

OPINION PACKETS

Guest VIEW

Olympic advances

Gender equality, new sport mark games

Indiana Daily Student
Indiana University

Bloomington, Ind. (U-Wire) – Friday marked the opening of the Winter Olympic Games in Nagano, Japan. While the Winter Olympics don't get nearly as much attention as the more traditional Summer Olympic Games, this year's games will be notable for two reasons.

First, more advances toward equality between women and men continue in athletic competition. Note the inclusion of women's softball in 1996. Secondly, the games are still marred by the occasional silly "sport." For the first time in Winter Olympic history, a sport will be introduced in both a women's and men's category: snowboarding.

Although this is just an exhibition sport, the move represents a much needed advancement toward gender equality in the field of sports. For a long time, new Olympic sports (except those few that have been traditionally considered women's sports) have been introduced only for male competition, ignoring half the population in the process. Through the years women's competitions have gradually been added to complement the already existing men's teams. But unfortunately, many of these additions have come about only recently. For example, just this year, the first female Olympic ice hockey competition will take place, although women have been playing the sport for almost as long as men.

On a more negative note for some people, the Winter Olympic Games bring out another, somewhat more superficial issue: Are all these sports really worth the attention we give them? Of course, the definition of what exactly constitutes a sport is highly debatable. But events such as the luge and aerial skiing seem to be nothing but silly, daredevil stunts.

This year, curling will be introduced as an event. Curling, for those out there who don't know, is a sport involving a surface of ice, stones and brooms. This is not to say this game isn't challenging, but it doesn't seem to demonstrate the athletic prowess for which the Olympic Games were intended.

Whether people watch the Olympics intently or ignore them completely, they should be aware of the fact the field of sports is experiencing a slight, albeit tardy, advancement. Gender equality in athletic competitions is still far from a reality. Maybe once that problem is solved, we can then tackle the task of getting rid of all of those silly events.

Haney's VIEW



DN LETTERS

Live and let live

Klaus Marre, one of the DN's esteemed columnists, beat a very dead horse in his column "An eye for an eye" last Friday.

Marre wrote that he agrees with the oft-quoted biblical passage "An eye for an eye," using the quote as justification for the death penalty. I wonder, does Mr. Marre know that one passage in the Bible also allows the killing of prostitutes and adulterers? Many religious leaders, the Pope included, have long since discarded the simplistic logic of "an eye for an eye," and have chosen instead to oppose capital punishment for any number of reasons.

Like Mr. Marre, I am not religious. Rather, I oppose capital punishment because I don't want to live under a government that believes human beings are incapable of change. I do not want people convicted of multiple capital offenses released from prison; I support life sentences without parole. But I subscribe to the fundamental notion of rehabilitation; I know that men and women can change.

For example, I believe that when Robert Williams was executed in December, he was not the same man who committed violent crimes years ago. He became a peaceful, religious man; a brother, uncle and good friend to many. He was a role model for his peers in the penitentiary. He had come to terms with the choices he had made and strove every day to become a better person.

Finally, a little known fact: In this century, 71 Americans have been found innocent of their crimes after being executed. That's 71 too many innocent lives lost to political maneuvering or unjust trials. For these and

countless other reasons, I support the goal of Nebraskans Against the Death Penalty: Abolition Before the Year 2000.

Sara W. Pipher
senior
anthropology

Media mogul

Professor (David) Hibler is not racist; he is worse. He is an intelligent, unprincipled man who carefully manipulated the media into providing a soapbox for his theories.

He constructed a piece of prose that was carefully legal, but was guaranteed to push that great big flashing racist button. If you noticed, he did not respond to the racism comments, but offered up his going-to-war-with-Iraq theories.

His prose was not sent out to just his classes in what could be construed an educational setting. It was sent out unsolicited to a large enough audience that guaranteed the response he wanted.

He should not be ridiculed or mocked; he should be feared. He got the media to do everything he wanted them to do.

Tim Myers
Information Services

A call to action

In light of the events that have taken place over the course of last week the time has come to focus the attention of the public on the customers of the university – the students. Whereas the media may have portrayed this incident only as one of

racial intent, we feel that this is also an issue of the lack of sensitivity shown on the part of Dr. David Hibler as a faculty member and a potential spokesperson for the university.

As a university, our diversity can be amongst our greatest strengths. However, in order to foster the strengths of that diversity, all members of our university community must be sensitive to the diverse ideals that exist within the community. In order to foster such sensitivity, it is not necessary to suppress messages of any individual. However, it is the responsibility for individuals to express messages in a respectful and responsible fashion.

We are offering the opportunity for members of our university community to express their diverse opinions in a respectful and responsible way this afternoon in the Nebraska Union. The Association of Students of the University of Nebraska will be sponsoring a discussion concerning the campus climate in relation to diversity and sensitivity among both students and faculty.

The ultimate goal is for the students and student organizations to come together with hopes of increasing lines of communication in order to accomplish a positive result from what is currently a negative situation. As students of this university, we can all assist in making our university a better place. Today you can help make UNL a better place by coming to the union and letting your voice be heard, and more importantly, by listening to the voices of those within our community.

Curt Ruwe
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P.S. Write Back



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