

Alice Coachman Davis

By Carmella Ruiz

“I didn’t know I won. I was on my way to receive the medal and I saw my name on the board. And of course, I glanced over into the stands where my coach was, and she was clapping her hands.” Alice Coachman Davis was the first black woman to receive an Olympic gold medal. She was a phenomenal track and field star. In the 1948 Olympics she reached a record breaking height of five feet, and six and one eighth inches in the high jump, all while recovering from a back injury.



Alice Coachman Davis was one of ten children. She was born on November 9, 1923 and died July 14, 2014. Alice grew up in Albany, Georgia. She went to Madison High School and got a scholarship to Tuskegee Preparatory School. After the 1948 Olympics Alice Coachman Davis finished her degree at Albany State.

The Olympic star didn’t train like other track and field stars do. She improvised her training. Alice Coachman Davis trained barefoot in fields and dirt roads. She also used old equipment to improve her high jumps.

Ms. Davis was also the first African American to earn an endorsement deal. In 1952 Coca Cola hired her to become a spokesperson. To help support young athletes and provide assistance to retired Olympic veterans, the track and field star established the Alice Coachman Track and Field Foundation.

Alice Coachman Davis was an amazing Track and Field star. She was put into nine different halls of fame. *"I paved the way for all of them,"* she once said. Davis was an outstanding athlete, and is an amazing role model to this day.