

Triangle Olympic Sports News

The XXIII Winter Olympic Games in PyeongChang may be over, but there is much Olympic and Olympic sport-related news to report.

Opening Ceremonies Watch Party



The Triangle Sports Commission (TSC) hosted its first-ever Olympic Opening Ceremonies Watch Party on Friday, February 9 in conjunction with the Opening Ceremonies of the 2018 PyeongChang Winter Olympic Games. A capacity crowd joined the Olympic fun at Cardina Ale House in Glenwood South. Among the attendees was 1968 Swimming Olympian Ken Merten who autographed photos from his competitive swimming days. In addition to the captivating Opening Ceremonies displayed on the nine big-screen TV's in the Cardina Ale House Watch Headquarters, Olympic fans were entertained with "pop quizzes" testing their Olympic knowledge and various Olympic prize giveaways.

"We borrowed the idea for the Watch Party from the Bay Area Sports Organizing Committee (BAYSOC) in San Francisco," said Hill Carrow, TSC CEO. BAYSOC has been a leader in organizing well-attended Olympic Opening Ceremonies Watch Parties for years. BAYSOC and the TSC have both been long-standing Community Olympic Partners, so they encouraged us, and we felt perfectly comfortable adapting their idea to the Triangle." Attendees had a great time and Cardina Ale House staff reported the large crowd that attended the Watch Party was as big or bigger than any pro or college sports party they've hosted.

NC Highlights from PyeongChang

The Winter Olympic Games may feature mostly non-traditional sports for the Tar Heel State, but North Carolina had good representation and an impact at the Games. Among the highlights:

- In her third Winter Olympics, **Heather Richardson Bergsma** of High Point captured the bronze medal for Team USA in Long Track Speedskating Women's Team Pursuit.
- In an Olympic first, South and North Korea combined to form a joint Women's Ice Hockey Team and the team's one and only goal was scored by **Randi Griffin** of Apex!
- **Bobbi Sanguinetti** of Wilmington played for the U.S. Men's Hockey Team which made it to the quarter finals before being knocked out by the Czech Republic.
- **Kimani Griffin** of Winston-Salem, who, like Heather Bergsma grew up as an inline skater before turning to ice sports, competed in Long Track Speedskating for the U.S. Team.
- **Anthony Barthell** of High Point served as one of the coaches of the U.S. Long Track Speedskating team.
- **Jim Garde** of Concord served as a key member of the U.S. Men's and Women's Bobsled Teams' "pit crew," helping maintain and repair their sleds on site at the Olympic Sliding Center.
- **Joey Cheek**, who grew up in Greensboro and who won gold at the 2002 Salt Lake Olympic Games in Long Track Speedskating, served as NBC broadcast commentator for Long Track competition in PyeongChang.
- An Olympic Silver medalist in the 1992 Albertville, France, Winter Games, in Figure Skating,

- Charlotte resident, **Paul Wylie**, was interviewed on the NBC Ice Time segment while he was at the Games providing figure skating radio commentary for Westwood One.
- Fellow Charlotte resident, **Dan Jansen**, Olympic Gold Medalist in Long Track Speedskating at the 1994 Lillehammer Games, was also in South Korea providing expert sport commentary.
 - Durham Bulls Play-by-Play announcer, **Patrick Kinas**, covered Opening and Closing Ceremonies and figure skating for Westwood One.
 - Reporters **Kathryn Brown** and **David Crabtree** of NBC affiliate WRAL-TV in Raleigh were on the ground in PyeongChang providing human interest, sports, and news stories throughout the Games.

If there were other North Carolinians involved in the PyeongChang Games that we may have missed, please let us know at info@trianglesportscommission.com and we will acknowledge them in future communications.



From left: Heather Richardson Bergsma, Brittany Bow, Mia Manganello, and Carlijn Schoutens after winning bronze in the team pursuit

Triangle Curling Club and Center Shine



In the largest event to date hosted by the Triangle Curling Club at their Curling Center on So-Hi Drive in RTP, 32 women's curling teams from across the country converged on the TCC for a National Bonspiel, February 16-18, 2018. The Triangle Sports Commission assisted the Curling Club with initial planning and accommodations arrangements for the tournament. Club volunteers did yeoman's work in tending to every detail, especially food and beverages in their new on-site kitchen and hospitality area. Athletes gave the event rave reviews, so expect more major bonspiels to come at the Curling Center.

Thanks to the national bonspiel and the unprecedented amount of Olympic broadcast coverage of Curling at the PyeongChang Games, interest in Curling in the Triangle is at an all time high as every learn-to-curl and similar group sessions at the TCC are sold out for the foreseeable future. The club has reported they have over 600 registered for upcoming programs!



Top photo from left to right: TCC leaders Clifford Gray, Lea Franklin, and Keith Scott; Bottom left photo: Women's National Bonspiel athletes; Bottom Right photo: Bonspiel spectators

USA Now Ranked Number One in Baseball



In the latest rankings of the World Baseball Softball Confederation (WBSC), USA Baseball has regained the world's number one ranking. Japan had held the top ranking for the past three years. Rankings are based on how a country's national teams – from U-12 to professional – perform in sanctioned international competitions. Congratulations to Paul Seiler, CEO; David Perkins, COO;

Eric Campbell, National Teams GM; and the entire locally-headquartered USA Baseball staff and board on this outstanding accomplishment. We are looking forward to great things from our US Team at the Tokyo 2020 Summer Olympic Games.

UNC Wins Indoor Tennis National Championships

UNC Women's Tennis Team has developed into quite a dynasty under Coach Brian Kalbas, particularly when it comes to the indoor tennis season during the winter months. Cardina has played in the finals of the Intercollegiate Tennis Association National Championship finals in four of the past five seasons. This year UNC, seeded third in the tournament, won its third national championship (previous titles were in 2013 and 2015) with a 4-2 victory over Pepperdine in the final match. Congratulations Tar Heels!

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