



From Brooklyn to the Olympics: The Hall of Fame Career of Auburn University Track Coach Mel Rosen

Craig Darch, Harvey Glance

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This book follows Mel Rosen's life from the streets of Brooklyn during the 1930s and 1940s to his selection as head coach of the United States track-and-field team for the 1992 Barcelona Summer Olympics. The story describes how a Jewish kid from Brighton Beach, New York, followed his dream to become the head track-and-field coach at Auburn University for 28 years. Rosen's achievements there were extraordinary. He coached seven Olympians and 143 All-Americans and guided Auburn's track-and-field team to four consecutive Southeastern Conference indoor championships. The pinnacle of his career was coaching U.S. Olympians to a record 20 medals in Barcelona. As a result of his impressive achievements, Rosen was inducted into the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame (1993), the U.S. Track and Field Hall of Fame (1995), and the International Jewish Sports Hall of Fame (1994). Auburn University honored him in 2006 by naming its new track the Hutsell-Rosen Track.

Author Craig Darch interviewed many of Rosen's former athletes and fellow coaches. Included are comments from football/baseball superstar Bo Jackson, legendary football coach Pat Dye, and Olympic medalists Harvey Glance, Willie Smith, and Carl Lewis. Most importantly, the book relies on the memories of Mel Rosen, his family, his Brighton Beach "buddies," and other friends he made along the way. It details Rosen's coaching career during the turbulent 1950s and 1960s. Included are lively vignettes about Auburn sports history, Alabama history, Jews in the South, and the Olympics. The story is an intimate, anecdote-rich portrait of a man who achieved excellence both as a track coach and as a person.



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