Cappy Productions Inc.

JIM SULLIVAN

JIM SULLIVAN HAS BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH BUD GREENSPAN/CAPPY PRODS. INC. FOR THE LAST TWO YEARS AND HAS FUNCTIONED IN SEVERAL DIFFERENT ROLES DURING THIS PERIOD. HE CURRENTLY SERVES AS WEST COAST PRODUCER FOR BUD GREENSPAN AND HIS STAFF.

DURING THE 1984 OLYMPICS HE PRODUCED FIVE DIFFERENT SEGMENTS FOR "16 DAYS OF GLORY", THE OFFICIAL FILM OF THE XXIII OLYMPIC GAMES. "16 DAYS OF GLORY" IS SCHEDULED FOR RELEASE ON JULY 29, 1985 AND WILL PREMIERE AT THE SAMUEL GOLDWYN THEATER IN BEVERLY HILLS.

JIM ATTENDED BOTH UCLA'S AND USC'S FILM SCHOOLS AS A GRADUATE STUDENT. HE THEN ATTENDED THE AMERICAN FILM INSTITUTE/CENTER FOR ADVANCED FILM STUDIES AS A PRODUCER-DIRECTOR FELLOW.

ALTHOUGH HIS BACKGROUND IN FILM CONCENTRATES ON DRAMATIC AND NARRATIVE-TYPES OF FILM PROJECTS, HIS CURRENT INVOLVEMENT IN DOCUMENTARY FILMMAKING IS HIS TRUE DESIRE AND PROVIDES MORE SATISFACTION THAN ANY PROJECT THAT "HOLLYWOOD" MIGHT HAVE TO OFFER.

jt/

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Los Angeles Times

Wednesday, July 4, 1984

HOWARD ROSENBERG

GREENSPAN'S HIGH MOMENTS OF TRUTH

The Los Angeles Olympics have an official everything else, so why not an official TV overkill?

Get ready for a photo finish: Will there be more Olympic athletes or *specials* about Olympic athletes on TV this summer?

There's a real glut of goop here. One special you shouldn't miss on CBS, however, is "America at the Olympics" (9 tonight on Channels 2 and 8), two hours from that master sports documentarian Bud Greenspan.

Ten former United States Olympics winners are profiled with customary Greenspan artistry. He creates a fascinating weave of history, athleticism and nostalgia through personal recollections and old pictures.

Greenspan's material is uplifting without being sentimental or manipulative.

Winners revisit the sites of their Olympic triumphs. Here is low-voiced 1936 sprinter Helen Stephens recalling Adolf Hitler pinching and patting her on the rear and inviting her for a weekend in the country. Here is 1948 medalist Harrison Dillard dating his Olympics inspiration to watching newsreels of the 1936 Games as child: "Mama, mama. I just saw Jesse Owens and I'm gonna be just like him." Here is swimmer John Naber celebrating the 1976 closing ceremonies in Montreal as "the ode to the joy of being an Olympian."

The pictures and stories are wonderful—and often poignant, as Greenspan puts each Olympics in historical and political context.

It works splendidly except for his review of the 1972 Munich Olympics, where the terrorist massacre of Israeli athletes is simply too awesome a tragedy for a separate-but-equal footnote along side Mark Spitz and the controversial Soviet win over the U.S. basketball team.

Greenspan's Cappy Productions—named for his wife and colleague, who died last year—has made 22 Olympics specials since 1968. His docudrama simulating modern news coverage of the 1932 Los Angeles games was one of his best efforts. And he has been commissioned to write, direct and produce the official film of the 1984 Olympics, scheduled for worldwide theatrical release.

IAN DRYDEN / Los Angeles Times

Storyteller Bud Greenspan.

His work is spectacularly good, almost a freak of commercial TV in which the romance and reality of sports are allowed to comfortably coexist without distortion and trickery.

"Cappy and I used to discuss why we are here at this time on this planet," Greenspan said the other day. "My needs are not the accumulation of wealth, but the accumulation of doing well—and leaving it behind." On those terms, Greenspan will leave an enormous estate. "In this town, you're considered to be off the board if you want to leave something for later generations," he said about TV in Los Angeles. "Here, they make it and forget about it."

Greenspan greatly admires athletes' "immense talent, pride, courage and ability to endure," and he tries to apply those qualities to his own work. "We don't quit. We enter every arena and we don't permit anyone to see anything we make that isn't in our eyes a perfect 10."

Of course, inspiration comes easier when the subjects are Olympians—the world's most interesting athletes—rather than wealthy baseball players with Olympian egos. "We're not doing sports as much as we're doing people who happen to be in sports," he said. "I would be doing the same thing if I were doing Pavarotti."

The tragedy of Greenspan's work is that it suffers from guilt by association, the muck of other so-called Olympics film makers inevitably soiling him as well.

There was, for example, "The First Olympics," a recent NBC clash of fact and fiction about the 1896 Games in Greece, an occasionally charming docufantasy that meant us to believe, for example, that U.S hurdlers were taught how to hurdle that year by a black maid.

How does "America at the Olympics" differ from the NBC drama? "Number one, we tell the truth," said Greenspan. Not that truth is what automatically sells a network.

Greenspan, who made a 1977 TV movie about Olympic champion Wilma Rudolph, once sold a script about blind golfer Charley Boswell to CBS. "This was a great dramatic story, admittedly soft and inspirational," Greenspan said, "but suddenly they wanted to make changes. They wanted sex in it, and they wanted him to be abused, so we didn't make it." Another network turned down the story without reading it, Greenspan said. "They told me they already had two handicapped shows that season."

Mirroring society's obsession with first-place finishes, networks also aren't interested in stories about non-winners. "You can't sell them the idea of someone finishing third or fourth without a physical handicap," Greenspan said. "You can't sell coming in sixth."

What *do* networks want when it comes to sports stories?

"They do not want what we do, they want what *they* do. So we've had many, many roadblocks. And what I like most is that we stayed, and we stayed on our terms," said Greenspan, TV's sports storyteller supreme.

And a winner.

The New York Times

WEDNESDAY, JULY 4, 1984

TV Review

Americans in Olympics

By JOHN CORRY

WE hear more about the Olympics than we want to. The State Department talks about it at briefings; President Reagan mentions it in the Rose Garden. Products sold on television are now distinguished not by an Olympic endorsement, but by its absence. Then, just when we are sure it is all too much, we see something nice. Consider, for example, "America at the Olympics," a two-hour special on CBS-TV at 9 o'clock tonight. It is uplifting and sentimental without being moralistic and smarmy.

The special focuses on 10 American athletes who competed in various Olympics, nine of whom are alive today. For the most part, they visit the scenes of old glories — from Berlin to Tokyo — and then talk about what happened. Some of the athletes are more attractive than others; some have more interesting things to say. All of them, one way or another, testify for the Olympics.

The athletes are disparate, separated by background and years. "The most wonderful thing in life, especially for a little Jewish boy," says Abel Kiviat, referring to his participation in the 1912 games in Stockholm. Billy Mills, an American Indian, who competed in Tokyo in 1964, says that "for one moment, you were the best in the world."

At the same time, "America at the Olympics" doesn't pretend that the games ever stand divorced from politics and world events, and indeed it takes pains to remind us that they always do stand connected. Each sequence is introduced with a reminder: Hitler hovered over the Berlin Olympics in 1936; the civil-rights movement in America visited the Mexico City Olympics in 1968. At the first modern Olympiad — in Athens in 1896 — nationalism was represented by the King of Greece.

What sanctifies Olympic Games, however, are the athletes themselves and what they do. "America at the Olympics" shows some stunning film. For example, we see Bob Beamon's world-record long jump of 29 feet 2½ inches in 1968. It is one of the most extraordinary accomplishments in sports, and in slow motion we see Mr. Beamon doing what logic, rationality and laws of physics say he simply cannot do: he operates against gravity.

Mr. Beamon and Lee Evans, who ran the 400 meters in 1968, talk about their teammates, Tommie Smith and John Carlos, who disturbed the sports world inordinately by raising their hands in black-power salutes while they stood on the victory stand in Mexico City. Mr. Evans, who also is black, says he agonized over what he should do.

"I was trying to decide whether I was going to run or not," he says, adding that Mr. Smith and Mr. Carlos told him to run and to win. He did, setting a world record that still stands.

•

This viewer's favorite athlete on the program was Billy Mills. One suspects that Bud Greenspan, who wrote, directed and produced "America at the Olympics," saves him for last because he is a better advertisement for the Olympics than "Chariots of Fire." Mr. Mills, a Sioux Indian, orphaned at 12, barred from a college fraternity because of his race, showed up at Tokyo unknown and unheralded. He won the 10,000 meters.

We see the race on film, and while we do, Mr. Mills talks about it. After he won, Mr. Mills says, he thought to himself: "Dad knows, dad knows I'm an athlete." If you don't get a little teary at this, you have no business watching "America at the Olympics." It is a winning film.

Times-Union and Journal, Jacksonville, Wednesday, July 4, 1984

'America at the Olympics' competes with fireworks tonight

By Charles Witbeck
King Features Syndicate

HOLLYWOOD — The Olympic Games have become a religion with Bud Greenspan, the sports documentary whiz, chosen to make the official film of the summer '84 Games in Los Angeles.

You can see why tonight in the two-hour CBS portrait, *America at the Olympics*, as various athletes from the 1896 Games in Athens, up to '76 in Montreal, relive their experiences. The show will air at 9 p.m. on WJXT-TV-4.

Greenspan loves the anecdote, the personal touch, the historical scene. He leaves figures, lists and records to announcers, and the hyped-up pulse of excitement to ABC. Best of all, Greenspan knows when to shut up; he lets the action talk, a small thing

TV REVIEW

ignored by the majority of TV sports people.

Sports fans are familiar with Greenspan's *The Olympiad*, 22 hours on the Games, rerun whenever you turn around, so they know what to expect tonight. But this July Fourth venture is for everyone, an appetizer for the LA Olympics three weeks away, as Olympians tell what it was like in former Games.

One problem with the upcoming Games is that only sports buffs are familiar with the participants. Except for the superstars Carl Lewis, Mark Decker, most of the American team will draw blanks.

Who knows Antonio McKay from Georgia Tech, the No. 1 man for the United States at 400 meters? Antonio just made the team two weeks ago, but he moves with the fluid grace of a gazelle.

Since Greenspan can't solve this problem in the allotted time, he turns to the past, focuses on Olympians he likes, and takes them back to stadium sites, listens to their stories, fusing newsreel shots of the era with original race and jumping footage.

Billy Mills, the American Indian, surprises experts by winning the 10,000 meter run in Tokyo, '48; Helen Stephens wins the 100 meter sprint before Adolf Hitler in Berlin, '36; Bob Beamon turns into a jumping frog to capture the broad jump in Mexico City, '68; Eleanor Holm wins the back stroke and becomes a Hollywood cutie in the '32 LA Olympics, before being kicked off the '36 team for sipping champagne.

Greenspan sticks to pals, and that's his privilege. He goes way back with Abel Kiviat, age 92, a silver 500 meter medalist at Stockholm in 1912. A shrimp compared to teammates, Abel tells of New York cops who specialized in the throwing events, the king and queen of Sweden and their fine friends, and his admiration for Jim Thorpe, "the greatest athlete in the world."

You might hear athletes talk in a similar vein on ABC later in the month, but it will be rare. Billy Mills, telling of feeling different, not being allowed to room with a white man or a black man at college, how he felt strangely at home in Tokyo because the natives had similar skin color, is a treat. ABC could copy, give athletes more time to express their feelings.

Then Greenspan inserts the story of the Tokyo runner bearing the Olympic flame, a youth born in Hiroshima the day the atom bomb fell, entering the stadium with the flame held high, revealing a withered arm, a symbol of a new era.

CBS is not doing anyone favors by scheduling *America at the Olympics* with fireworks displays around the country, but the network is not overly eager to promote an ABC product. Still, the show is the best prep yet for the LA Spectacle.

Listening to former Olympians could be a starchy, cheerleading affair, old-timers gushing about the past. Yet it's strangely stirring without prompting by over-zealous quesions.

Perhaps Greenspan has been overpraised for his documentaries, but he takes a different road, filming history rather than playing to the audience. Fond of his athletes, the man shows it in every foot, but he pulls it off with dignity, by not over-selling.

Chicago Tribune

Friday, June 22, 1979

NUMERO UNO

Human element makes Bud Greenspan's films into works of art

Chicago Tribune Press Service

LOS ANGELES—Bud Greenspan has a few questions for the sports departments of ABC, NBC, and CBS: "Why do you have to show us Joe Frazier almost drowning as he tries to swim 50 meters? Why deprecate the talents of a fine athlete by putting him into a buffoonish situation? Why not celebrate the magnificence of sports that's taking place all over the world?"

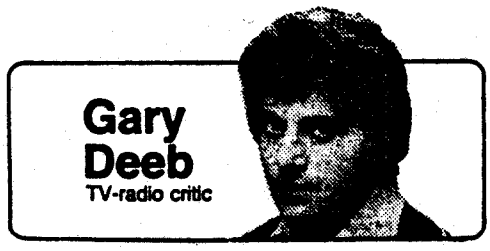
If anybody has the credentials to castigate the networks for their hambone treatment of sports these days and for their continual dependence on junksports like "The Superstars," it's Greenspan. The outspoken athletic freak is probably the most brilliant sports producer now practicing the art, and after nearly 20 years of banging his head against the wall, he's finally selling many of his programs to America's three big networks.

"The biggest problem for an independent producer like me is having to deal beneath my intellect and sensitivity when I talk with the big networks about a project," Greenspan says. "We just don't talk the same language."

THE OBVIOUS difference is that Greenspan is an artist, a fellow who worships the aesthetic beauty of sports, its history and traditions, and the monumental sacrifices many athletes must make to achieve greatness; the networks are run by salesmen who will telecast donkey races if they think they'll attract good audience ratings.

Fortunately for pure sports fans, the art of Bud Greenspan is coming into view increasingly on the tube. He's responsible for hundreds of vingettes we're already seeing on the Moscow Summer Olympics on NBC and the Lake Placid Winter Olympics on ABC, plus a batch of historical short subjects for CBS' coverage of next month's Pan American Games.

In addition, his 13-part series on great athletes from various countries, "Numero Uno," is going into syndication; "The Olympiad," the critically acclaimed series about Olympic champions, is being repeated on pay-TV; and "Wilma," his movie biography of U.S. Olympic great Wilma Rudolph, is set for an NBC rerun July 7.



"We're finally making it," Greenspan says. "In the last two years, we've boosted our staff from 6 people to 26 people."

NEVERTHELESS, IT'S a titanic struggle every time Greenspan brings one of his ideas to an American network. "The networks just haven't found the formula for intelligent, high-quality sports programming," he says. "And they're unwilling to duplicate our formula. They're hung up on instant gratification, as opposed to our lower-key methods."

TO GREENSPAN, THE theory of sports programming is deceptively simple: concentrate on the human being, not the event. He has been doing it for more than 30 years.

"In the late 1940s, I was a sports announcer at WHN in New York, but I wasn't very good," he says. "I was quite knowledgeable, but in those days, the mellifluous voices dominated the airwaves. I was the token sports history nut on the air.

"At this time, a black weightlifter from Brooklyn named John Davis is the strongest man in the world. He wins the Olympic Gold medal in London in 1948, and then I read an item in the newspaper that he's studying to be an opera star. So here's this magnificent body, a black American in the middle of the Cold War. The United States is using him as an example that a black man can make it in this country.

"And I told this dramatic story—not from the standpoint that he was the world's strongest man, but from the angle that he was trying to become an opera singer. He had a pretty fair voice. I wrote the story for the Reader's Digest and then I adapted it for film. I didn't know one end of a motion picture camera from the other, but I went to the Helsinki Olympics in '52 and shot a 17-minute short subject that got distributed overseas and in U.S. theaters. I made the thing for $6,000 and it grossed about 50 grand.

"THE SAD PART is that John Davis today is a security guard on Ryker's Island in New York. He never was able to capitalize. He couldn't quite sing well enough to be a professional. But today he could have made a lot of money by being a singer and an Olympic champ. He's a classic example of a guy who was born a quarter century too early.

"But that's the beauty of sports—the human beings behind the athletic event. A Rembrandt painting can live for centuries. A Beethoven symphony can live for centuries. If a great moment exists and you recreate it properly, it'll exist forever.

"A perfect example of how the networks fail to understand this was that confrontation during last year's World Series between Reggie Jackson and the Dodger pitcher, Bob Welch. The actual event must have taken a good 11 minutes. It was tremendously exciting and nerve-wracking, the best drama you could ask for. So the next day, NBC comes on the air, 'Now we're gonna show you something really incredible.' Then we see Welch throwing the ball and Jackson striking out. One pitch! That's the network mentality for you."

Sports Illustrated
APRIL 23, 1979 $1.25

by WILLIAM OSCAR JOHNSON

TV RADIO

A COLLECTION OF 13 NUMBER ONES

Though they are always interesting and usually quite informative, the documentaries of Bud Greenspan have been of uneven quality. For example, a program on Jesse Owens' return to Berlin and the series, *The Olympiad*, both of which ran repeatedly on public television, were overpraised, except for the segment *The African Runners*, which merited its accolades.

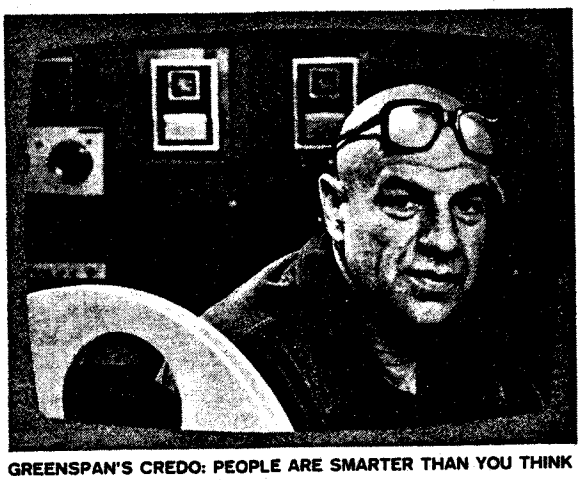
Still, whatever Greenspan does is often superior to anything the networks produce. His theory about that is simple: "We think people are smarter than the networks do." He is probably right. Where the networks tend to present events in an oddly mindless atmosphere of hyped-up shouting, Greenspan, at his best, comes on with an approach that is tasteful, delightful and illuminating.

His latest production shows Greenspan at his best. It is called *Numero Uno*, a series of half-hour programs dealing with celebrated sportsmen from 13 different countries. As Greenspan's introduction for each film says, "In every country of the world there is a legendary sports hero. Athletes whose exploits are revered from generation to generation . . . timeless, universal, immortal. They are Numero Unos."

This collection presents as eclectic a crowd of premier athletes as one could imagine. There is Roger Bannister from England, Jean-Claude Killy of France, Italian diver Klaus Dibiasi, and track stars Irena Szewinska of Poland and Peter Snell of New Zealand. From Finland comes cross-country skier Veikko Hakulinen, from Japan sumo wrestler Taiho, and from the U.S. the venerable discus thrower, Al Oerter.

Greenspan sticks by his list. It is purely arbitrary, of course, and probably will create heated arguments from the hot stoves of the U.S. to the hot saunas of Finland over who is each nation's true Numero Uno. But, there is no question that Greenspan has assembled a lineup of demigods; in gently bringing them down to earth he has made them totally human and somehow done so without diminishing their dazzle by so much as a kilowatt.

It is with affection, rather than awe, that Greenspan approaches these stars. His film shows Bannister, who ran the first four-minute mile some 25 years ago, as he is today, a balding and rather fogeyish middle-aged physician. Bannister maunders on in his English manner about this dramatic sports event. He tells how he had been "following the wind by the flag on the church flagpole" near the track at Oxford University in order to decide if he would actually make the effort to break the barrier. "But then, about eight or 10 minutes to the time of the race, the wind seemed to settle a bit, and then I talked to myself and realized that I must do it," he says. Perfectly paced by Chris Chataway and Chris Brasher, Bannister did it. All of it, every stride of the historic race and the events that followed, are preserved—and beautifully enhanced—on Greenspan's film.



GREENSPAN'S CREDO: PEOPLE ARE SMARTER THAN YOU THINK

Mainly Greenspan lets the Numero Unos tell their own stories, using foreign-accented voice-over translations for subjects who do not speak English. Argentina's Juan Manuel Fangio, perhaps the greatest of auto racers, expresses his almost mystical relationship to an automobile: "I could never think of the machine as an inanimate object to be thrashed at will. I felt that the car entrusted to me was a living thing. As a result, when anything broke, I felt as if I myself had been wounded." Taiho, the sumo wrestler who won the Emperor's Cup 32 times before he retired in 1971, tells how he arrived at the decision: "I asked my little children if it was all right for their papa to retire. They did not understand what I was talking about, but they sort of nodded their heads. A great burden was lifted from my chest."

The evocative footage of each athlete's achievements is skillfully intercut with childhood snapshots. Commentary and insight is provided by experts, opponents or coaches involved in the various deeds. Stirling Moss speaks of Fangio's genius. Dr. Sammy Lee talks of the brilliance and daring of Dibiasi. And Belgian Roger Moens still speaks with undiminished despair of the 800-meter victory Peter Snell stole from him in the 1960 Olympics: "I gave everything I had down the stretch. I closed my eyes again and I said to myself, 'Roger, this time it is certain. You're the Olympic champion.' The finish line was 20 meters away. I looked to my left. A black uniform flashed by me. It was Peter Snell. . . ."

Frequently, Greenspan lets an entire event unreel with only fragmentary remarks, no background music and only natural crowd sounds. It is an effective touch, the more so for the contrast it makes with the compulsive nattering that network commentators indulge in over every step of every event. Of his silence-is-golden philosophy, Greenspan says, "I think a sports event is like a painting or a symphony—it has to stand by itself."

At the moment *Numero Uno* has not found a home on U.S. television. The BBC has bought the series and will run it later this year. Not that the art of Greenspan (and wife Cappy, the executive producer of *Numero Uno*) will go entirely unseen in the States. All three of the networks have ordered up Greenspan vignettes for mini-documentaries: NBC for the 1980 Summer Olympics, ABC for the 1980 Winter Games and CBS for the 1979 Pan-American Games. "We seem to have made a breakthrough at last," Greenspan says.

It's high time. The standard set by *Numero Uno* is one that all TV sports producers should try to emulate. But the attitude Greenspan brings to his work is not one usually found in the hard sell of network TV. END

Detroit Free Press

The Inside of Sports

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18, 1977 • Page 8-C

'Wilma'— Nice Story . . . and It's True

BY JIM BENAGH
Free Press Sports Writer

As an Olympic sprinter, Wilma Rudolph won three gold medals.

She ought to get another one for her life story, which will be told in a two-hour special on NBC-TV Monday night (Channel 4 in Detroit, 9 p.m.).

Wilma is the true story of a frail little black girl from Tennessee who took off the leg brace she had to wear for eight of her first 12 years and became an Olympic champion.

It's a true story — no fictionalized hokum — and because of this it is good.

It's a love story, too. Love from parents, family (all 12 kids in a poor family), coaches, and a boyfriend — all who stood by her while she blossomed into a champion and the beautiful woman she is today at 37.

It's a story of a girl who returned that love, too — to a caring mother, a dying father, a daughter born out of wedlock before Wilma went to Rome, the father of that baby, coaches who nurtured the talent they saw in Wilma.

It's the kind of story that, after they watch the Bob Hope Special on NBC Monday night, people will stick around for a pleasant nightcap and say during the Christmas week, "It's too bad the whole world isn't like that."

Without moviedom's usual hokum, Wilma wears her gold well.

Most people who like sports like them because the real-life drama is stranger and sometimes even stronger than fiction.

If you get a chance to watch *Wilma*, keep one thing in mind: It is as true as it is loving, as accurate as it is dramatic.

Like: How can you get any pagentry more exciting than the Olympics? All of Hollywood's props cannot match the splendor of the hot September days of Rome in 1960 that brought Wilma to worldwide attention.

Wilma Rudolph knew from the days that she sped over Stadio Olimpico that she had a real story to tell. She has done it now, she said, "Because I wanted people to know this was a real person — a little girl who won the Olympics and is now the mother of four children. She really exists."

When Wilma talks now, as she did over lunch at Charley's at the Pontch the other day, her voice is smooth as her fluid running motion once was. Her facial features, encompassed by natural, full-bodied hair, are as striking as they were once strong. She is no longer the shy child who once ran scared from the playgrounds.

Yet the movie story of her life returns her to a troubled youth. A caring father, handled brilliantly by Joseph Senaca, and a thoughtful mother, handled wonderfully by Cicely Tyson, and brothers and sisters help her overcome her handicap by rehabilitating her bad right leg.

For eight years, from age four on when they took her to the doctor, the family strengthens that leg, taking turns exercising it three hours a day — a half-hour at a time without stopping — even though both parents had to hold down their own jobs for survival's sake.

Wilma learns love through this, and later through her coaches.

The father, who gives Wilma special attention despite his big family, is overly protective at times, not wanting her to go to track camps in the summer: to Nashville for college, where she came under the genius of Ed Temple (played by Jason Bernard); to Philadelphia and eventually the 1956 Olympics at Melbourne.

Ed Rudolph's motive is not selfishness. "I'm gonna say OK," he says after reluctantly giving her permission to attend Tennessee State, where Temple turned her into an international star. "But this one ain't gonna have no more bad times."

Wilma has her bad times, including the ill-timed pregnancy that almost costs her a chance to star at Rome. A dramatic point of the movie comes when she twists an ankle two days before the start of the Games, the result of some "goofing around" that Temple tried to prevent.

But she comes through — and it is all seen on the actual Olympic race films.

The leg she hurts is her left one. Shy but not scared, she says later, "The only scare I ever had — that the bad one (the once-crippled right) would go."

There are facets of Wilma's story that come alive in *Wilma*, such as the leg injury. Over lunch, Wilma spoke of how sportswriters in Tennessee and later at Rome protected her about the story of her illegitimate daughter — a topic people weren't ready to deal with in 1960.

Because the story is as true as diligent researchers can portray it, it is something special. Wilma herself seemed as satisfied as one could be watching another (her role is played by Shirley Jo Finney) go through her life.

She was considered for the role herself. "But you can't live in the past and portray yourself," she said. "I was happy to step aside."

Wilma didn't step aside completely, however. She served as a consultant.

And served well, obviously.

In the Hollywood world, *Wilma* comes off because it is true.

It is a testimonial to producer Bud Greenspan, the maestro of sports documentaries (*"Glory of Their Times," "Jesse Owens Returns to Berlin," "Olympiad"*) that he refused to accept anything less than the truth.

Greenspan said he dismissed two scriptwriters, including one who wanted to have young Wilma running right out of her leg brace when white kids threw rocks at her, to get to the truth. He wrote the script himself.

What emerges is Wilma's fourth gold, a nice story during a nice time of the year.

MAY 24, 1976

Newsweek®

TELEVISION

TV's Olympiad

Bud Greenspan is a pixieish, Telly Savalas look-alike who drolly describes himself as "the maker of the best sports shows never seen on television." Over the past decade, the independent producer's hauntingly evocative sports specials have won praise around the world. Yet with the exception of a Jesse Owens profile in 1972 that won three Emmy nominations for ABC, Greenspan's work has been politely spurned by U.S. commercial TV. The three networks, it seems, do not maintain high-budgeted sports departments to have outsiders come in and show up their efforts.

Fortunately, such chauvinistic considerations do not burden public television. This month, the 265-station public TV network began presenting Greenspan's

UPI

Russian basketball team celebrates, 1972

most ambitious project—a ten-part series tracing the Olympics from 1896 to the present. Greenspan's "The Olympiad" lacks the soaring visual poetry of Leni Riefenstahl's film of the 1936 Berlin affair. But the series, which was distilled from 3 million feet of footage—much of it never seen before on TV—emerges as the medium's most definitive study of the games nations play.

To capture the human spirits behind the bionic legends, the show juxtaposes the Olympics' most dramatic moments with their participants' recollections. Here is Paavo Yrjola, the 1928 Finnish decathlon champion, touring the primitive farm where he trained as a boy and pointing out the pine forest from which he hewed his vaulting poles. Here is Eleanor Holm, who was suspended from the 1936 U.S. swimming team for quaffing champagne en route to Berlin, recalling her chats with Hitler: "He told me that, if I had been German, the punishment would have come afterward—if I had lost." And here is triple gold-medal winner Wilma Rudolph struggling—and failing—to explain how one of 22 poor

Swiftest: Rudolph striking gold in 1960

black children came to be the world's fastest woman in 1960.

The series' most compelling scenes were born in defeat. In a segment to be aired in mid-June, we share the special agony of athletes who were cheated of immortality by the bungling of Olympics officials. There is no more harrowing study of the fragile line between ecstasy and the abyss than Greenspan's footage of the Russians' infamous "three-second" victory over the U.S. basketball team in 1972. The series also punctures some enduring myths. We learn that Hitler's highly publicized snubbing of Jesse Owens—by refusing to shake the black sprinter's hand on the winner's dais—did not actually happen to Owens but rather to another black runner, the U.S.'s Cornelius Johnson. "I've been making a living off that story for 40 years," Owens laughingly told Greenspan.

After the Munich murders of 1972, some may question Greenspan's decision to ignore the dark underside. An unabashed idealist, the former sportswriter has chosen to balance the politics of the Games with uplifting glimpses of international brotherhood—such as the Russian discus champion who corrected her Czechoslovakian competitor's style of throwing and thereby lost her own title. The embodiment of Greenspan's "The Olympiad" is not a John Carlos raising an angry black fist (a scene he scratched) but an exhausted Rafer Johnson being embraced by runner-up C.K. Yang in the 1960 decathlon.

Purchased by stations in 50 nations, the ten one-hour shows are expected to be viewed by nearly 500 million people by the time the Montreal Games begin in July. In the meantime, Bud Greenspan—and public television—deserve a special gold medal for their timely rekindling of the Olympics' flickering image.

—HARRY F. WATERS

The Washington Post

SPORTS:
'OLYMPIAD': TV'S EPIC LOOK AT ATHLETICS

BY LEONARD SHAPIRO

It was 1974, and Bud Greenspan was calling Holland from New York, person to person for Fanny Blankers-Koen, the outstanding performer of the 1948 Olympic Games in London.

"I told her we were doing a series for television on the Olympic Games and we wanted to come over and interview her," Greenspan says.

"She says to me, 'Why do you want to interview me?'

"I couldn't believe it," Greenspan recalls.

"'Why you?,' I say. 'Don't you know, Fanny, that you are the only woman in history to win four gold medals in track and field?'"

"No, I didn't know that, Mr. Greenspan," said Blankers-Keon.

"It would be very lovely if you can interview me. When could you come?"

Greenspan came quickly to Holland, just as he had already hopscotched around the world to find a snip of newsreel film here, to interview some long-forgotten Olympic hero there, or to retrace the steps of a 2,500-year-old marathon man, an anonymous Greek who ran 40 kilometers and dropped dead on the spot.

Greenspan's labors have paid off handsomely, both for the chatty documentarian and for viewers of his stunning series, "The Olympaid," now in the midst of a 10-week run on WTTG-Channel 5 in Washington every Friday at 8 p.m.

This week's episode, "The Incredible Five," was filmed on location in Czechoslovakia, Holland, Finland and the U.S. and details the Olympian exploits of the Games' greatest champions: Blankers-Koen, distance runners Paavo Nurmi and Emil Zatopek, discus thrower Al Oerter and gymnast Vera Caslavska.

More incredible than these achievements, though, has been the reluctance of the major networks to clear prime time for Greenspan's staggering project — a total 18 hour-long documentaries first aired by PBS in 1976.

"It was sold in 80 countries around the world before it ever ran in the United States," says Greenspan, a 52-year-old New Yorker. "I heard all the excuses in the world — they couldn't give us 10 weeks, they didn't want to promote someone else's exclusivity, they had their own sports departments."

CANDYMAKER DORANDO PIETRI STAGGERS TO THE FINISH LINE IN THE 1908 OLYMPIC MARATHON.

But that is changing for Greenspan. A two-hour made-for-television film on sprinter Wilma Rudolph was produced by his Cappy Productions and now, a similar this-is-your-life on Oerter is being filmed.

Oerter, who won gold medals in four consecutive Olympics, reportedly became so excited after seeing himself in a Greenspan production he decided to attempt a comeback in the 1980 Games in Moscow.

The network sports departments also are relying on Greenspan to help them cover the 1980 games. He is now piecing together 100 different five-minute historical spots for NBC (summer games) and ABC (Winter Olympics).

But Greenspan says he will not tinker with most of the 18 hour-long documentaries, except for the segments on the decathlon and marathon. "We'll update those after every Olympics," he said. "The others were made to stand the test of time.

"I decided when we first went into this it would be a 'Victory at Sea' kind of sports program rather than instant gratification. The concept was that if you had a piece in 1976, you could show it in the year 2000 without having to change a word."

Bud Greenspan spent two and half years traveling the world researching before any of the shows were filmed. Frequently, he lucked into footage other historians had long since given up trying to find. Film of the 1908 marathon was a prime example. That race, considered by many the most dramatic marathon in Olympic history, featured the Italian candymaker, Dorando Pietri.

Leading the race coming into the stadium, Pietri staggered several hundred yards from the finish, was escorted to the tape by officials, then disqualified two hours later.

"I was going to tell the story in still photographs," Greenspan said. "But I got a call from a newsreel company in London telling me they found a box in their attic labeled '1908 Olympics.' Sure enough, we put it on the machine and my God, they had the film. It was amazing."

So, too, was Greenspan's interview with Micheline Ostermeyer, who won gold medals in the shot and discus and finished third in the high jump in 1948 and then went on to a distinguished second career as a concert pianist.

Greenspan could hardly believe she would risk her music for sports. Wasn't she ever worried about injuring her hands? he asked her.

"I was never frightened when I competed in athletics," Ostermeyer said. "It was a great pleasure, a joy."

The same must be said about Bud Greenspan's "Olympiad."