

Vandals Fail to Topple Jesse Owens Monument

OAKVILLE, Ala. (AP) Residents frightened off vandals who tried to topple a newly erected monument of Olympian Jesse Owens, a statue that stirred controversy when the Lawrence County commission refused to put it on the courthouse lawn in Moulton

Sheriff Dan Ligon said vandals with a chain hooked to a truck tried to pull down the monument early Sunday. The noise of the spinning truck wheels awakened neighbors, he said.

"Apparently whoever it was got scared

and took off when people started coming," Sheriff Ligon said. The monument was chipped slightly at the base, he added.

The statue was placed in this northeast Alabama town after the commission denied permission to install it at the courthouse in Moulton. Commissioners denied that race played a role in the decision, saying that the courthouse lawn was for more general monuments to war veterans, not individuals.

Mr. Owens, who was born in Oakville, gained worldwide fame when he won four gold medals during track events at the 1936 Olympics in Berlin