



Pikok Oenga and her sister Freida were two of the dancers who led Point Hope to first place in Eskimo dancing.

PHOTOS BY BILL HESS

From young to old, they dance in Pt. Hope

When the first Point Hope dancers walked out onto the floor of the Patty Gymnasium to present the Eskimo dance they had learned as small school girls, one other Eskimo dancer was overheard to say, "they've won it."

And the well-organized spirited dance group — all 52 members of it — proved that prediction true on July 30 when it was awarded the first place medal for Eskimo Dance in the

1982 Eskimo Olympics.

The win was no small thing for the dancers. They took the floor again upon the announcement of their victory over powerhouse Barrow and matched the enthusiasm and exciting dance that gave them first place in the dance competition.

Then they all ran out to the cooler area in back of the Patty Gymnasium and hugged and laughed and talked of their

happiness in their victory.

Point Hope children have been learning Eskimo dancing in their school for the past four years, according to Annie Frankson, vice-chairman of the dance group.

The classes have helped increase the Point Hope Dance group to the 52-member strength it now has.

The classes have been taught by Mrs. Frankson's relatives, David and Dinah Frankson who taught bilingual, bi-cultural education in Anchorage before returning to Point Hope.

The Franksons said during the excitement of the post-win celebration that "my aunt make songs, his father make songs. They are whalers all," and the songs were of whaling.

Annie Frankson said the group performs so well together because it has always been able to work well together. "We might have misunderstandings but we work them out. We're strong."

Annie Frankson said she is very proud of the two little girls who took the dance floor first, Pikok Oenga and her sister Frieda, but adds that all the children in Point Hope have learned to dance well. "We just took a few of the children."

"These two girls are pretty good. They got their mind to it," she said of their attentiveness when their Elders were dancing. As the older members of the group danced, the girls sat still, their eyes glued to the dancers, their hands occasionally following the motions.

The dance group practiced three to four times a week for the three weeks preceding

the Olympics but their rush to make their well-coordinated dance costumes was much frantic.

Annie Frankson said the group ordered material for its black and white kuspuks and summer parkas only two weeks before they left for Fairbanks. The men wore white summer parkas with black pants, the women black kuspuks with black pants.

"Everybody just helped to-

gether and worked together."

Mrs. Frankson said the dance group hasn't performed since returning to Point Hope but did present their dances to the village just before leaving for Fairbanks.

They will return to the Olympics next year if they can but the trip is costly. "It cost \$21,000 to fly there this year."



Pikok and Freida watch carefully and mimic the motions of another dance-team member after they finish performing.



Dancers from Minto won the Indian Dance competition.