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Isabelle Daniels Holston

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Isabelle Daniels Holston

Isabelle Daniels Holston was born in Jakin GA on July 31, 1937. She was the youngest of 9 siblings. Her father was a farmer, growing peanuts, cotton and corn. He also drove a school bus. At birth she was nicknamed “Tweety” because of her high-pitched voice. The name followed her through childhood.

The story, as told by her daughter Kezia in a television interview, was that one day at Isabelle’s father’s farm, the pig got into the garden and began tearing things up, eating some vegetables, rooting up others with its snout. Dad went in and tried to stop the animal, with no luck. Two of Tweety’s older brothers tried, without success. The pig was too quick. Isabelle said, “Daddy I can do it”; but was told “You are too small.”

Finally, after her two brothers had failed, dad relented. Tweety went in and began chasing the pig around the enclosure. After numerous laps, the pig laid down exhausted, while Isabelle still had a lot of energy left. Her father noted his daughter’s unusual stamina and decided to encourage the talent.

Her daughter Kezia memorialized the affair in her book entitled *Tweety and the Pig*. It contains the story of her mother’s life and recounts the tale of the pig.

Isabelle was known for using her father’s school bus to pace her as she ran the 13 miles to school. This was how she trained, at age 16, for the prestigious Tuskegee (Alabama) Relays.

At the Tuskegee Relays, Coach Ed Temple noted Holston’s talent, and persuaded her to come to Tennessee State University to study and run.

Participants in the “Tigerbellees”, as Coach’s female athletes were called, report that as far as practice was concerned, he ran a tight ship. He often had the girls practice 3 times a day in the

summer heat. Further, the TSU track was made of cinders, not exactly the most comfortable running surface. The coach's philosophy was "difficult in training, easy in competition." The coach also had an effective intelligence network on campus. He used the information gleaned to make sure the girls were focusing on athletics and avoiding the dangerous activities of drinking and smoking.

The coach told the girls that God comes first. Often, he would take them to church. Concerned for the girl's appearance, the coach bought them a hot plate to use on trips. Holston said, "They didn't have perms back then so he bought us a hot plate. He bought a hot plate and some straightening combs and a pair of curlers." Mae Faggs, captain of the team, had the job of managing the plate, combs, and curlers. Later, after Mae had graduated, the girls used wax to keep their hair neat. The coach always felt the girls should be presentable.

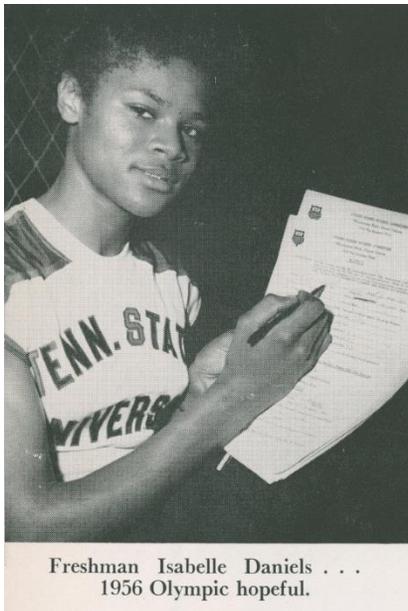
In Ms. Holston's long career, one must note numerous honors and medals. She was part of the AAU champion relay team for 5 years. She took silver in the 60 meters in the 1955 Pan American games and was a member of the relay team. At the 1956 Olympics in Melbourne Australia the relay team, of which Isabelle was a member, placed 3rd, until an examination of photos put them in 4th.

When her running career was over, she became a secondary Physical Education teacher and coach near Atlanta Georgia. She received an award for National Coach of the Year from the National High School Athletic Coaches Association; in 1987 she was inducted into the Georgia Sports Hall of Fame. In 1992 she was honored as the All-State Role Model; a documentary on her life was produced and broadcast in the halftime of the Georgia high school all-stars basketball game. She was also listed on the 1992 "Coaches Care Honor Roll" sponsored

by Gatorade. In March 2006 she was inducted into the Hall of Fame of the Bob Hayes Invitational Track Meet in Jacksonville, Florida.

On Sept 8, 2017, Isabelle Daniels Holston passed on, surrounded by her family.

 [Christmas in Georgia Public Kindergartens Mandated, Questioned, and Honoring Tweety_1-Isabelle Holston.mp4](#)



Freshman Isabelle Daniels . . .
1956 Olympic hopeful.

Further Reading

Former Olympian Isabelle Daniels Holston dead at 80. (Friday, October 18, 2017). Early County News. Retrieved from <https://www.earlycountynews.com/articles/former-olympian-isabelle-daniels-holston-dead-at-80/>

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Table Talk: Christmas in Georgia: Public Kindergartens Mandated, Questioned, and Honoring 'Tweety'. (n.d.). AIB Studios. [Video file]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9aadbnSXprU>.

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