

Big crowds at Six Nations 20th Pow Wow

by Mark McEachern

SIX NATIONS - They came to the Six Nations Pow Wow at Chiefswood Park this year from all over and they all came for many different reasons.

And on Saturday and Sunday, most of those who came and participated in the 20th anniversary of the Grand River Champion of Champions Pow Wow vowed that they would return next year.

"This is my 8th Pow Wow and I'll be back again next year," said Mac Cromwell of Brantford, one of 10,000 or more visitors that made their way to the Pow Wow on the weekend. "My wife Lois is a Six Nations Cayuga and she comes down to see friends and I like to come and watch the dancers."

Temperatures for the two day event were scorching, reaching a high of about 35 degrees Celsius on Saturday for the Grand Entry of more than 350 dancers taking part in the Pow Wow this year.

The dancers compete in several categories depending on their age and gender, with the youngest competitors being children of five years to the golden age participants who are 50 and older.

The dancers also compete for a share of \$35,000 worth of prize money.

"This is my third Six Nations Pow Wow that I have been to," said 44 year old Jim Caagoonse McCue of Curve Lake. "The Pow Wows give me a chance to meet old friends, make new friends and pray for mother earth and my family. The dancing allows me to do the healing that needs to be done and of course we also come here to have fun."

McCue, who admitted to having problems with drugs and alcohol in the past, says he has been attending Pow Wows for the last seven years and uses them for his own recovery from these addictions.

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The 20th annual Six Nations Champion of Champions Pow Wow was the occasion for over 350 dancers to come to Chiefswood Park on the weekend. Under hot, hazy and humid conditions, the Pow Wow was well attended during the weekend with over 10,000 people making their way to the banks of the Grand River for the two day event.