

Bill Rea ? Pretty good show so far

I think there was a certain irony that winter had to hammer this area so heavily over the weekend.

It all coincided with the start of the Olympic Games in PyeongChang.

It was a nice weekend to stay at home and do nothing, apart from maybe watching the coverage of TV. That's pretty much what my wife did, although as she was battling a bad cold, so she really didn't have the energy for much else.

I, being the lucky fellow I am, had to work. But in keeping with the trend, or ?irony,? as I described it earlier, the work requirements obligated me to spend a fair amount of time outdoors, at places like Caledon Ski Club and Albion Hills Conservation Area.

It really wasn't that much of a burden, since those are the types of events I rather enjoy attending. I really didn't enjoy the driving conditions, but I have been doing this long enough to know how to get by. When driving in inclement weather, just take it slow and hope those other folks you're sharing the road with have the good sense to do the same. Fortunately, I encountered very few idiots, and having winter tires does help a bit.

Despite the demands of the job, Beth and I did get to spend part of the weekend watching the coverage. I know better than to bother Beth when she's watching figure skating (I learned that very early in our marriage).

Naturally, we did not watch the opening ceremonies live. They took place during traditional sleeping time, and I had to go to work the next morning. But we PVRed them, and watched the spectacle over the days that followed.

I was not too taken with the CBC coverage. It seemed a little too geared to distracting the audience from the splendour on the screen with meaningless talk about other matters. But that's one man's opinion.

Beyond that, the show was the wonderful performance that one would expect from such an occasion.

I have never attended such an event, and I doubt I will ever get the chance. The closest I ever came was last summer, attending the opening ceremonies of the Provincial Summer Games, which were held in Peel. The event was nowhere near the scale of what took place in Korea, but it was impressive, and allowed my imagination to ponder what it must be like to see the real thing.

One has to wonder at the enormous amount of work that had to go into organizing such a spectacle. Many people worked countless hours to put it all together. The result was a lot of colour and choreography. I doubt those who were there will ever forget it.

There was also a lot of mention of the attempts to bring the North and South Korea together. While it's something that's nice to think about, I have to wonder how realistic it all is. Indeed, considering some of the volatility in the world, with Donald Trump seeming to be constantly mad at North Korea, I have to wonder at the wisdom of holding the Games in such a place.

The Summer Olympics were held in Seoul in 1988, and things seemed to go pretty well, assuming Canadians can set aside memories of Ben Johnson. But even then, there were concerns expressed that was not the place for the games. The late Howard Cosell was one of those who was always convinced it was a mistake.

?It was a terrible risk of lives,? he wrote.

Time will tell if there is any trouble.

And then there are the actual competitions.

Like just about everyone else, I have the sports I enjoy watching.

Like I stated above, Beth enjoys watching the figure skating. Prior to being married, I wouldn't have bothered with it, but watching it with her over the years has given me a certain appreciation of the athletic skill it requires to be successful. My problem with it is it's hard to see tangible results in sports where the winners are decided by judges. In events where the results are decided by a tape measure or clock, it's easy to determine who's the best and who's not. No matter how professional and honest the judges might be, they are still human, thus subject to emotion, bias, error, etc.

Some of the sports puzzle me a bit.

Beth and I watched a couple of relay speed-skating races, and I had a terrible time figuring out what was going on. At least the commentators on NBC, which we were watching at the time, warned us it would be confusing.

I'm always in something of awe when I watch freestyle skiing, observing the terrain they have to traverse, and then do backflips. What is it that would spark an interest in someone to try such activity? Watching them go down those courses always makes my knees hurt.

Since I was a kid, I enjoyed watching ski jumping. I was never much of a skier ? I tried it a couple times when I was in high school, but never gained much proficiency. And would never have had the necessary guts to try jumping. But it is fun to watch.

The luge and bobsled events have always entertained me too. I guess it's the speeds that impress me. But like all kids, I had a lot of fun sliding down hills when I was a kid, and was lucky to have a good hill for tobogganing at the school I attended.

Of course people around here are going to be interested in hockey. I guess there are still some lamenting that NHL players aren't

taking part, but Canada is not the only country suffering. Besides, there will be a lot of local interest in how the women's team will be doing, and none of those members play in the NHL.

There are still several days of competition to come, and lots of winter weather around here. There will be lots of encouragement to stay home and watch the Games.

