

1977 Olympics tickets go on sale in April

By MARGIE BAUMAN

FAIRBANKS — Tickets for the 1977 World Eskimo-Indian Olympics, the annual Alaska Native spectacular of sports, games and pageantry, go on sale April 10 in Anchorage and Fairbanks.

John Heffle, chairman of the 1977 Games, said the tickets would be on sale at the Chamber of Commerce offices in both cities, plus the Alaska Federation of Natives Inc., Anchorage and several villages.

Village store managers wanting to sell limited numbers of tickets in their store may write Heffle, at Box 5329, North Pole, Alaska 99705, with their orders.

Tickets will also be on sale at the University of Alaska's Patty Gynmasium during the Games, July 28-30, at \$6 apiece for adults, \$3 for children, or a "season" ticket for all three nights, at \$15 per adult and \$7 per child, Heffle said.

Heffle said the Olympics committee has also completed work on the schedule for the games, which begin with the traditional race of the torch at 6 p.m. on July 28, at the Patty Gym.

Peter Solomon, Fairbanks, has won the four mile race over a cross country course on the University of Alaska campus for the past four years. "Whether he wins it this year or not, he'll get a special trophy for winning it four years straight," Heffle said.

The winner of the torch race is given the honor of lighting the sticks with which Poldine Carlo and Edith Tegoseak, light the traditional seal oil lamps of the Olympics. The two women, both now Fairbanks residents, represent the unity of the Indian and Eskimo cultures respectively in the Games.

Each evening following the lighting of the torches spectators will view a colorful march of all contestants in the games, everyone from competitors in the baby contest to the blanket toss and high kick contenders.

From there the events will vary, with different highlights for each evening.

On Thursday, July 28, the schedule includes the Native sewing contest, first round of the two foot high kick, the

greased pole walk, introduction of Queen contestants, first round of the one foot high kick, Indian dance competition, the woman's blanket toss, the muk-tuk eating contest and the tug-of-war between white men and Native women.

Heffle said he had to chuckle over that one. "Every year the women win it and the majority of the women run mostly in ages from 50 up," he said. "Last year they were up against a bunch of big guys, pipeline workers, and they won again," he said.

On Friday, July 29, the sewing contest continues and the Queen contestants will be interviewed for first judging. Eskimo dance competition follows, plus the finals in the two foot high kick and one foot high kick.

There will also be a finger pulling contest, a traditional Eskimo game. The seal skinning competition is the last listed event, but all events will be interrupted for the crowning of the Olympics Queen, as soon as the judges reach a decision.

On the final day of the games Saturday, July 30, the Queen and her court will be introduced and the Native baby contest begins. Each baby and mother competing must be attired in authentic Native dress.

The winner of the Native sewing contest will then be announced and the completed work auctioned off to the highest bidder. The money goes to the award winning seamstress.

Next comes the arm pull and the ear weight contest, the latter

starting with 16 pound ear weights.

Eskimo and Indian dances will be performed by the winning teams, followed by the knuckle hop and muskrat skinning contest.

With the muskrat hunting season just getting under way, Heffle notes that 16 unskinned muskrats will be needed for the games and that because of limited funds, donations will be very much appreciated. Anyone wishing to donate muskrats may send them collect, via airplane, but should advise Heffle first, he said.

Trophies to all the top athletes, plus winners in other events will be awarded.

The grand finale of the games comes with the awarding of the

outstanding sportsmanship medal, plus the Howard Rock Memorial trophy to the outstanding athlete of the Olympics.

Native athletes interested in competing should notify the Olympics committee, c/o Box 5329, North Pole, Alaska 99705, as soon as possible and ask for copies of the rules if they need them.

Any Alaska Native woman at least 18 years of age is eligible to compete for the queen competition, as long as she is single, and is at least ¼ Alaska Native, and appears in Native dress, Heffle said. Anyone needing entry forms for the queen competition or baby contest should also contact the Olympics committee quickly.