
Old Press Release: The Hopi Tribe

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Hopi Tribal Involvement in the 2002 Winter Olympics

Kykotsmovi, Arizona-- The Hopi people still remember with great pride the honor of having Louis Tewanima represent the United States at the summer olympics in Stockholm, Sweden in 1908 and Tokyo, Japan in 1912.

Other than the involvement of Native American athletes in the games itself, tribes have historically had no other involvement in the winter or summer olympics.

In 2002, tribes across the nation hope to change that by participating in the winter olympics in Utah. To encourage Hopi participation in the 2002 winter olympics, Chairman Wayne Taylor and local organizers have established the Hopi 2002 Winter Olympic Committee.

Chairman Taylor sees the Hopi role in the winter olympics as an opportunity for the world to appreciate Hopi culture and history. "The 2002 olympiad will celebrate not only the history of Utah but the west and its cultures. We have a real opportunity to share our rich heritage in the opening and closing ceremonies of the winter olympics as well as to open market doors for our local artisans. I understand that the involvement of youth in sport programs will also be offered and I want our young people to participate as well. By being directly involved, we can also assist the Salt Lake Organizing Committee to avoid stereotypes of Indian people in this country."

The Committee will begin its work to lay the foundation for Hopi participation during the next three years leading up to the opening show in the year 2002.

"Our first task is to see if we can get Hopi arts and crafts into the stream of the official olympic market," states Rick Tewa, Lead Coordinator for the Committee. "The official olympic market is highly regulated and each product that is selected by the Salt Lake Organizing Committee must be licensed. The Hopi committee has put out a call to local artisans to bring in their artwork so that we can make a presentation at the end of November."

Once the arts and crafts selections are licensed according to certain specifications, the items can then be mass produced by local artisans. The committee is exploring ways in which to meet the demand of officially licensed products as well as ways in which local artisans can still participate in the olympic market for items that are not selected for licensing. Due to its cultural and religious sensitivity, the Hopi committee decided not to include kachina dolls.

Rick Tewa explains the challenges of meeting the November presentation deadline. "Other tribes, including the Navajo, have already presented their arts and crafts. The challenge for our local Hopi artisans are the timelines in which they must produce samples for presentation. Artists can incorporate

the olympic rings into their sample artwork only for the presentation that will occur this month. If their items are not selected, they can no longer use the trademark rings without permission from the Official International Olympic Committee. We are hoping that we can present baskets, jewelry and pottery for licensing along with contemporary items like the Gentle Rain Design coats and vests and cloth dolls."

Members of the Committee include Chairman Wayne Taylor, Rick Tewa, Fred Kootswatewa, Carey Shanks, Gloria Lomahaftewa, Loris Taylor, Barbara Poley and Leigh (Jenkins) Kuwanwisiwma.

For more information about this press release, please contact Rick Tewa at (520) 734-3244.



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