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Editorial 15: No Editorials Until the End of the Olympics

Most Podern Racing

The luge is an improbable event for television. Technique is only visible, in theory, when watching the slow motion replays, but even then, the movements of the lugers are so small compared to their speed that technique remains all but invisible. Slow motion is still nice to watch—bodies quivering like jello as they slide around a corner, the lugers trying to remain relaxed, forcing themselves to look nowhere but straight up, for the sake of aerodynamics.

Luge is so fast and the course so convoluted with twists and turns that the TV cameras can't follow the sled for any distance. Instead, stationary cameras sit at the track's edge, lunging at lugers as they slide by. Luge is based on one of the better Olympic sport templates—get a bunch of people, send them in the same direction, and see who gets somewhere fastest—but it is televised in a collage of two second clips—few cameras can keep them in focus for longer. The result is shot after shot after nearly identical shot of lugers, their position in the race only apparent from the split times, racing elliptically by the cameras. An excellent sport for the low of attention span.

Card Sharks and Cheats

My addiction to the Olympics is so complete, that I will even watch figure skating—a sport which normally bores me entirely and which, not coincidentally, I barely understand.* I do understand that skaters are cheated by the corrupt and byzantine voting system, one which seems to require the Russians receive the gold at the end of the day. This might be a lot more upsetting if it weren't so routine.

I realize that Canada did win a gold in the demonstration sport of Bridge, but allowing Bridge in the Olympics is the first step down a punishingly slippery slope that ends with televised chess. Perhaps we could all

agree that in future, any "sports" in the Olympics, require "athletes," or, minimally, some display of "athleticism."***

And, speaking of corruption and things not welcome at the Olympics, I hope the NHL will not be back at the next Winter Olympics,*** if for no other reason—though there are many other reasons—than to keep NHL Commissioner Bettman, who is even more of a weasel than his appearance suggests, at a healthy distance. If the never ending, embarrassingly typical and tedious hand wringing over The State of Canadian Hockey was shortened as a result,**** it wouldn't be a moment too soon.

Curling? Or Ski jumping?

Matthew Dorrell,
Editor-in-Chief

Footnotes

* I'm so clueless that I keep thinking that routines without falling are better than those with. (Slightly off topic, but will someone let me know when we can stop being proud of Elvis Stojko, and start making fun?)

** A new biathlon composed of skiing and bridge, for example, would be acceptable.

*** Throw the NBA out of the Summer Games too.

**** The time spent guessing and second guessing the composition of Canada's hockey team, and their chances in Salt Lake City, has far exceeded the discussion about, say, the need to send several hundred much braver Canadians to Afghanistan. Also, wouldn't we all like to see Gretzky get some sleep? The guy looks like the living dead, except with a lot more fear in his eyes.