

Extreme Ironing: Quirky Sport Revival

VOCABULARY WORDS

1. venture (noun) /'vɛn.tʃər/ - A risky or daring journey or undertaking.
Example: They went on a new venture to start their own business.
2. peculiar (adjective) /pɪ'kjuː.liər/ - Strange or unusual.
Example: He has a peculiar habit of wearing mismatched socks.
3. shy away (phrasal verb) /ʃaɪ ə'weɪ/ - To avoid something because of fear or uncertainty.
Example: She tends to shy away from public speaking.
4. limelight (noun) /'laɪm.laɪt/ - The center of public attention.
Example: The singer's new album put him back in the limelight.
5. lasting (adjective) /'læstɪŋ/ - Continuing for a long time; enduring.
Example: They built a lasting friendship over the years.
6. revival (noun) /rɪ'vaɪ.vəl/ - The process of becoming active, popular, or successful again.
Example: The band experienced a revival in popularity after releasing a new album.
7. quirky (adjective) /'kwɜːr.ki/ - Unusual in an interesting or endearing way.
Example: She has a quirky sense of humor that everyone enjoys.
8. enduring (adjective) /ɪn'dʊər.ɪŋ/ - Lasting for a long time or forever.
Example: The enduring love between the couple was evident in their long marriage.



Phil, a father who enjoys old video games, also excels at navigating social media. However, his past includes a surprising twist. Over 20 years ago, he was known as Steam, a nickname he earned while inventing an unusual sport called extreme ironing. His friend, Spray, partnered with him in this **venture**. Together, they created a sport that combined ironing with performing the task in **peculiar** locations.

The sport began in the late 1990s and has recently made a comeback on TikTok. Extreme ironing involves people ironing clothes in strange and challenging places. In videos from the 2002 Extreme Ironing World Championships, competitors can be seen ironing on surfboards

and even on motorbikes. The sport doesn't **shy away** from adventurous environments like mountains, trees, snow, and underwater.

Phil, whose full name is Phil Szomszor, introduced the sport in 1997 by taking his ironing board outdoors. He called it "extreme ironing" when he told his friend Paul, who later became known as Spray. This marked the beginning of a journey that brought the sport into the **limelight**, earning media attention and even a world championship.

The Extreme Ironing World Championships, held in Germany in 2002, featured participants from 10 countries ironing their clothes while navigating a challenging 800-meter course. Competitors were judged based on style, speed, and the quality of their ironing. This one-time event left a **lasting** impression, despite being the only world championship ever held.

Today, extreme ironing's **revival** is seen on social media, where participants are judged by "likes" rather than official judges. Despite the changing methods of judging, the sport remains as extreme and entertaining as ever. Phil's unique past as Steam contributes to the sport's **quirky** history and **enduring** appeal.

DISCUSSION

1. Where would you like to try extreme ironing?
2. What everyday task could become an extreme sport?
3. What would you wear to an extreme ironing competition?
4. If you could rename extreme ironing, what would you call it?
5. What criteria would you use to score participants in a competition?
6. What other hobbies could be combined with ironing?
7. How would you film a viral extreme ironing video?