

# Reed resigns just before Special Olympics

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The Canadian Invitational Special Olympics for the Mentally Handicapped start Thursday with opening ceremonies at the Agridome, but there is already trouble within the organizing committee.

George Reed, coach and honorary chairman of the Saskatchewan Special Olympics, has submitted his resignation to the organizing committee.

William MacRae, chairman of the Special Olympics management committee, says he thinks Reed resigned because the committee refused a grant from Loto Canada.

"We've just got enough (money) and we don't need any more," MacRae said. "It would be irresponsible to accept funds from Loto Canada."

He feels since the Special Olympics are financially sound, the grant from Loto Canada should go to some other organization where it is needed.

MacRae received Reed's letter of resignation yesterday and has not been able to reach him. The letter does not give any reason for his resignation. Reed is unavailable for comment.

"There has been some inference that there is a political struggle going on," MacRae said, in reference to the resignation. "I have no time for politics."

The Special Olympics, held in Regina as part of the 75th birthday celebrations, begin Thursday night at 8 p.m. with opening ceremonies at the Agridome.

Organizers have already arrived and the athletes will begin arriving tonight.

The competition begins Friday at 9 a.m. with the swimming competition at

the Lawson Aquatic Centre and bowling events at the Bolodrome and Prairie Lanes.

Track and field competition will begin Saturday at 9 a.m. at Douglas Park. The Olympics close at 4:30 p.m. with a ceremony in the park.

The first Canadian Special Olympics were held in Toronto in August, 1969. Since then, the organization of volunteers has grown. This year, more than 500 children are expected to compete.

Carole Kraushaar, a speech therapist for the mentally retarded within the Saskatoon Public School system, is one of those volunteers.

She became involved in the Saskatchewan Special Olympics organization because the volunteer work is closely related to her profession. She has worked on zone meets and eventually became

director of Saskatchewan's zone six (Saskatoon).

"At the annual general meeting of the organization, a decision was reached to host the Olympics and Kraushaar was asked to represent the province's delegation, the largest delegation to the competition with 197 athletes."

The Olympics are special because, "these are young folks who are competing against super odds," MacRae said. "You'll see a good wholesome approach to competition."

He said the Special Olympics show sport as it was years ago. The children want to win but they are content to compete and have fun.

The Canadian Special Olympics are also important to the provinces involved. "The games serve as a focus that keeps

the provincial organizations and clinics going through-out the year," he said. They give the children and provincial organizations a goal to work toward.

MacRae, a superintendent with the RCMP, was asked to head the organizing committee of the Olympics because of his past experience working with the Saskatchewan Association of the Mentally Retarded.

The Olympics became financially sound with a \$10,000 grant from the culture and youth department of the provincial government. Ned Shillington, minister of culture and youth, handed the cheque to organizers Tuesday night at a press conference at the Regina Inn.

A variety of private businesses have donated funds but MacRae says people who donate their time are just as impor-

tant to the success of this year's games.

"It takes hundreds of people because, while the focus is on Regina, to get the kids here involves hundreds of people across Canada."

Chaperones travel with the children, usually one chaperone for every four children.

MacRae also said the people of Regina have shown great interest in the Olympics. He has had people phone him to volunteer their services, with cars for transportation or time to work as scorekeepers during the events.

"You feel good about doing good work," he said.

MacRae says he is not surprised by the response to the event. He says he knows the people of Regina. "My big surprise would have come if we had failed."