



PAGE D9

HERALDNEWS

Sunday,  
February 12, 2006

## sneakers

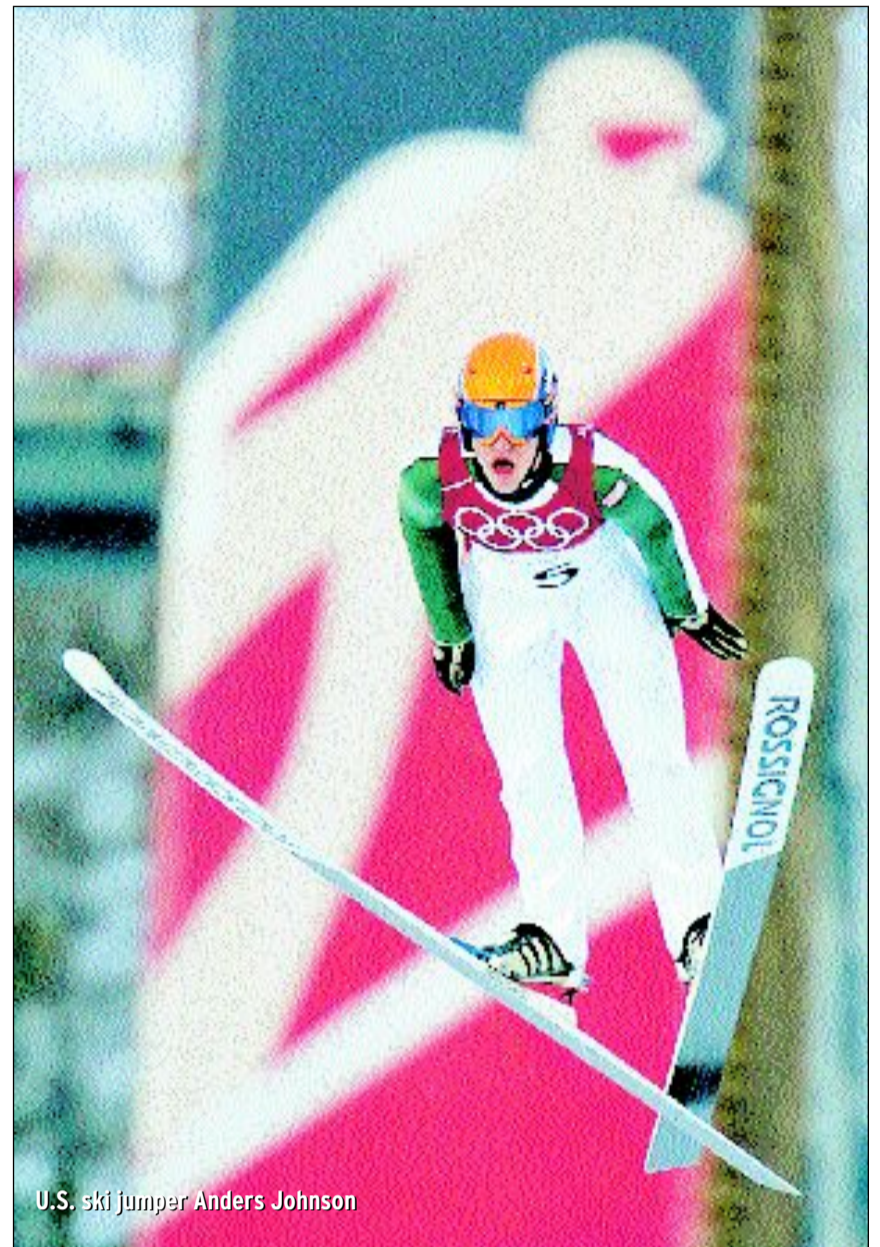
GET INTO  
THE  
GAMESBy MARYLOU TOUSIGNANT  
The Washington Post

The world's best skiers, skaters and sledders are gathering in Turin, Italy, for the Winter Olympics, which began Friday.

Seven sports divided into 15 categories – all of them contested on ice or snow – make up the 2006 Games. Four of the seven (skating, skiing, bobsledding and hockey) are familiar to most of us. The other three (biathlon, curling and luge) might not be.

Some sports have several events. (There are 84 events in which athletes can win medals.) Skiing, for instance, includes downhill, ski jumping and snowboarding. Skating includes figure skating, ice dancing and speed skating. Got that?

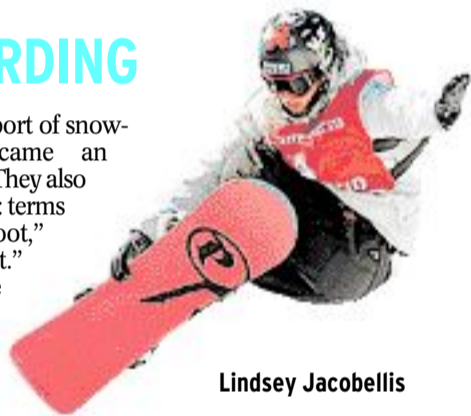
KidsPost explains some of what you'll see at the Games in Turin (Torino in Italian). They offer a great chance to discover new sports – and maybe find a new favorite athlete.



U.S. ski jumper Anders Johnson

## SNOWBOARDING

Surfers gave us the sport of snowboarding, which became an Olympic event in 1998. They also inspired its unique lingo: terms such as "fakie," "duckfoot," "slob air" and "McTwist." Keep your eye on the U.S. team's Lindsey Jacobellis. The 20-year-old is favored to win the women's snowboard cross event.



Lindsey Jacobellis

## SLEDDING

There are three sledding events in the Games: skeleton (face-first), luge (feet-first) and bobsled (sitting, hunched over). Speeds faster than 80 miles per hour are common. Mellisa Hollingsworth-Richards hopes to bring home Canada's first medal in skeleton, a sport that got its name in 1892 from a mostly metal sled that reminded people of a skeleton. In luge (a French word for sled), Germany's Georg Hackl will be competing in his sixth Olympics. Nicknamed "The Speeding Sausage," Hackl already has three gold medals and two silvers.

## FIGURE SKATING

Kimmie Meissner, of Bel Air, Md., could get an Olympic medal before she gets her driver's license. The 16-year-old is on the U.S. team with Michelle Kwan, 25, and Sasha Cohen, 21. The last three women's champs have all been teens. Two were 16. A good sign for Kimmie?

## CURLING

Curling began on frozen ponds in 16th-century Scotland, using big river rocks. Today's granite stones, which weigh 42 pounds, come from a Scottish quarry. Curling is like shuffleboard on ice. Points are based on where the stones end up. Teammates sweep the ice to stop the rocks at a good spot. Brooms also can be used by the shooter for balance.

## HOCKEY

Some 3,500 pucks will be used by the 20 ice hockey teams in Turin. The pucks come from a small Czech company called Gufex. It uses a secret rubber-making formula, so its pucks don't scuff the ice. Gufex can make 5,000 pucks a day. It ships as many as 700,000 to the United States each year.

Shani Davis



## SPEEDSKATING

American Shani Davis holds the world speedskating record at 1,000 meters. He will skate in that and two other events in Turin. Now 23, Davis began skating at a roller rink when he was 2-1/2. He switched to ice at age 6. Four years ago he became the first African-American athlete to make a U.S. Olympic speedskating team.

## SKIING

Alpine skiing is one of the most exciting Olympic sports. The U.S. team has a lofty goal of capturing eight medals in the 10 events. One medal hopeful is Ted Ligety, 21, in slalom. Ligety, whose nickname is "Ligety Split," had three top-three finishes this season. Men's slalom racers must pass through more than 50 gates (set up with poles) on a short, steep course.



Ted Ligety

Photos by The Associated Press

## FIRST WINTER OLYMPICS

## Chamonix, France, 1924

- Some 250 athletes from 16 nations took part.
- Norway and Finland captured 28 of the 45 medals.
- The United States won four, including the first gold ever awarded at a Winter Olympics, which went to speed skater Charles Jewtraw.
- Canada's men's hockey team won its five games by a combined score of 110 to 3.
- Among the 11 female athletes was Norwegian skater Sonja Henie. Just 11, she finished last but came back to win gold medals in the next three Winter Olympics.

## BY THE NUMBERS

## Turin 2006

- 6 Time difference in hours (Turin is six hours ahead of New Jersey.)
- 8 Competition sites
- 84 Sporting events
- 650 Judges and referees needed
- 1,026 Medals to be awarded
- 2,500 Athletes participating (211 on the U.S. team)
- 10,000 Journalists attending
- 1 million People expected to attend

Source: International Olympic Committee

– The Washington Post

Smoochy and squeezey stories add  
sweetness to Valentine's DayBy MICHELE SIUDA JACQUES  
Knight Ridder News Service

Get ready for Valentine's Day reading with lots of XOXO's between two covers.

"I Will Kiss You (Lots & Lots & Lots!)" by Stoo Hample (Candlewick, \$15.99) is an adorable book depicting all the silly ways parents show affection throughout the day. The cartoonish illustrations show a mom showering her child with kisses – from a peck on her hair to smooches for her stuffed animals to nibbles on her toes at bedtime.

Welcome your preschooler to "Hugville" by Court Crandall (Random House Books for Young Readers, \$13.95), a town that has very fun ways of showing affection. Read along for instructions on such hugs as the Octopus Hug and the Tornado Hug. Crandall says he wrote this book for his children when they

started to turn away from his simple hugs. Joe Murray's lively illustrations add to the spontaneity and physicality of the book.

"I Love Messes!" and "I'm All Dressed!" (Little, Brown, each \$7.99) from the Just Being Me series are great for both children and parents to see how compromise really can make everyone happier. The books by Robie H. Harris, colorfully illustrated by "Sylvia" cartoonist Nicole Hollander, focus on the struggles parents have with their children not wanting to conform to expectations. In the end, kids get their way some of the time and parents learn that sometimes the right way isn't the only right way. It's OK to wear your sweatshirt on your legs and your mittens on your feet as long as you're warm and happy, for example.

There can hardly be a child who hasn't been exposed to the delights of Eric Carle. He's back

with board book editions of "My Very First Book of Words" and "My Very First Book of Numbers" (Philomel, \$5.99 each), eye-catching books with a clever approach to matching.

Both books are in flip-card form, with each page divided in

half. In "Words," the idea is for the reader to pick a word at the top and then flip through the pictures on the bottom to find its match. In "Numbers," the reader picks a number and then flips through the pictures to find the corresponding fruit. It's also nice that "Words" features both uppercase and lowercase versions of words and that "Numbers" spells out the numerals and the fruit. These are books to grow with.

For all the princesses out there, Jane O'Connor's "Fancy Nancy" (HarperCollins, \$15.99) tells the sweet and funny story of a little girl named Nancy who loves everything fancy and tries to convert her plain family to her ways. More important, even when her plans backfire, Nancy has the support of her family. Robin Preiss Glasser's illustrations are colorfully detailed with all the fuchsia and froufrou a princess would expect.



## KIDS' PICKS

**ENTER NOW:** Kids and teens today have had some hard realities to face – the devastation of 9/11 and the recent natural threats of hurricanes Katrina and Wilma, to name just a few. But have these events spurred any reaction from youth? You bet.

In honor of our young volunteers, Kohl's offers a scholarship program that will recognize nearly 1,500 students who have made a difference in their communities. Nominations for Kohl's Kids Who Care Scholarship Program will be accepted from Feb. 1 through March 15, and must be submitted by an adult. So show this column to someone you volunteer with, or just print out an application and leave it in a strategic place around the house.

Find the forms at Kohl's stores or at [www.kohls.com/corporation.com](http://www.kohls.com/corporation.com) (go to "community relations" and choose the top link). The nominations must be returned to a participating Kohl's store in person or by mail.

Nominees will be judged in two age groups: 6-12 and 13-18. Two winners will be selected from each store – one in each age group. Store winners receive a \$50 gift certificate and compete for one of 148 regional scholarships worth \$1,000 each. Regional winners then compete for one of 10 \$5,000 scholarships, five in each age group. National winners will be announced in July.

– Knight Ridder News Service