

THE VICTORIA STAR Sports



Cats win two ————— » D4

Winter Carnival a success despite bad weather

By Madeleine Leclerc

With many of the activities planned during the Grand Falls Winter Carnival cancelled on Saturday due to a major snowstorm, Sunday more than made up for the event as approximately 1,500 people packed the site of the igloo building competition. In addition, children and adults also enjoyed the snow tunnel maze and the snowslide, horse-drawn sleigh rides as well as a visit to the replica of last year's Guinness World record-breaking giant igloo.

"We estimate that between 1,200 and 1,500 people visited us on Sunday. That number could be more as children under 12 years of age did not have to purchase a Carnival button upon their arrival," stated Eric Ouellette, a member of the igloo competition's organizing committee.

Ouellette and a number of volunteers

put in hundreds of hours preparing the site, as well as seeing to the last minute details in an effort to make this year's event a success. As well, other volunteers which included Maurice and Alan Vautour and Sylvio and Eric Poitras were responsible for devoting more than 300 hours to prepare the tunnel maze which attracted the visitors. The giant snowslide, featuring a clown's face carved by by well-known snow sculptor Albert Deveau of Edmundston, had children climb a series of steps and walk through a clown's face before sliding down on KrazyKarpets. As well, many others took in a three-horse drawn sleigh ride around the site, while more visited the giant heated tent to either eat a meal or visit the local Gorge Guilt Guild's various quilts or watch Onil Cyr of St. Martin at work building handmade snowshoes. Winners of the igloo competition's col-

ouring contest from nearby elementary schools were also awarded their prizes during the afternoon.

As for the igloo building competition which saw four teams competing for the much-coveted medals and trophy from the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of New Brunswick, the Falls Construction crew took home the gold medal with its winning entry. Silver and bronze medals were won respectively by the Morin Carbing and the University of Moncton teams. The Falls Construction squad also won the \$500 prize draw among all the entries.

"By adding the snow tunnel, snowslide, snow sculptures and horse-drawn sleigh ride, we wanted to offer more family-oriented activities," stated Ouellette. "A small number of volunteers worked very hard to achieve all of this

and I want to take this opportunity to thank them all. When organizing such events, it is always hard to have enough volunteers to ensure their success so I am very thankful for those who joined us in this endeavour," he added. "They put in a lot of hours and long nights to make sure everything was ready. I also want to thank the Town of Grand Falls for its involvement in the event."

While trying to catch up on lost sleep, Ouellette said his group will look at what was done right and what could have been done better in order to improve the competition and hopefully have more teams participate in the igloo building portion of next year's Winter Carnival. "A lot of the competitors spent too much time carving out the snow blocks to build their igloos. We may next year have a crew of volunteers with electric chainsaws to carve out the

blocks beforehand so that the competitors need only to build their respective igloos. That could be an option we are looking at implementing. That way, we could attract more teams, especially from high schools and universities," he said.

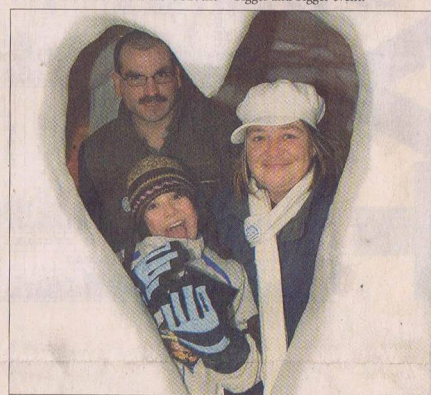
Next year's competition could also see a change of venue. "Since the E. and P. Sénéchal Centre will be open next winter, it could be the appropriate site for next year's competition as well as many of the Winter Carnival's activities," Ouellette said. "Other activities could be organized inside the Civic Centre itself."

"We may have to look at doing more marketing outside the area so as to attract more competitors and volunteers to help out. We want to build on the success and make the competition a bigger and bigger event."



Afternoon fun

Hundreds of visitors to the igloo-building competition site enjoyed the horse-drawn sleigh rides offered on Sunday afternoon during the Grand Falls Winter Carnival. (Madeleine Leclerc photo)



Inside the snow maze

John and Natalie Thériault and their nine-year-old daughter Angelica enjoyed going through the snow tunnel maze on the site of the igloo building competition on Friday, Feb. 13 during the Grand Falls Winter Carnival's third edition held over the weekend. (Madeleine Leclerc photo)



Too much weight

After surviving the drop of two 250-lb tires on its top, this igloo could not stand the weight of a 1,250-lb steel cone. It, and the other igloos built over the weekend as part of the igloo-building competition held during the Grand Falls Winter Carnival attracted a flood of people on Sunday. (Madeleine Leclerc photo)



Gold medal winners

Members of the Falls Construction team won the gold medal at the igloo-building competition sponsored by the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of New Brunswick on Sunday, Feb. 15. The competition was one of the activities held during the Grand Falls Winter Carnival. The team included: Pat Plourde, Eric Levesque, Kevin Plourde, Steven Côté and Blanc Cormier. The team also won a \$500 prize draw among the four participating teams. (Madeleine Leclerc photo)



MP meets Miss Grand Falls

Tobique-Mactaquac MP Mike Allen met Miss Grand Falls Mélanie Cyr while visiting the igloo-building competition on Sunday, Feb. 5. (Madeleine Leclerc photo)



A popular activity

Children enjoyed walking up the steps in back of this giant snow slide and coming out of this carved clown's face before sliding down with their KrazyKarpets on Sunday, Feb. 15. (Madeleine Leclerc photo)