

Call number: 00-00-178-04 PT 3

Eskimo Olympics, 1972 (KUAC) Interviews and Dances

Summary created by: Summer Dougherty

Date(s) of creation of summary: 2/15/2013

Notes: Originals on 7 inch reels. Master and circulation copies on CD.

A man is speaking, saying that the games are quite different [in Minto?]. They do not have the ear pulling contest.

Melvin Charlie(?) from Minto speaks, saying that people are able to see people that they haven't seen for a long time. Both Eskimos and Indians compete. The man says this is his second year coming to the Olympics. He takes time off work especially to come. He thinks more people are participating and that in the future more games will be added.

Isaac Pescoya interviews Elmer Frankson(?), a contestant from Point Hope. Elmer has participated in three games: the one legged kick (he kicked 6'7"), the two legged kick, and the knuckle hop (he went 23"). He describes how the activities are performed. Elmer says that the same games are played in Point Hope but not the swing kick. They also play other games. In one you tie your feet up behind your neck and you climb up a rope as high as you can go and then climb back down. In another you hold yourself up on your hand (or hands?) balancing with your elbows (or elbow?) on your stomach. You spin as many times as you can without losing your balance. In another game you walk on your hands with your feet next to your elbows. Elmer says there are even more games than these that he has described.

Elmer says the rhythm of the Point Barrow and King Island dancers is almost the same as Point Hope but Barrow has a strong beat while King Island has a rhythm that is smooth. Point Hope's beat is somewhere in between these two, not slow and not fast. The motions in Point Hope dances are very different than here. In Point hope daces have about 7 drummer and six women for the music. Point Hope plays their games once a year, during the Christmas holidays. They have women's, men's, boy's and girl's games. He describes the type of teams and competition used at Point Hope. Elmer says there are more people here but that there are some experts up there [at Point Hope?] who specialize in a certain game. For example, the record for the knuckle hop at the Eskimo Olympics is 71' but there are people who can go 100' or maybe 150' [at Point Hope?].

Isaac Pescoya interviews Roger Kunayak . Roger thinks the Olympics are great and should continue for years and years. He thinks other Eskimo games should be introduced like the rope trick, the elbow walk and stick bend. These games have been passed down from his great grandfather and are done every Christmas where he comes from.

Roger says that where he comes from, unlike at the Eskimo Olympics, the dancers do not compete.

In his village everyone participates in the games and dances. The competition is more exciting than here because they have more games. The games might start at 5 or 6pm and run until 2 or 3am.

Roger has been going to these Olympics since '68. The first year he was representing Upward Bound the first year. He is representing Nome this year. Tonight he will be participating in drop the bomb. He describes the same. He will also be dancing the walrus dance tonight. He has been dancing ever since he can remember. He also knows a raven dance from King Island. The dance tells the story of a raven teasing a man about not being able to fly.

Isaac Pescoya interviews Alfred Grant, originally of Tanana, now residing in Fairbanks. He is now working with an alcoholism program in Fairbanks. He is married with six children. He thinks the Olympics have been going well regardless of whether the Athabaskan Nation is present or not. He has been attending the Olympics 5 or 6 years and things previous years have been better. He thinks the competition shows spirit, effort and good sportsmanship. The tape cuts out.