

Champion



...Clara Ketzler, Women's 1967 North American sled dog champion.

--Merv Mullins photo

Clara Ketzler Fights Blizzards To Win Big Race

Fighting snowdrifts formed by a 40-mile per hour wind, Clara Ketzler came from sixth place to win the Women's North American Sled Dog Championship last Sunday.

The snowdrifts almost completely wiped out the trail in many places, and several teams became bogged down at the end of the starting chute.

Snow-gos and hikers helped to break down the drifts further along the trail, but the fastest time was over 100 minutes for the 14-mile course.

In addition to fighting the drifts, three of the original leaders lost time when they followed a dead-end snow-go

(continued on page 6)

Champion . . .

(continued from page 1)

trail.

The drifts and the false trail bunched the mushers up, and most of them finished within a few minutes of each other. As a result, the final times almost completely reversed the starting order for the day.

Ketzler, who had times of 45.17 and 43.12 for the first two 10-mile heats, had sixth place overall and fifth place for the second day. Her time of 103.38, second for the 14-mile heat, brought her the victory.

Second place went to Ruth Macchione, who started the heat in seventh position. Her time of 102.22 was the best for that day.

Close on her heels in third place was Jerry Best, only 15/100 of a minute behind in overall time. Ethel Stoneman, eighth in total time and ninth in starting, took fourth.

Fifth place went to Lena Charlie of Tok, who had started third, Anita Henry and Polly Schallock took sixth and seventh, while Nellie Probert and Natalie Norris dropped from second and first to eighth and ninth positions.

Plagued by bad luck, Janet Fabian won the red lantern for the slowest elapsed time (378.93) for the 34 miles. Pauline Sowell scratched before the heat, and Barbara Jimmie, who had been disqualified the first day, dropped from the race.

Winner Clara Ketzler is the wife of Gilbert Ketzler and the sister-in-law of Al Ketzler. She has been racing about five years, but had never placed in the money before.

She says her reaction when she found that she had won was "I just couldn't believe it."

Originally from Nenana, she now lives just south of Fairbanks. The family has its own dogs, and her son Harry finished second in the seven-dog junior competition this year.

Her sponsor for the race was A & A Roofing of Fairbanks.