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Editorial: Strive For The Podium

The 2010 Winter Olympics are over. After a tragic start, the Games were an unqualified success. As the host country, Canada and all Canadians should feel a tremendous sense of pride. The country garnered a record 14 gold medals, capped off by the heroics of our esteemed hockey team.

Overall, Canada finished third, behind the powerful Americans and the eclectic Germans. Our winning crossed many sports: mens' and women's hockey, ice-dancing, men's curling, men's moguls and women's ski cross, skeleton, snow-boarding, and speed-skating, long track and short track. In all, Canada won 26 medals. We also had the greatest number of fourth and fifth place finishes.

The Americans, too, can feel proud. They won the most medals, 37 and, with 15 silver, were always in contention for gold in so many disciplines.

Our national pride is deep-felt and our gratitude to the citizens of Vancouver and Whistler for showing such grace and friendliness to our international guests is genuine.

Yet, Canada was scorned, particularly in the British press (those who live in glass houses should not throw stones: the British are up next with the summer Games of 2012 in London!), for our "Own the Podium" program. The international community looks on Canadians as being quiet, conservative, polite to a fault, and modest. For us to exhibit brashness and show some conceit is unknown and out-of-character. Perhaps the name chosen could have been better. How about "Strive for the Podium"? The goal is the same: to perform to the best of our ability.

We did that. Hopefully, with the whole country crystallized behind this magnificent showing, Canada may realize that it has the new-found ability to exert itself to a greater extent on the world's stage. Government should seize the moment, capitalize on our well-deserved respect, and foster and promote Canada and Canadian business in the international arena.

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