

News Column

by Greg McClure, KSU-Riley County Extension Agriculture Agent
110 Courthouse Plaza
Manhattan, KS 66502

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Phone: 785/537-6350
Fax: 785/537-6353

OLYMPIC RACING

My wife aspires to be an Olympic downhill ski racer. She hasn't actually told me this, but I know she likes the slalom races because she has been practicing every day.

Pam isn't really a skier, and her course isn't even downhill, but she practices nonetheless. Every morning when she leaves for work she backs carefully out of the garage, then accelerates at an ever increasing rate of speed down our curved driveway, cutting the corners just as closely as she can.

Believe it or not, we do have something of a slalom course set up for her. Every winter, during the snowy season, we drive fiberglass fence posts along both edges of our driveway to mark the driving surface. We do this because our driveway is about 450 feet long, with three curves before the final turn leading to the garage. It can be very difficult to see where to drive if snow is more than a couple of inches deep.

Ryan drove the posts this year when I didn't have them in the ground before the first snow. I won't complain about the job he did because he made navigating our driveway kind of fun. However, he did place the posts a bit closer together than I have in the past.

Pam still isn't admitting guilt, but we all know she is the speed racer that has clipped one post so many times that it now lies flat on the ground. If you've watched the slalom racers, you understand why she does it. The closer you get to the posts – clipping every one of them if you can – the faster you'll get through the course.

So, what does ski racing have to do with today's topic? Nothing really. I've just been watching the Olympics every night, so it was on my mind. My apologies to anyone who thought I could actually transition from slalom racing to cover crops and make you believe the two were somehow related.

Soil Health Workshop - March 8

The Conservation District is advertising this meeting as a Soil Health Workshop, but if you look at the program, it is all about cover crops. The workshop will be held on Thursday, March 8 at Pottorf Hall in Manhattan. The program will run from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., and lunch will be provided free of charge.

Participants are asked to register by Monday, March 5 by contacting Aubrey Evans at 785/537-8764, or by e-mail to Aubrey.evans@ks.nacdnet.net. The Riley County Conservation District and the Natural Resource Conservation Service are the meeting hosts.

Topics and speakers include:

- Using Cover Crops for Weed Control – Anita Dille
- Cover Crops and the Nitrogen Cycle – Peter Tomlinson
- Sorghum Response to Cover Crops in No-Till Systems – Kraig Roozeboom
- Protecting Surface Water with Healthy Soils, Cover Crops, and Fertilizer Management – Nathan Nelson
- Building Better Soils with Cover Crops – DeAnn Presley
- Cover Crops in a Soybean Production System – Doug Shoup
- Covers for Use by Cattle – Jaymelynn Farney

All of these speakers have ties to K-State Research & Extension, being either Extension specialists, or research and teaching faculty at K-State. I've heard most of the presentations, but

we were outside on a really cold November day the first time I heard them. I know the presentations were good, but they will be much better this time around, when I can concentrate more on learning and less on how many fingers and toes I'm going to lose to frostbite.

If you have questions, you can reach me at the Riley County Extension Office at 785/537-6350. Or, you can send e-mail to gmcclore@ksu.edu.

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