

On being a farm wife - And other hazards

Joyce Bupp



It was with pride, joy, frustration and sorrow (plus a few tears here and there) that we devoured every broadcast of the Winter Olympics from the picturebook setting in the snow-smothered mountains of Yugoslavia.

The pride, joy, frustration and sorrow combined as we watched our American athletes perform their best against delays and dismays, some weather-induced, and some controversial judging decisions.

Relief came in the form of the expectation that I can return to getting something accomplished in the evening other than just crashing the kitchen for snacks during commercials.

But what the television cameras completely missed were a series of agricultural athletic events, for which farmers train year round, and which have failed thus far to win Olympic Committee attention.

So at this time, we bring you a quickie rundown on what you may have missed during the broadcasts from Sarajevo '84:

Giant Slalom: an individual event, for both males and females, run twice daily, year in and year out, hardy, well-trained contestants. Equipment includes a feed scoop and bull buckets of grain. Participants must complete the course through a dozen gates formed by shoving, hungry, 700-pound heifers vying to stick their noses into the feed before the feed

trough goal is reached. points will be deducted based on amounts of feed lost from buckets when heifers pull contestant off balance by grabbing hold of the back of a vest or sweatshirt. Disqualification for getting stuck up to the knees at the sticky spot where the water fountain froze, then thawed into a steady slow leak.

Ten Kilometer Cross Country: a perennial spectator favorite, staged with herds of animals bored with having feed and water carried to their stalls and pens. Most exciting runs take place in icy conditions over rolling terrain. Would-be medalists must be accomplished in forming snowballs on the run and targeting them accurately to the tailheads of herd leaders headed for neighboring properties.

Banquet-Nite Biathlon: held on dairy farms, only on days when annual meetings or otherwise important organizational meetings are scheduled. Competitors must complete their normal milking routines while delivering a big, breached bull calf from an uncooperative and nervous first-calf heifer. Extra points awarded to participants who diplomatically handle a pair of salesmen who stop by through the middle of this contest. Entrants successfully juggling the milk tester into this event automatically take a medal.

Men's - and Women's - Downhill Races - footwear plays a critical role in this time-honored category. Judges will carefully inspect boots or shoes for smooth, worn-down sole tread, allowing participants to slide sideways down a mild-to-steep gradient from barn to barn. Track preparation of vital importance. Surface should have snowmelt runoff that was refrozen, with a light coating of foggy mist settled on the top for speed. Entrants balance bags of feed or holes of hay while maneuvering

the slick track. While time may be lost on the flats, experienced racers can make it up on the steeper slopes. True test of champions is the ability to curve and sweep into barn doorways without losing balance. Supreme physical fitness and balance demanded in this race.

So don't turn your TV set off just yet.

I think Jim McKay and the sports coverage team just pulled up outside.

4-H Stenciling Workshop

Arts & Crafts 4-H members celebrated Valentines Day a week early this year. Mrs. Ruth Gronsky of Hampton conducted a Valentine Stenciling Workshop, attended by 25 members and leaders. Mrs. Elsie Bundt of Lebanon assisted.

This event was sponsored by the Hunterdon County 4-H Arts & Crafts Council.

The members learned that

stenciling is a unique art. They each received a plastic paper stencil. Four heart-shaped balloons made up the design. The members, aged 9-15, were able to take their projects home with them after the workshop.

Clubs represented at the workshop were: Pins & Needles, Clever Clovers and Country Cooks.

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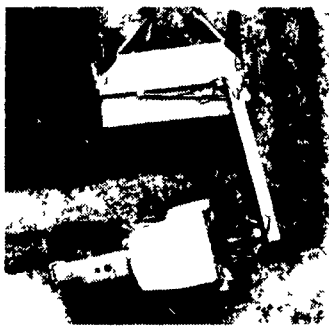
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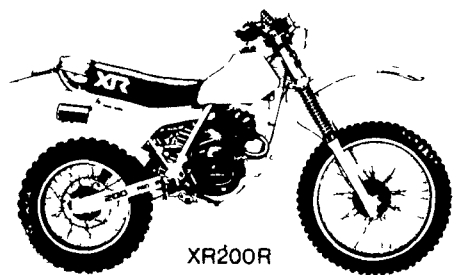
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