

Games volunteers already hard at work

Volunteers are hard at work preparing for the next Saskatchewan Summer Games.

The week-long Games are more than two years away, but there's already plenty of work to be done.

"Most of '94 will be a planning year and a fund-raising year," says games committee chairman Ray Boughen.

The committee's goal is \$500,000. A celebrity golf tournament with the Warriors, planned for the weekend of the Saskatchewan Air Show — July 9-10 — is just one of the fund-raisers planned. Corporate sponsorships are being lined up. One sponsor that's confirmed is Ford of Canada, which will supply the games with 11 vans.

The committee chairmen are meeting monthly; they're currently outlining the tasks to be completed during the next two years. Recently, they attended the winter games in Kindersley, paired with their counterparts there to learn more about the games organization.

Most committee members have previous experience working with provincial games or other major events.

Still, in Kindersley they picked up some ideas about things they would like to copy or do differently.

"A lot of the organizational structure holds true, winter or summer, like setting up the games village, meals, accreditation, officials, and souvenirs," Boughen said. "It was good because we got a feel for how it worked."

A brainstorming session was held following the visit to Kindersley. One of the decisions the committee made was to have more than the one outlet Kindersley organizers had for distributing souvenirs.

One thing that caught the Moose Jaw group's interest was the use of foam mats rather than cots for the athletes. Boughen said he asked some of the athletes their opinion of the sleeping arrangements and heard no complaints.

Winter games organizers arranged cultural events for the athletes and coaches. The Moose Jaw committee plans to do the same, however more outdoor events will be planned, likely in the Crescent Park amphitheatre.

Boughen expects his committee will follow Kindersley's example and open a games office about six months in advance. Souvenirs and admission buttons will be sold there ahead of time.

Lots of volunteers have already pledged their support to the games; their numbers are growing daily, Boughen said.

In 1996 it'll be 24 years since the first Saskatchewan Summer Games were held — in Moose Jaw, as a matter of fact.

The Band City was one of four communities bidding on the '96 games.

The city has committed \$100,000, which will go toward upgrading facilities. The province is kicking in \$235,000.

All the sports venues will be of national standards. The games committee is working with the city to determine what facilities need upgrading. Among those slated for improvement are the clubhouse at Ross Wells Park, and painting at some locations.

The sports and their locations include: baseball, Ross Wells Park; basketball, Peacock, Central and Riverview Collegiates; cycling, city and Wakamow Valley; equestrian, exhibition association; golf, Hillcrest Sports Centre; horseshoes, Moose Jaw Horseshoe Club; soccer, Caribou Heights; girls' softball, Optimist Park and Memorial Field; swimming, Phyllis Dewar pool and Natatorium; tennis, Moose Jaw Tennis Club; track and field, Guttridge Field; lacrosse, Creighton Park; and track and field Special Olympics, Guttridge Field.

Boughen predicts the '96 games will be the best Saskatchewan has ever seen.

"We have a very forward-thinking crew; they all have good administrative and organizational skills.

"I think this will be one of the better games ever because we have such a good committee," Boughen said. "Come august 1996, people will see a games that will be one of the classics. I know it will."