

Call number: 00-00-178-01 PT.3

Eskimo Olympics, 1972 (KUAC) Interview of James Nageak (continued possible from -01-04), Guy Okakok, Music (drums and singing or chanting) in the background. Describing the march of the dancers around the gym.

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

(Continued from 00-00-178-01 PT 4)

The interviewer (sounds like Paul Quist) asks James Nageak to tell him about the seal skinning contest. James says that what makes this 1972 Olympics unusual is that the champion seal-skinner, Rhoda Nageak, James' mother, did not show up this year. Since the Eskimo Olympics originated, she had been the champion every summer as well as some other events in Anchorage. She is in the hospital during this Olympics. The lady that replaced her from Barrow won yesterday at 1 minute 27 seconds. This woman had been coming in second all these years. Rhoda Nageak holds the record of 57 seconds from the 1967 Olympics.

James comments that Fairbanks people don't get too many seals and that the person who participates in the event gets to keep the skin and the meat so it is a treat for the people here to be able to have some seal meat during the Eskimo Olympics. The man guesses the seals came from Barrow this year. He says the muktuk for the muktuk eating contest, which was held yesterday, came from Barrow.

The man entered the muktuk eating contest so he could have some muktuk. The winner yesterday ate the 2"x1" piece on muktuk in 27 seconds. The speaker believes the record is 15 seconds. The muktuk is big enough that you have to cut it into pieces to eat it. The winner yesterday cut it into three big pieces.

James thinks that one of the highlights is the two-foot high kick. A record was broken last night; the man jumped with both feet, kicked a target at 7' 1/2" and landed with both feet. The man elaborated on the two-foot high kick contest and estimated that distances kicked by old timers in the past were higher, especially considering the height of the men that were kicking. At this point singing and drumming starts and can be heard in the background. James thinks people had more stamina and endurance in the old days because they had to; today's young people can go to a store and buy something to eat instead of hunting.

James says he is 32 years old and was born in 1940 and remembers the high kick game being played in Barrow when he was small. He says that people in those days were scattered around the Arctic coast and did not get a chance to meet as a group often but did meet at Thanksgiving and Christmastime and people did play games on these occasions. James thinks the games are a very good thing for people

from all over Alaska and even from Canada to get together. James notes that there was not much competition in Native cultures, traditionally, and says that the competition during the Olympics is friendly and relaxed.

The singing and drumming get louder. James says that this is the time when they march around the Patty Gymnasium. The first place champions from last year have the privilege of being the first ones to go around the gym and present the parkas and costumes they have. The tape cuts out.

Guy Okakok from Barrow introduces himself. He has moved to Fairbanks temporarily. He did not know that he was elected as a commissioner on a housing project, so he supposes he will stay for another year or two. He says the games here are like the games up north. The high kick is especially important to him. The high kick winner this year is the man's nephew Tom Gordon from Inuvik. These games such as high kick, one leg kick, and both-feet kick are familiar to him from his boyhood. He says the games have been changed so they are a little easier. He says he was about 11 years old when he first began to do the high kick and was about 16 or 17 when he kicked 8' in Barrow. The tape cuts out.