

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Jim Thorpe featured in new documentary for public television

*Jim Thorpe: The World's Greatest Athlete* is being released to Public Television stations across the nation starting in October. The film is presented by **Native American Public Telecommunications** and **American Public Television** for Native American Heritage Month. Check your local Public Television station listings for dates and times.

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The hour-long documentary is a biography of the Native American athlete who became a sports icon in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Beginning with Thorpe's boyhood in Indian Territory, it chronicles his rise to athletic stardom at the Carlisle Indian Industrial School, winning two gold medals at the 1912 Summer Olympics, his fall from grace in the eyes of the amateur athletic establishment, and his rebound in professional baseball and football. Thorpe retired from pro sports at age 41 just before the stock market crash of 1929. He worked as a construction laborer before getting work in Hollywood as a bit part player. He became a representative for Indian extras in Hollywood, fighting for equal pay for Native Americans in the movies. In the 1940s he crisscrossed the nation as a public speaker advocating for Indian self-determination.

This is a film about a man who used his amazing physical prowess as a way to affirm his American Indian identity in the face of unrelenting efforts to eradicate tribal cultures. Veteran documentary producer and director Tom Weidinger (*A Dream in Hanoi, Heart of the Congo, Swim for the River*) teamed up with the Abenaki author and storyteller, Joseph Bruchac (*Jim Thorpe : Original All-American*) to make the film. It is the first documentary film to tell the story of Thorpe's life outside of his well-known athletic victories. The film uses in-depth interviews with Thorpe's surviving children, as well as recreations and images culled from over seventy-five archive sources (both stills and motion picture).

- Photos and broadcast information: [http://www.nativetelecom.org/jim\\_thorpe](http://www.nativetelecom.org/jim_thorpe)
- Official Program Web Site: <http://www.jimthorpefilm.com>
- Electronic Press Kit: <http://www.jimthorpefilm.com/about/index.html>
- Teachers Guide: <http://www.jimthorpefilm.com/resources/index.html>
- Producer Web Site: <http://www.moiraproductions.com/>

Broadcast presenter, **Native American Public Telecommunications (NAPT)**, shares Native stories with the world through support of the creation, promotion and distribution of Native media. NAPT's other fall 2009 offerings include *To Brooklyn and Back: A Mohawk Journey*, *For the Rights of All: Ending Jim Crow in Alaska*, *River of Renewal*, and *Power Paths on Independent Lens*. Other NAPT services include **AIROS.org**, for streaming and downloadable audio; and **VisionMaker Video**, a distributor of *Jim Thorpe, The World's Greatest Athlete* and other documentaries by and about Native Americans. For more information, visit: [www.nativetelecom.org](http://www.nativetelecom.org).

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**NAPT shares Native stories with the world.**

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AIROS Audio  VisionMaker Video

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[www.nativetelecom.org](http://www.nativetelecom.org)

[www.visionmaker.org](http://www.visionmaker.org)

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