

The Bandera PROPHE'T

February 17, 2022

Gone Country
Olympic Curls

By Mikie Baker
The Bandera Prophet

I'm a fan of the Olympics because at this age, I can claim that I almost made the swim team, but I didn't want my fingers to wrinkle, and people will actually believe me. Nah, but I could have medaled at Boy Chasing, a sport that I'm very proficient at, I might add.

The sport I'd like to discuss today is Curling. You know, you can only take so much Curling. Those Olympic Gods should understand that the nation is not on pins and needles to see not only mixed doubles, but teams of two and teams of four! Oh Boy! Curlers abound! Who knew? I guess in Texas the sport equivalent would be Cowboys skidding horseshoes across the river? It almost looks like they're playing with little EcoVac robot vacuums, but no, those things never go straight. And if you had to sweep in front of them, what would be the point?

When I ran across the sport, I said, "Oh heck. I'll bite. Let's see what curling is all about. Obviously it's not the latest curling iron trend."

I learned a lot. You can wear one Teflon shoe and another kind of shoe on the other foot and that's okay with everyone. Nobody ever says, "Hey, Gustaf, your shoes don't match." It's also exciting to see people yell at each other in languages you don't know so they kind of sound like Martians playing an alien game from another planet.

I don't really care enough to Google how curling began because I've got my own ideas. I picture *Grumpy Old Men's* Walter Matthau throwing one of those "hot pots" at his nemesis who pulls out a broom and starts pushing it around on a frozen pond in northern Wisconsin where there's

nothing else to do in the dead of winter. Think I'll submit this definition to Wikipedia.

Anyway, Curling. They taught me many new terms. "Throw the curl" means get that sucker and make it go down the ice. "Freeze the rock" means "we're going to smash their yellow one with our red one, take that!" And the most fun term of all: the hog line. If you push past the hog line with your overweight hockey puck, it will light up and scream that you screwed up. So, so sporting of that puck.

Plus, when the camera is high above the "action" – where the pucks go, it looks like a giant ad for Target. Just sayin'.

But the most interesting wrinkle to the whole thing is "discussion time." This is the amount of time you stand around and discuss what your next move will be. These guys stand around for minutes discussing the different plays. Imagine Tiger Woods and his caddy doing that: "I'm thinking 2 iron." "What about the 3 wood?" "Maybe I should consider shooting it right over there with the wedge." "No, no, let's knock the middle one in with the putter." And why would anyone in the cold want to stand around talking anyway? About anything?

I have actually tried to catch a little bit of Curling every day. I guess it's because I'm trying to perfect my mopping technique and, since I don't mop, I figured I'd start with the pros. Gotta learn to use a Swiffer somehow.

And my hair's not any curlier than it was before. No, I'm just really not into Curling, but I kinda liked those biathlon Swedish hunks that skied forever except to stop to shoot bb's into some random target that I've never seen in the woods before. I think the cold gets to those guys minds...