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August 18, 2005

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## > WHAT WAS IT REALLY LIKE?

### Chantal Eustace

Dose

I started off on the wrong foot, with my laces untied, you could say.

The schedule I had to wear laminated on a lanyard around my neck freaked me out and before I even got to Whistler, B.C., I was worrying about a potential "Kumbaya"-type weekend; what if we had to hold hands, braid each other's hair and chant around a fire?

Last weekend, I embarked on an all-girl, feel good and get fit conference in a mountain paradise. What did I have to complain about? I was staying at a nice hotel, booked to do all sorts of neat activities, such as pole-dancing and yoga, but I was wussing out and winging a little.

What a nerd, eh?

After I gave myself a quick talking-to, I realized that there was would be nothing creepy about haging out with a bunch of all-female strangers.

So I bucked up, jumped in and I lived to tell my story. Here's a play-by-play of some of the notable classes I attended while at the Every Woman in the World event in Whistler, B.C.

#### 1 p.m. Friday — Mountain Biking

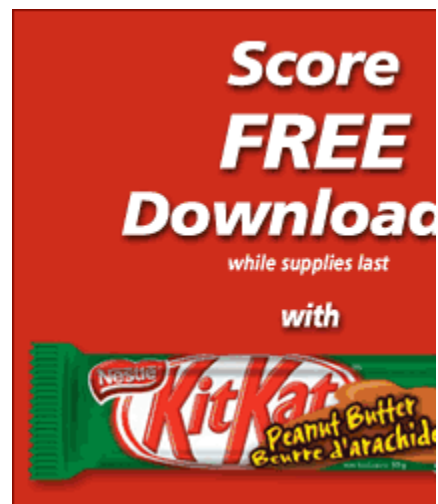
The woman in front of me aims for a big, jutting rock and hops her bike into the air, cranking around a corner, leaving a haze of dust in her wake. How did she do that? I've never even come close to doing this before. Then I remembered our mountain biking guide and inst **WOJCIK**, words of advice. Before we "climbed," (pedalled up the mountain) and began winding the trails back down some less-than-conforting tips. "If you slam your front brake hard, bam, you'll go over the bars," she demonstrated f Gotcha. "If you see a bear, don't scream." **WOJCIK**,23, led us around two beautiful lakes, pointed out a nude beach ; Even though it was scary, there was something amazing about zipping along mountain paths on a bike and even if yo on a helmet before, you'd be fine after a lesson or two. Heck, I even stood on my pedals. Once.

#### 3:30 p.m. Friday — Mountain-top Yoga

We pedalled up to a beautiful wooden building called Spruce Grove. Inside, I planted my roots on a pink mat and wip sunscreen and dust, which left a brown smudge on my T-shirt. Since I know yoga, this felt like a familiar treat. **KIMB CUMMINGS**, 31, a buttery-voiced yogi, shared a tip: "If you find the folds of your skin on the but gets in the way, m



■ Chantal Eustace conquers the universe holding, hair-braiding or chanting neck



Since it was all girls, it's not uncomfortable to, er, spread the bread, so to speak. Next, while doing a downward seat triangle with my body, hands and feet on the mat — there was a weird burn in my elbows. Mountain-bike burn. But t yoga comes into play. It's smooths out knots. "Namaste," says **CUMMINGS** and the class is over.

#### **6:45 a.m. Saturday — Running and intervals in the forest**

I'm dead set against leaving my bed so early on a Saturday morning. It's psychotic, isn't it? But the toned buns in fro me out of my sleepy haze. "Inspiration," mumbles a girl next to me and laughs. There were about 20 women out for 1 — all ages — scuffling along the Whistler Village skate park. "Many people overdo it," says **LYNN KANKUNA**, an Olyr conference organizer, who was encouraging us to slow down. "Just shuffle." Everyone's pace relaxes. It feels like a gy my early teens but without the humiliation factor. And yes, a slow jog does wake up sleepy muscles and feel good.

#### **8 a.m. Saturday — Nia in a classroom**

I'm nervous about Nia, which combines elements of tai chi, yoga and dance. Anything that explores "body-mind aven hokeyness potential. Then **JAN JENSEN**, our smiling instructor, arrives and things started to move. And grunt. And d shake. "Have fun!" whoops **JENSEN**, shaking her fists over her head and then scooping transparent energy up and d her body. I feel like a giant tool at the beginning and embarrassed, especially when we were encouraged to make the laughing sounds, sighs and loud exhales. We were all following her lead, convulsing to trance hippie music. "Let your side," says **JENSEN**. But soon, the class is twisting every body part, laughing, hopping, wiggling and giggling. Nia hel having fun and boosting energy — and it's darn good exercise.

#### **12 p.m. Saturday — Poledancing on portable poles**

Nothing brings a gang of gals together like learning to strip. So right now I'm standing moving my hips in circles. "Im got a pen in your vaginas and each time you rotate you draw a circle," says the instructor, **CAROLINE MACGILLIVR** amazing hair. I look around me, blushing like a prude and giggle. Circles, eh? It all seems very foreign to me — and a "Caress your thighs. Caress your body," she coaxes and demonstrates. So there we are, caressing and doodling with and it's hilarious. And fun. Looking around the class, I learned that the slower you move, the sexier you look. The silli better. "It makes women feel good, sexy and sensual," summed up **MACGILLIVRAY**.

#### **📺 [Watch video of poledancing class](#)**

#### **3:30 p.m. Saturday — Boot camp on the beach**

Walking down the sandy beach of Lost Lake toward our boot camp instructor, **CAT SMILEY**, was a scary and memora Dressed in fatigues, she looked pissed off. We were late and immediately **SMILEY** got everyone doing sit-ups, push-u jacks, then race back and forth before doing more jumping jacks. I couldn't finish the class, so I dragged myself to a watched. Everyone kept laughing, even though they were knackered. Girls really do kick ass.

#### **Every Woman in the World — my official schedule (the one laminated on a chart, roped around my neck)**

##### **Friday**

10 a.m.: jog  
11 a.m.: poolside  
1 p.m.: get fit for bike/helmet  
1:30 p.m.: two-hour guided mountain bike tour  
3:30 p.m.: yoga  
5 p.m.: meditation

##### **Saturday**

7 a.m.: jog  
8 a.m.: nia  
9 a.m.: Pilates  
10:30 a.m.: karate  
12 p.m.: pole dancing  
1 p.m.: belly dancing  
3:30 p.m.: Boot camp  
4:30 p.m.: drumming  
6 p.m.: cosmetics

##### **Sunday**

9 a.m.: reflection walk  
Noon: reiki

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Yes

No

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(Images)



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