

= Boy Meets Curl =

" Boy Meets Curl " is the twelfth episode of The Simpsons ' twenty @-@ first season . It aired on the Fox network in the United States on February 14 , 2010 . In this episode , Homer and Marge Simpson form a mixed curling team with Agnes and Seymour Skinner , which is chosen to play in the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver . Meanwhile , Lisa begins collecting pins shaped like Olympic mascots , but her obsession soon turns to desperation .

With the Winter Olympics being held in Canada , the writers wanted an Olympic @-@ themed episode that could air during the Games . The script was written by Rob LaZebnik , who considered having the plot revolve around Homer competing in four @-@ man bobsled . However , he decided a curling episode would allow for the plot to revolve around Homer and Marge . In order to try to make the depiction of curling in the episode accurate , the writers visited a curling club and tried the sport themselves . They also consulted with a number of curlers . The episode was directed by Chuck Sheetz , while sportscaster Bob Costas guest @-@ starred in the episode .

Airing during the Olympics , the episode was watched by 5 @.@ 87 million viewers and had a Nielsen rating of 2 @.@ 6 . The episode received positive reviews from critics , and CTV Olympics reported that Olympic curlers largely enjoyed the episode .

= = Plot = =

Marge and Homer 's plans for a romantic date night fall through when Homer is forced to stay longer than expected at the Springfield Nuclear Power Plant to fix a leak in one of the plant 's nuclear processing pipes . Looking for a romantic activity after walking out of a movie starring Ben Affleck , they find an ice rink and decide to do some skating . However , they are unable to rent skates because it is curling night . They decide to try it and discover their innate talent for the sport ? particularly Marge , who has years of experience sweeping floors . Agnes and Seymour Skinner notice and invite Marge and Homer to join their mixed @-@ doubles team . It is announced that mixed @-@ doubles has been added to the Winter Olympics as a demonstration sport , and the Skinner @-@ Simpson team qualifies for the United States curling trials . Agnes cautions Marge not to let emotions get in the way of winning , relating how a fetal kick by an unborn Seymour foiled her chances at winning gold in pole vault at the 1952 Summer Olympics in Helsinki . At the trials , Marge 's talented sweeping earns the team a win and a trip to the Winter Olympics in Vancouver .

Meanwhile , at the trials , Lisa is given an Olympic mascot pin . Lisa puts it on her shirt and decides it " looks lonely " and buys another , but her interest in them quickly spirals out of control . The Simpsons arrive in Vancouver , where Agnes insists that Homer be cut from the team . Marge insists she can compensate for his weak throws , but she injures her right shoulder while sweeping to secure a win in the semifinals . She is told that she will never curl again and that the American team must forfeit the gold @-@ medal match to Sweden . Lisa 's pin collection grows , and when she runs out of money , she trades her pearl necklace to a vendor in exchange for a pin from the 1924 Winter Olympics in Chamonix , France . Bart discovers Lisa busking on a street corner , having relinquished her dress in favour of wearing her pins at all times , and offers to help her kick her pin @-@ collecting addiction . Cutting the lower portion of Homer 's face from his driver 's license and making it into a pin , Bart creates " Fatov " , a phony mascot for the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi , Russia . He trades the pin to the vendor in exchange for Lisa 's necklace .

As Marge prepares to leave Vancouver , she reveals to Homer that she is left @-@ handed , but has always used her right hand to avoid seeming unusual (due to years of using her right hand , it renders her cross @-@ dominant) . She has enough dexterity to change Maggie 's diaper and dress her one @-@ handed . They return to the rink just in time to stop Seymour from forfeiting the match and go on to defeat Sweden for the gold . Agnes softens her attitude of unyielding contempt toward her son after he breaks his broom and has to drop out , and Marge and Homer agree that they had a great date night .

= = Production = =

With the 2010 Winter Olympics occurring in Vancouver , the writers wanted an Olympics @-@ themed episode that could air during the Games . The script was written by Rob LaZebnik ? his fourth writing credit ? , who originally considered having the plot revolve around Homer competing in four @-@ man bobsled . However , he decided a curling episode would allow for the plot to revolve around Homer and Marge and explore the issues of spouses competing together . The writers used some artistic license , because although curling is an Olympic sport , mixed @-@ doubles , which is featured in the episode , is not an Olympic event . However , in the episode , it is explained that the event is being held as a demonstration sport . Curling had previously been shown in the season 13 episode " The Bart Wants What It Wants " , when the family visits Toronto . In order to try to make the depiction of curling in the episode accurate , the writers visited a curling club and tried the sport themselves . They also consulted with four @-@ time American mixed curling champions Brady and Cristin Clark , as well as Rick Patzke , the chief operating officer of the United States Curling Association , who felt that the writers took a " genuine interest " in the sport .

On the issue of whether competitive curlers would be offended by the episode , LaZebnik said " When you hear The Simpsons is going to do their take on your sport , you naturally get a little alarmed , But we ended up being respectful I would say , even , surprisingly respectful . Both Homer and Marge take it seriously . " Some curlers , including the Clarks and Patzke , felt that the exposure the sport received was beneficial . Cristin Clark said " Although Homer Simpson probably isn 't the ideal athlete I would want to see representing our sport , I just think it 's great exposure . " Canadian curler Randy Ferbey , a four @-@ time world champion , said " I 'm sure they 're going to somehow make a mockery of it like they do every other thing , but I think you need to take it with a grain of salt . It brings attention to our sport and I think it 's wonderful . The more curling on TV , whether it 's in an animated form or real form , the better . "

Sportscaster Bob Costas guest @-@ starred in the episode as a caricature of himself .

= = Cultural references = =

Homer 's speech before he and Marge begin curling is a parody of the St Crispin 's Day speech from Kenneth Branagh 's version of Henry V. Across the street from the Olympic curling trials are the " National Curly trials " , in reference to Curly Howard from The Three Stooges . The Medicine Woman who appeared in The Simpsons Movie appears in the streets of Vancouver , and Homer refers to her as his former therapist . The opening ceremonies in the episode are directed by Ivan Reitman , described by announcer Bob Costas as Canada 's " most famous director " . During the parade of athletes , nations are called to the tune of the theme song from Ghostbusters , which was directed by Reitman .

= = Reception = =

In its original American broadcast , " Boy Meets Curl " was viewed by 5 @.@ 87 million viewers and got a Nielsen rating of 2 @.@ 6 , with a 7 % share of the audience . The episode came in third in its timeslot , but was the second @-@ most viewed show on the Animation Domination lineup after Family Guy .

The episode received positive reviews . Robert Canning of IGN gave the episode an 8 @.@ 4 / 10 saying it was " Impressive " and " With or without the timeliness of the story and setting , ' Boy Meets Curl ' was a fast and funny episode certain to be a highlight of the season " . Todd VanDerWerff of The A.V. Club gave the episode an A , the best grade of the night , saying " Simpsons was one of their best episodes in a long time , and it continues a season that 's had some pretty good episodes overall . I wouldn 't put this on The Simpsons ' top tier , but I think it 's definitely on that next tier down , episodes that maybe don 't have the most original plots but do have solid jokes throughout . Even the Bart and Lisa B @-@ plot , involving Lisa getting a sudden addiction to Olympic pin collecting , starts out kind of bland and gets better and better as Lisa 's jones grows . " Jason Hughes of the TV Squad gave the episode a positive review as well saying " All in all , it was a weird

time out of Springfield this week , with some highlight moments sprinkled throughout " . Steve Tilley of the Toronto Sun wrote " Sure , the episode was probably funnier for Canadians and curlers (and maybe Harry Potter fans) than anyone else , but it did prove Homer has got a bit of meteorological , psychic in him : ' Pack your winter coat , we 're going to Canada 's warmest city ! ' " .

Bob Costas received praise for his appearance , particularly for his line " This is the sort of bittersweet melodrama Olympic coverage feeds on . I admit , we 're vampires who suck on shattered dreams . " Jason Hughes of TV Squad called the line " about as accurate a description [of Olympic broadcasters] as I 've ever seen . " .

CTV Olympics reported that Olympic curlers largely enjoyed the episode . American men 's team coach Phill Drobnick said " The team watched it together and we gave it two thumbs up , they did a great job and it was reaching out to a new audience for our sport , so that 's always great for us too . " American team alternate Chris Plys said " They didn 't make a mockery of the sport , which is nice . Curling catches a lot of abuse . " .