

# Special Olympics to start here Friday

Children from all over the province will begin to get more excited as the days near Friday.

It is Special Olympics time again for close to 240 mentally retarded children and, if previous experience holds true to form, the excitement about this weekend's activities in Regina will be growing.

The Special Olympics, a joint project of the Saskatchewan Association for the Mentally Retarded and the Knights of Columbus, is held every year. Children, from six provincial districts begin training and work their way towards district playdowns held in May. The six provincial districts are Regina, Moose Jaw, Yorkton, North Battleford, Prince Albert and Saskatoon.

The children will converge on Regina Friday for competition in the first two events of the meet—bowling and swimming. The bowling

will be conducted at the Bolo-drome, beginning at 5 p.m. and the swimming competitions will be held at the university pool at the same time.

Saturday, the track and field events will be run off at Douglas Park following the official parade of athletes around the track. Official opening ceremonies are scheduled to begin at 10 a.m. and conclude around 2 p.m.

Children are grouped into five categories according to age; A for eight- and nine-year olds; B, for 10, 11 and 12 years; C, for 13, 14 and 15 years; D, for 16, 17 and 18 years and E, for over 18 years of age.

There are also ability levels in each of the age groups, depending upon the number of participants in each event. The top three winners will receive a gold, silver or bronze medal, according to his or her placing.

George Réed, honorary

head coach of the meet, explained why it is the 'Special' Olympics.

"These children have a great competitive attitude and work harder at mastering their events than any children I know. They are happy to compete and if they lose it is not a big thing—but winning a medal or ribbon is a big thing for them," Réed said.

"Everyone wants to be involved and they work hard throughout the year preparing for this event," Réed said. "I think it is one of the best things we have established.

"The public is certainly welcome to attend—we have had good support from people who are interested in donating their time to help run the event. The guys from the football club (Saskatchewan Roughriders) have been more than willing to help out before and I'm sure they will do it again," Réed stated.