



Willie Haas of Regina works out on balance beam



Elaine Sager of Ontario enjoys Lawson pool at the swimming competition

Leader-Post photos

# Rift with Reed repaired?

By Vicki-Lynn Martin  
L-P Sports Writer

Organizers of the Canadian Invitational Special Olympics for the Mentally Handicapped in Regina this weekend are saying the split between the Saskatchewan Branch of the organization and George Reed has been repaired.

Harry (Red) Foster, president of the Canadian Special Olympics, says, "Reed has pledged himself to support the Olympics. He and William MacRae (chairman of the Special Olympics management committee) shook hands and Mr. MacRae said he was very pleased to have him back on the team."

Reed tells the story of his return to the Special Olympics a little differently.

"I have agreed to sit down and talk to the people next week," Reed says. "I have to express my views. I cannot continue to work under that kind of set-up."

Reed was referring to the officials' refusal to accept a grant he had obtained from Loto Canada to help finance the national competition.

Reed says if he left the Special Olympics it would be a difficult decision.

"The kids remember me," he says. "It's hard to divorce yourself from them."

As Reed left the head table at a banquet at the Regina Inn Friday night he was swamped by children of all ages who repeatedly thanked him for the good time they are having at the Games.

"I guess you could say it's all because of the kids," Reed said.

Also at the banquet, Foster announced a \$50,000 donation to the Special Olympics. The money will be distributed in sums of \$10,000 annually for five years.

The Alfred Seedhouse Memorial Fund has been donated by the Manufacturers Life Association in memory of a man who contributed many hours to the Special Olympics.

# In this meet, every athlete special

By Vicki-Lynn Martin  
L-P Sports Writer

It may take a little time and the dropping of a few inhibitions, but sooner or later the children at the Canadian Invitational Special Olympics for the Mentally Handicapped manage to get their audience to smile. And finally to realize these children have huge hearts.

Organizers have said throughout their publicity campaign for the Games in Regina this weekend that these children are special, hence the name Special Olympics.

The kids make that point much clearer than any publicity organizer could possibly imagine.

They enter competitions for gold, silver and bronze medals. Every partici-

pant receives a ribbon with his place showing on it. They generally couldn't care whether they get a gold medal or a fifth-place ribbon.

The athletes just want their moment in the spotlight, to pick up their award and shake hands with the presenters.

They aren't content with just the presenters, however. They then shake with the promoters, coaches and anybody else who is nearby.

It's the spotlight that counts.

The children have few inhibitions, which sometimes leads to embarrassment and other times, joy.

It's embarrassing when they fidget in their seats if a dignitary makes a long-winded speech.

It's a special moment when they cheer for a woman who had to choose between

her volunteer work for the Special Olympics or a regular paying job. They gave her a standing ovation because she chose them.

Regina Mayor Henry Baker read telegrams from the podium Friday night at a banquet at the Regina Inn. As he read a telegram with best wishes from Conservative-party leader Joe Clark, who apologized for not attending the Games, one child asked his coach, "How come he didn't come here?"

When his coach replied that it's a long way from Ottawa to Regina, the child was satisfied but added a wistful, "Maybe next year?"

To these children, the Special Olympics are the highlight of their lives. It is a time when they, and they alone, are recognized for their achievements.

The vehicles being employed are bowling, swimming and track and field competition. But the word competition has a different meaning to those taking part.

The organizers deserve credit for getting 500 children from across Canada in the same city to compete. From there on, it's the athletes' show.

Paul Sleser, chairman of Regina's 75th Anniversary committee, was willing to tell his captive audience last night just what they have done for him in the first day of competition.

"You people are doing something for us," he said quietly from the podium. "It's a lesson in hope, happiness and courage."

Some may not have understood the full implications of his remark but they all knew he had paid them a high tribute.