

Reed reflected long time

George Reed's resignation this week as coach and honorary chairman of the Saskatchewan Special Olympics was not a spur of the moment decision.

According to Reed, who has been involved in the Special Olympics program since 1969 and more recently founded the George Reed Foundation for the Handicapped, the decision has been a long time coming, and many factors were involved.

"I just decided it was best to get out of it now and not get involved in the politics," Reed said Thursday. "I can now channel my energies toward the foundation."

The development that precipitated Reed's resignation was the refusal by officials of the Special Olympics to accept a grant from Loto Canada, which Reed had played a role in obtaining.

William MacRae, chairman of the Special Olympics, which opened Thursday in Regina, said the organization had enough money and "it would have been irresponsible to accept funds from Loto Canada."

Reed said no one told him the Special Olympics did not need any more money when he was trying to raise funds for the organization.

"What happened was just one more in a series of things," Reed said. "You might say it was the straw that broke the camel's back."

Although he has already tendered his resignation, Reed has agreed to stay on until the the Special Olympics end Saturday.



Judy Kirby of Saskatchewan lights the Olympic flame (left) . . . Victor Ross of North Battleford is pleased with a handshake from Steve Mazurak



Leader-Post photos by Don Healy

Softball tournament

The Molson's Mount Pleasant Men's Softball Association's annual tournament will be held today, Saturday and Sunday at Kaplan Field and Red Sox Field.

The tourney starts at 7 tonight with doubleheaders at both locations. Play begins at 8 a.m. Saturday at both fields and continues all day.

There are games Sunday, also beginning at 8 a.m., but continuing until noon at Red Sox Field. The remainder of the games will be at Kaplan Field with the final at 3 p.m.

The second game, if necessary, in the modified double knockout affair will be at 5 p.m.

All Mount Pleasant Softball Association teams, including defending champion Redhead Equipment, will play. Co-operators, Impalas and Kyles of the Rambler Park League will also compete.

Out-of-town teams include Bruno Merchants, last year's provincial champion and runners-up at the Western Canadian championships.

Esterhazy, Swift Current, Saskatoon Twisters, provincial champions two years ago, Plentywood, Mont. Allstars and Raymore Athletics will also compete.

By Vikki-Lynn Martin L-P Sports Writer

The Canadian Invitational Special Olympics for the Mentally Handicapped opened with much pomp and splendor Thursday night as athletes paraded around the AgriDome and RCMP color guards raised the Olympic flag.

The athletes have travelled from all 10 provinces to participate in the events and are anxiously awaiting today's start of competition.

The 500 athletes received a standing ovation from a crowd of almost 800 spectators. Many competitors raised their arms in signs of victory as they lapped up the attention.

The youngsters' thrill of the evening came with the arrival of Ronald McDon-

ald, mascot Gainer the Gopher and members of the Saskatchewan Roughrider football squad, who presented each athlete with a participation medal as a souvenir of the 1978 Games.

The provincial teams paraded in the order each province joined Confederation. Ontario led the parade with athletes dressed in red and white, sporting white sun visors.

Saskatchewan athletes, dressed in white T-shirts and green shorts, were the largest delegation at the games with clubs from Regina, Saskatoon, Melfort and Oxbow.

Harry "Red" Foster was one of the featured speakers of the evening. As the president of the Canadian Special Olympics, Inc., he has had many years of ex-

perience working with the mentally retarded and knows how to reach that audience.

He compared the Special Olympics to the Commonwealth Games to be held in Edmonton in August.

"In the Commonwealth Games, speed and strength count," he said. "In our Special Olympics, these don't count." He went on to say these Olympics focus on an athlete striving to better himself.

To involve the children, who were beginning to fidget in their seats, he then asked them if they could manage a cheer for Regina's 75th birthday. Three, resounding cheers echoed throughout the AgriDome.

The city of Regina was well represented at the ceremony, with the Regina

Lions Junior B Band and Regina's 75th Anniversary Choir providing entertainment midway through the ceremony.

George Reed, coach and honorary chairman of the Saskatchewan Special Olympics, then led the athletes in a recitation of the Special Olympics oath.

"Let me win and if I cannot win, let me be brave in my attempt."

Reed submitted his resignation this week to the organizing committee of the Games but has agreed to continue serving in his position until the Games end Saturday.

Today's competition includes swimming events at the Lawson Aquatic Centre and bowling at the Bolordrome and Prairie Lanes. Both events were

scheduled to begin at 9 a.m.

The public is invited to all events and there is no admission charge.

Floor hockey at the Al Ritchie Centre and synchronized swimming, water polo and diving at the Lawson Aquatic Centre, also got under way this afternoon, beginning at 1:30.

Soccer, table tennis, archery, fencing, gymnastics, bowling, boxing and wrestling will be featured at the Wascana Institute for Applied Arts and Science. Starting time once again is 1:30 p.m.

Saturday's track and field competition begins at 9 a.m. at Douglass Park. The closing ceremony will also be held that afternoon at the park at 4:30.

Special Olympics open in a big way