

Run included America

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by ROD DRABBLE
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For the first time in its history, the Special Olympics Torch Run spanned two countries.

The 1995 version of the run started Thursday morning from Portal, N.D. and crossed the border into Canada at the Port of North Portal accompanied by 35 runners from law enforcement agencies in both Canada and the United States.

Run organizer Const. Clark McClelland of the Estevan Police Service said it was appropriate the torch run start in the communities of Portal and North Portal which are separated only by the international border.

"This is the first time in the world an international run has taken place," McClelland said. "Because of the border being so close to Estevan and the camaraderie we have with the Americans we decided to make it an international run."

The Americans were represented by officers from U.S. Customs and the U.S. Border Patrol stationed at Portal. Senior agent Fred Ewalt of the Border Patrol said a joint torch run reinforces the links between American and Canadian law enforcement officers.

"I worked on the southern border for five years and there is a big diversity between American and Mexican law enforcement," Ewalt said. "The first thing I noticed up here was the spirit of co-operation between Canadian and American law enforcement."

"We co-operate in work, so it's only natural to co-operate in this. The athletes are the ones who benefit, so what difference does it make if they are Canadian or American? We thought it would be a good idea to participate when it (the Canadian run) was starting in North Portal," he said.

Law enforcement officers in North Dakota also recently partici-

paid in their state torch run which went from Williston to Grand Forks.

The Saskatchewan run left Portal at noon Thursday, reached Estevan by 5:30 p.m. the same day and was completed Friday with the torch being carried into the opening ceremonies of the Saskatchewan Special Olympics Summer Games held in Weyburn over the weekend.

The biggest challenge for the runners during the two-day run was the high heat and humidity which caused the group to consume over 350 litres of fluid during the portion from Portal to Estevan alone.


"The heat took a toll," McClelland said. "It slows down a person and you don't want to push it too much because of the heat. We didn't want anyone collapsing out on the highway."

According to McClelland, the support of Estevan and area businesses and the people who pledge the runners is the biggest reason for the ongoing success of the run which is now in its ninth year in Saskatchewan.

He expects the run from Portal to Weyburn will raise over \$7,000 towards the goal of \$100,000 for the various provincial torch runs. Last year's torch run raised a total of \$77,000 province-wide.

In addition to the participation of American law enforcement, this year's run also received a financial boost from businesses in Portal.

"We had the businesses in Portal pledge money to sponsor us," Ewalt said. "A lot of their business is Canadian business and they wanted the posters to put up saying they supported the Saskatchewan torch run."



in track and field and fourth in swimming out of eight zones competing. A team from Manitoba also competed in the weekend's events.

Weyburn athletes also managed some impressive individual performances.

Dennis Whitrow's six medals was tops for local athletes.

He took gold in the long jump and 400 metres, silver in 100 metres and the

tres and the 4x100 metre relay and bronze for 50 metres, shot put and long jump.

Ivan Robb took two medals — silver for the 4x100 metre relay and bronze for the 200 metre race.

Other Weyburn medals were earned by Terry Dionne, bronze in long jump, Audrey Verbeem, silver in long jump, and Blaine Kimbal, silver in long jump.

