

POST'S
GUIDE
to the
PAN AM
GAMES



BASKETBALL

GUIDE TO THE GAMES

BY ERIC KOREEN, NATIONAL POST

Venue

Ryerson Athletic Centre, which you may know by another name.

Venue acronym

RYA

Landmark status

High

In a prior life, this venue was known as Maple Leaf Gardens, the home of the National Hockey League's Maple Leafs from 1931-99. It was dormant for years after until Loblaw Companies bought the facility in 2004, entering into a joint-use agreement with Ryerson University in 2011. Now, the building is split between Ryerson — the school's gym and ice

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rink are there, and the top-floor arena recently held the CIS Final 8 in men's basketball — and a Loblaws store at street level. If you get hungry in the middle of some games, there is a dynamite prepared-food section. At their prices, you will only save a bit on concessions, though.

Other events at venue

Wheelchair basketball, at the Parapan Am Games.

Transit options

Take Line 1 of the TTC's subway system to College Station, and enjoy a two-minute walk east on Carlton Street to the facility.

For exact directions, try:

Triplinx.ca

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[TTC trip planner](#)

Schedule

	<i>Women</i>	<i>Men</i>
Round robin	July 16-18	July 21-23
Semifinals	July 19	July 24
Final	July 20	July 25

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

How it works

At the opposite ends of a 94-foot parquet floor, there are two hoops, 10 feet off of the ... actually, we are going to assume you have seen basketball before.

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Teams Competing

Women

Group 1

- United States
- Puerto Rico
- Brazil
- Dominican Republic

Group 2

- Canada
- Cuba
- Argentina
- Venezuela

Men

Group 1

- United States
- Brazil
- Puerto Rico
- Venezuela

Group 2

- Canada
- Mexico
- Argentina
- Dominican Republic

Canada's team

Women

Natalie Achonwa, Guelph, Ont.;
Miranda Ayim, London, Ont.;

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Nirra Fields, Lachine, Que.; Kim Gaucher, Mission, B.C.; Miah-Marie Langlois, Windsor, Ont.; Lizanne Murphy, Beaconsfield, Que.; Kia Nurse, Hamilton, Ont.; Katherine Plouffe, Edmonton; Michelle Plouffe, Edmonton; Nayo Raincock-Ekunwe, Toronto; Tamara Tatham, Brampton, Ont.; Shona Thorburn, Hamilton, Ont. Alternates Shay Colley, Brampton, Ont.; Saicha Grant-Allen, Hamilton, Ont.; Jamie Weisner, Clarkston, Wash.

Men

(Tryout roster; final roster to be announced)

Jermaine Anderson, Toronto; Olu Ashaolu, Brampton, Ont.; Anthony Bennett, Toronto; Sim Bhullar, Toronto; Dillon Brooks,

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Mississauga, Ont.; Junior Cadogan, Toronto; Aaron Doornkamp, Odessa, Ont.; Melvin Ejim, Toronto; Carl English, Paradise, N.L.; Devoe Joseph, Pickering, Ont.; Daniel Mullings, Toronto; Jamal Murray, Kitchener, Ont.; Andrew Nicholson, Toronto; Dyshawn Pierre, Whitby, Ont.; Thomas Scrubb, Richmond, B.C.; Kyle Wiltjer, Portland, Ore.

Tournament format

There are three days of round-robin play, with the top two teams in each group advancing to the semifinals. The winners of those games meet in the gold-medal game.

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Andrew Nicholson against Brazil at the Basketball World Cup qualifier in 2013

Photo: Leo Ramirez, AFP/Getty Images

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Results from 2011 Pan Ams

Women

1. Puerto Rico; 2. Mexico; 3. Brazil

Men

1. Puerto Rico; 2. Mexico; 3. U.S.

Why it's worth watching

This is one of the Games' marquee events. While it unfortunately is not being used as an Olympic qualification tournament, it will be a preparation for those tournaments, which take place later in the summer. On the men's side, many NBA players will be playing for their professional teams' entries at the Las Vegas Summer League, but there will be some appearances. For one, former Raptors guard Greivis Vasquez, an ambassador of the event, will play for Venezuela.

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Competition outlook

On the men's side, each country is sending a mix of college-aged players and low-level professionals. For Canada, Minnesota's Anthony Bennett, Orlando's Andrew Nicholson, and Sacramento cast-off Sim Bhullar are among the few NBA players expected in the tournament. It is hard to know how any of the countries will come together, though. Likewise, the women's field is full of young pros and college players. Canada's two stars are Kia Nurse, who helped Connecticut win the NCAA title this spring, and Natalie Achonwa, who is getting over a torn anterior cruciate ligament.