



**MISS WORLD ESKIMO OLYMPICS**—Miss Marie Irwin of Nenana has just been crowned to become the 1969 World Eskimo Olympics queen. Wearing her ivory and baline crown, Marie is talking to Miss Audrey Ambrose, 1968 Olympics queen. Both girls wept, one for joy and one for

having to give up her year's reign. At far right is Miss Sarah Seeberg, Miss Arctic Circle who was first runner-up. Jack Silbaugh, left, of the Arctic Oil Show crowned the new queen. Miss Irwin is part Eskimo, part Indian and Caucasian.

—DIGNA JOHNSON Photograph

## Olympics Great Despite Problems

The 1969 World Eskimo Olympics concluded its two-day program last Saturday at the Patty Gymnasium of the University of Alaska before capacity crowds in the 2,500-seat gym.

The Olympics probably experienced its finest success in its 8-year history of annual performances despite numerous difficulties met by Thomas Richards, Jr. and his Eskimo Olympics committee.

One of the first problems was that Richards took over as chairman with not much more than a month to prepare for the events.

It was first decided that the

Olympics would be held outdoors at the Alaskaland but later it was decided that it would be held indoors at the Seward Hall or the gold dome structure, the inclement weather being the factor.

At the last minute, it was found that repairs at the gold dome would not be made on time to close the open area on the lower roof damaged by fire months ago. This development threatened to leave the Olympics out in the cold.

Tom Richards and his committee were rescued by President William R. Wood of the Univer-

sity of Alaska who made the spacious Patty gym available as well as making housing and food

(Continued on page 6)



# Olympics Great . . .

(Continued from page 1)

facilities at the University for the Olympics performers.

Proving once again its popular public appeal, the Olympics were performed before capacity crowds. The unique native cultural show received many a spontaneous applause from the appreciative crowd.

One of the pleasant developments was the staging of the Olympics queen pageant that was done in a dignified and professional manner. Mrs. Daphne Rylander Gustafson, a former Olympics queen herself, was in charge of the pageant.

"Daphne and her helpers worked so hard," said Mrs. Peggy Anderson, a young member of the Olympics committee.

Peggy singled out Daphne's helpers as Martha Smelcer, Judy Birkliid, Lois James, Jane Haycraft, Mrs. Maria Morrison, Anna Marie Morrison, and Virginia Kriley, a beautician from Bonnie's Beauty Salon in Fairbanks.

The hard work along with the beauty pageant judges picked a charming and beautiful World Eskimo Olympics queen in the person of Miss Marie Irwin of Nenana.

First runner-up was Sarah Seeborg, Miss Arctic Circle; second runner-up, Sally Woods, Miss Nuchalawoyya; and Miss Congeniality was Linda Cook, Miss Metlakatla.

Marie is part Eskimo, part Indian and Caucasian and 18 years old. Marie succeeded Miss Audrey Ambrose of Huslia who was the reigning queen for 1968. Both charming young ladies wept, one for joy and the other for having to relinquish her crown.

The popular Eskimo hi-kick event one with both feet and the other with one were won by Job Kasuk of Barrow. Job kicked the both feet event to the height of 6 feet 8 inches and the one-foot event at 7 feet 8 inches.

The trick of the hi-kick is that the kicker has to land on both feet in the both-foot event and land on the same foot with which he kicked on the one-foot event.

Barrow Eskimo dancers won the event once again by perform-

ing authentic and traditional dances as well as by wearing authentic Eskimo costumes.

In the Indian dance category, the Minto Athabascan Indian dancers walked away with the award. Copper Center Indian dancers attended the Olympics for the first time this year and performed admirably.

Upward Bound native young people at the University of Alaska pleased the crowd with their original and lively Eskimo and Indian dances. Mrs. Judy Woods of Manley Hot Springs and her nine children charmed the crowd by their Indian dancing.

The ever popular seal skinning contest was again won by Rhoda Nageak of Barrow. She has retained the crown in that event for the last three years.

The exciting nalukatuk (blanket toss) was won by Marie Nusunginya with Laura Bergt placing second and Jenny Felder placing third.

The men's blanket toss was won by Roger Kooniak who also became the favorite of the crowd with his game and serious efforts at the hi-kick and other events. Second was Tommy Fields of Kotzebue who did the difficult sommersault while being tossed.

The painful ear-weight contest was won by Fred Titus of Minto who outlasted his opponents by carrying 9 pounds of lead on his right ear by a string.

Eskimo yo-yo contest was won by Penny Lie of Kotzebue. She was also a lovely beauty pageant contestant.

Muktuk eating contest was won by Lawrence David of Fairbanks who did the trick in 15 seconds flat, while Lorry Scheurich, formerly of Kiana now a State Trooper in Fairbanks, who devoured his muktuk in 16 seconds.

Peggy Anderson also praised Jim and Donna Miller, resident counselors at the Lathrop Hall at UA for their tireless services in accomodating the Olympics performers.

"They did everything possible for the people who stayed there," said Peggy.