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Competition, camaraderie rank high at Senior Games

Monroe County event draws 600 participants

ROCHESTER — Whether it be leisurely or seriously competitive, novice or advanced, there was something for everyone at Monroe County Senior Games '93.

Approximately 600 senior citizens took part in the ninth annual event, held Sept. 9-14 at several venues around Monroe County. Participants ranged in age from 55 to "well into their 80s," according to Nancy McLean-Smith, special events coordinator at Monroe County Office for the Aging.

Bocce, golf, softball, tennis, billiards, bowling, swimming, track and field, basketball, racquetball, horseshoes, table tennis, and dance were among the large number of activities offered.

Not only did the Senior Games draw Monroe County residents, but participants also came from as far away as Hornell, Buffalo, Syracuse and even Utica.

"These are really avid competitors who enjoy meeting people from other

areas," McLean-Smith noted. "A lot of them train all year formally, and also on an informal basis — like taking walks every day."

Two levels of competition were made available at the Senior Games: "competitive," in which the top finishers were awarded medals; and "recreational," for those who took part strictly for enjoyment.

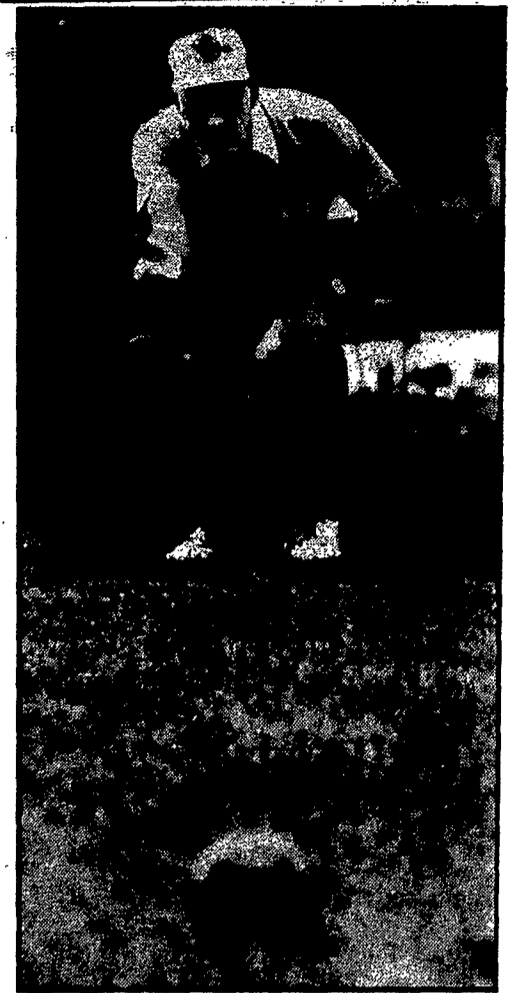
Senior Games applications were circulated by Monroe County Office for the Aging as well as various town recreation departments, senior centers and YMCAs.

The event has grown tremendously since its inception in 1985, when it was a one-day competition for 130 people. Now the participation level has more than quadrupled, and activities are spread over a six-day period.

McLean-Smith noted that events such as the Senior Games enable senior citizens to be portrayed in a more positive light.

"A lot of people tend to think of older persons as being in rocking chairs, and we're trying to really change that. That's not the seniors of today," McLean-Smith said.

— Mike Letona



S. John Wilkin/Staff photographer
 Kenneth Finch takes aim during a bocce tournament held at Brighton Park Sept. 9, as part of the ninth annual Monroe County Senior Games.



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