

Olympics Get Head Start

Fairbanks— Interior Eskimo Association leader John Heffle has been elected president of World Eskimo-Indian Olympics Inc., an organization promoting a broadbased Native sports program.

It was Heffle who, earlier this year, led the move for incorporation so that the Olympics organization could lend its support not only to the annual games, but a variety of associated events.

On top of the agenda, of course, are the 1977 Games, set for July 28-30 at Fairbanks. The spectacular features everything from a beauty pageant and muktuk eating contest to athletic tests of pain and endurance.

But Heffle and other new board members are committed, by the articles of incorporation of World Eskimo-Indian Olympics Inc. to a plan that stretches far beyond the Olympics.

The articles direct them to a threefold plan:

(1) to promote the economic and social customs, arts and crafts, traditional games of skill, strength, agility, and endurance in harmony with the Alaskan Native, Siberian, Greenland and Canadian Eskimo and American Indians, together with the language, crafts, arts and legends of these cultures.

Working with Heffle on the board are Buzz Fitzpatrick, vice president; Jerry Woods, secretary; Daphane Gustafson, treasurer, and members Ollie Anderson, Chris Anderson and George Bell.

The board has also named three Olympics athletes as regional representatives to promote the games. They are Reggie Joule, for the Kotzebue-Nome area; Fred Titus, for the Interior, and James Itta, for the Arctic Slope. More regional representatives are to be named later.

The games involve an enormous amount of work, on everything from ticket sales to arrangements for several hundred people who will participate. With the games still several months away, the organization hopes to get a good head start, Heffle said.

Anyone wishing to help organize for the Olympics in their area and anyone having questions about the forthcoming games is invited to write Jerry Woods, secretary, World Eskimo-Indian Olympics Inc., Box 5329, North Pole, Alaska.