

# Enthusiasm the byword at Island's Special Olympics

By JULIA I. MARTIN

Non-stop enthusiasm morning and afternoon was the tie that bound the spirits of volunteers, chaperones, guests and participants totalling a thousand yesterday at the 1982 area games co-hosted by the Staten Island Special Olympics and the Staten Island Developmental Center in Willowbrook.

The more than 500 handicapped athletes who convened for the event at the developmental center ranged in age from 8 to 80, and all were celebrities sporting a blue-and-gold participation medal on a red-white-and-blue ribbon hung around their necks Olympic-style.

According to Richard Salinardi, coordinator of Special Olym-

pics, the special athletes in yesterday's events consisted of close to 400 who reside throughout Staten Island in their own private homes or in foster care accommodations; nearly 100 from the developmental center, and United Cerebral Palsy contingents totalling about 75 clients from Brooklyn, Manhattan and Queens.

And after the program of tailor-made events ended at 4 p.m., many of them also wore additional medals — gold (first place), silver (second) and bronze (third), according to their achievements.

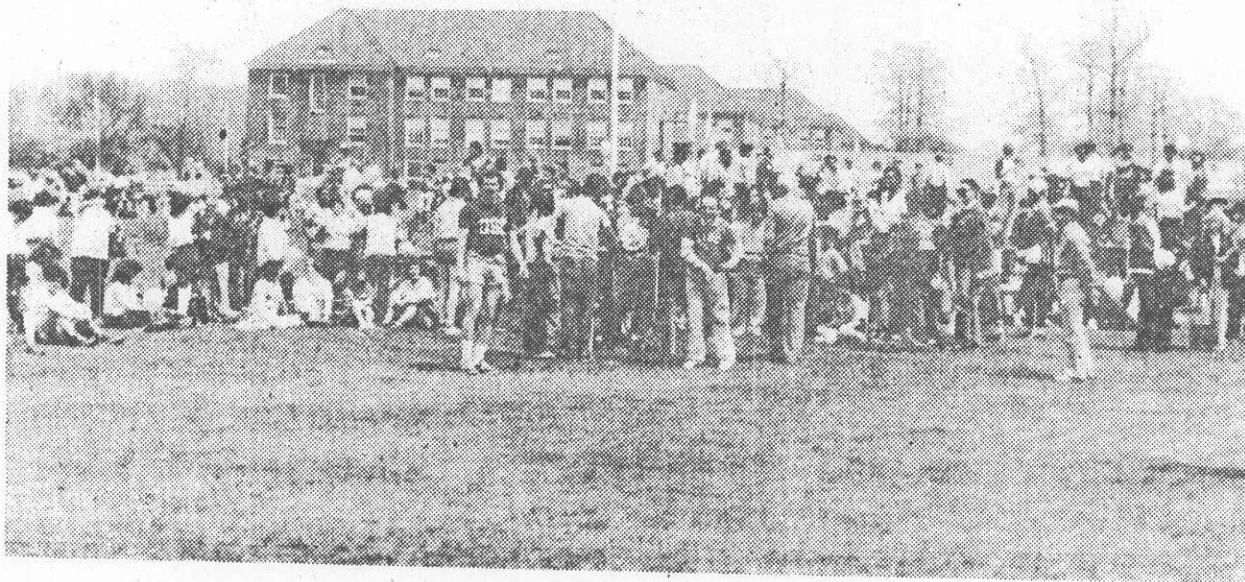
"The story of this day is the community — the way the people turn out in force for our games," said Salinardi. The Eltingville resident, along with

Elin M. Howe, former director of the developmental center, inaugurated the idea of competition without regard to skill level for special olympians three years ago.

Also serving as host, along with the Staten Island Special Olympics and the developmental center, was the Joseph P. Kennedy Jr. Foundation as co-sponsor.

The cameras of proud parents and other relatives and friends were busy clicking away during events in three categories: ambulatory, wheelchair, and severe and profound. They included softball throw, frisbee, track, field and wheelchair events on the center's grounds.

"They really worked harder than any other athletes we've



Competitors and onlookers take in the events.