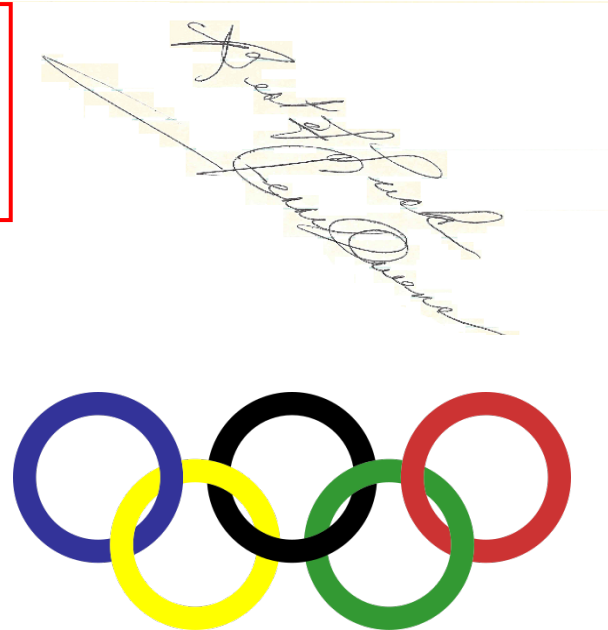


## CENTENNIAL OF JESSE OWENS IN CLEVELAND, 1922-2022



**CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE – Owens at East Tech, Owens at the 1936 Olympics, Owens' 1972 signature, the 1936 Olympics symbol, Owens at Ohio State, Owens visiting Rhodes High School and his Oak Tree in 1972, and Owens at Fairmount Junior High.**



# Timeline of Jesse Owens and Cleveland

1913 – Henry and Mary Emma Owens give birth to their 10<sup>th</sup> child, James Cleveland Owens, in Oakville, Ala.

**1922** – The Owens family moves to Cleveland. Owens enrolls in Cleveland's Bolton Elementary School, where one of his teachers begins to call him Jesse. The name sticks.

1928 – At Fairmount Junior High, Owens sets records in the high jump and long jump under coach and life-long mentor, Charley Riley.

1930 – Owens enrolls at East Technical High School. Ivan Greene is his track coach. Riley also follows to East Tech as a volunteer coach.

1932 – Owens competes, but does not qualify, in the U.S. Olympic preliminary trials at Northwestern University.

1933 – Owens is senior class president and captain of the East Tech track team. He finishes first in 75 of the 79 competitions he enters, and breaks Ohio's long-jump record at the state interscholastic finals. At the National HS Championship in Chicago, Owens wins the long jump, sets a new world record in the 220-yard dash, and ties the 100-yard dash world record. Owens graduates from East Tech and enters the Ohio State University.

1935 – In what becomes known as the “greatest 45 minutes in sports,” Owens ties one world record and sets three more at the Big Ten Track Meet in Ann Arbor, Mich. His performances catapulted Owens into prominence in the sports world. Also, Jesse Owens and Minnie Ruth Solomon get married.



**1936** – Owens wins four gold medals at the Summer Olympics in Berlin, setting world records in the 200-meter race (20.7 seconds), long jump (26 feet, 5 ¼ inches) & the 400-meter relay (39.8 seconds), while tying the world record for the 100-meter dash (10.3 seconds). Owens also brings home four Oak Tree saplings, baby trees which Germany also awarded to the winning athletes as a memento from the host nation. Owens plants one of the trees near the track at Rhodes High School, where he trained in 1935-36 for the Olympics.

1936-1940 -- Due to racism, endorsement offers for Owens don't materialize. He races against a horse in December 1936 in Cuba to make money, and resorts to barnstorming (baseball and basketball) and other activities for a living. His dry-cleaning business fails, and Owens files for bankruptcy in 1939.

1942 – Owens is appointed the Director of National Fitness by the U.S. Office of Civilian Defense, and he works for the Ford Motor Co. in Detroit during and after World War II.

1949 – Owens and family moves to Chicago, where he establishes a PR agency.

1950 – The Associated Press names Owens the greatest track athlete of the half-century

1956 – Owens and other former U.S. Olympic champions go to Australia and attend the Summer Olympic Games as personal representatives of President Dwight Eisenhower.

1965 – The ARCO Jesse Owens Games are established.

**1972** – Ohio State University awards Owens with an honorary doctorate of athletic arts for his “unparalleled skill and ability” as an athlete & for his “personification of sportsmanship ideals.” Owens, who had moved to Arizona this same year, comes to Cleveland to speak at the dedication of East Technical High School and to check up on his Oak Tree at Rhodes.

1973 – The U.S. Olympic Committee appoints Owens to its board of directors. He advocates for better funding to equip and train U.S. athletes.

1974 -- Owens is inducted into the U.S. Track and Field Hall of Fame.

1976 -- President Gerald Ford presents Owens with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian award of the U.S. government.

1980 -- Owens dies at the age of 66.

*Much of the information here comes from the Ohio State University's "Timeline: Jesse Owens, a Lasting Legend."*

