

Suite 190, SCARBOROUGH

Local Special Olympians off to nationals

Next winter will be extra 'special' for a couple of local athletes.

Two Moose Jaw Special Olympians have qualified for the Winter Nationals in Calgary in February of 1996.

Figure skater Gwen Hochlander and speed skater Roy Alton were informed of their selection to the provincial team on the weekend. Both athletes won gold medals at the provincials in Saskatoon last February but their spots on the provincial squad were not announced until this month.

"It's a pretty big deal," says local Special Olympics chairman Tom Leftley.

"It has been quite a while since we've had an athlete qualify for nationals. This is on par with any of our local athletes getting selected for a national event. It's something they work hard for —

they go out and practice six times a week."

The two Special Olympians will be joined by Moose Jaw Kinetite Figure Skating Club coach Betty Calvert, who coached Hochlander to a gold medal at provincials this year.

Hochlander and Alton weren't the only two local athletes to excel in the Special Olympics this year. At the recent summer provincials in Weyburn, four local athletes won medals in track and field events.

Laurie Carter picked up gold in the 100-metres, silver in the shot put and bronze in the 200-metres, while Melvin Ostrum earned a bronze in the 100-metres. Daniel McCartan came through with a silver in the 100-m and a bronze in the 200-m, while Doug Pringlemire also won silver in the 100-m and bronze in the 200-m.