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A Minute With ... Lindsey Manck

Ice rink manager's among few to drive square's 'Zamboni'

By Lori Kurtzman • lkurtzman@enquirer.com • January 8, 2009

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Let us take a moment to envy Lindsey Manck, Fountain Square ice rink manager, driver of a mystical and legendary vehicle most of us will never have the privilege to operate.

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The Zamboni.

OK, so it's not a *real* Zamboni. According to Fountain Square Management, it's the Olympia 250, designed for smaller studio rinks and complete with a Kubota BX 2200 Tractor. But when we see a big vehicle out there on the 68-by-105-foot rink, smoothing the nicks caused by hours of blades slashing the surface, we think Zamboni. And Manck, 24, of Mount Lookout is one of the lucky few who get to drive it.

Manck, who works for Game Day Communications, was patient enough to handle a number of questions about the fake Zamboni and ice in general. Here are some of her answers.

Question: Why are people fascinated by the Zamboni?

Answer: The word Zamboni seems to put a smile on everyone's face. I think driving the Zamboni is an experience everyone would like to have.

Q: Is it difficult to drive?

A: No, not difficult. All you need is a little practice.

Q: Who taught you?

A: Rich Szturm, our ice rink consultant from Northland Ice Rink. He taught me all I know.

Q: Can you do any cool tricks?

A: Backing up the Zamboni is my best trick. We make it look easy, but I promise you it takes skills. I haven't ever tried a wheelie, but that would be the first new trick I would attempt.

Q: Do you take it for late-night joyrides?

A: No. Ha ha. It has so much potential, but backing it into the storage tent is as much of a joyride as I have experienced.

Q: Does all that Zamboni driving make you a better driver on those snow covered highways?

A: Of course. But when I come across the steep hills I am on my own.

Q: Smoothing the ice: more satisfying than mowing the lawn?



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The Enquirer/Ernest Coleman
Fountain Square ice rink manager Lindsey Manck says it's not difficult to drive the rink's ice-smoothing vehicle.

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If you go

What: The Fountain Square ice rink.

When: Open daily through Feb. 22. Noon-5:30 p.m. Monday through Wednesday; noon-8 p.m. Thursday; noon-10 p.m. Friday; 10 a.m.-10 p.m. Saturday; and 10 a.m.-8 p.m.

Cost: \$2.50; skate rental is an additional \$2.50.

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A: Yes, smoothing the ice leaves a beautiful shine which is much more satisfying to me than the smell of fresh-cut grass.

Q: How would you rate the ice skating skills in Greater Cincinnati?

A: Cincinnati skaters are ... beginner level. Anyone who is worried about their lack of skating skills need not worry - they are in the majority of those on the rink. Every so often there are those who have transported to Cincinnati from the north. Those folks have amazing skills.

Q: What's your favorite outdoor winter activity?

A: Sledding. Nothing is more exciting after a beautiful snow than sledding down some large hills in the saucer sled.

Q: Your ice - cubed or crushed?

A: Cubed. The small square cubes are the best.

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