

**America's  
Golden  
Girl**

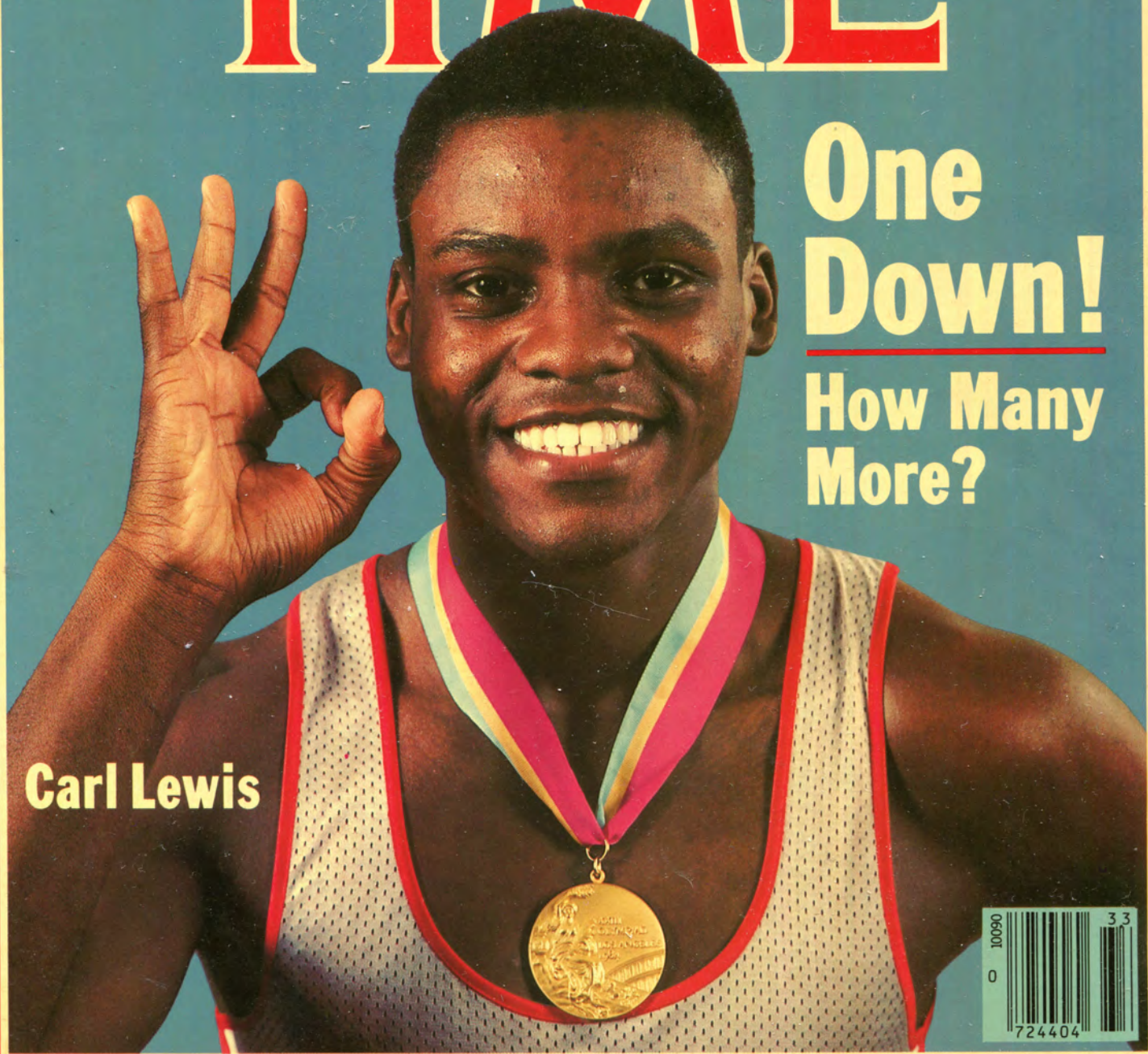


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# TIME

SPECIAL  REPORT



**One  
Down!**  
**How Many  
More?**

**Carl Lewis**





# Carl Lewis: Man in the Eye of a Media Hurricane



*As he began his pursuit of history and Jesse Owens with the 100-meter gold medal last Saturday, Carl Lewis, 23, also took off on the most intense eight days of his life. The week before could not have been a greater contrast. In the swirl of publicity and pressure, Lewis rigorously worked at relaxing, tranquilly creating his own world. TIME Correspondent Melissa Ludtke, who first interviewed him six months ago, was permitted a rare chance to enter that world and spend some time with Lewis. Her report:*

Though he was raised in New Jersey, Carl Lewis' inner thermostat always registers cool. Lewis loves to run and jump when it is hot. The hotter it is, the better he feels. On this humid Tuesday afternoon, as Lewis prepares for his final workout, the stands at the Santa Monica track are empty save for the security guards who only have eyes for stray spectators trying to pass through the chain-link fence. A female hurdler sprints along one side of the track. Lewis, his coach Tom Tellez, and Carl's friend Kirk Baptiste, a University of Houston sophomore who will run the 200 meter, set up shop on the opposite side. "Carl, go grab the tape measure!" Tellez yells from the stands. Lewis ambles over to the tape.

Anyone who has watched him train knows that the world's fastest human does everything slowly except run. He is slow to start his workout. His warmup is usually a slow jog once around the track. He spends a lot of time talking and walking, slowly. Lewis grabs the tape measure and stretches it 171 ft. along the track, the distance of his approach for the long jump. This is the first activity of most workouts. But Lewis does not normally jump in practice; he merely runs through the paces of his approach. This final workout lasts 40 min. During that time, he takes only three runs. He is in action for a scant total of 30 sec. But Tellez, as serene as his student, intends the last few workouts for fine-tuning, not of the body so much as of the mind. Until now Lewis felt that his efforts had been 99% physical, a mere 1% psychological. "At the Olympics it is 100% mental," he says, "because there is nothing you can change physically."

Away from the track, the essential aim is to keep Carl's life as close to normal as possible. To provide some of the insulation of home, his family has set up house in Los Angeles. Mother Evelyn, Father Bill and Sister Carol, who will probably earn a medal in the long jump, are staying with him in a two-story white stucco house on a residential street six miles from the Los Angeles Coliseum. The house is a haven where Lewis can be himself, by himself. If he wants to, as he did one day last week, he can simply lounge around all morning in his blue cotton nightshirt on the brick patio overlooking a small, oval swimming pool. His mother, an excellent cook, prepares meals for everyone. By noon of one busy morning, she already had dinner made: a

The visible superstar did march in the opening ceremonies. "Really spectacular," he says with remembered pleasure. But he consciously avoided the excitement of most other events. One evening Lewis moseyed over to the Santa Monica apartment of his manager, Joe Douglas, to watch the swimming on television. When Bruce Hayes, an unheralded freestyler from UCLA, held off the final surge of West Germany's Michael Gross to give the U.S. the gold in the men's 4 × 200 freestyle relay, Lewis "got very excited, probably more excited than I will for the 100 meters. I was turning somersaults. I was jumping and screaming. I wasn't resting then. I was emotionally involved. But when it was all over I was resting again."



At "home" in Los Angeles: Mother Evelyn, Carl, Sister Carol and Father Bill

variation on shepherd's pie with layers of potatoes, red onions and scallions, green peas and sautéed turkey, topped by a layer of Jiffy biscuit mix—accompanied, as are most Lewis meals, by corn on the cob and a salad.

For weeks before the Games, a debate had been waged over whether Lewis would stay with the other athletes in one of the Olympic Villages. He said no. Olympic officials responded with an adamant yes. Two days before the opening ceremonies Lewis compromised, and got his own way. He checked in officially, but apparently no one seems overly concerned about how much time he spends at his room in Webb Tower. Which is very little. Calling himself a "visible" athlete (a rare moment of understatement), he claims that the mere act of walking through the village without being interrupted is difficult. "Distracting," he calls it. "The main issue," Lewis says, "is for me to compete well, not [for officials] to make sure every person stays here or there."

Neither was he stirred unduly by his customary precompetition press conference. Some of the 700 gathered journalists had grown testy, though, as they waited for Carl, who as usual was half an hour late. He arrived wearing a red leather shirt perforated by hundreds of tiny holes, with black zippers running up the sides. Classic Carl. Some reporters noted that his Olympic haircut made him look like the singer Grace Jones. At the podium as on the track, Lewis is a practiced performer. He even critiqued the inquiries. "That's a great question,"

he told a British journalist who asked him whether he was running for the money or rather, like Jesse Owens, to become a folk hero for mankind. "My objective," he answered forthrightly, "is to be the role model, not the rich man."

Another objective, for a possible career after his legs no longer support him, led him one night to the ABC control center, where he sat behind Roone Arledge while the network chieftain called the shots for the evening's coverage. Lewis has worked for the past few months at the local ABC affiliate in Houston as an intern, learning what goes on behind the scenes as well as doing on-camera sports interviews. The process fascinates him. After a while, Arledge turned around from the blinking panel of screens and asked, "Do you want to try it?" Replied Lewis: "No thanks, I don't want to be in the hot seat yet." That would be rushing things. This week he will be in the hot seat he knows how to handle. And as always, he will be cool.