

Jesse Owens Biography

By Chris DiPoalo

JC Owens was the tenth child of Henry and Mary Emma Owens. JC Owens was born on September 12 1913 on a small farm in Oakville, Alabama. JC's parents, Henry and Mary Emma Owens were share croppers. Henry sold the mule and the family moved to Cleveland, Ohio. When JC went to school, he was called Jesse because of his teacher.

Jesse Owens had jobs as a young man. He had to sweep floors, shine shoes, water plants and deliver groceries. Even though the whole Owens family was working, they were still poor. When the coach, (Coach Riley) saw Jesse Owens run in gym class he wanted him on the track team. Coach Riley taught Jesse to run like the ground was on fire which made him faster. When Jesse Owens was running and jumping someone said he was soaring in the air.

Jesse Owens was on his way to the 1936 Olympics in Berlin, Germany. The Olympics are a series of events that very good athletes go to, try to win medals. When he was in the broad jump event he was in trouble. Luckily, Luz Long helped him out and then Jesse won the Olympics. When Jesse went home he was treated like a star and was offered many business jobs. Jesse Owens even started his own business called "Jesse Owens Dry Cleaning Company", but it went out of business a year later.

Jesse Owens wrote a book called "Black Think." It wasn't a very good book. Jesse Owens got married to Minnie Ruth Solomon. Jesse gave lots of speeches around America. Jesse Owens died on March 31 1980. Most people thought he was one of the inspirations for black Americans.

Pictures of Jesse Owens



Courtesy of Clip Art

Questions about Jesse Owens

1. What did you learn?
2. Who did you learn about?