

Games Bring Small Village To Life ; Our Men Beaten By The Weather

by Lois Keating

Inuvik, N.W.T. I promised you a good report on Northern Games held at Fort Good Hope and then, soon after I got there, I got sick, and consequently only saw some of the early events.

However, I've tried to get information from some of the other people who were there.

Most of us stayed in tents and the tents were made by the tent factory at Fort McPherson. Their business should increase from now on because the participants were quite happy with the tents and with a camp stove inside, they were really comfortable and warm.

Most of the participants arrived by plane a few came by river and some never got there at all. A group of three fellows from the Eskimo-Indian Olympics in Fairbanks—Roger Kunayak, Jerry Woods and Chris Anderson left Fairbanks on the 17th and went to Whitehorse on the sched. From there they were to have chartered a plane to Fort Good Hope. The weather was bad Friday morning and they couldn't leave Whitehorse, on Saturday the small plane got as far as the Mackenzie Mountains, but couldn't get across because of fog. So they had to return to Whitehorse, and eventually went back to Fairbanks, without even having reached Fort Good Hope.

Another group encountering travel problems was the group

from Wrigley, who had planned to come by boat. The trouble started the weekend before the Games when they went to Fort Simpson to get gas for the trip, and were stuck there because of high winds. Then somebody took off with their brand new kicker. Somehow they finally made it as far as Norman Wells on Saturday, but if they had kept going by river they would have missed the Games completely, so they finally got to Fort Good Hope in two small planes.

Rain cancelled the outdoor activities on Saturday, and everything was held in the school auditorium. But on Sunday a number of outdoor events were held. I've got a rundown of most of the winners of the various events.

In the Fish Cutting contest, Mary Kendi of Aklavik took 1st prize of 2.25 minutes.

There were two winners in the Duck Plucking contest. Fastest was Georgina Tobac of Fort Good Hope at 5 mins; for the Best Cleaned, the prize went to Bertha-Ruben of Paulatuk.

There were nine categories in the Handicraft Contest.

In Beadwork, Georgina Tobac of Fort Good Hope took first prize for a pair of beaded moosehide gloves.

In Fur Work, 1st prize went to Nellie Kanoyak of Coppermine for a traditional central Arctic bonnet.

In Embroidery, the 1st prize

(Continued on page 2)

Northern Games . . .

(Continued from page 1)

was shared between Lucy Jackson of Fort Good Hope and Alice Arnayak of Paulatuk. Lucy made a wall hanging of white stroud depicting a bush camp scene, and Alice displayed embroidered parka trimmings.

For Dress, Nellie Kanovak of Coppermine won 1st prize for a Central Arctic traditional Eskimo costume.

In Miniature Handicrafts, the 1st prize was for sleds with moose hide wrapper — the maker was unidentified but probably from Ft. Norman.

For Dolls, 1st prize went to B. Otatak of Coppermine for a

fur dressed doll in traditional costume.

There were several single entries. A prize went to Mary Firth of Fort McPherson for a moose hair embroidered handbag; to Eunice Mitchell of Fort McPherson for sinew; and to Roger Ahalik of Pt. Barrow for a carved ivory cribbage board.

There were two over-all Grand Prizes given for Handicrafts; 1st went to Lucy Jackson of Fort Good Hope for an embroidered wall hanging. Her two oldest sons, 10 and 12 years old, drew the bush camp scene on the stroud and it took two years to sew. It was 2 ft. x 1½ ft. in size.

(Continued on page 3)

Northern Games Even Honey Buckets Auctioned Off

(Continued from page 2)

2nd Overall prize went to Fred Edgi of Fort Good Hope for his artwork in posters for the gymnasium and a charcoal drawing on red velvet with black frame.

There were a lot of participants for the Tea Boiling contest and the winners were Martha Stewart of Aklavik with 5 mins; Lucy Jackson of Fort Good Hope with 5.05 mins; and Mabel Steffanson of Tuk with 5.20 mins.

In the bannock making contest, there were two categories: starting off with a cold pan and with a hot pan. The winner of the cold pan method was Eunice Mitchell of Fort McPherson, with 12.35 mins; and the winner of the hot pan method was Georgina Tobac of Fort Good Hope with 7 mins.

In Muskrat Skinning, Jane Charlie of Fort McPherson won first prize at 1.40 mins.

In the Costume contest, Mary Stewart of Aklavik won 1st.

They had to come up with an alternative for the seal-skinning contest, which couldn't take place because it was impossible to obtain any seals. The new event turned out to be a sewing contest. The women from Paulatuk cut out duffles and mitts, and the women taking part had to sew and trim them. The winners were Rosie Stewart of Fort Stewart of Fort McPherson for mitt strings; Annie Emaghok of Tuk for duffles; and Emma Dick of Inuvik for mitts.

The over-all winner of the Good Woman contest was Georgina Tobac of Fort Good Hope.

And because several men took part in some sections of the Good Woman contest, they created a special category known as Good Man — this turned out to be a tie, and was awarded to Peter Rufus of Tuk for Bannock making; Dolphus Shae of Fort Good Hope for Fish Cutting; and Fred Rabisca of Fort Good Hope for Fish Cutting.

In the Fiddling contest, first prize went to Thomas Manual of Fort Good Hope.

The Jigging contest was a lively one and there were a lot of contestants. The winners were James Ruben and Mabel Thrasher of Paulatuk.

In the Stick Bend, Tommy Smith of Inuvik won 1st prize; Steve Cockney of Tuk, 2nd; and Sam Otokiak of Cambri lge Bay won 3rd.

In the Ear Weight contest Charlie Kasook of Inuvik won 1st, carrying 18 lbs. for 22 rounds, which figures out to 1,584 feet; Billy Ahalik won 2nd for 19½ rounds; and Donald Ahsok 3rd, with 6 3/4 rounds.

In the 2-foot High Kick, Steve Cockney won first place with 6 ft. 10 ins; and Pat Tingmiak of Inuvik won 2nd with 6 ft. 9 ins.

Ernie Bernhardt of Coppermine won the Alaskan High Kick.

In the one-foot High Kick, Pat Tingmiak of Inuvik won 1st with 8 ft.; Mickey Gordon of Inuvik, 2nd, with 7 ft. 11 ins.; and Steve Cockney of Tuk, 3rd place with 7 ft. 10 ins. This is pretty good, as Steve is a lot shorter than Pat or Mickey. Mickey injured his knee quite badly, and has been hobbling around Inuvik on crutches the last few days.

The winner of the Knuckle Hop was Peter Usher of Inuvik and Ottawa.

The winner in the men's blanket toss was Donald Ahsok of Point Barrow. I don't have a name for the winner of the women's blanket toss.

There were several Tugs-of-War, but there doesn't seem to be any winners listed. One was between the men of Wrigley, Fort Norman and Norman Wells against the men from Tuk, Paulatuk and Point Barrow. Another was between the men from Inuvik and Tuk against the men from Fort Good Hope.

There was no Eskimo Drum Dance competition, but the drum dancers from Point Barrow were there, and one of their outstanding dances featured a rectangular box drum, of the type used before the well known round drums came into being. This was suspended in the air by a wire and was beaten vigorously with a stick.

The Mackenzie Delta Drum Dancers also performed many times, with perhaps the largest group they have ever had together at one time. From Inuvik were Kenneth and Rosie Peelook, Tommy and Sarah Kalinek and Alex Gordon; from Aklavik, Kathleen Hansen and Simon Bennett; and from Tuk were Raddi Kowichuk, Felix Nuyaviak and Mark Noksana. Hope Gordon and Elmira Soupay, who usually dance with the group, were both ill, and were sadly missed.

In the Indian Drum Dance competition, the winner was the Fort Norman group, consisting of Victor Menacho, Fred Widow, John Menacho and Jerome

Menacho. 2nd prize went to the Fort Good Hope drummers — Gully Turo, Baptiste Shae, Joe Orlas and Benny Erutze. 3rd prize went to the group from Arctic Red River, consisting of Hyacinthe Andre, William Norman, Nap Norbert and Annie Norbert.

The Indian game of stick gambling was also played, but not in official competition.

John Hodges of Inuvik made two parachute jumps into the ball field.

At one point, when the people were waiting for the results of the Good Woman contest, the kids of Fort Good Hope got hold of the blanket and started a blanket toss of their own.

Each evening there were drum dances, square dancing and jigging, which lasted far into the night.

After the Games were all over, the massive clean-up began. Tents had to be taken down, garbage collected, and all sorts of topping up activities. Fr. Labat pitched in and washed all the dirty pots and pans from

the bannock making and tea boiling contests.

An auction was held and dry fish, muktuk, and food from the tents was sold, with George Grandjambe of Fort Good Hope acting as auctioneer. They even auctioned off the honey buckets, how about that?

It seems like having Northern Games in a small settlement like Fort Good Hope is a fine idea although there is a lot of work involved, and a lot of problems to be solved. So in a sense, I guess you could call Fort Good Hope a test area for the new look in Northern Games. Next year it is hoped that the Games can be held in more than just one settlement, and now that some of the difficulties in such a venture are now known, it should be easier next time.

Informality was the keynote — and one of the best aspects of the Games is the chance for people to meet with old friends, and to make new ones. Certainly this happened in great measure in Fort Good Hope — at Northern Games 1973.