



Competitors on the second leg of the 4x100 team relay drive hard to be first at the halfway point in the event which was

held during the Special Olympics on Saturday. —Journal photo

## Special Olympics here successful

The success of the 15th annual Saskatchewan Special Olympics held in Humboldt over the weekend was due to a number of factors, says chairman Tony Saretsky.

"The games were very successful due to the hard work of all the volunteers. The weather was also a very positive factor," he said following the three-day event. "I can't say enough about the people who helped. Everything was moving like clockwork."

Mr. Saretsky said 300 volunteers helped run the Special Olympics along with 60 mission staff who accompanied the 228 athletes.

While no great attendance record was set, "we were not expecting much of a spectator turnout from the general public. I don't think people are fully aware of what it entails and the calibre of people attending, especially since it has only been going for 15 years."

Despite a low public attendance, many first-time accomplishments were associated with the Special Olympics in Humboldt.

"It was the first time the games were held outside a city; the first time horseshoes were tried; the first time a parade was held with the games, and successfully at that; and the first time an Olympic Village concept was tried."

Mr. Saretsky said.

All athletes and mission staff were housed in a massive dormitory at the Uniplex. This allowed a closer relationship with other athletes.

"Al Bolin, president of the Canadian Special Olympics, was here for two full days. He was impressed and very positive with the Olympic Village since it has not been tried nationally before."

Participation in the various athletic events was very high with 210 athletes in the various track and field events, 180 in bowling and 43 in swimming. Spectator and participant turnout for bowling was very high as the sport is a popular pastime with many handicapped people.

Mr. Saretsky said there were a few minor hitches, usually short delays, during the various events and social activities but everything went well.

"Participants from Estevan said these were the best games they had attended, and that reflected the attitude of most people," he said.

Estimated cost of staging the 1985 Saskatchewan Special Olympics in Humboldt was between \$19,000 and \$21,000.