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*National Museum of the American Indian Archives Center*

## **Grace F. Thorpe collection - Cyprus College: Jim Thorpe House Dedication Ceremony, 1977**

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[[newspaper clipping]]

6 PART III-Sat., Feb. 19, 1977 R 2\*: Los Angeles Times

Grace Thorpe at Cypress--Olympian Quest Goes on  
by Al Carr  
Times Staff Writer

[[image]]

CYPRESS — The 55-year-old daughter of the legendary Jim Thorpe said she is continuing her quest in getting her father's name restored to the Olympic record books.

Grace Thorpe of Tahlequah, Okla., was here to official dedicate the Jim Thorpe House at Cypress College Friday. The building is a \$3 million structure at Cypress College which houses a basketball court, wrestling room, student lounge, athletic and physical education offices and counseling rooms.

The building has been in use since September and is home to the Cypress College basketball team which is ranked No. 1 in California. The Chargers have a 24-1 record.

"I don't want the medals back from that man (H.K. Wieslander of Sweden who placed second in the decathlon and pentathlon to Thorpe in the 1912 Olympics), "Ms. Thorpe said Friday.

"I received a letter from Mr. Wieslander a year ago. He's a nice man."

The tale has often been told of Thorpe - the Sac and Fox Indian - winning the decathlon and pentathlon in the 1912 Olympics at Sweden and then having his gold medals taken away from him for playing semi-pro baseball earlier for a price ranging from \$60 to \$120 a month, depending on the teller. The AAU, the USOC and the IOC decided he was a pro athlete.

Since then, attempts have been made to get Thorpe's medals returned. Wieslander actually returned the medals to Thorpe once, feeling that Thorpe had beaten him and should have the medals. But the IOC and the USOC had Thorpe send them back to Wieslander.

Said Ms. Thorpe: "I couldn't ask him (Wieslander) for them again. Maybe new medals could be stuck. But the medals are incidental to me. The main thing is to have my father's name returned to the Olympic record books.

"I want the record books to show that an American won those events. I particularly want the record books to show that an American Indian won them. This is because today's Indian youths have few people they can look up to."

For the record, the AAU restored Thorpe's amateur status in 1973. In 1975, the USOC forwarded the AAU's request to the International Olympic Committee to restore the medals and his name to the record book.



In 1975, President Ford requested the IOC to restore the medals and Thorpe's name to the record book.

Last July, the IOC, meeting in Montreal, tabled a motion to restore Thorpe's medals and records.

Now, some of the students at Cypress College say they will take up the crusade.

Grace Thorpe is a little weary of the battle. "It took me four years and a lot of influence from people in high places, such as President Ford, to even get the motion put on the agenda of the IOC meeting," she said.

That was merely four years of a long, long battle for her.

Asked if she believed Thorpe became such a hero because his medals were taken away, Ms. Thorpe said. "That's possible. Americans seem to take up the side of the underdog."

Thorpe, also a great football player and six-year major league veteran, was voted Athlete of the Half-Century by sportswriters in 1950.

Jim Thorpe died a poor man in Lomita in 1953.

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