

Eskimo Olympics Champs Can Come From Bethel

BETHEL—Chances are good that a future Eskimo Olympics champ will surface at the Bethel Winter Carnival this week. More than 50 youngsters have been in training there to compete in Northern Eskimo games under Sylvester Ayek, Bethel Recreation Department.

“We’ve got a really tough looking group down here,” Ayek warns. “We’re shooting for Fairbanks!”

Southwest games are traditional in the area. The Recreation Department has developed about 40 of them and plans to teach them this summer. The winter concentration has been on Northern games, however, because statewide meets usually feature them.

Winners from the Winter Car-

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Champs . . .

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nival will enter the Anchorage Youth Olympics in March. Those who win in Anchorage will go to Fairbanks in July to compete for honors in the international Eskimo Olympics sponsored by the Tundra Times.

Coach Ayek, who was himself an Olympics high kick champ in 1968, predicts his youngsters will take at least half a dozen places in the Anchorage games and score well in Fairbanks.

"They're so far ahead of me I can't compete with them," he claims. "And we've got some really tough games down here."

Bethel merchants are also impressed. They've raised \$700 in travel funds to help the team on its way.

The winter carnival will last through Sunday. Also featured with Eskimo games will be snowshoe races, Eskimo baseball and other outdoor sports.