



Interviewed: Anthony Lipschitz

Oral History Clip Title: Sports as an Equalizer

Theme: Politics and Apartheid

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Date: 10 May 2016

Oral History Number: AC 430

(Anthony)

In my early years, I was the only Jew on my team, which was actually fine with me because you know I learned early on that sports is really the ultimate equalizer. And as I progressed there were some other Jewish kids but it wasn't necessarily about the connection of being Jewish so much as the connection of you know being on a team and playing together. As I progressed in level, obviously with apartheid growing up in South Africa where it was not only a religious divide it was a social divide. Being on teams where there were mixed race, was especially important to me. It really was the ultimate equalizer.

(Interviewer)

Did that change over the course of your...soccer where teams became mixed? Where they always mixed?

(Anthony)

No. So when I first started it was predominately white teams. As I progressed in levels and I got older, when I was seventeen, eighteen, the teams were mixed and that was for me, it wasn't even an issue. But what it did do was because we played at a different level we traveled a lot around South Africa to townships, disenfranchised areas. Areas where other white people kind of stayed away from/shied away from going to these areas. But because of soccer, I was exposed to some of this and it was you know a huge part of my personal growth.

(Interviewer)

How did it contribute to your growth?

(Anthony)

It just reinforced the message that people are people. It makes no difference. You asked me some of the things that I miss or reminisce about South Africa, it's that humility of those people who didn't have a lot but were very humble.

(Interviewer)

I was also curious, why did the teams now mixed when you were older? Did something happen political?



(Anthony)

Politically the country was changing towards that time the early 90s. Apartheid was essentially crumbling. They were leading towards the first elections with Nelson Mandela. I was playing for the youth team of a professional team in South Africa. The makeup of soccer was predominately African. The top pro teams had much more black players than white people. It was very integrated early on.

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