

Olympics mark end of school at St. Joseph's Villa

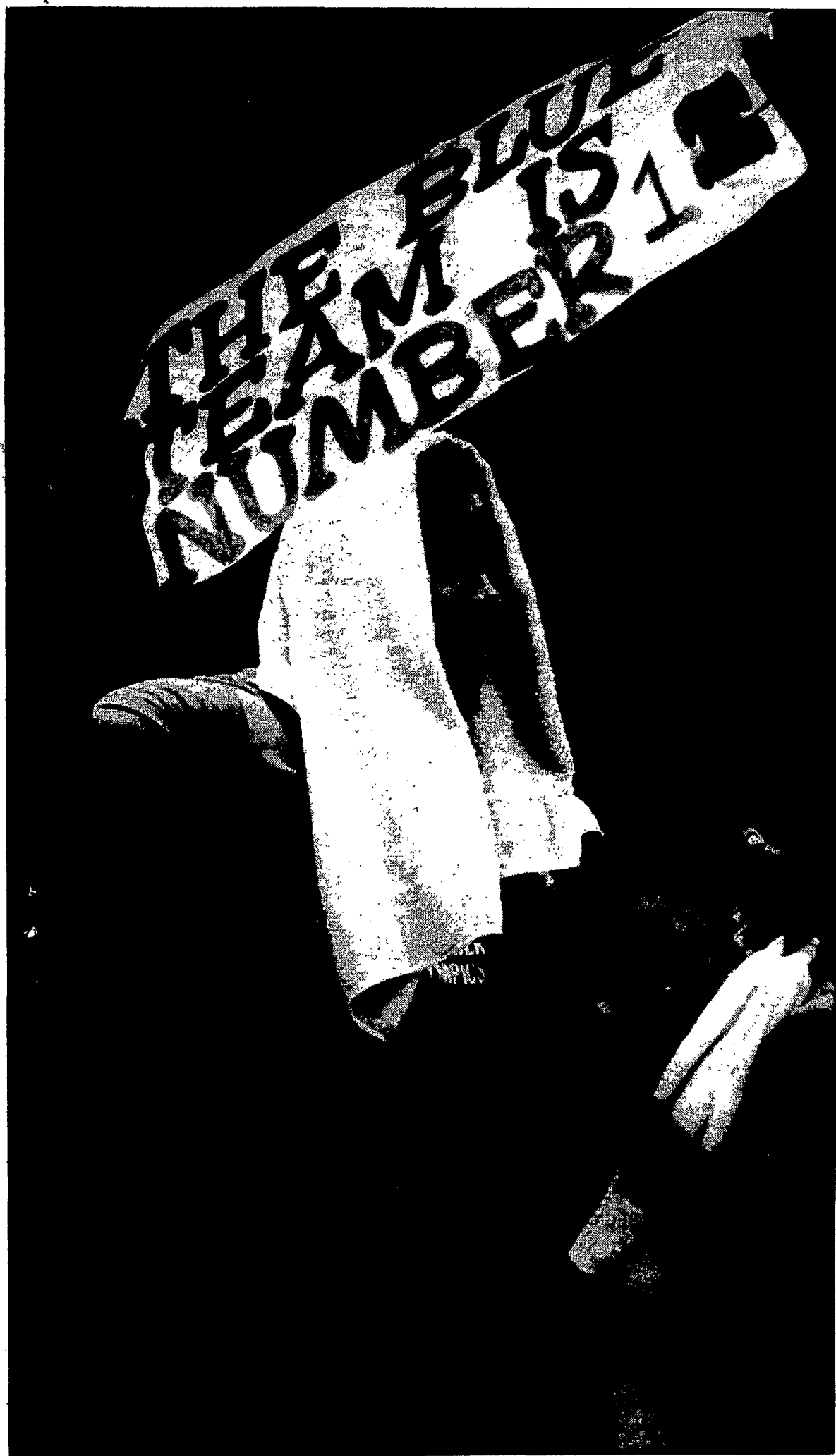
As most students begin to wind down their summer activities and back-to-school advertisements appear, staff and students at St. Joseph's Villa celebrated the end of their 11-month school year with the 17th annual Summer Olympics.

Nearly 130 participants exploded into action Tuesday through Thursday, August 6-8, striving in events from track-and-field and swimming to tug-of-war, a human centipede and a yelling contest.

Instead of creating winners and losers, the Olympic events foster a therapeutic atmosphere of cooperation, personal achievement and team spirit. Participants earn points for their teams as a group of judges score players on sportsmanship as well as skill.

Students and staff were assigned to one of three levels based on their ages and abilities. Then three teams were chosen, balanced with players from each level. Each team was designated by color — blue, red and green — and the games began.

On Thursday, trophies were presented to the team with the most points — green. Awards also recognized the student who demonstrated the most effort and motivation, the most sportsmanlike student, and the most enthusiastic staff member on each team. Steve Hanson, a substance abuse counselor, and Marie DeRosa and Nancy Drum, child-care workers, were the honored staff members.



Dwane Williams, a counselor, takes a playful jab from Tyrone in stride as he encourages his teammates in the pool.

ST. JOSEPH'S VILLA



Todd is fished from the pool by counselors using a towel. He was left high, but not dry in the middle of the inner-tube race.



The Human Centipede competition required cooperation and long arms. Here the red team stretches to pick up one last member.