

DRY OLYMPICS

Got Milk?

while scientists can explain what makes Utah's snow some of the driest in the world, it don't take but a ski bum to predict that Utah will host the world's driest Olympics when the Winter Games come to Salt Lake City in 2002. Utah is infamous for having some of the toughest liquor laws in the country: Shots are metered out in strict, miserly proportions, and most beer available is a watery 3.2 percent alcohol. Which isn't to say you can't get loaded in Utah (Park City, in particular, is chock-full of good bars), but with alcohol-shunning Mormons making up over two thirds of the state's population, the atmosphere is a far cry from that of, say, Garmisch.

And then there's the Alcohol Policy Coalition, a local lobbying group that is pressing for even tougher anti-alcohol laws. Among other things, the group would like to see the under-the-influence blood-alcohol level dropped from .08 percent to .04 percent, heavy restrictions placed on Olympic alcohol advertising, and Anheuser-Busch's estimated \$50 million sponsorship resold to a less bacchanalian advertiser.

None of which is likely to happen. According to Utah State Senator Ron Allen, "State legislators see little possibility of changing the current laws." Going even further, some members of Utah's food and beverage industry have expressed hope that the Salt Lake Organizing Committee (SLOC), recognizing that the thirst of a Winter Olympic traveler is greater than that of the average Utahan, would lobby for a temporary easing of Utah's liquor laws during February 2002.

But that is even less likely to happen: "We are going to operate within the existing state laws," says SLOC spokesperson Frank Zang, "and we are making no attempt to change them." Maybe by the time the Olympics get back to Athens in 2004, they'll have changed the Olympic motto to "Citius, Altius, Fortius, Siccus": "Swifter, Higher, Stronger, Sober."

—TOMMY KIRCHHOFF

Flaunting it at the Salt Lake Temple.



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