

POST'S
GUIDE
to the
PAN AM
GAMES



BASEBALL

GUIDE TO THE GAMES

BY ERIKA GILBERT, NATIONAL POST

Venue

President's Choice Ajax Pan Am
Ballpark

Venue acronym

AJX

Landmark status

Low

The existing Ajax Sportsplex was modified for the Games, with two soccer fields converted into baseball diamonds to create four “pin-wheels.” It is located at Audley Road and Taunton Road, which is hard to get to from downtown but should at least be mildly amusing to Star Wars fans.

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Other events at venue

Softball

Transit options

The designated transit stop for the ballpark is the Ajax Go Station (take the Lakeshore East Go Train). There will be a Durham Region Transit shuttle to the ballpark from there. If that sounds like too much work, there is parking available about 300 metres from the entrance for \$10 (cash only) for the driving crowd. There is also a bicycle valet if you are coming from elsewhere in Ajax, or wish to try to compensate for all the sitting you'll be doing during the game with a lengthy bicycle trek.

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For exact directions, try:

Triplinx.ca

Schedule

July 11-19 Men's tournament

July 20-26 Women's tournament

[See the full competition schedule at the Pan Am website](#)

How it works

You've probably seen baseball, right? If not, let this [George Carlin's famous baseball vs. football routine](#) inform you: "Baseball is played on a diamond, in a park. The baseball park! ..."

Teams/Nations competing

Women

Canada, Cuba, Puerto Rico,
United States, Venezuela

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Men

Canada, Colombia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, Puerto Rico, United States

Canada's teams

Listed by uniform numbers

Men

4 Pete Orr,
Richmond Hill, Ont.

7 Skyler Stromsmoe,
Bow Island, Alta.

13 Tyler O'Neill, Maple Ridge, B.C.

14 Tim Smith, Toronto

15 Sean Jamieson, Kitchener, Ont.

18 Brock Kjeldgaard,
London, Ont.

19 Tyson Gillies, Vancouver

21 Jesse Hodges, Victoria

22 Kellin Deglan, Langley, B.C.

23 Rene Tosoni,
Port Coquitlam, B.C.

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- 24 Kyle Lotzkar, Delta, B.C.
25 Jasvir Rakkar,
North York, Ont.
26 Jeff Francis, Delta, B.C.
27 Andrew Albers,
North Battleford, Sask.
29 Jared Mortensen,
Abbotsford, B.C.
30 Chris Robinson,
Dorchester, Ont.
32 Shane Dawson,
Drayton Valley, Alta.
34 Evan Rutckyj, Windsor, Ont.
37 Jordan Lennerton,
Langley, B.C.
40 Shawn Hill, Georgetown, Ont.
47 Phillippe Aumont,
Gatineau, Que.
48 Scott Richmond, Vancouver
52 Chris Leroux,
Mississauga, Ont.
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Women

- 2 Kelsey Lalor, Red Deer, Alta.
- 3 Vanessa Riopel,
Repentigny, Que.
- 4 Autumn Mills, London, Ont.
- 5 Nicole Luchanski, Edmonton
- 6 Stéphanie Savoie,
La Pocatière, Que.
- 7 Kate Psota, Burlington, Ont.
- 8 Heidi Northcott,
Rocky Mountain House, Alta.
- 9 Melissa Armstrong,
Saskatoon, Sask.
- 11 Jenna Flannigan,
Cornwall, Ont.
- 12 Ashley Stephenson,
Mississauga, Ont.
- 14 Jessica Bérubé, Québec City
- 17 Veronika Boyd, Whalley, B.C.
- 18 Bradi Wall,
Swift Current, Sask.

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- 19 Amanda Asay,
Prince George, B.C.
- 20 Jennifer Gilroy,
Mississauga, Ont.
- 21 Claire Eccles, Surrey, B.C.
- 22 Daniella Matteucci,
Fruitvale, B.C.
- 28 Rebecca Hartley,
White Rock, B.C.

Tournament format

Women

There are five days of preliminary/round robin games, followed by a gold-medal game for the top two teams in the round-robin standings and a bronze-medal game for the next two teams in the standings.

Men

There are seven days of preliminary/round robin games, with

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the top four teams advancing to the semi-finals. The semi-final winners go on to the gold-medal game while the losers play for bronze.

Results from 2011 Pan Ams

Women

Women's baseball is making its Pan Am Games debut

Men

1. Canada; 2. United States;
3. Cuba

Why it's worth watching

A tournament of their own!
Women's baseball has had a World Cup since 2004 but this will be its first inclusion in a multi-sport Games. And with baseball out of the Olympics — it won't return until 2020 at

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the very earliest — the Pan Am Games are a good place to get your international baseball fix. Hometown fans will see some familiar faces on the Canadian men's team in Jeff Francis and Andrew Albers, who are both with the Toronto Blue Jays' Triple-A team, and Scott Richmond, a former Blue Jay. While the talent on the men's side is generally on the fringes of the major leagues at best, you might find the occasional prospect: Shane Dawson is on the rise with the Jays' Class-A team in Lansing, Mich.; Albert Almora of the Cubs will be playing for the U.S. team and is the No. 46 prospect on MLB.com list.

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Canada pitcher Shane Dawson

Competition outlook

Women

The U.S. would have to be considered the favourite, entering the tournament with the highest ranking (No. 2 according to the International Baseball Federation, behind Japan) and having appeared in five of six World Cup finals — with two wins — since the event's inception. The hometown

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Canadians have a decent shot, though, having won four World Cup medals and fielding the fourth-ranked team. Venezuela, Cuba and Puerto Rico are also ranked in the top 10 in the world.

Men

Canada is the defending champion — the upset over the U.S. was one of the big upsets in Guadalajara — but will have a tough time repeating that feat. Cuba has been dominating this tournament for decades, having won 10 straight titles before falling to the U.S. in the semis in 2011. The Americans should be considered among the favourites again as the highest-ranked team at the tournament. The Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico could also contend.

Photo: John Lott, National Post
