

OPENING CEREMONIES

Kate's interpretation.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1999,

DAY 1 OF THE 1999 JEUX DU CANADA GAMES,

7:00 a.m. noise in the hall... wake up... feeling surprisingly perky after only 4 and a half hours of sleep. Lucky for Lilla, I just lie in bed reading until 8... (I am not sure if I want to feel the wrath of somebody who is woken up a little bit too early after a late arrival...

8:30... okay, I get bored... wake Lilla up.

9:00. Time to manger (eat). We make our way to the cafeteria... (we thought it was busy then... little did we know.)

10:00. We arrive back at our room, to be greeted by Margret in pjs, and meg still sleeping, we don't have a clue where Krista and Sue are, but seeing the situation that Margret and Meg are presently in, we assume they are still asleep. *I am actually at a meeting I found out about from another coach in the bathroom!*

11:00. By this time, everybody is up, we have all found one another, so we go down to the "caff" (by the end of the week, all of us girls had picked up Krista's word.) for lunch. I realized then, it wasn't busy at breaky... but it still wasn't at the maximum stage...

12:00. We all meet outside the boy's dorm, with posters for the guys to put up, and attired in our complete team NS uniform all ready to head into the waiting tank for opening ceremonies.

12:30- Someother time, I forget cos I wasn't looking at my watch we are stuffed in the holding tank, for numerous minutes, given little paper NS flags to use in the marching in... (by that time, a lot of them had been broken, and were made in to handy dandy little airplanes by an unidentified person.) Chris Algar practiced his horn, and Daniel entertained everybody with his juggling, (in some pictures, you have the hockey players looking on with absolute amazement.) We were told to line up alphabetically by sport, and in lines of 4, but we had some problems explaining to the hockey team who seemed to be having an identity crisis, and though they were biathletes... when we sorted that out we discovered that they still didn't know the alphabet, and though that h came before c... not quite.

At an unidentified time, we began to march in the stadium, Chris was blowing his horn, and everybody was yelling to make themselves horse (or at least I did). I think that Nova Scotia had the loudest entrance, besides Newfieland. After all the provinces paraded in, and sat themselves, we sat (or stood on our chairs and waved) through a bunch of speeches from the people who made it all happen, (*Jean Cretien, Brian Tobin, the Mayor etc*) and Terry Kelly, and another band... and the athlete/coaches/(mission staff maybe, I forget, but I know there was a third one) oaths. (or vows...) and the lighting of the official torch, and the gift exchange between Alberta and Newfoundland. by 4:30, the ceremonies were over, and we were allowed to go to the cafeteria to mass confusion, and to stand in line for over an hour to get our grub... if you weren't hungry before, you certainly were by the time you got to eat... after you got the food, there was the problem of finding where to sit... after we ate, and cruised around the school for a bit, everyone kinda went their own ways, most of the girls headed off to beds. and there you have it. my report strawberry fields forever!! kate!!

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Sunday February 21st – no report sent by Kris Doyon

Monday February 22nd – by Margret Scallion

Waking up with fear in our hearts Monday morning we prayed that the sugar falling from the sky yesterday had been sufficiently packed into a good hard racing course. Today was the day of the first race: the men's 10 km free technique and the women's 5 km free. The girls had to start at 10 am. Rolling out of bed at 7 am we cursed the ringette team (and all of the other teams) that had the rooms next to ours. They had been extremely noisy the night before and bloody murder was an alternative that seemed quite realistic. Krista had to tell them that her athletes were trying to sleep several times to get them to shut up. Ok, enough of the vindictive stuff. We caught the 8 o'clock bus out to the site. Groaning at the thought that the guys were all still asleep in their nice cozy beds, while we were groggily making our way to the site.

Getting to the site we were delighted to see many people that we knew from Nova Scotia. Great parental support!! The course was actually surprisingly hard. Well, compared to what it was like yesterday!! The guys showed up just in time to see us streak (with clothes on!) out of the start gate and go on to set world record times (in our dreams). But everybody had good races and seemed happy. Margret finished in 24th place, Meg was 51st (and what would it be if the 5 was not in front of the 1?), Krista was 55th, Kate 57th, and Lilla was 58th. Excellent work. Also coming on to the scene in this race was the FOGHORN. The strategical instrument used to confuse the other racers (ie. What the heck is that sound... maybe I will stop and check it out!) The strategy did not work all that well as Nova Scotia did not sweep the top three spots. The winners were: 1. Genvieve Savard, Que, 2. Tara Whitten, Albt, and 3. Sarah Peters, Ont. The girls were all nice and cooled down by the time that the men's race started. This gave them to opportunity to go out and cheer their little fanny's off. And cheer we did. We figure we must have done something right because the guys pulled off some excellent races as well. Ian managed an 8th place finish, Chris was 23rd, Daniel was 24th, Charles was 30th and Kris 33rd. Way to go!! The winners of the men's race were: 1. Lee Churchill, NFLD, 2. Chris Jeffries Ont, and 3. Dan Roycroft Ont.

After the race we all had to do a bit of waxing on our skis because the coaches were totally burnt out after waxing all of our skis the night before. One coach in particular was a bit overzealous and had spent Sunday night (all of it) waxing our skis and testing. We all returned to the athlete's village and cleaned ourselves and slept or did homework, or went to the mall to get some things. Little did the mall goers know that it as a civic holiday so nothing was open. So we ended up buying laundry detergent, paying an exorbitant price for a taxi, and being severely disappointed. It was quite an adventure to return to the village as we were not about to pay for another cab so we hitched a lift with one of the Fencing moms that we met in Shoppers. Ha ha ha. What nice Nova Scotians. If we were from Ontario we would not have been able to do that so easily. We all met and had supper together and had our team meeting. It is very interesting to note that if you eat a large meal after not eating much for several hours you get an instant energy jolt. Quite invigorating. I have to stop using big words as my vocabulary and spelling is giving my ad-libbing away. So, after eating we had our team meeting and

some of us had interviews. Ian had the top NS skating result ever (tying with Bronwen from last games). Margret had the same place as her mother did back in '75. So after all of that exciting stuff everyone just rattled around athlete's village, talking with friends and just going nuts. Everyone got to bed at a half decent hour (with one notable exception... that coach again.)

On a more personal note, I would like to thank the whole team for my wonderful games experience. It just keeps getting better every time. I could not ask to have a more fun and talented team than what I have. To the guys... you are my inspiration. When I was younger I looked up to you so much, I always said to myself that I had to train hard and get in my hours just like you. And now that I am older... nearly the same age you were at your last games, I realize what excellent people you are and how lucky I have to have had the opportunity to know you. I sincerely hope that you guys all keep racing and skiing so that I can see you all a whole bunch in the future. You cannot possibly understand the void we would have on our team without all of you there. The games seem so much like the end of the line and I just hope that you guys prove me wrong. To the girls, you were all so much fun. We had some great times together... especially being malicious about the loud people on our floor. We definitely all need to keep in touch!! I love you all. To the coaches. You were wonderful, organized and a pleasure to ski with. I feel that we had the best team in all of Canada working with us. Way to go!! Don... you should be a psychiatrist... I figure that I gave you enough training on Saturday!

ciao, magi

February 23, Canada Games race day 2...by Ian Murray

Oh did it snow... It started in the night and didn't really stop until who knows when. All the new snow made for extremely soft uphill which made things into a little bit of a uphill herringbone race in deep power since the tracks were non-existent after the forerunners went around. The 10 kilometer, 2 loops of the A-B course was a little easier than the uphill grunt of the day before for the men while the women did 1 loop of the A-B for their 5K. Lee Churchill of Newfoundland was again the dominant man finishing 45 seconds ahead of second place while Shannon Dikkama of Manitoba won the women's race by nine seconds. The Nova Scotia Results were strong again. Something we should all be proud of.

That evening I was talking to Gabrielle Nadeau of the Quebec Team and she commented on the fact that she fell on a downhill and both of her straps popped off and she had to go back up the hill and get them. She said that she would tape her new Excel grips for the next race. I don't know about the rest of the Quebec equipment. Our Wax was super again. I blew by one Quebec skier on a downhill.

Ian

Wednesday February 24 – no report received from Charles Curtis

Thursday February 25 – no report received from Chris Algar

Friday February 26th - by Meg Payne

Friday, day seven, started out fairly early for part of our team. Sue, Dennis, Don, Kris, and Lilla were all up early to start wax testing. They probably beat the sun to the race course, nothing new for Sue, Don, and Dennis but there were a few complaints from Lilla and Kris. It was the day of the bug team race, the relay. The guys started first so us girls got to sleep in. We were all there, along with the rest of the Nova Scotia cheering squad, for the start of the race. Even the mission staff was out despite the weather, which couldn't decide if it was snowing, raining, or hailing. The guys gave it their all and finished well, in sixth place. Then came our race, the weather had by now made up its mind and had chosen hail. We also gave it all we had and finished just behind PEI. Then we had our final race of the day, the mascot race. Kris went in as the Nova Scotia mascot and blew the competition away, actually he blew them over! As we packed up our skis after the race Sue got a bit of a surprise as she found out that there was a protest against one of the Nova Scotia athletes. She worried her way to the jury to find out that Tautuit was protesting against our mascot's wingspan. After that everyone quickly finished packing and returned to the village. That evening was supposed to be the dance but we were also invited down to one of the local poolhalls for a ski party. We all decided to go to the ski party first and then go up to the dance. There were two rooms full of pool tables so we ended up playing quite a few games. Margret and Krista were the first to leave for the dance. Most of the team was soon to follow. Dan, Charles, Chris, Kris, Becky (from Ontario), Don, and I stayed down until around 10:30. We ended up having a very long walk back up the hill to the dance due to the many run ins with snow banks. We finally made it to the dance for the last three or four songs. Once the dance was over everyone filled into the very tiny enclosed hallway to get their coats from the terribly unorganized coat check. As we waited, cramped in the hallway, to be let out I found out that I happen to be very claustrophobic. I ended up having to be let out of the line and then taken outside. I came very close to eating dinner for a second time. After that everyone was rushed into their rooms so as not to be late for curfew, which didn't happen, everything was packed up and everyone went to bed. All in all it was a great closing to an awesome week, minus the claustrophobia.

Meg

Friday's races from the guys perspective- by Daniel Murray

The morning greeted us with cloudy skies and the smell of snow in the air. A 2.5km loop, which lapped through the stadium twice, was bound to make for some exciting spectating. And no other province spectates like the Nova Scotians. That flag waving, whistle blowing, trumpeting, fog horn noisy mob of folk from Nova Scotia refreshed skiers each time they flew through the stadium. Well, at least the eastern skiers were refreshed because westerners did not seem too fond of the fog horn(sucks to be them). However, the snow held itself back for the men's race. I stood on the start line as the first Nova Scotian in the relay. The plan was to conservatively start and place myself in good

position with the leaders and use the draft to pull me around the course. The plan changed when the gun sounded. I lived 15 seconds of glory as I annihilated everyone out the start and hit the downhill with a small gap behind me. But the pace was hot by the time we hit the first uphill and a throng of madmen hammered past me. I choose to hammer along with these madmen but I was dropped around the 2km mark. The rest of the race was painful and I came into the tag in 7th place and sent Chris Algar on his way. And he had a good leg. He was climbing hill as elegantly as ever(it looked to be the same speed as the leaders to me) and he passed two other teams but was passed by Newfoundland superstar, Lee Churchill. Chris flew into the tag in 6th place to tag Ian to initiate the skating legs of the relay. Ian was as fast as usual. But the boy is a master drafter and unfortunately, there were no teams in close proximity to work with. But he flew and he tagged anchorman, Charles Curtis who took off like bat out of hell. When all was said and done, Ontario won, dropping Alberta on the final leg. Quebec was third and closing fast on Alberta, Newfoundland, a strong 4th, then it was BC and then it was us. Good job boys.

Then it was Nova Scotia's moment of glory when our mascot, Osie, kicked Tautuit's butt in a mascot race. That bunny didn't stand a chance either. It goes to show that Nova Scotia has the best mascot cross-country ski racing program in the country.

And now for the ladies. Many provinces put their fastest gals in the first leg and my were they moving even with all the snow that was falling. Margaret was moving too, but not at the pace to the superstars ahead of her. At least she had a smile the whole way. She came into the tag in 9th place. Meg was our second classic skiing girl, and she showed a lot of stamina and skill for a person with so little classic experience. Krista started off the skating legs and ate up the course with a flurry of tempo and power. Considering she was plagued with injuries, she skied well. Then it was our anchor leg, Kate (I liked the shorts) who skied well but unfortunately was passed by a bud spud to be put back into 11th place. And that is how the girls finished. Alberta won, Quebec second, Ontario third. It was an exciting race and our girls had good times for a relatively young team.

All in all, I had fun with all of you in Newfoundland and it is nice to periodically reflect on the time spent there to escape from the present reality of schoolwork. Take care y'all.
Cheerio
Daniel

Saturday February 27, 1999, Day 7, Canada Games By Lilla Roy

.... We rose from our beauty rest at 7:00. Our bags had to be packed, sheets off our beds, and us wonderful athletes out of the dorms by 8:30 am sharp. Some of us hurried through breakfast (don't know why) and some of us took our time to eat everything. (Charles, Ian, as usual... just kidding). We just hung out everywhere until 11:30, did some last minute shopping, finished off email, and watched some TV We were free to do what we wanted. At 11:30 we had to say goodbye to Krista and Daniel (bye guys!!) finally on our way at 12:30. Nice LONG 2 hour bus ride through more snowy weather. Got to the holding pen at around 2:30, and stayed there for half an hour. The NS plane got to leave early, and fun flight home. Mainland parents met us at the airport, and then we went

to Sue's for pizzas. They were good... invented a new race series and around 10:30 we (Margret, Kate and me) left. Meg's parents came later and the guys stayed with Sue for the night.

That concludes Lilla's games experience!! whoopy!!

Krista's view of the day

I can only talk about the morning because you guys left at 11:30 am. The day started at 7:30 am. I think we all showered but I can not say for everyone. Then we all had to strip our bedding then carry our bags down to army trucks. After that we hung out in the TV room until 11:00am, then headed to the cafe for a bite to eat. Then the team said our good byes and the rest of the day Dan hung out with his parents and I did homework and finished up my diary of the games.

That's all for now,

Krista

That concludes a fabulous week in Corner Brook Newfoundland. I think a huge THANK YOU must go to Don MacKinnon who gladly accepted the assistant coach position after Mike got the job in the North. Don had unending energy and enthusiasm the entire week even with no sleep. We all really enjoyed having you as part of the NS team and look forward to skiing with you again. I also must thank Dennis Doyon for all his work as manager. The team really appreciated all the time and energy you spent (on all trips) making sure everyone was happy. You are a master at juice making and became very competent as a wax tester too. It was great to know that the athletes were always looked after.

The other group of people that helped make this such a great experience were the spectators, there were at least 16 from NS that I saw, parents, siblings, grandmother, friends and two team members. They carried flags, blew horns, conch shells, whistles, bells and a fog horn. Thank you, your support was tremendous.

Linda, Ken, Stephen and Marjorie Murray, Maurice and Sandra Curtis, Dave and Rosemary Algar, Linda and Mike Doyon, Eddie and Edward MacLean, Bryan Scallion Marjorie Roy, Cliff Matthews and Billy Burton

The most important people in this event were the athletes. You are all fabulous. To think that 5 of you were attending your second games and 2 were alternates for those games. Such an experienced group. This was my third games and definitely the best for me. Everyone was so positive and worked so well together. Our age range was 13-22 yet you all worked as a team. That is really something to be proud of. Everyday on and off the trails I was proud. You are all amazing and gave everything you had, no coach could ask for more.