**Jesse Owens**

* The seventh child of ten to parents Henry and Emma Alexander Owens was named James Cleveland when he was born in Oakville, Alabama on September 12, 1913. (<http://www.jesseowens.com/about/>)
* He was called ‘J.C.’ for his initials
* At the age of 9 his family moved to Cleveland, Ohio.
* Teacher at his new school in Cleveland misheard J.C. on his first day of school and referred to him as Jesse, which he would continue to be referred as.
* He became interested in track and field in junior high school, and he would set records for his age by clearing 6 feet in the high jump and 22 feet 11 3/4 inches in the long jump.
* His success carried over to high school as he would go on to win three Ohio state championships.
* During his senior year of high school at the National Interscholastic meet in Chicago, he set a new high school world record by running the 100 yard dash in 9.4 seconds to tie the accepted world record, and he created a new high school world record in the 220 yard dash by running the distance in 20.7 seconds.
* In another event, he set a new world record in the long jump by jumping 24 feet 11 3/4 inches.
* J.C. was recruited by numerous colleges for track and field as a result of his ability.
* He would choose to attend Ohio State University although they were unable to offer him a scholarship.
* J.C. worked numerous jobs to pay for college and support his family, which consisted of his Wife, Ruth, and their young daughter. The couple would go on to have two more daughters. (Ruth gave birth to their first daughter, Gloria, in 1932. They married on July 5, 1935, and had two more daughters together: Marlene, born in 1937, and Beverly, born in 1940. They remained married until his death in 1980.)
* He worked as a night elevator operator, a waiter, he pumped gas, worked in the library stacks, and served a stint as a page in the Ohio Statehouse, all of this in between practice and record setting on the field in intercollegiate competition. **(REWORD)**
* Despite the adversity he was facing, J.C’s record setting ways continued.
* At the Big Ten Championships on May 25, 1935, he set three world records and tied a fourth, all in a span of about 45 minutes. One of which was the 100 meter yard dash, in which he set a new world record of 9.4 seconds.
* After dominating the college ranks, Owens decided to enter the 1936 Olympics which would be held in Nazi Germany.
* Leading up to the Olympic games, there was a lot of anticipation due to Adolf Hitler’s racist beliefs that the German ‘Aryan’ people were the dominant race. On the opposite end of the spectrum NAACP and like organizations were encouraging athletes to boycott the Olympics due to the mistreatment of Blacks in the United States. J.C decided to participate and felt that the Olympics were above politics.
* His decision would lead to him winning four gold medals, becoming the first American track and field athlete to complete the feat and dispelling Hitler’s asinine race theories.
* During the Berlin Games, Owens wore cleats made by a German shoemaker by the name of Adolf ‘Adi’ Dassler. Owens’ endorsement, helped Dassler launch his own footwear company that would be named Adidas.
* Jesse Owens died from complications due to lung cancer on March 31, 1980 in Tucson, Arizona.