

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

This copy is for your personal, non-commercial use only. To order presentation-ready copies for distribution to your colleagues, clients or customers visit <http://www.djreprints.com>.

<http://blogs.wsj.com/speakeasy/2014/02/07/winter-olympics-2014-opening-ceremonies-in-sochi-live-blog/>

SPEAKEASY

Winter Olympics 2014 Opening Ceremonies in Sochi: Live Blog

By **WSJ STAFF**

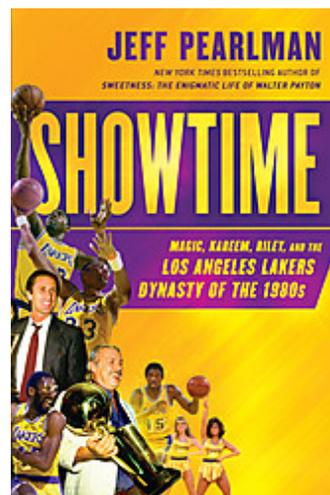
Feb 7, 2014 7:15 pm ET



The 2014 Winter Olympics opening ceremony, Friday, Feb. 7, 2014, in downtown Sochi, Russia. AP

The 2014 Winter Olympics are kicking off in Sochi, Russia tonight and **Speakeasy** is live blogging the broadcast of the opening ceremonies.

Here's our blogging team for tonight:



Jeff

Pearlman: The author of several bestselling books about sports as well as the new book “Showtime: Magic, Kareem, Riley, and the Los Angeles Lakers Dynasty of the 1980s.”

Christopher John Farley, editor of Speakeasy and author of the new kids

fantasy adventure book “Game World.” Born in Kingston, Jamaica, you can probably guess which bobsled team he’s following closely.

Dawn Fallik, Speakeasy’s “Nashville” and “Good Wife” recapper, writes about arts and entertainment.

Of course the ceremonies are on tape delay, but they feel live don’t they? Join the conversation and leave your thoughts in the comments.

OLDEST	NEWEST
--------	--------

7:21 pm

Winter Olympics 2014 Opening Ceremonies, Sochi, Russia

Welcome to our blog of the Winter Olympics 2014 Opening Ceremonies in Sochi!

Join in the conversation and leave your thoughts in the comments.

by Christopher John Farley

7:32 pm

It’s the Chaos Olympics! Where the TV talent shows up with very contagious eye infections, Olympic stars back out because the course is so dangerous and even the doggies are in danger. Welcome to the 2014 Olympics in Sochi!

Bob Costas announced on NBC that he woke up with his left eye swollen shut and as red as the Soviet flag. Poor Bob! I hope he gets a sexy pirate patch.

But don’t worry, we can see you through the Opening Ceremonies. So far they say Russia mystifies and transcends!

by Dawn Fallik

7:33 pm

Whose uniforms will win the night? Team USA? Team Norway?

by Barbara Chai

7:36 pm

What I'd love to see—but what won't happen—is American athletes wearing rainbow gloves in support of gay rights (and the lack thereof in Russia). Could be Carlos-Smith '14. Sadly, no one seems willing to speak up and take a courageous stand.

by Jeff Pearlman

7:37 pm

Welcome to Sochi, folks! Let's see if we can get through this broadcast without any technical glitches or strange camera cutaways.

by Barbara Chai

7:38 pm

I heard a rumor that Peter Dinklage from Game of Thrones will be making an appearance. Winter is coming!

Let the hyperbole begin! Every journey is tinged with drama! They are modern day Vikings! She skates like her name is her destiny! The Russians must recapture supremacy!

When they talked about the sea filled with ancient myths, is it wrong that I thought about the Russian cannibal rat ship? No?

by Dawn Fallik

7:39 pm

I just hope nothing goes wrong. Like, nothing big. With lights. Or, eh, rings. That would be awful. But no way ... can't happen. No way.

by Jeff Pearlman

7:39 pm

I know this is sorta mean to ask—but what DID happen to Bob Costas' eye? Doesn't look so great.

by Jeff Pearlman

7:41 pm

If only the Good Morning America crew were covering this, ratings would be through the roof ...

by Jeff Pearlman

7:42 pm

Poor Bob Costas. Must have been the Sochi hotel room water.

by Barbara Chai

7:43 pm

I'll take a wild stab and say Bob Costas' interview with Barack Obama will be a tad, eh, different than Bill O'Reilly's Super Bowl interrupt-a-thon

by Jeff Pearlman

7:45 pm

That Omega commercial had the deepest voiceover I've ever heard. My TV almost trembled.

by Barbara Chai

7:46 pm

(Not that he really needs to explain, but) President Obama: "There are a lot of things going on, even when it was as close as Vancouver, I didn't attend."

by Barbara Chai

7:47 pm

Costas said he had pink eye. No fun for anyone!

Remember the London opening and closings! Here was my blog – was it only two years ago? When NBC knocked off the Who?

Lauer asks – what will Russia try to say? Well London said – we have really cool music and here are the Spice Girls. Oh and they had the history of London, including the smell of rotten eggs wafting across the stadium.

What will Russia smell like?

by Dawn Fallik

7:48 pm

"You are judged by your merit. By how good you are, regardless of where you come from, what you look like, who you love. That I think is consistent with the spirit of the Olympics." – Pres. Obama

by Barbara Chai

7:48 pm

My daughter Casey, 10, just walked in, saw Barack Obama on the screen and said, “Hey, this is boring.” She’s right.

by Jeff Pearlman

7:50 pm

I’m not trying to be mean—but, just like the Super Bowl, NOBODY wants to see this. I voted for Obama. I like Obama. But I turned the TV to watch the opening ceremonies, not to hear political jibber jabber.

by Jeff Pearlman

7:52 pm

Um, are the ceremonies going on while we’re listening to Pink Eye Bob asking President Obama about ... Russian orphans?

fyi, #CheersToSochi is apparently the hashtag to tweet for LGBT rights and highlight Russia’s human rights abuses.

by Dawn Fallik

7:52 pm

I was told this was going to be about athletes walking around a track, wearing neat uniforms...

by Barbara Chai

7:55 pm

OMG. Obama, no stranger to Late Night skits or talk show appearances, just said Putin looks bored doing interviews and that’s Putin’s “shtick.”

Go Obama with the Yiddish.

Pink Eye Bob does not ask about Snowden.

by Dawn Fallik

7:55 pm

OMG. Barack Obama, no stranger to Late Night skits or talk show appearances, just said Putin looks bored doing interviews and that's Putin's "schtick."

Go Obama with the Yiddish.

Pink Eye Bob does not ask about Snowden.

by Dawn Fallik

7:55 pm

7:56 pm

Yes, you'll probably vomit and bring forth massive buckets of bodily fluid on one of our virus-absorbed cruises. But we here at Royal Caribbean bring you Gabby Douglass. Ain't she cute?

by Jeff Pearlman

7:58 pm

Isn't now when they show the Olympic commercials that make me cry?

This one. Every time. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OgTdyCiMiFo>

by Dawn Fallik

7:59 pm

Dumbest question so far – Did you feel a special sense of pride for your hometown?

Also is Maria Sharapova a giant? Or is Bob just specially small in those seats?

by Dawn Fallik

8:00 pm

She said “Georgian Egg McMuffin”!

by Barbara Chai

8:01 pm

Is tennis an Olympic sport? Why are we interviewing Maria? She lived in Sochi for five years from age 2-7?

Where are the bears and the shirtless Putin?

by Dawn Fallik

8:03 pm

To me, the gay issue hangs over this entire thing. Were blacks not allowed in the city, the Olympics would not be here. Period.

by Jeff Pearlman

8:04 pm

My wife @thefamilycoach just said, “I don’t understand. Why aren’t they showing the opening ceremonies?” Agree 100%. This is so dull.

by Jeff Pearlman

8:05 pm

Do you think he likes being called “The New Apollo Ohno”? Isn’t that a little reductive?

by Barbara Chai

8:06 pm

What happens if Gracie Gold wins bronze?

by Jeff Pearlman

8:06 pm

stupid question #2 – Mary Carillo to Shani Davis at his third Olympics. “Are you as good as you’ve ever been?”

What is he going to say? No, I’m kind of slower now, but I got this fugly sweater so why not?

He’s going for three golds, jeesh!

by Dawn Fallik

8:09 pm

If these Olympians work hard and go for the gold, one day they might—dare to dream!—star as unidentified ex-athletes alongside Pele and a guy in suspenders in a Subway commercial.

by Jeff Pearlman

8:10 pm

Oh look, it’s the “Old” Apolo Ohno! This suddenly got much more interesting.

by Barbara Chai

8:12 pm

By the way, the Olympic theme here is “Hot. Cool. Yours.” Were they talking about the Russian Egg McMuffin?

I would like to hear any of the 230 athletes on the 2014 team use that phrase in an actual sentence – without vodka being involved.

by Dawn Fallik

8:13 pm

Whenever they say that the ceremony is being held in the “cauldron” I just think of Neville and Hogwarts.

by Dawn Fallik

8:13 pm

Am I alone in finding this painfully dull? P-a-i-n-f-u-l-l-y.

by Jeff Pearlman

8:16 pm

2014 goal: Learn how to pronounce “Dostoyevsky” in Russian.

by Barbara Chai

8:16 pm

I just really hope the rings light up.

by Jeff Pearlman

8:18 pm

Pozhaluysta. Spasiba. “Barbara” in Russian is “Varvara” (Now you know!)

by Barbara Chai

8:20 pm

Is everyone following #SochiProblems? Hilarious.

Oh, it’s time for a video. Apparently, we should understand what makes Russia, Russia when the evening is done.

They are going through letters i.e. C- Catherine the Great and H equals Hedgehog in the Fog.

Matt Lauer just informed us that he has no idea what some of these are either, no worries.

Also Baryshnikov, the sexiest dancer of all time, not that I’m biased. Oh whoops. D = defected.

by Dawn Fallik

8:21 pm

Spider-Man: Turn Off The Dark should have signed up this kid before it closed.

by Jeff Pearlman

8:22 pm

Do they know we don’t speak Russian?

Uh, we start with the “feminine soul” of Russia, who is a little girl in a white dress. She is displaying Russia as a series of dreams because, Meredith Viera tells us, Russia is a group of dreamers.

Yes, they dreamt they could build hotels and stadiums in seven years for 50 billion dollars. Some dreams, they die.

by Dawn Fallik

8:24 pm

Is this pretty girl actually lip-synching? Is this another Beijing situation?

by Barbara Chai

8:25 pm

Uh, the fifth ring is a special snowflake! (Someone's going to get thrown in jail)

by Barbara Chai

8:27 pm

they bring things on wires. There are trees. And uh, shetls? Great-great grandma Yetta? Is that you with the borsht?

The poor girl is floating in the air like a billion feet up. She is flapping her feet nervously. Can we let the feminine soul of Russia down? I think she's dreaming of being on the Earth.

by Dawn Fallik

8:28 pm

Pretty cool to see Russia offering up suggestions for the Pope's new duds.

by Jeff Pearlman

8:29 pm

The feminine soul of Russia is SO lip-synching.

Remember at the games in China when they made the uglier girl sing the recording and replaced her with the prettier girl as the “face” of China.

oooh whoops. We will only get four of the five Olympic snowflake rings. Putin is not happy. Some electrical engineer is going to get a little unhappy visit tonight.

Also Jeff, you so cheated by watching this earlier.

by Dawn Fallik

8:30 pm

We now bring you the Russian President, who just sentenced the person who screwed up the ring to 1,000 years in Siberia.

by Jeff Pearlman

8:31 pm

President Obama is right, Putin does look kind of bored. At least Queen Elizabeth got into the scene with her James Bond commercial last time

by Dawn Fallik

8:31 pm

Did anyone catch that one red light gone astray? #Siberia

by Barbara Chai

8:33 pm

Dang, the singers look REALLY angry. They need a glow person to cheer them up.

by Jeff Pearlman

8:37 pm

while we are waiting for this very long song to end, and the people dressed as red, white and blue igloos? hydrants? To finish walking around..

Now we have the “razzmatazz” according to Lauer as the delegations walk in.

Let’s see if we can find any of them tweeting as they were walking in (this morning, but we’re going with it.)

by Dawn Fallik

8:38 pm

Untz untz untz.

by Barbara Chai

8:39 pm

My husband wants a ratio of # of athletes to country’s population. (Austria vs. India)

by Barbara Chai

8:39 pm

This is the part of the show where I always wish the United States just went by “America.”

by Jeff Pearlman

8:41 pm

throwing some shade at Argentina, are we?

by Barbara Chai

8:43 pm

I'm 41. Not old by many standards. But watching these kids walk through the ceremonies—I feel downright George Burns-ish.

by Jeff Pearlman

8:44 pm

We're watching for a country that begins with "B" — right when it cuts to a "Good Vibrations" commercial. Thanks, NBC!

by Barbara Chai

8:47 pm

@SochiProblems – 283,000 followers

@Sochi2014 – 175,000 followers

Just saying

by Dawn Fallik

8:49 pm

No South American country has ever won a winter medal, Meredith announces joyously. But one of Argentina's figure skaters plans to skate to the tango. Is that... surprising?

Matt says most of them know they aren't going to win a medal and this is their moment. Wow, downer, man.

Oh look, skier Nick Goepper is taking photos with Shaun White! He says that walking in the ceremony crossed a line off his bucket list..

by Dawn Fallik

8:49 pm

Macedonia's flag waver looks 8.

by Jeff Pearlman

8:50 pm

2014 goal 2: Learn the Cyrillic alphabet.

by Barbara Chai

8:51 pm

This whole event—while cool—feels unusually cool and sterile. Not sure why. I like seeing all the nations walk back to back to back around a track. Here's it's very ... flat.

by Jeff Pearlman

8:52 pm

The winner—no contest. Antonio Pardo.

by Jeff Pearlman

8:52 pm

Just fyi, it's a standard order of 100,000 condoms for the Olympic Village – looking back to Beijing and Vancouver and now, Sochi.

Some rumors say that it was 150,000 for London. Was it the sexy Austin Powers' accent baby?

by Dawn Fallik

8:53 pm

These Subway commercials are sooooooooooooo awful. Yes, Nastia, it's the whole enchilada. What was that?

by Jeff Pearlman

8:56 pm

Yes, I was in fact just wondering: Are any Winter Olympians from Staten Island, NY?

by Barbara Chai

8:57 pm

Dear Germany -

What are you wearing? The sweet-tart jackets? The hot red licorice pants? You're like the candy Olympic outfits.

by Dawn Fallik

8:57 pm

Dear Germany -

What are you wearing? The sweet-tart jackets? The hot red licorice pants? You're like the candy Olympic outfits.

by Dawn Fallik

8:57 pm

I thought he just said, "The Islamic Republic of Enron" #Iran

by Barbara Chai

8:58 pm

I'm sorry. But if you don't live in Dominica, you shouldn't be allowed to compete for Dominica.

by Jeff Pearlman

8:58 pm

Israel is followed by Iran. Matt Lauer says it would've been cool to be in the staging area in case there were any "interactions."

by Dawn Fallik

9:02 pm

Spain follows Iceland because of the Russian alphabet. Good luck guessing the next one.

Also each team is led by a Russian hostess, a girl trapped in a plexiglass box with what looks like the white decoration between the bannister railings on her head?

It's like a really really bad Rockettes costume. She can't even kick.

by Dawn Fallik

9:04 pm

Is this longer than the Oscars? We need Amy and Tina to pep this up.

Oh I am loving Canada's red pea coats! Classy! Oh Canada, I want one!

by Dawn Fallik

9:05 pm

So far, seems Canada's snuggly coats are in first place.

by Barbara Chai

9:06 pm

Kyrgyzstan gets props for using this morning's Honey Nut Cheerios boxes as hats.

by Jeff Pearlman

9:06 pm

The Sochi Olympic twitter account would like you to know that the opening ceremony was "Hot. Cool. Yours."

Someone help me. Is this like an icy hot patch? You're giving it to me?
That's so nice. That's the Olympic spirit.

by Dawn Fallik

9:09 pm

I'm the only person I know who's actually been to Malta. One athlete, but the most beautiful place on earth.
by James Pearlman

9:11 pm

I worry about the Moldova in my basement.

by Jeff Pearlman

9:11 pm

Oh, let me tell you about tonight's USA flag bearer, Todd Lodwick. Last month he fractured his left shoulder while in a competition in France during the ski jump portion.

Now he has to schlep the flag around the track – well and then compete in

the Nordic combined. It's his sixth Olympic games.

Here's a list of past flag bearers:

by Dawn Fallik

9:13 pm

This is the best rave music ever. I'm just saying. Between the music and the Rockette outfits and the flags a-flying, I could be in a warehouse in Berkeley. Not that I would know about that.

It does make everyone step lively, the teams are just marching alone.

by Dawn Fallik

9:16 pm

The greatest victories are celebrated with a bite. That being said, if you keep biting McNuggets, you'll weigh 500 pounds and have a heart attack.

by Jeff Pearlman

9:17 pm

This year's Olympic games have some social media rules for the athletes. They can post photos, but no videos. No Vines for you!

by Dawn Fallik

9:17 pm

This year's Olympic games have some social media rules for the athletes. They can post photos, but no videos. No Vines for you!

by Dawn Fallik

9:19 pm

oops that should be.. the teams are marching along! I mean, they are alone while they are walking, except for ice Rockette girl.

Ohhh, here's the crying commercial. Did you all have any favorites?

by Dawn Fallik

9:21 pm

More info on the Canadian coats! (what, you thought I was going to let that go?)

They are Hudson Bay coats. I'm freezing in Kansas under one of their blankets right now!

If you want one they are yours for \$275.

by Dawn Fallik

9:21 pm

I'm now rooting for the woman who is the first ever Winter Olympian from Paraguay.

by Barbara Chai

9:22 pm

My kids are Casey and Emmett. They're 10 and 7, respectively. Their takes on the Opening Ceremony, in three words each: Casey: "Bright. Nice. Boring." Emmett: "Kind of boring."

by Jeff Pearlman

9:22 pm

Go Paraguay! You sent your first ever athlete to the winter games! A skier!

Although born in Paraguay, she's now a junior at the University of Colorado.

by Dawn Fallik

9:23 pm

Looking forward to the free skate with Yuna Kim, aka Queen Yuna. I hope she skates to that Frozen song, "Let It Go"

by Barbara Chai

9:25 pm

The United States name is dangling there ... taunting us.

by Jeff Pearlman

9:26 pm

Most of the Olympic costumes are streamlined and tasteful. Poland is all white, Romania is all black, San Marino is spiffy in red coats and black pants.

Why does the USA have to look like dorks? Can we not get Jason Wu to design next time? (although his fashion week shows this week were dark and sad, so maybe not.)

by Dawn Fallik

9:27 pm

I love my country. Love it. But those sweaters ooze Cosby Show.

by Jeff Pearlman

9:29 pm

We have a lot of athletes and they are all holding up their phones. That's the USA picture right there – 230 of us dressed badly and carrying technology. Those are like bad XMAS sweaters man. I'm sorry.

by Dawn Fallik

9:29 pm

Shaun White has gone Hollywood. Sorta sad to see. Like Rocky at the start of the third flick. Then Clubber busted him up.

by Jeff Pearlman

9:30 pm

Shaun White, Olympics Opening Ceremony

Do we like Shaun White's new hair? I say yes. Very Prince Harry.

by Dawn Fallik

9:33 pm

lyson Dudek, Olympics Opening Ceremonies

Whoops! Alyson Dudek (@alydudek) tweeted that her boot came untied mid-march into the Opening Ceremonies. Girl, I didn't even notice.

#itscool

by Dawn Fallik

9:33 pm

Alyson Dudek, Olympics Opening Ceremonies

Whoops! Alyson Dudek (@alydudek) tweeted that her boot came untied mid-march into the Opening Ceremonies. Girl, I didn't even notice.

#itscool

by Dawn Fallik

9:35 pm

Don't know about you, but I'm rooting for BenJarvus Green-Ellis Timor-Leste.

by Jeff Pearlman

9:40 pm

I have a good friend from Ukraine. She will be hearing about these jackets tomorrow.

by Jeff Pearlman

9:40 pm

This has been great—but I've gotta put the kids to bed. Thanks all for reading. Have a blessed night.

by Jeff Pearlman

9:41 pm

Did you know that the Olympics have their own video game? Oh yeah. It's "Mario & Sonic at the Sochi Winter Olympic Games." It's about \$50 and you can take Mario skiing, figure skating and curling. I do not know if shirtless Putin is involved. And yes, there was a London version.

by Dawn Fallik

9:44 pm

We just learned from the Olympic announcer that “Yolo” stands for “You only live once.” As if we didn’t all learn that some time ago.

9:44 pm

We just learned from the Olympic announcer that “Yolo” stands for “You only live once.” As if we didn’t all learn that some time ago.

9:44 pm

We just learned from the Olympic announcer that “Yolo” stands for “You only live once.” As if we didn’t all learn that some time ago.

9:45 pm

Jamaica is in the house!

9:45 pm

Hey! You won a medal at the 2014 Olympic Games! Here. Have a rock.

No joke. There are 50 medals made from the 1,250-pound meteorite that hit Chelyabinsk last year.

About 10 of them will be handed to winning athletes. It’s not clear who gets the rock and who just gets the gold.

by Dawn Fallik

9:46 pm

The crowd roars as the host country Russia comes in.

9:47 pm

Olympics 2014 Opening Ceremonies

Why are some of the Russian athletes dressed like Santa's helpers?

9:49 pm

t.A.t.U., Olympics 2014 Opening Ceremonies

They're playing the band t.A.t.U., a duo with a lesbian image. Interesting they're getting play as Russia cracks down on gay rights. Here's the story we wrote.

9:50 pm

Olympics 2014 Opening Ceremonies

Good night to Jeff Pearlman. Check out his new book "Showtime: Magic, Kareem, Riley, and the Los Angeles Lakers Dynasty of the 1980s." I enjoyed it more than these opening ceremonies.

9:55 pm

Surya Bonaly, Olympics 2014 Opening Ceremonies

Do you ever wonder what happened to your favorite Olympians?

I was always a fan of Surya Bonaly, the ice skater who performed the illegal but completely amazing one-footed backflip.

I also loved Midori Ito, the first woman to land the triple/triple jump combination.

Yeah, yeah, I'm an ice skating nerd.

by Dawn Fallik

9:57 pm

Oh fyi, here's a really bad video of that backflip .

by Dawn Fallik

9:57 pm

Olympics 2014 Opening Ceremonies

For real, I'm not going to lie. I thought China's opening ceremony was amazing, I couldn't look away.

London's was a little long, but they had amazing singers. Plus mysterious choices like .. the health system.

We're being told that Russia is telling its story through "kitsch." With 230-foot long white ghost horses slowly running through the air. Apparently this is the "aaah" moment. Ah. Ok.

by Dawn Fallik

9:59 pm

Olympics 2014 Opening Ceremonies

Ha ha commenter Scott Jeffries – that Putin is like President Snow saying "may the odds be ever in your favor."

That's pretty spot on.

Now people are running across the stage in pretty costumes to form the shape of a whale. No one seems to know what the whale has to do with anything.

by Dawn Fallik

10:03 pm

Olympics 2014 Opening Ceremonies

I am so confused. It's like "Alice in Wonderland" meets "Beauty and the Beast." Plus the Kremlin?

And I'm worried for the feminine soul of Russia, who has reappeared.

Oh, next imperial Russia. Can't wait. Any word from Rasputin do you think?

by Dawn Fallik

10:04 pm

Olympics 2014 Opening Ceremonies

Um, here is a commercial about how Americans rock because we work a crazy amount of hours and we have a lot of stuff. And we're supposed to be proud that we only take off two weeks in August and left trash on the moon?

I don't think that commercial got the message across that it wanted to get across.

Can we bring back the doggie and horsey commercial?

by Dawn Fallik

10:09 pm

Olympics 2014 Opening Ceremonies

The floor has turned into the sea, but St. Petersburg has conquered the sea! Much like Washington D.C. is built on a swamp. Perhaps we could work together on mosquito issues. Yes, that's what will bring us together.

by Dawn Fallik

10:11 pm

Olympics 2014 Opening Ceremonies

Good point commenter. What happened to Anne Curry?

Just fyi, the military has morphed into a dance from “War and Peace.” I think this is David Remnick from The New Yorker letting us know about the novel.

This is the peace part. I wonder if David is really dreading his decision to comment on this ceremony. He could be kicking back with David Sedaris, mocking the sweaters and eating blinis right now.

by Dawn Fallik

10:18 pm

Olympics 2014 Opening Ceremonies

The dancer and the guy have been looking at each other and not moving for like, 20 minutes now.

Is the dancer the grown-up version of the feminine soul of Russia?

The ballet dancing is fabulous, as many of the dancers are from the Bolshoi. But um, it's not exactly Paul McCartney or Adele, you know? We are not dancing in our seats. We feel sad, like Russian winter.

What is going on? Are we dying in winter? We are cold and dying? We are dead on the ice like Imperial Russia?

by Dawn Fallik

10:31 pm

The train is coming! The train is coming! It's been a long hard winter Pa and we've been twisting wheat for fire and now the winter is over!

Oh wait, that's Laura Ingalls Wilder.

Here is the time in Russia where there were a lot of prison camps and pogroms. I'm guessing that's not in here. But we hear the trains and see the machinery (some looking like hamster wheels) across the floor.

We are moving along to the Soviet March. Lenin and Stalin are not

mentioned.

by Dawn Fallik

10:32 pm

Here's a moment of remembrance where they lost 20 million Russians in World War II.

The camera glimpses at the America stands. Everyone has a look of "um, what is going on?" going on.

Now we are sad.

OK, now we're happy. There is happy music playing and cars are zooming everywhere.

by Dawn Fallik

10:34 pm

Now there are giant faces zooming across the stadium. With the hammer and sickle flying around.

David Remnick says we now look like we're in an Elvis movie and there are many dancers in 50s and 60s bright colors – looking like extras from Grease – dancing around.

"This is highly idealized" someone says. Yes.

by Dawn Fallik

10:39 pm

Here's a little trivia while we're watching baby carriages roll around on stage. Lots of baby booming!

The feminine soul of Russia is again flying thousands of feet above the ground, making me nervous. She's holding a red balloon of the 20th century and letting it go.

So we're skipping the whole Russian collapse with Gorbachev? All righty.

We're in the Fisht stadium, which cost about \$780 million to build.

The roof is supposed to appear like snowy peaks. That's all I got for ya.

by Dawn Fallik

10:42 pm

Olympics 2014 Opening Ceremonies

Here is the head of the Russian organizing committee, welcoming everyone and apologizing for killing the dogs, the orange water, the unfinished projects and the corruption.

Ha ha! We joke! He says the games will be cool with icons and full of diversity. Ha ha diversity.

by Dawn Fallik

10:46 pm

Are we lighting the flame? Can we light the flame and sing "Every Rose Has Its Thorn" and go home now?

Putin says the games are open. There is no smiling. David says Putin insists that we look at Russian power and its place in its world.

Oooh fireworks, pretty.

Now here is the dove of peace, set to Tchaikovsky's "Swan Lake." This is lovely, although all the dancers are glow in the dark jelly fish, which I don't remember from the Natalie Portman version.

by Dawn Fallik

10:48 pm

This Omega ad seems like a ripoff of the “Game of Thrones” intro.

10:50 pm

Woody Allen is trending on Twitter along with all the Olympic stuff.

10:53 pm

Spinning spinning jellyfish everywhere!

Like Russian men-o-war stingers, only with famous ballerina Diana Vishneva as she spins and spins.

It’s beautiful, but it’s making me a little dizzy.

by Dawn Fallik

10:57 pm

Anna Netrebko

Opera star Anna Netrebko injected some life into the opening ceremonies. Here’s the interview I once did with her.

by Christopher John Farley

10:59 pm

Olympics 2014 Opening Ceremonies

Wow I’m tired. Matt and Meredith somehow seem to have all the energy in the world. You gotta give them props.

Now is the time for the Olympic flag. We march the flag very very slowly across the floor.

Only one of the women is wearing heels. Good for her!

You know who we haven't seen this evening? The Olympic mascots! The leopard! The Bear! and the Hare!

Don't worry. Here they are, complete with cartoon house!

by Dawn Fallik

11:00 pm

Do you think the NSA is hacking all the Russian hackers breaking into the phones and computers of the athletes?

It's like meta spy world.

I do not know the words to the Olympic anthem. I swear that's a Disney princess dress that opera singer Anna Netrebko is wearing. It's a mix between Cinderella's dress and Belle's dress around the neckline. Yeah, those are my references. Less Tolstoy and more Disney.

Here are the lyrics in English, in case ANYONE is still awake with me out there.

Immortal spirit of antiquity,

Father of the true, beautiful and good,

Descend, appear, shed over us thy light

Upon this ground and under this sky

Which has first witnessed the unperishable fame.

Give life and animation to those noble games!

Throw wreaths of fadeless flowers to the victors

In the race and in the strife!

Create in our breasts, hearts of steel!
In thy light, plains, mountains and seas
Shine in a roseate hue and form a vast temple
To which all nations throng to adore thee,
Oh immortal spirit of antiquity!

by Dawn Fallik

11:06 pm

OK, now we have lots of glow in the dark people skating around on rollerblades. They are honoring the hockey and skating. The Russians are announcing that they will kick our butts in these sports.

OOoh sparkly figures in the sky of all the sports. But they are now playing very menacing music. The sparkly figures in the sky are coming to get you!

Like Russian bears in the night with their dangerous face water! (explainer: one of the journalists tweeted that she was told not to use the water in her hotel on her face because it had something very dangerous in it.)

by Dawn Fallik

11:11 pm

Does NBC not remember that Americans work a lot (see earlier commercial) and that we're all freaking tired on Friday nights?

Wouldn't be awesome if Borat showed up to sing? He'd be awesome at the luge. Somehow I don't think Putin will laugh.

Where is the ode to the Russian food? We need some blintz, borscht, pirogi, with sour cream, of course.

by Dawn Fallik

11:13 pm

Olympic Torch

It's the longest Olympic torch relay ever.

Who is carrying it? Tennis star (and earlier person interviewed) Maria Sharapova. Who hands it to a track and field winner. Who hands it off to a wrestler.

I like how they all run together to hand it off to the next person, who is a rhythmic gymnast, Alina Kabayeva, who (Matt says) is allegedly in a relationship with Putin.

I'm sure that's going to go over well. In the meantime, France is all "meh, we got our own mistress problems."

Off to the cauldron! WinGARDIUM levOsa! Oh no, Harry Potter London again.

by Dawn Fallik

11:15 pm

Just an aside to one of the comments. I don't have any problem letting Russia have its moment.

It is kind of funny what they choose to ignore. And I'm sure when we held it here, other countries pointed out what we decided to ignore.

by Dawn Fallik

11:25 pm

Oh here's the last special snowflake in the Olympic ring, finally showing up!

The purple fountains are dancing merrily and the fireworks are ablazing!

The cauldron is lit. Let the games begin!

Seriously, that was a pretty Olympic opening if you focus on the sparkly (possibly killer) lite-brite athletic figures in the sky, and the spinning (possibly deathly rays) of ballerina jellyfish and, of course, the feminine soul of Russia, dangling from wires thousands of feet in the air.

I just expect the opening ceremony to be high-energy, to end on a let's go!! moment. And not so much the death on ice.

Do you have a favorite event? I love all the ice skating, but particularly the pairs dancing because I was spoiled on Torvill and Dean dancing to Bolero growing up.

All right, I'm out of steam.

What are your thoughts on the opening ceremony? Better than Beijing? London?

by Dawn Fallik

11:28 pm

Good night everyone!

Share this:

2014 OLYMPICS

JEFF PEARLMAN

SOCHI

Copyright 2014 Dow Jones & Company, Inc. All Rights Reserved

This copy is for your personal, non-commercial use only. Distribution and use of this material are governed by our Subscriber Agreement and by copyright law. For non-personal use or to order multiple copies, please contact Dow Jones Reprints at 1-800-843-0008 or visit www.djreprints.com.