59th historical “tidbit.”
Dr. John S. Dahlem

1915 CIF-SS FINALS TRACK MEET MEDAL
Won by Earl Thomson, Long Beach High School
Earl “Tommy” Thomson would become an Olympic Champion

The first medals handed out to CIF-SS track individual champions were made by The T.V. Allen Company at 723 West 7th Street in Los Angeles. The company would continue to supply championship medals for over a half a century to the Southern Section. Track coach Robert Summers, from Hemet High School, has a very nice collection of old track medals including one from the 1915 CIFSS track finals held at the YMCA Track Field on March 28, 1915. The medal was awarded to the first place finisher in 120 yard hurdles. Researching the records we find the winner was Earl Thomson from Long Beach (Poly) High School. Earl’s name was often misspelled Thompson. Earl Thomson was very busy that day as he also won the discus and the high jump, was third in the low hurdles and would have run in the relay had he not been still jumping. He accumulated a total of sixteen (16) points in the meet and won individual honors. Manual Arts won the team title and Long Beach, thanks to Thomson, was second. At the first CIF State Track Meet in Fresno, Thomson won the 120 yard hurdles in a new world interscholastic record of 15 1/5 seconds. Thomson was also an outstanding baseball and football player for Long Beach. Thomson, a Canadian citizen whose parents moved to California from Saskatchewan when he was 8 years old, won the gold medal in the 110 hurdles at the 1920 Olympic Games for Canada. Earl, who was almost totally deaf, became a National Champion at USC and Dartmouth College and coached at the U.S. Naval Academy for thirty-six (36) years where his team won the national collegiate title in 1945. He died in 1971.
Meet where the medal was presented to Earl Thom(p)son
Earl Thomson at Long Beach (Poly) High School - 1915
(Track team with Thomson on the right)

1920 Olympics
Earl Thomson (centre, in shorts) won an Olympic gold medal for Canada in the 110-metre men's hurdles at the 1920 Summer Games in Antwerp. The source of the photo is unknown but is probably from a Canadian military track meet in Ontario during the final months of World War I.
Saskatchewan Sports Hall of Fame and Museum

Naval Academy

THOMSON TO ENTER U.S.C.

[LOCAL CORRESPONDENCE]

LONG BEACH, Jan. 5.—Long Beach's loss will be the University of Southern California's gain next month, when Earl Thomson, star track and football man, graduates from the local institution.

Thomson, although a versatile athlete, is at his best on the track. He holds the Pacific Coast intercollegiate record in the high hurdles with a mark of 15.5 flat, and should fill the gap in the obstacle department of track athletics left vacant thus year at U.S.C by Fred Kelly.

Thomson established a new Coast record in the high hurdles at Palo Alto last spring by clipping 1/5 of a second off the previous best time.

Thomson also consistently clears the bar at over six feet in the high jump, making a six foot, two-inch jump last spring in the same meet that he set up a new record in the high hurdles. He is also a good broad jumper and runs the low sticks in excellent time.

The Long Beach marvel is also a remarkable athlete in the respect that he has developed into an exceptional performer both in track and football in spite of a bad hole in his side sustained several years ago when the accidental discharge of a shotgun blew out a couple of his ribs. His injury, however, never bothers him, he

Enters USC…note last paragraph