

Editorial

Soviet boycott rains on 1984 Olympics

A "Real People" segment Saturday featured the world championship rope-jumping competition held in a little town, somewhere in the United States, called Bloomer. In Bloomer, skippers hop faster and fancier than people anywhere else on the good planet Earth. Well, almost anywhere.

According to a Bloomerite organizer of the event, this year's competition is not quite open. "We're not gonna let any Russians precipitate in the competition this year," he said. I hope not. That would be a little messy. Especially indoors.

The furor over the Soviets' and their pals' decision not to compete in the 1984 Summer Olympics has quieted. Discussion about that decision now is taking an interesting, though not entirely unpredictable, tone.

"We're sorry all those countries won't be here," American athletes and fans alike can be heard saying, "but now we can win more medals."

That's not all bad. Everyone wants to win, and it's only natural to be happy when one's chances of doing so are increased. In this case, however, the way American and others' chances have improved may prove costly indeed.

Granted, the primary stated purpose of the Olympics is to provide amateur athletes an opportunity to compete against their counterparts from other nations. The 1984 Summer Olympics will be somewhat crippled in that sense. However, many of the best will be in Los Angeles, and the competition there should be anything but lackluster. The 1984 Games will not be world championships, but still could be successful as international athletic competition.

The Games also may be only partially successful in their secondary function as a non-political international gathering. This is where the Soviet bloc's abdication really hurts. The Olympic Games for all their national fervor, are a chance for people from different countries to mingle where money and lives are not at stake, where the test of a person's mettle is not how much capital they control or how many people they can kill, but how fast they can run, how high they can jump, how far they can throw. Beneath the national colors on their breasts, Olympic athletes are humans competing against humans.

That type of contact is important in today's world, particularly between the United States and the Soviet Union. The USSR's decision not to compete in Los Angeles, whatever its reason, can only serve to increase East-West polarization.

The Russians may not be precipitating in the world rope-jumping championships in Bloomer, but they've already rained on the Olympic parade.

Christopher Burbach



Win or lose, Mondale scores victory

Whatever the outcome of the November general election, Walter Mondale will have scored a victory. The choice of Rep. Geraldine Ferraro of New York most certainly with the consultation of democratic pols and his aides, was a choice of vision ensuring the future of the present power structure.

Liz Burden

I would venture to say that, although they would never admit it publicly, the democratic leaders sense the chances of beating President Reagan in 1984 are slim to none. Running a close race with him

could be considered a victory. So the selection of a woman vice presidential candidate does many things for the party and for Mondale. Among these:

- It puts Mondale and Ferraro in the history books, whether or not they win the election. If they do win, so much the better; then they'll have talked up two firsts.

- It gives the party a scapegoat should the ticket fail in November. Quite simply, it could set women in politics back 20 years if the democrats lose, because the likely reaction will be "we fought a good fight, but the country just wasn't ready for a woman in the White House. We'll try again later, honey."

- If the male democratic leaders have the foresight to acknowledge that they may lose in 1984, it gives a foothold in 1988 when there will not be a Ronald Reagan to contend with. Mondale could run again in

1988 without the pressure to chose such a non-traditional running mate. He will be able to literally chose the best man for the job, since he's already broken the gender barrier. Most voters will not see it as a retrenchment, since, if the democrats lose this year, they will be able to say that they tried. However, the Democrats may still have to deal with the "minority" populace in 1988.

- It slyly evades the issue of minority representation in the top two positions, and in the party, since women in this country are considered in the lump-term "minorities." It ensures that should this move succeed, the power of the country still will be in the hands of white people. This is especially important if the Democrats look at the possibility, however remote, of presidential assassination.

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The Daily Nebraskan (USPS 144-080) is published by the UNL Publications Board Monday through Friday in the fall and spring semesters and Tuesdays and Fridays in the summer sessions, except during vacations.

Readers are encouraged to submit story ideas and comments to the Daily Nebraskan by phoning 472-2588 between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. The public also has access to the Publications Board. For information, call Carla Johnson, 475-0375.

Postmaster: Send address changes to the Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 1400 R St., Lincoln, Neb. 68588-0448.

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