

Pi-Ume-Sha Celebration Revives an Old Tradition



As emcee of Pi-Ume-Sha, Nathan "8-ball" Jim is accustomed to getting large doses of hot sun. (above)

A trend in powwow dancing is sweeping through Indian country these days and the recent Pi-Ume-Sha celebration in Warm Springs reflected the movement. More and more dancers are returning to the traditional or "straight" war dance and leaving their fancy gyrations behind.

For the first time in the eight year history of their powwow, the Pi-Ume-Sha Committee held a traditional war dance contests for men and women. And the crowd—bigger than ever—loved it.

To further confirm the trend, a trio of traditional dancers came away with a first place in the men's team dance contest, which had previously been dominated by fancy dancers.

But, as ever, the crowd at the powwow held June 24-26 savored the climactic last event—men's fancy war dance. It was of little surprise to anyone that Warm Springs' Jim Macy won that popular contest.

Committee member and emcee Nathan "8-ball" Jim observed that at many pow-

wows straight dancing is now "equal with fancy dancing in cash prizes." Chairman Art Mitchell noted that contests for every age group are cropping up at powwows, although Pi-Ume-Sha would have to "add on a day" to incorporate that many events. As it was, the Warm Springs powwow sponsored one men's and one women's contest for all ages.

The revival of the sacred dance ritual is injecting not only dignity but variety into the powwow scene. As each tribe rediscovers its traditions, regional differences become apparent, making the judging at powwows that much more difficult.

One judge commented that being unfamiliar with the various styles, he was more apt to judge on costume and appearance. How can the stately steps of one tribe's war dance be compared with the birdlike strut of another's?

A Pi-Ume-Sha Committee member offered the thought that competition might actually be incompatible with traditional war dancing which was done

in a sacred manner by warriors and veterans. Women were never included in this dance ritual.

While Pi-Ume-Sha and other powwows adapt to the new-found popularity of traditional dance, the other contests continue unchanged. The Warm Springs powwow featured individual and team round dancing and war dancing for all ages. Approximately 500 people competed for over \$4,000 in cash prizes.

Art Mitchell noted that contestants did not come from as wide an area this year due to other powwows scheduled at the same time. The number of spectators was up considerably however.

The Pi-Ume-Sha grounds next to the Community Center were crowded with teepees for three days, although there were fewer craft and food concessions than last year.

Inside the arena pomp and grandeur combined with tradition. The grand entry of dignitaries and dancers and welcoming remarks from Tribal Council Chairman Eugene

Greene led off the daily sessions. The Pi-Ume-Sha Queen Winona Spino was crowned and princesses chosen on the first evening.

Visitors from Skokomish and Arizona performed exhibition dances for the appreciative crowd. Giveaways added a traditional touch to the powwow; Alice Florendo's family, Pi-Ume-Sha committee members, and Herbert Stwyer, Nedda Greene, Matilda Mitchell and Nettie Shawaway gave valuables to friends and strangers alike to honor loved ones.

Stick games were as popular as ever and the lively beat from the riverside "casino" often competed and usually outlasted the powwow drumming and singing.

Financially, Pi-Ume-Sha '77 was successful. "We didn't go in the hole, that's for sure," remarked Mitchell. A fund-raising raffle generated such donated items as buckskin clothing, blankets, a quilt and a drum.

Pleased with their eighth annual celebration of the Warm Springs Reservation's

treaty days, the Pi-Ume-Sha Committee plans to spend the summer attending other powwows and in the fall launch into preparations for their ninth annual.

Members of the committee are co-chairmen Art Mitchell and Sam Colwash and their wives Bernice and Millie, Nathan Jim, Larry and Redine Calica, Silas and Prunie Williams, Oliver and Mildred Kirk, Clark Livingston, Larry and Ellen Stanley, Lizzy Rhoan, Ada Sooksoit and Adeline Miller.

Contest results and powwow notables are as follows: Pi-Ume-Sha Queen and Court.

Queen, Winona Spino. 1st Princess, Pearl Johnson, 2nd Princess, Jackie Estimo, 3rd Princess, Sandra Greene, 4th Princess, Marylena Heath, 5th Princess, Doreen Danzuka.

Judges. Hank Palmer, Jimmy Selam, Tony Shoulderblade, Barbara Farmer, Bernard Whitehat, Byron Patt, Leah Conner, Wilfred Yallup, Gilbert Walkingbull.

Drummers.

Heart Butte, Montana; Yakima Nation Inter-Tribal; Leander George, Yakima; Pendleton Studs; Chemawa Bucks; Pine Grove Jrs.; Wide Spot; Tenino Singers; Seattle Inter-Tribal; Northern Plain Singers, Seattle; Portland Bow and Arrow Club.

Emcee, Nathan "8-ball" Jim. Whipman.

Oliver Kirk.

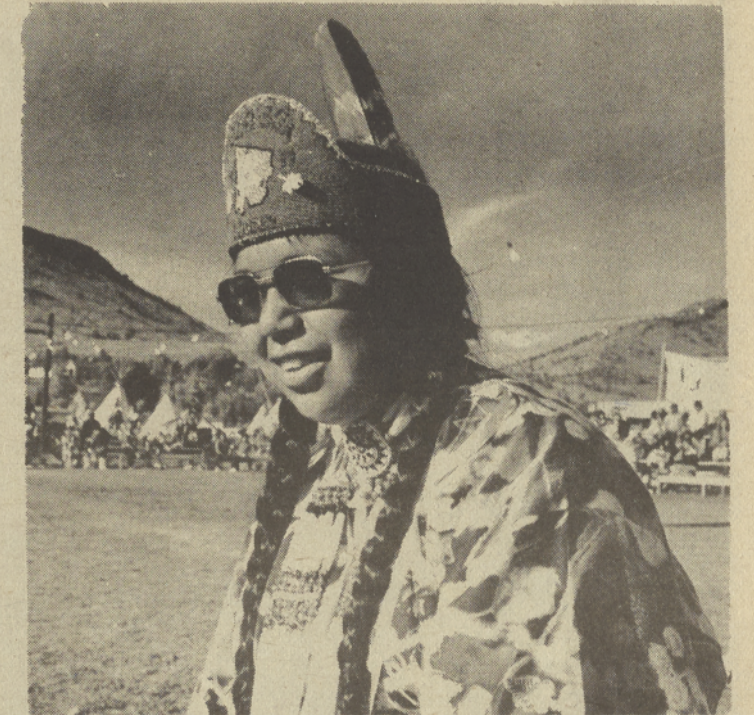
Contest Results:

In the Old Warriors War Dance and Kussa Round Dance, all were acknowledged and were given prizes.

Men's Individual Fancy War Dance - 17 (17 years & older).

1st Jim Macy, Warm Springs, 2nd Reggie Walsey, Warm Springs, 3rd Robert Cody, Sioux-Pendleton, 4th Wiggie Sooksoit, Warm Springs, 5th Raymond Meanus, Warm Springs.

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Winona Spino, 17, presided over the powwow as Pi-Ume-Sha Queen for 1977. Winona was the candidate who sold the most raffle tickets.



Drumming groups from as far as Montana kept the powwow going throughout the weekend. The Pine Grove Juniors joined forces with the Widespot Singers for at least one song. From left to right are: Gene Greene, Chuck Dick, Dallas Winishut and Sanders Heath. (right)



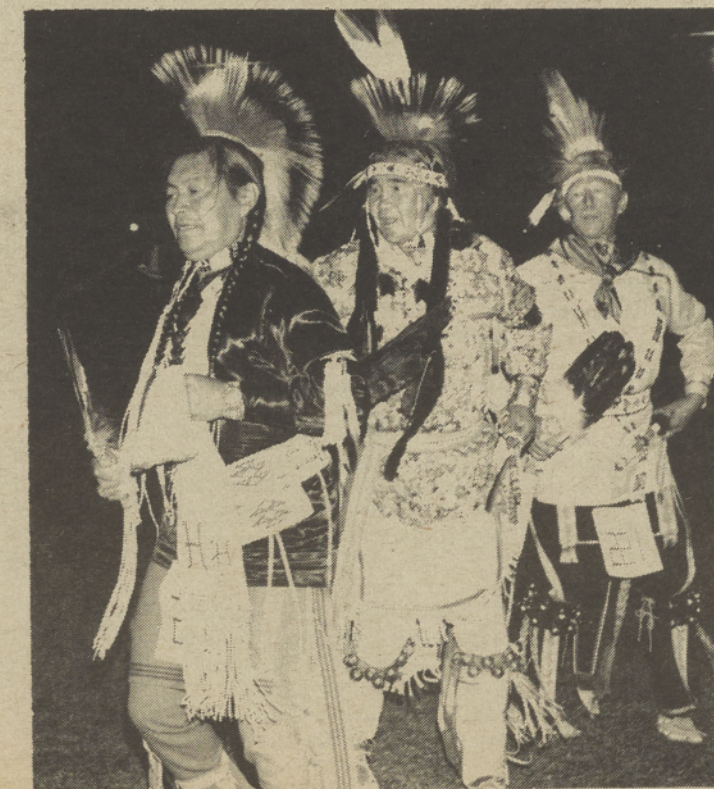
Judges were honored for the long hours they devoted to Pi-Ume-Sha. Showing their own footwork in a special judges dance were Jimmy Selam, Barbara Farmer, Bernard Whitehat, Tony Shoulderblade (partially hidden) and Hank Palmer.



Bob Cody, a Sioux from Pendleton, was welcomed back to the powwow scene after a two year absence by Bernice Mitchell. The tall lanky dancer placed third in individual fancy dancing and second in team dancing.



Leading the grand entry on Sunday was Allen Slickpoo, Nez Perce, followed by Oliver Kirk (Whipman) and Benson Heath of Warm Springs.



Traditional dancers found a place at Pi-Ume-Sha this year as two new straight dancing contests were added and on old contest was won by a trio of traditional dancers. From Ferndale, Washington were Dick Phare, Neuman Hood and Wally Paul.



Lilly Heath celebrated her 71st birthday at her teepee on the Pi-Ume-Sha grounds. Although her actual birthday wasn't until July 3, friends took advantage of the powwow gathering to throw Lilly a party, complete with decorated cake.

Photos and story by Cynthia Stowell