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GLICKMAN, MARTY, WITH STAN ISAACS. **The Fastest Kid on the Block: The Marty Glickman Story** Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1996. Pp. x, 201. Index, photographs. \$24.95.

One of the more infamous events in Olympic history occurred during the most tarnished of Olympic Games, those in Berlin in 1936. At those games, two American Jewish athletes were removed from the 400-meter relay team at the last minute. Marty Glickman was one of them, Sam Stoller the other.

This incident is clearly the most dramatic part of Marty Glickman's reflective autobiography *The Fastest Kid on the Block* with veteran sportswriter Stan Isaacs. Glickman takes us through the U.S. Olympic trials and the games, and in the

process provides a first-person account of this shameful episode. What we learn is not only the details of the Berlin decision, but also the reaction of teammates and rationale of coaches, set against Glickman's own inner emotions as a Jew caught in an anti-Semitic incident within an anti-Semitic setting. Glickman speaks frankly of his own thoughts and feelings as he made his decision to attend the 1936 games in the face of a call for a boycott. The result is riveting and revealing in any number of ways.

Glickman's problems with the U.S. Olympic track and field authorities actually began at the U.S. Olympic trials in New York City when he apparently finished third in the 100-meter final and earned a place on the 100-meter team. After lobbying by University of Southern California coach Dean Cromwell, his runners, Foy Draper and Frank Wykoff, were moved ahead of Glickman in the standings. Lack of television replays, photographs, or even timing devices made such an appeal possible, and Cromwell was able to convince the judges that they had not seen what they thought they saw. Glickman found himself finishing fifth instead of third, a member of the 400-meter relay team, rather than the 100-meter dash group.

This incident at the trials left Glickman vulnerable in Berlin when head coaches Lawson Robertson and Dean Cromwell made their announcement that Stoller and Glickman would be replaced by Owens and Metcalfe on the 400-meter relay team. Draper and Wykoff were the other two members of that team.

In Glickman's view, Avery Brundage was the key figure in this decision. Circumstantial evidence, as well as Brundage's well-documented anti-Semitism, would seem to reinforce Glickman's conclusion, although Allen Guttman does not share that view in his biography of Brundage (*Guttman: The Games Must Go On*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1984, 81).

With this incident and this drama comprising the opening chapters, not surprisingly the remainder of the book seems anti-climactic. Nonetheless, there is much more here to interest the sport historian. Glickman's college days as football player and track star, his subsequent broadcasting career, and his personal life hold considerable historical interest.

For those familiar with the Wilmet Sidat Singh story at Syracuse University, the black quarterback with a Hindu-Indian name, Glickman offers a firsthand account of his experience on the same team with Singh, and reflects frankly and with regret on his own reaction to the incident at the time. He also makes interesting observations on the changes in high school and college football, especially in coaching styles, and tells us of the importance of Frank Merriwell in his life.

Glickman would face more anti-Semitism through his life, and the incident in Berlin keeps coming back to him as he deals with other forms of prejudice in varying contexts. His rejection at the doors of the New York Athletic Club are recalled, especially when he returns to the Club to be honored at a dinner.

Glickman's broadcasting career provides a personal account of the changing and growing sports and sports broadcasting businesses. Glickman did pioneering work with HBO sports from its beginnings until its now large role, and was a

**broadcasting coach for NBC. From observations on early broadcasters and broadcasting, to his comments on Red Barber, and his account of his own career as broadcaster for the Knicks, Giants, and Jets, Glickman's career is a window on change from an insider's point of view.**

**Spanning over a half-century of sport history, Glickman's account of his varied sports career, as well as his reflections on his Jewishness, provide excellent primary source material on several subjects, as well as an excellent overview of the changing sports scene.**

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