --> 00:03:16,880

Did you form them

when you couldn't

50

00:03:16,880 --> 00:03:18,320

join the German the ones?

51

00:03:18,320 --> 00:03:20,990

There were Jewish

sporting clubs.

52

00:03:20,990 --> 00:03:22,850

Maccabi, they called it.

53

00:03:22,850 --> 00:03:26,030

But that was a Zionistic outfit.

54

00:03:26,030 --> 00:03:29,900

And that was like the National

League and the American League

55

00:03:29,900 --> 00:03:31,100

in baseball.

56

00:03:31,100 --> 00:03:34,910

They didn't get along with the

other Jewish athletes, so--

57

00:03:34,910 --> 00:03:38,021

58

00:03:38,021 --> 00:03:40,700

They called them the--

59

00:03:40,700 --> 00:03:48,170

RJF was people who fought in the

First World War, the veterans.

60
00:03:48,170 --> 00:03:53,810
They started this
club for athletics.

61
00:03:53,810 --> 00:03:57,860
And they were able, in some
towns, to rent or even buy--

62
00:03:57,860 --> 00:04:02,210
I don't know-- stadiums
where Jews could practice on.

63
00:04:02,210 --> 00:04:07,770
But the facilities were
pretty poor, pretty terrible.

64
00:04:07,770 --> 00:04:10,580
But as I said, we tried
to do as much as we

65
00:04:10,580 --> 00:04:12,920
could to entertain ourselves.

66
00:04:12,920 --> 00:04:18,230
And there was no
coach capable of--

67
00:04:18,230 --> 00:04:22,160
anybody who was a little bit
more advanced like I was,

68
00:04:22,160 --> 00:04:24,950
to tell me how to do
it and what to do.

69
00:04:24,950 --> 00:04:29,210
And it was just a
very, very bad time.

70
00:04:29,210 --> 00:04:32,947
These Jewish clubs, were
they already in operation?

71
00:04:32,947 --> 00:04:34,280
Or they were formed in reaction?

72
00:04:34,280 --> 00:04:38,690
I think they were
mostly formed after--

73
00:04:38,690 --> 00:04:42,800
as I said, the Maccabi, they
were formed before already.

74
00:04:42,800 --> 00:04:47,870
But the Veterans
of Foreign Wars,

75
00:04:47,870 --> 00:04:52,430
I think they called themselves,
that came afterwards.

76
00:04:52,430 --> 00:04:56,870
In all the towns, almost,
especially in the bigger towns,

77
00:04:56,870 --> 00:05:00,650
they started a movement
so Jews would have a place

78
00:05:00,650 --> 00:05:05,120
to go to and do sports.

79
00:05:05,120 --> 00:05:06,920
What kind of
facilities were they?

80
00:05:06,920 --> 00:05:11,420
Poor, mostly pretty poor.

81
00:05:11,420 --> 00:05:13,310
I think they only let you--

82
00:05:13,310 --> 00:05:15,890

the Germans would not give
you anything very good.

83
00:05:15,890 --> 00:05:20,510
They let you have the garbage
places that nobody else wanted.

84
00:05:20,510 --> 00:05:24,350
Most likely, that's what
they gave the Jewish people.

85
00:05:24,350 --> 00:05:28,670
So this made it difficult
for the Jewish athletes

86
00:05:28,670 --> 00:05:32,150
to really improve
or be competitive?

87
00:05:32,150 --> 00:05:33,080
Oh, yes.

88
00:05:33,080 --> 00:05:35,330
Oh, yes.

89
00:05:35,330 --> 00:05:40,760
It was very bad to really
achieve something spectacular

90
00:05:40,760 --> 00:05:43,010
because it was just in such--

91
00:05:43,010 --> 00:05:44,840
it was a poor condition.

92
00:05:44,840 --> 00:05:49,100
And no coaching,
that was bad too.

93
00:05:49,100 --> 00:05:51,840

94

00:05:51,840 --> 00:05:55,800
Now we can jump
forward to England,

95
00:05:55,800 --> 00:05:57,480
where you had been
running in, I guess,

96
00:05:57,480 --> 00:06:01,520
British National Championships.

97
00:06:01,520 --> 00:06:04,400
The day I won the British
Championship, as I said,

98
00:06:04,400 --> 00:06:07,240
that was a fabulous day for me.

99
00:06:07,240 --> 00:06:09,440
Let me ask you to do
that again but don't say,

100
00:06:09,440 --> 00:06:11,210
as I said before.

101
00:06:11,210 --> 00:06:11,918
OK.

102
00:06:11,918 --> 00:06:13,550
Thank you.

103
00:06:13,550 --> 00:06:15,650
The day I won the
British Championship

104
00:06:15,650 --> 00:06:22,430
was a fabulous day for me
because I felt such pride

105
00:06:22,430 --> 00:06:27,260
in myself that I was able to
do that because the Germans had

106

00:06:27,260 --> 00:06:28,820
told me I'm inferior.

107

00:06:28,820 --> 00:06:30,150
I'm no good.

108

00:06:30,150 --> 00:06:34,430
And all of a sudden, here
I am, the British Champion.

109

00:06:34,430 --> 00:06:37,070
And I was hoping
that, somehow, word

110

00:06:37,070 --> 00:06:41,910
would go back to Germany so they
would find out that I did this.

111

00:06:41,910 --> 00:06:46,760
And my father had come over
to watch me, I thought.

112

00:06:46,760 --> 00:06:49,640
I thought that was the
reason for his trip,

113

00:06:49,640 --> 00:06:51,410
to watch me compete.

114

00:06:51,410 --> 00:06:57,020
But on the way back
from the stadium,

115

00:06:57,020 --> 00:06:59,420
we found out differently.

116

00:06:59,420 --> 00:07:00,900
He didn't tell me right away.

117

00:07:00,900 --> 00:07:03,470
He waited until we
got back to his hotel.

118
00:07:03,470 --> 00:07:06,560
But on the way back there,
there were newspapers

119
00:07:06,560 --> 00:07:08,060
being hawked in the street.

120
00:07:08,060 --> 00:07:11,660
And everything seemed
like to be big excitement.

121
00:07:11,660 --> 00:07:14,040
We asked the taxi
driver, what's going on?

122
00:07:14,040 --> 00:07:16,940
And he said, it has something
to do with the Nazis killing

123
00:07:16,940 --> 00:07:18,830
each other off.

124
00:07:18,830 --> 00:07:23,930
So we stopped the taxi, and
we got out, got the newspaper.

125
00:07:23,930 --> 00:07:28,760
And it told a story about
Hitler having killed off

126
00:07:28,760 --> 00:07:34,760
his best friend plus about
1,000 of his Nazi people

127
00:07:34,760 --> 00:07:37,490
because they complained
about something.

128
00:07:37,490 --> 00:07:40,880
And he wanted to show that
you just didn't do that.

129

00:07:40,880 --> 00:07:42,890

You did as you were told.

130

00:07:42,890 --> 00:07:45,800

And when we thought
that this might

131

00:07:45,800 --> 00:07:48,170

have been the beginning
of the end for Hitler,

132

00:07:48,170 --> 00:07:49,640

we couldn't have
been more wrong.

133

00:07:49,640 --> 00:07:52,790

Because Hitler, by
killing off these people,

134

00:07:52,790 --> 00:07:58,340

let everybody know, if you want
to stay alive, don't be a hero.

135

00:07:58,340 --> 00:08:00,410

So we got to the hotel--

136

00:08:00,410 --> 00:08:02,090

excuse me.

137

00:08:02,090 --> 00:08:04,160

And there my father
finally told me

138

00:08:04,160 --> 00:08:07,710

that I had to go
back to Germany.

139

00:08:07,710 --> 00:08:10,310

And the reason he
could not write to me

140

00:08:10,310 --> 00:08:12,710

or tell me on the
telephone was because there

141
00:08:12,710 --> 00:08:17,780
was this strict censorship of
everything coming into Germany

142
00:08:17,780 --> 00:08:19,590
or going out of Germany.

143
00:08:19,590 --> 00:08:21,620
And he couldn't have
dared to tell me

144
00:08:21,620 --> 00:08:28,280
that unless I came back, the
family was being threatened.

145
00:08:28,280 --> 00:08:31,260
You tell her to
come back, or else.

146
00:08:31,260 --> 00:08:34,620
So, of course, I decided
immediately to go home,

147
00:08:34,620 --> 00:08:39,409
especially in view of what
happened to Hitler's pals.

148
00:08:39,409 --> 00:08:41,309
If he can kill off
his own people,

149
00:08:41,309 --> 00:08:45,110
what is he going to do
to a Jew who says no?

150
00:08:45,110 --> 00:08:48,030
And I went back.

151
00:08:48,030 --> 00:08:50,100
I think, within a week,

I was back in Germany,

152
00:08:50,100 --> 00:08:53,240
which was very,
very hard to accept.

153
00:08:53,240 --> 00:08:59,060
I was supposed to be a member
of the German Olympic team.

154
00:08:59,060 --> 00:09:03,590
And that was something I
couldn't understand and didn't

155
00:09:03,590 --> 00:09:05,930
understand for a very long time.

156
00:09:05,930 --> 00:09:09,380
I think I didn't understand it
until I came over here and saw

157
00:09:09,380 --> 00:09:11,210
all the newspaper
articles that had

158
00:09:11,210 --> 00:09:15,800
been written about my
involvement with this time.

159
00:09:15,800 --> 00:09:19,100
The only reason I was supposed
to be on that Olympic team

160
00:09:19,100 --> 00:09:21,530
was because the Americans,
and the English,

161
00:09:21,530 --> 00:09:24,650
and the French, and a
lot of the other nations

162
00:09:24,650 --> 00:09:29,450
threatened not to come

to the 1936 Olympics

163
00:09:29,450 --> 00:09:31,790
due to discrimination
of the Jews.

164
00:09:31,790 --> 00:09:36,290
And Hitler wanted to make
this the best Olympics ever,

165
00:09:36,290 --> 00:09:38,450
use it as a propaganda vehicle.

166
00:09:38,450 --> 00:09:41,000
And he wanted, of course,
the United States and all

167
00:09:41,000 --> 00:09:42,740
the big nations to be there.

168
00:09:42,740 --> 00:09:47,090
And this was the
ruse that they used.

169
00:09:47,090 --> 00:09:55,170
I was the pigeon to help him
get the 1936 Olympics settled

170
00:09:55,170 --> 00:09:56,730
in Berlin.

171
00:09:56,730 --> 00:10:00,150
They were already
making a building

172
00:10:00,150 --> 00:10:03,220
and making a stadium
and everything.

173
00:10:03,220 --> 00:10:06,450
But they were really
afraid that it would not

174

00:10:06,450 --> 00:10:10,350
be a good Olympics for them
because the big nations weren't

175

00:10:10,350 --> 00:10:11,220
going to show up.

176

00:10:11,220 --> 00:10:17,070
And that would take away
from the Games, of course.

177

00:10:17,070 --> 00:10:20,550
So that's how I got on
the German Olympic team.

178

00:10:20,550 --> 00:10:23,250
And it was tough.

179

00:10:23,250 --> 00:10:25,960
How did your father
get this information

180

00:10:25,960 --> 00:10:27,540
that they wanted
you to come back?

181

00:10:27,540 --> 00:10:31,560

182

00:10:31,560 --> 00:10:33,330
It was very peculiar.

183

00:10:33,330 --> 00:10:35,940
My father told me
at the time, the way

184

00:10:35,940 --> 00:10:40,140
he had to come to England
to tell me in person,

185

00:10:40,140 --> 00:10:46,890
somebody showed up at our house

in Laupheim to tell him that--

186
00:10:46,890 --> 00:10:49,140
he also could not
write to my father--

187
00:10:49,140 --> 00:10:53,350
that the family would be in
danger if I didn't come back.

188
00:10:53,350 --> 00:10:56,520
So this man traveled to
Laupheim, told my father.

189
00:10:56,520 --> 00:10:59,430
My father traveled
to England, told me.

190
00:10:59,430 --> 00:11:03,225
That was like a relay
race, avoiding danger.

191
00:11:03,225 --> 00:11:06,280

192
00:11:06,280 --> 00:11:09,620
You, as a Jewish
athlete, we're going to--

193
00:11:09,620 --> 00:11:12,580
when you tell me that
you were aware of--

194
00:11:12,580 --> 00:11:15,190
you later, at least,
learned about the kind

195
00:11:15,190 --> 00:11:16,990
of international aspect of this.

196
00:11:16,990 --> 00:11:20,740
At the time, did you
know that you were going

197
00:11:20,740 --> 00:11:23,290
to fill some symbolic role?

198
00:11:23,290 --> 00:11:24,040
No.

199
00:11:24,040 --> 00:11:27,130
But I knew that I
would be the only Jew

200
00:11:27,130 --> 00:11:29,980
because there was nobody else.

201
00:11:29,980 --> 00:11:31,810
It sounds kind of conceited.

202
00:11:31,810 --> 00:11:36,310
But there really wasn't
another 100% Jewish athlete

203
00:11:36,310 --> 00:11:42,800
who could have competed
in the Olympics

204
00:11:42,800 --> 00:11:45,130
and having a chance
to win a medal.

205
00:11:45,130 --> 00:11:48,210
They just weren't good enough.

206
00:11:48,210 --> 00:11:49,510
That's the way it was.

207
00:11:49,510 --> 00:11:50,050
In Germany.

208
00:11:50,050 --> 00:11:51,250
In Germany.

209

00:11:51,250 --> 00:11:57,480
And I didn't know that I was
going to-- at first, that I

210
00:11:57,480 --> 00:11:58,710
was going to be the only one.

211
00:11:58,710 --> 00:12:01,680
And in Germany, nobody
knew anything about this.

212
00:12:01,680 --> 00:12:04,230
This was strictly--
nothing was in the papers

213
00:12:04,230 --> 00:12:09,420
about this, that the Olympics
were in such good shape.

214
00:12:09,420 --> 00:12:10,980
No, they only
heard, the Olympics

215
00:12:10,980 --> 00:12:13,920
is going to be the best
thing you ever experienced

216
00:12:13,920 --> 00:12:16,060
in Germany and all this stuff.

217
00:12:16,060 --> 00:12:19,110
And there was
nothing in the papers

218
00:12:19,110 --> 00:12:21,660
that there was a danger
that it wouldn't be--

219
00:12:21,660 --> 00:12:22,800
that it would be a flop.

220
00:12:22,800 --> 00:12:26,550

221
00:12:26,550 --> 00:12:30,870
Do you remember the reaction
of the German community

222
00:12:30,870 --> 00:12:32,160
to your coming back?

223
00:12:32,160 --> 00:12:36,660

224
00:12:36,660 --> 00:12:41,730
I think that the Jewish
community, they were very proud

225
00:12:41,730 --> 00:12:42,750
of me.

226
00:12:42,750 --> 00:12:45,930
After a while,
word spread around

227
00:12:45,930 --> 00:12:47,730
that there's this
Jewish girl who might

228
00:12:47,730 --> 00:12:49,290
be competing in the Olympics.

229
00:12:49,290 --> 00:12:53,070
And, of course, I was like
the Great Jewish Hope.

230
00:12:53,070 --> 00:12:57,120
We had the Great White Hope,
this boxer, whoever he was.

231
00:12:57,120 --> 00:12:58,740
I was the Great Jewish Hope.

232
00:12:58,740 --> 00:13:01,650
And people were proud of me.

233
00:13:01,650 --> 00:13:06,480
And they wished me the best.

234
00:13:06,480 --> 00:13:08,340
And it was a
terrible time for me

235
00:13:08,340 --> 00:13:12,600
because I would be asked all
these ridiculous questions.

236
00:13:12,600 --> 00:13:14,910
Are you going to be
competing in the Olympics?

237
00:13:14,910 --> 00:13:17,430
And what are you going
to do, and how are

238
00:13:17,430 --> 00:13:20,520
you going to conduct yourself?

239
00:13:20,520 --> 00:13:22,260
I said, I don't know.

240
00:13:22,260 --> 00:13:23,820
How do I know what's
going to happen?

241
00:13:23,820 --> 00:13:26,170
I just have to play it by ear.

242
00:13:26,170 --> 00:13:28,750
And that's exactly what I did.

243
00:13:28,750 --> 00:13:31,170
So did you think that
you would actually

244
00:13:31,170 --> 00:13:35,040
go forward and participate in

the Olympics at this stage?

245

00:13:35,040 --> 00:13:37,890

Maybe I was hoping
for it in a way.

246

00:13:37,890 --> 00:13:39,660

And maybe I was hoping for it--

247

00:13:39,660 --> 00:13:41,010

I need you to say--

248

00:13:41,010 --> 00:13:41,890

my question is--

249

00:13:41,890 --> 00:13:42,390

Oh, yeah.

250

00:13:42,390 --> 00:13:43,110

I'm sorry.

251

00:13:43,110 --> 00:13:44,370

Yeah.

252

00:13:44,370 --> 00:13:47,340

In a way, I was hoping I
would be in the Olympics

253

00:13:47,340 --> 00:13:51,210

because to compete
in the Olympic Games

254

00:13:51,210 --> 00:13:53,910

is a thrill of a lifetime.

255

00:13:53,910 --> 00:13:56,040

And it doesn't
happen to everybody.

256

00:13:56,040 --> 00:13:58,450

You have to be good
enough to do it.

257
00:13:58,450 --> 00:14:01,740
On the other hand,
I was so afraid.

258
00:14:01,740 --> 00:14:07,410
Supposing I am allowed to
compete, supposing I win--

259
00:14:07,410 --> 00:14:11,010
and I was convinced that I
would win a medal and possibly

260
00:14:11,010 --> 00:14:12,270
the gold--

261
00:14:12,270 --> 00:14:14,880
supposing I do
this, what do I do?

262
00:14:14,880 --> 00:14:17,010
I'm going to stand
on that podium

263
00:14:17,010 --> 00:14:20,400
and say heil Hitler
like all the others?

264
00:14:20,400 --> 00:14:27,240
That was the accepted
way to say, well, I won.

265
00:14:27,240 --> 00:14:29,670
You had to stand up there
and say, heil Hitler.

266
00:14:29,670 --> 00:14:33,900
And this to do for a
Jewish girl would never do.

267
00:14:33,900 --> 00:14:36,090
I was scared stiff.

268

00:14:36,090 --> 00:14:39,000

And this was going around in
my head, day and night, day

269

00:14:39,000 --> 00:14:40,200

and night, day and night.

270

00:14:40,200 --> 00:14:41,070

Oh, wow.

271

00:14:41,070 --> 00:14:42,250

What's going to happen?

272

00:14:42,250 --> 00:14:43,260

Am I going to compete?

273

00:14:43,260 --> 00:14:44,820

Am I not going to compete?

274

00:14:44,820 --> 00:14:49,000

How do I conduct
myself if I do compete?

275

00:14:49,000 --> 00:14:50,735

It was a terrible time.

276

00:14:50,735 --> 00:14:52,360

So you were very
conflicted about this.

277

00:14:52,360 --> 00:14:53,940

Oh, yes.

278

00:14:53,940 --> 00:14:57,070

I was so torn apart about it.

279

00:14:57,070 --> 00:14:58,960

I didn't know what to do.

280

00:14:58,960 --> 00:15:03,270

And it was not

only that, but when

281
00:15:03,270 --> 00:15:07,170
I met with the other girls,
non-Jewish competition,

282
00:15:07,170 --> 00:15:08,310
I was always afraid.

283
00:15:08,310 --> 00:15:10,830
How are they going
to react to me?

284
00:15:10,830 --> 00:15:15,060
And at the Olympic
training courses

285
00:15:15,060 --> 00:15:21,000
that I was ordered
to attend, they

286
00:15:21,000 --> 00:15:22,710
couldn't have been any nicer.

287
00:15:22,710 --> 00:15:28,200
All the girls accepted me
fully, no antisemitism, nothing.

288
00:15:28,200 --> 00:15:31,650
I was just an athlete like
all the other athletes.

289
00:15:31,650 --> 00:15:34,230
And I wrote many,
many years later--

290
00:15:34,230 --> 00:15:36,630
after 1980, I wrote
to one of them.

291
00:15:36,630 --> 00:15:39,930
I said, I can't understand
why you were so nice to me.

292
00:15:39,930 --> 00:15:41,800
Did you really
know I was Jewish?

293
00:15:41,800 --> 00:15:43,200
And she wrote back to me, sure.

294
00:15:43,200 --> 00:15:44,280
I knew you were Jewish.

295
00:15:44,280 --> 00:15:47,370
But you were a good athlete
like we were good athletes.

296
00:15:47,370 --> 00:15:51,570
And that was all
that counted to us.

297
00:15:51,570 --> 00:15:55,740
And politics didn't
mean anything to us,

298
00:15:55,740 --> 00:15:57,540
she said in the letter.

299
00:15:57,540 --> 00:16:00,540
But I'm sure that she, as well
as many of the other girls,

300
00:16:00,540 --> 00:16:03,390
were members of the Nazi Party.

301
00:16:03,390 --> 00:16:05,190
There is this conflict again.

302
00:16:05,190 --> 00:16:06,150
They're Nazis.

303
00:16:06,150 --> 00:16:09,660
And still, they accept
me, the Jewish girl--

304
00:16:09,660 --> 00:16:11,740
doesn't make any sense.

305
00:16:11,740 --> 00:16:14,202
It didn't make any sense.

306
00:16:14,202 --> 00:16:15,660
Why don't you get
a drink of water?

307
00:16:15,660 --> 00:16:18,330
Your voice is getting a little--
sounding a little scratchy.

308
00:16:18,330 --> 00:16:20,220
Well, I just said--

309
00:16:20,220 --> 00:16:22,650
5 seconds and 14 minutes left.

310
00:16:22,650 --> 00:16:23,434
Oh, OK.

311
00:16:23,434 --> 00:16:23,934
Cool.

312
00:16:23,934 --> 00:16:26,710

313
00:16:26,710 --> 00:16:32,800
So you came back to Germany
a little bit confused

314
00:16:32,800 --> 00:16:33,690
but championed.

315
00:16:33,690 --> 00:16:37,600

316
00:16:37,600 --> 00:16:40,810

What kind of training and preparation at this point

317
00:16:40,810 --> 00:16:47,890
were you able to participate in to get ready for the Olympics?

318
00:16:47,890 --> 00:16:49,360
I got back to Germany.

319
00:16:49,360 --> 00:16:52,870
I was hoping I would at least have

320
00:16:52,870 --> 00:16:54,970
a place where I could train.

321
00:16:54,970 --> 00:16:59,140
But the fact that I was a member of the German Olympic team

322
00:16:59,140 --> 00:17:03,560
did not allow me to use any of the stadiums.

323
00:17:03,560 --> 00:17:07,240
I was still a Jew who was not allowed to use any of this.

324
00:17:07,240 --> 00:17:12,670
So I had to use those poor facilities of the Jewish clubs

325
00:17:12,670 --> 00:17:16,270
and compete there for them.

326
00:17:16,270 --> 00:17:19,880
And that was absolutely terrible because first of all,

327
00:17:19,880 --> 00:17:21,910
there was no competition whatsoever.

328
00:17:21,910 --> 00:17:24,190
If you don't have
any competition,

329
00:17:24,190 --> 00:17:26,170
you have to only fight yourself.

330
00:17:26,170 --> 00:17:29,350
And that's much harder
than somebody who--

331
00:17:29,350 --> 00:17:33,460
if there's stiff competition,
you try to outdo each other.

332
00:17:33,460 --> 00:17:35,830
But when there's no
competition, it's very hard.

333
00:17:35,830 --> 00:17:38,360
So I always had to fight myself.

334
00:17:38,360 --> 00:17:41,890
And it was really
very, very tough.

335
00:17:41,890 --> 00:17:44,170
And then, of course, all
those stupid questions

336
00:17:44,170 --> 00:17:47,270
I had to answer--
everybody asked me,

337
00:17:47,270 --> 00:17:49,570
are you going to
be in the Olympics?

338
00:17:49,570 --> 00:17:52,660
What are you going to do?

339

00:17:52,660 --> 00:17:56,440
I was a nervous wreck,
I think, day and night.

340
00:17:56,440 --> 00:17:58,090
Things were on my mind.

341
00:17:58,090 --> 00:17:59,890
It was really horrible.

342
00:17:59,890 --> 00:18:02,230
And my parents and I,
we didn't discuss it,

343
00:18:02,230 --> 00:18:05,410
because I knew they
were worried about it.

344
00:18:05,410 --> 00:18:07,730
And they knew I was
worried about it.

345
00:18:07,730 --> 00:18:10,210
So we didn't talk
about it, because we

346
00:18:10,210 --> 00:18:13,300
didn't want to hurt each
other's feelings, I suppose.

347
00:18:13,300 --> 00:18:18,340
So it was very hard.

348
00:18:18,340 --> 00:18:20,260
How does one train
for the Olympics

349
00:18:20,260 --> 00:18:22,750
if you're not on the
same playing field?

350
00:18:22,750 --> 00:18:24,190
You know what I mean?

351
00:18:24,190 --> 00:18:30,140
It doesn't sound like you had
what you needed to get ready.

352
00:18:30,140 --> 00:18:35,620
I was ordered four
times in those two years

353
00:18:35,620 --> 00:18:37,930
to go to an Olympic
training course.

354
00:18:37,930 --> 00:18:40,270
And that's the
only solid training

355
00:18:40,270 --> 00:18:42,520
I had for the Olympics.

356
00:18:42,520 --> 00:18:45,200
And as I said before--

357
00:18:45,200 --> 00:18:46,285
I think I said it before--

358
00:18:46,285 --> 00:18:49,180

359
00:18:49,180 --> 00:18:51,250
I was a natural athlete.

360
00:18:51,250 --> 00:18:54,640
And if I hadn't been
a natural athlete,

361
00:18:54,640 --> 00:18:56,170
I don't think I
would have achieved

362
00:18:56,170 --> 00:18:59,875
what I did because

there just wasn't

363
00:18:59,875 --> 00:19:03,610
any opportunity for
me to get better

364
00:19:03,610 --> 00:19:06,760
or to advance or to
know what I was doing.

365
00:19:06,760 --> 00:19:09,610
It just happened naturally.

366
00:19:09,610 --> 00:19:12,490
And, I think, also then
what I've got to assume from

367
00:19:12,490 --> 00:19:16,180
this is that even if there
had been good Jewish athletes,

368
00:19:16,180 --> 00:19:21,010
maybe not in your caliber but
good Jewish athletes, clearly,

369
00:19:21,010 --> 00:19:22,810
they wouldn't have
had an opportunity

370
00:19:22,810 --> 00:19:26,170
to progress and be competitive
with the German athletes.

371
00:19:26,170 --> 00:19:29,060
Is that true?

372
00:19:29,060 --> 00:19:32,600
There were very
few Jewish athletes

373
00:19:32,600 --> 00:19:39,920
who really were capable to
compete on a national level.

374
00:19:39,920 --> 00:19:42,980
There were the best Jewish
athletes, let's say.

375
00:19:42,980 --> 00:19:46,100
But they weren't the
best German athletes.

376
00:19:46,100 --> 00:19:49,820
And they really
couldn't compare.

377
00:19:49,820 --> 00:19:51,260
The were very, very few.

378
00:19:51,260 --> 00:19:52,580
And there were some--

379
00:19:52,580 --> 00:19:55,340
for instance, in
the Olympics, there

380
00:19:55,340 --> 00:19:57,860
was a fencer, Helene Mayer.

381
00:19:57,860 --> 00:19:59,130
She was half-Jewish.

382
00:19:59,130 --> 00:20:00,410
They let her compete.

383
00:20:00,410 --> 00:20:02,720
I guess half-Jewish
was only half

384
00:20:02,720 --> 00:20:05,540
as offensive as
being all Jewish.

385
00:20:05,540 --> 00:20:08,660
And there were some

half-Jewish athletes that

386
00:20:08,660 --> 00:20:11,390
competed, one in ice hockey.

387
00:20:11,390 --> 00:20:16,370
So he melted into the team.

388
00:20:16,370 --> 00:20:20,520
So he wouldn't stick out
like I would have stuck out.

389
00:20:20,520 --> 00:20:23,600
But I don't think there were
any Jewish athletes, really,

390
00:20:23,600 --> 00:20:28,445
that were capable of
competing on a national level.

391
00:20:28,445 --> 00:20:31,650
They certainly didn't get
the backing to get better.

392
00:20:31,650 --> 00:20:32,780
No.

393
00:20:32,780 --> 00:20:37,761
The Germans did another
number of days--

394
00:20:37,761 --> 00:20:41,240
every time there were
some newspaper articles

395
00:20:41,240 --> 00:20:45,020
written that they're not
holding up their end about--

396
00:20:45,020 --> 00:20:49,310
they finally signed a
commitment that they would not

397

00:20:49,310 --> 00:20:51,860

discriminate against
Jewish athletes.

398

00:20:51,860 --> 00:20:55,070

They wrote it down.

399

00:20:55,070 --> 00:20:57,320

But there were always
newspaper articles

400

00:20:57,320 --> 00:20:59,870

that they were not living
up to their commitment.

401

00:20:59,870 --> 00:21:04,010

They wouldn't let me compete
in the German National

402

00:21:04,010 --> 00:21:05,210

Championship.

403

00:21:05,210 --> 00:21:08,930

And they said, well, she was
not entitled to compete in that,

404

00:21:08,930 --> 00:21:12,470

because she was not a member
of the German Track and Field

405

00:21:12,470 --> 00:21:13,520

Association.

406

00:21:13,520 --> 00:21:15,230

And why wasn't I remember?

407

00:21:15,230 --> 00:21:16,540

Because I was Jewish.

408

00:21:16,540 --> 00:21:20,120

So it was like a dog
chasing its tail.

409
00:21:20,120 --> 00:21:26,030
And so they had
all kinds of ways

410
00:21:26,030 --> 00:21:28,360
to talk themselves out of it.

411
00:21:28,360 --> 00:21:33,530
In 1935, for instance, they
got a little scared again.

412
00:21:33,530 --> 00:21:38,510
So they called all the
best Jewish athletes

413
00:21:38,510 --> 00:21:42,320
for a training course, an
Olympic training course.

414
00:21:42,320 --> 00:21:44,270
I said in an article
once, I think

415
00:21:44,270 --> 00:21:46,730
Snow White and the
seven dwarves would

416
00:21:46,730 --> 00:21:48,770
have done just as
well as those athletes

417
00:21:48,770 --> 00:21:50,420
because they weren't any good.

418
00:21:50,420 --> 00:21:53,360
I happened to meet
my husband there.

419
00:21:53,360 --> 00:21:56,930
That was the best part about
this training course, really.

420

00:21:56,930 --> 00:21:58,910

But they really
weren't good enough.

421

00:21:58,910 --> 00:22:02,890

But it was just a sham by
the Germans to show, well,

422

00:22:02,890 --> 00:22:07,220

we're trying to find new
talent for the Olympics

423

00:22:07,220 --> 00:22:09,690

in the Jewish community.

424

00:22:09,690 --> 00:22:13,160

But that was all baloney.

425

00:22:13,160 --> 00:22:14,600

Did you learn anything there?

426

00:22:14,600 --> 00:22:17,570

Did it give you an
opportunity to get better?

427

00:22:17,570 --> 00:22:21,560

There was a very
good coach there.

428

00:22:21,560 --> 00:22:25,790

But I think what he
told me I knew already.

429

00:22:25,790 --> 00:22:28,250

By then, this is 1935 already.

430

00:22:28,250 --> 00:22:31,310

And the Olympics were
the following year.

431

00:22:31,310 --> 00:22:35,700

And I did very well all along.

432
00:22:35,700 --> 00:22:42,020
In the training courses I
always outdid the other--

433
00:22:42,020 --> 00:22:44,330
not in the Jewish one
but in the other one,

434
00:22:44,330 --> 00:22:48,530
I always did better
than the German girls.

435
00:22:48,530 --> 00:22:51,560
And whenever I competed-- it
only happened three times,

436
00:22:51,560 --> 00:22:54,500
I think, in the two years--

437
00:22:54,500 --> 00:22:55,640
I always beat them.

438
00:22:55,640 --> 00:22:59,000
Even though only once did
I have good competition

439
00:22:59,000 --> 00:23:02,390
with girls that were also
going into the Olympics.

440
00:23:02,390 --> 00:23:06,710
The other times, I think I
jumped about 15 inches higher

441
00:23:06,710 --> 00:23:07,790
than the next best.

442
00:23:07,790 --> 00:23:12,396
And there was no--

443
00:23:12,396 --> 00:23:15,040

I had no competition
in that respect

444
00:23:15,040 --> 00:23:18,490
and in the Jewish
competitions also.

445
00:23:18,490 --> 00:23:21,310
But the Germans always
kept an eye out.

446
00:23:21,310 --> 00:23:23,680
Whenever I was
competing someplace,

447
00:23:23,680 --> 00:23:27,130
there was always somebody
watching out for the Nazis

448
00:23:27,130 --> 00:23:30,160
to make sure if I
did poorly, they

449
00:23:30,160 --> 00:23:33,930
would have kicked me off the
team immediately, I'm sure.

450
00:23:33,930 --> 00:23:38,170
You had mentioned that the
other athletes treated you

451
00:23:38,170 --> 00:23:40,030
the same as anyone else.

452
00:23:40,030 --> 00:23:42,950
Did you feel that same
equanimity from the officials

453
00:23:42,950 --> 00:23:43,825
and from the coaches?

454
00:23:43,825 --> 00:23:46,860

455
00:23:46,860 --> 00:23:49,120
The coaches treated
me very well.

456
00:23:49,120 --> 00:23:54,810
They saw-- and listen,
not everybody was a Nazi.

457
00:23:54,810 --> 00:23:56,820
And they treated me well.

458
00:23:56,820 --> 00:23:58,740
And they like me, it seems.

459
00:23:58,740 --> 00:24:04,060
But the officials, whenever
I had to compete at the--

460
00:24:04,060 --> 00:24:05,010
they were hostile.

461
00:24:05,010 --> 00:24:08,430
I think they were
hostile towards me.

462
00:24:08,430 --> 00:24:12,930
One time I saw this fellow who
was a member of my former club.

463
00:24:12,930 --> 00:24:15,450
I knew him as well
as I knew myself.

464
00:24:15,450 --> 00:24:18,210
He looked through me
like I didn't exist.

465
00:24:18,210 --> 00:24:19,350
He didn't say hello.

466
00:24:19,350 --> 00:24:22,950

He didn't-- I was
just non-existent.

467
00:24:22,950 --> 00:24:27,380
And at that competition,
they tried--

468
00:24:27,380 --> 00:24:29,680
the officials are
supposed to be neutral--

469
00:24:29,680 --> 00:24:35,580
they tried to teach the other
girls how they could beat me.

470
00:24:35,580 --> 00:24:36,930
They didn't do that, of course.

471
00:24:36,930 --> 00:24:40,140
They couldn't, because
they weren't good enough.

472
00:24:40,140 --> 00:24:42,010
This must have been hurtful.

473
00:24:42,010 --> 00:24:43,080
Yes.

474
00:24:43,080 --> 00:24:47,070
But it made me better because
I was so full of rage.

475
00:24:47,070 --> 00:24:49,017
The madder I got,
the better I jumped.

476
00:24:49,017 --> 00:24:50,850
And the Germans didn't
know that, of course.

477
00:24:50,850 --> 00:24:53,880
Otherwise, they might have
treated me a little better.

478
00:24:53,880 --> 00:24:59,220
But I was so absolutely
enraged about everything,

479
00:24:59,220 --> 00:25:04,800
the whole thing, these whole two
years, that the madder I got,

480
00:25:04,800 --> 00:25:06,450
the better I did.

481
00:25:06,450 --> 00:25:08,920
And that was wonderful.

482
00:25:08,920 --> 00:25:10,710
So rage was your motivator.

483
00:25:10,710 --> 00:25:16,200
Rage was my fuel,
fueled my energies--

484
00:25:16,200 --> 00:25:19,725
and my motivator.

485
00:25:19,725 --> 00:25:22,830
It was really weird.

486
00:25:22,830 --> 00:25:24,220
Took you on to new heights, huh?

487
00:25:24,220 --> 00:25:24,720
Uh-huh.

488
00:25:24,720 --> 00:25:27,600

489
00:25:27,600 --> 00:25:28,560
5 minutes.

490
00:25:28,560 --> 00:25:31,510

491
00:25:31,510 --> 00:25:34,620
So you're training, and
you're taking sham courses.

492
00:25:34,620 --> 00:25:36,960
And you're continuing
to work as if you are

493
00:25:36,960 --> 00:25:39,120
going to be in the Olympics.

494
00:25:39,120 --> 00:25:40,710
Was there a qualifying process?

495
00:25:40,710 --> 00:25:43,980

496
00:25:43,980 --> 00:25:49,920
For instance, the German
Track and Field Championships,

497
00:25:49,920 --> 00:25:53,370
they were supposed to be
one of the events that

498
00:25:53,370 --> 00:25:59,460
would show who was going to
be taken into consideration

499
00:25:59,460 --> 00:26:00,840
to compete for the Olympics.

500
00:26:00,840 --> 00:26:02,370
But they wouldn't
let me compete,

501
00:26:02,370 --> 00:26:06,990
because I was not a member
of the German Track and Field

502

00:26:06,990 --> 00:26:08,010
Association.

503
00:26:08,010 --> 00:26:08,940
So I couldn't compete.

504
00:26:08,940 --> 00:26:12,630

505
00:26:12,630 --> 00:26:15,400
One time I had to
compete in Munich,

506
00:26:15,400 --> 00:26:18,750
which was the scariest
thing because Munich

507
00:26:18,750 --> 00:26:22,470
was the hotbed of Nazism.

508
00:26:22,470 --> 00:26:23,610
Hitler lived there.

509
00:26:23,610 --> 00:26:26,970
And I was scared
stiff to go there.

510
00:26:26,970 --> 00:26:28,710
And I didn't do that well.

511
00:26:28,710 --> 00:26:31,440
And it was noted, duly
noted by the Nazis

512
00:26:31,440 --> 00:26:36,570
that I only jumped a meter
53 instead of better.

513
00:26:36,570 --> 00:26:41,760
But still, I beat the
competition by about 15 inches.

514

00:26:41,760 --> 00:26:44,940
But I didn't do
as well, because I

515
00:26:44,940 --> 00:26:48,000
think I was mentally
a wreck at the time.

516
00:26:48,000 --> 00:26:53,220
Were there other
qualifying matches?

517
00:26:53,220 --> 00:26:55,350
Assuming that you were
going to go forward and be

518
00:26:55,350 --> 00:26:58,560
in the Olympics at this
point, were there other

519
00:26:58,560 --> 00:27:00,510
qualifying meets or
anything like that?

520
00:27:00,510 --> 00:27:01,460
Or it was just--

521
00:27:01,460 --> 00:27:05,700
how does one then get in the
Olympics and on the team?

522
00:27:05,700 --> 00:27:12,000

523
00:27:12,000 --> 00:27:14,370
The gentile girls
who were supposed

524
00:27:14,370 --> 00:27:17,690
to go into the Olympics,
they had their own meets

525
00:27:17,690 --> 00:27:20,220

to which I was not admitted.

526

00:27:20,220 --> 00:27:25,770

And I think the whole deal
was just if I did fairly well,

527

00:27:25,770 --> 00:27:29,250

they would not throw me out
because they were still afraid

528

00:27:29,250 --> 00:27:32,530

that the boycott would happen.

529

00:27:32,530 --> 00:27:35,470

So, I think, no
matter what I did,

530

00:27:35,470 --> 00:27:41,100

I was pretty safe at that
point, even in Munich

531

00:27:41,100 --> 00:27:45,180

when I did not do too well.

532

00:27:45,180 --> 00:27:47,760

They couldn't afford to
throw me out at that point,

533

00:27:47,760 --> 00:27:51,090

because they were still afraid
the Americans wouldn't show up.

534

00:27:51,090 --> 00:27:52,530

So you just assumed
you were going

535

00:27:52,530 --> 00:27:53,790

to be on the Olympic team.

536

00:27:53,790 --> 00:27:56,920

Yes, I think so.

537

00:27:56,920 --> 00:28:04,020
I think that I was going to be
safe then until further notice.

538
00:28:04,020 --> 00:28:06,060
And I didn't know,
was it going to be?

539
00:28:06,060 --> 00:28:07,620
Wasn't I going to be?

540
00:28:07,620 --> 00:28:09,360
What was I going to do?

541
00:28:09,360 --> 00:28:12,590
It was a terrible time.

542
00:28:12,590 --> 00:28:13,100
Tape change.

543
00:28:13,100 --> 00:28:13,820
Tape change.

544
00:28:13,820 --> 00:28:15,670
Thank you.

545
00:28:15,670 --> 00:30:15,000