

1968 U.S. Olympic Team Oral History Project: Interview Topics

While both the interviewee and interviewer should mutually strive to record candid information of lasting value, the interview is also expected to be relaxed and conversational. Interview topics should be treated as story prompts or general conversation starters and should not be viewed strictly as questions that must be asked and answered in an exact order. Some topics will be more relevant, meaningful, or memorable than others; therefore, interviewees may choose the subjects they will and will not address. Keeping in mind that the interview will be recorded for the permanent public record with the intention to make it publicly available online, we respect the rights of interviewees to refuse to discuss certain subjects. Interviewees should ask the interviewer to pause the recorder before sharing any information not intended for public access as we have limited ability to edit recordings.

Interviewees can expect the following topics to be addressed in the course of the interview: testing for performance enhancing substances, training (especially high altitude), friendships and meaningful experiences, politics (Cold War, Civil Rights).

Interview questions may include:

- Basic biographical and background information?
- What were your accommodations in Mexico City?
- Did you become particularly close with anyone on the team?
- What are your memories of the Soviet Bloc athletes?
- What were some of the training methods you used to deal with the altitude?
- In your opinion, what was the most meaningful part of the 1968 Games?
- The Mexico City Games were marked by several historic moments: first Games at altitude, first Games to deliberately test athletes for performance enhancing drugs, the Tlatelolco massacre, the first disqualification because of doping, Smith & Carlos' famous medal stand salute, the strong presence of Soviet Bloc athletes, first Games in Latin/South America. Were you aware of any of these and how did they affect your Olympic experience?
- What sort of reception did you get when you returned home? What happened after the Games? Did you have any "down" time or did you go directly back to work (training or employment)?
- What one piece of advice would you give to today's Olympic hopeful?
- What does the preservation of the 1968 U.S. Team legacy mean to you?