

Gaga tests 'borderline'
positive for lupus**B5****Bond, James Bond,
back in a new novel****B4**

NELIA G. NERI Editorial Consultant

KRISTIN ALDANA-LERIN Contributing Editor



2010 Winter Olympics

EXCLUSIVE REPORT!

BY MANNY GONZALEZ, PLANTATION BAY RESORT AND SPA

Apparently there are Olympic junkies who, every two years, drop everything to attend the Olympics. I used to think they were nuts. But now, having been to my first Olympics ever, I can see the attractions.

Obviously, there is the tourism. You get to see some pretty neat places. The 2010 Olympics in Vancouver and Whistler, British Columbia, had the further advantage of combining a large city with all the amenities, and a small ski village with all the charm.

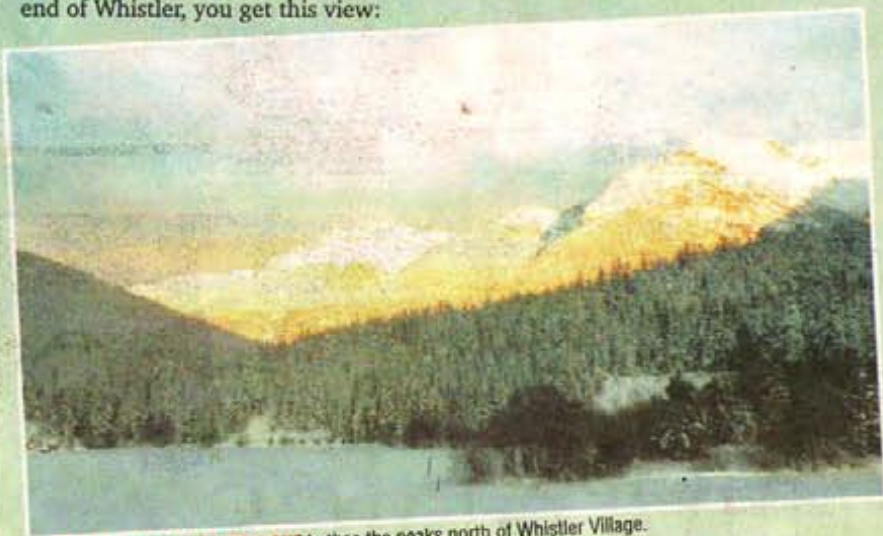
The Sea-to-Sky Highway connects the two locales. At the start of the highway, just north of Vancouver, the scenery looks like this—

MAGNIFICENT. The start of the Sea-to-Sky Highway, in Vancouver.

live!

continued from B1

The highway is pretty much just as breathtaking as this throughout. An hour and a half later, at the north end of Whistler, you get this view:



LATE-AFTERNOON 'ALPENGLOW' bathes the peaks north of Whistler Village.

No wonder, then, that this stretch of road is regularly voted one of the Top 10 Scenic Drives in the World.

At the ski-jump the author – who is afraid of heights and can't ski – poses on a photo-op set thoughtfully provided by the organizers

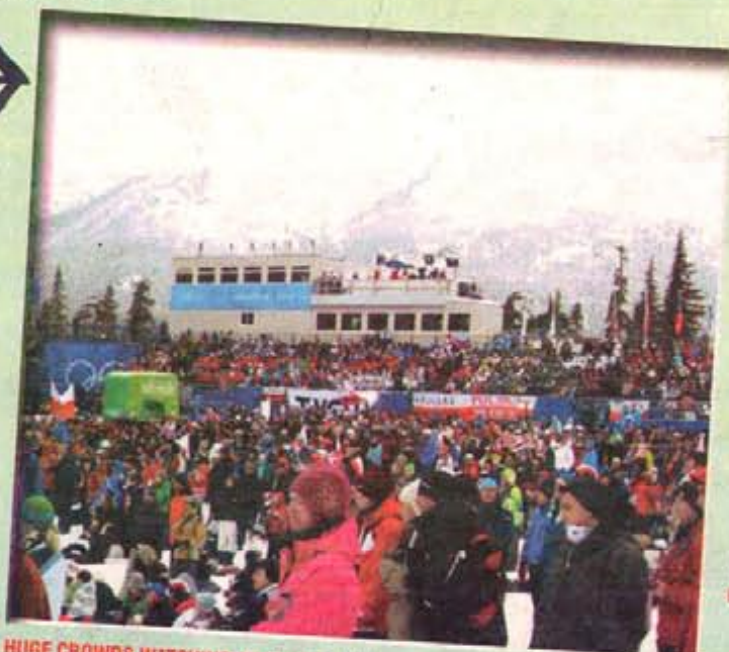


PERFECT 10. The author just landed after a graceful 300-foot jump. In his dreams.



A POLISH-TEAM SUPPORTER. I smiled at her but, showing a lamentable lack of good judgment, she did not smile back.

At the Olympics, you have to be prepared for crowds. On the other hand, you get to see a lot of people. For example:



HUGE CROWDS WATCHING AN EVENT in Whistler's Callaghan Valley. Except for the caps, you almost can't tell that everyone here is freezing his butt off.

By accident, I wound up with front-row seats at the Ice Dance Finals. At the end of the show, for ten whole seconds, I was on worldwide TV, seen by hundreds of millions. Well, the kids I was with were.

Another advantage of front-row seats was that we were close to the enclosure where the skaters went while waiting for their scores. This meant I could take pictures of some serious talent. Have a look:



STARS OF THE SHOW. These kids were on global TV for 10 seconds. It's downhill from here on.

Sorry, wrong picture. Here is something better:



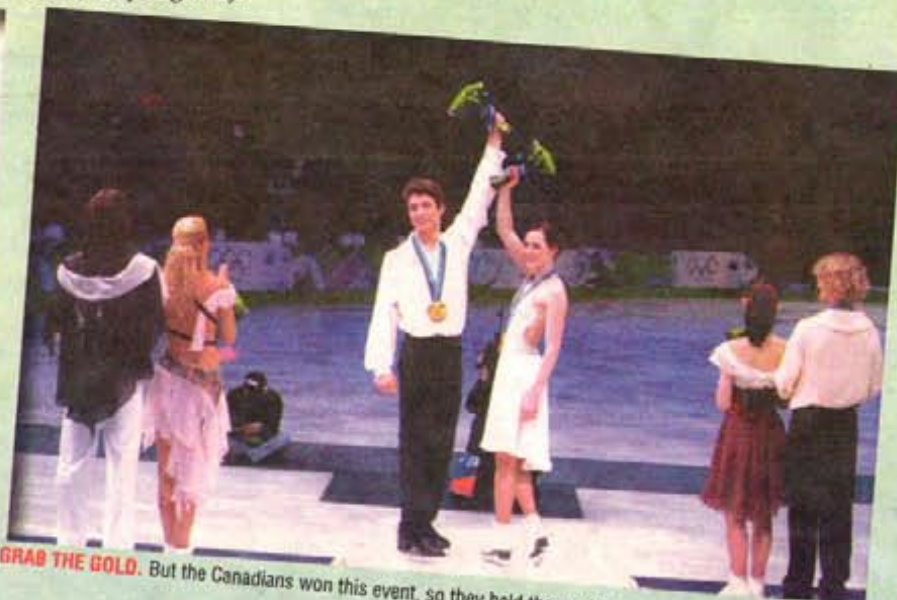
ICE PRINCESS. An Ice-Dance contestant from the UK. Personally, I was willing to watch her skate some more.



DRAW. At the exact moment I tried to shoot this cute official photographer, she decided to shoot me. I guess it was a draw.

Naturally, at these events, everyone is taking pictures of everybody else.

Do you know that the money-grubbing Vancouver Olympic Committee even charged separately for watching the medal ceremonies? This was on top of tickets costing hundreds of dollars (and being scalped at thousands). Well, I suppose they had to earn back some of the \$650 Million they spent on fixing the Sea-to-Sky Highway.



GRAB THE GOLD. But the Canadians won this event, so they held the medal ceremony immediately. No charge.

Next Winter Olympics, maybe I will stay home beside my fireplace.

2010 Winter Olympics – Exclusive Report!

By Manny Gonzalez, Plantation Bay Resort & Spa

Apparently there are Olympic junkies who, every two years, drop everything to attend the Olympics. I used to think they were nuts. But now, having been to my first Olympics ever, I can see the attractions.

Obviously, there is the tourism. You get to see some pretty neat places. The 2010 Olympics in Vancouver and Whistler, British Columbia, had the further advantage of combining a large city with all the amenities, and a small ski village with all the charm.

The Sea-to-Sky Highway connects the two locales. At the start of the highway, just north of Vancouver, the scenery looks like this:



The start of the Sea-to-Sky Highway, in Vancouver.

The highway is pretty much just as breathtaking as this throughout. An hour and a half later, at the north end of Whistler, you get this view:



Late-afternoon “alpenglow” bathes the peaks north of Whistler Village.

No wonder, then, that this stretch of road is regularly voted one of the Top 10 Scenic Drives in the World.

At the *ski-jump* the author – who is afraid of heights and can’t ski – poses on a photo-op set thoughtfully provided by the organizers.



The author just landed after a graceful 300-foot jump. In his dreams.

At the Olympics, you have to be prepared for crowds. On the other hand, you get to see a lot of people. For example:



A Polish-team supporter. I smiled at her but, showing a lamentable lack of good judgment, she did not smile back.

If you attend an Olympics, you need to like crowds. And if you attend a Winter Olympics, you need to have a certain tolerance for sub-zero temperatures.



Huge crowds watching an event in Whistler's Callaghan Valley. Except for the caps, you almost can't tell that everyone here is freezing his butt off.

By accident, I wound up with front-row seats at the Ice Dance Finals. At the end of the show, for ten whole seconds, I was on worldwide TV, seen by hundreds of millions. Well, the kids I was with were.

Another advantage of front-row seats was that we were close to the enclosure where the skaters went while waiting for their scores. This meant I could take pictures of some serious talent. Have a look:



These kids were on global TV for 10 seconds. It's downhill from here on.

Sorry, wrong picture. Here is something better:



An Ice-Dance contestant from the UK. Personally, I was willing to watch her skate some more.

Naturally, at these events, everyone is taking pictures of everybody else.



At the exact moment I tried to shoot this cute official photographer, she decided to shoot me. I guess it was a draw.

Do you know that the money-grubbing Vancouver Olympic Committee even charged separately for watching the medal ceremonies? This was on top of tickets costing hundreds of dollars (and being scalped at thousands). Well, I suppose they had to earn back some of the \$650 Million they spent on fixing the Sea-to-Sky Highway.



But the Canadians won this event, so they held the medal ceremony immediately. No charge.

Next Winter Olympics, maybe I will stay home beside my fireplace.