

POST'S
GUIDE
to the
PAN AM
GAMES



MOUNTAIN BIKING

GUIDE TO THE GAMES

BY NICK FARIS, NATIONAL POST

Venue

Hardwood Mountain Bike Park,
Oro-Medonte, Ont.

Venue acronym

HRD

Landmark status

Medium

Regarded as Ontario's foremost cross-country course, Hardwood will get its first taste of international competition when it hosts the Pan Ams.

Other events at venue

None

Transit options

None. Enjoy the scenic drive

GUIDE TO THE GAMES

north up Hwy. 400, slightly past Barrie.

For exact directions, try:

[Games Trip Planner](#)

Schedule

July 12 Women's and men's races

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

How it works

As is apparent in the sport's name, mountain bikers navigate treacherous terrain on two wheels, speeding up hills and off small cliffs as they wind around the course. All riders compete at once; whoever completes a pre-set number of laps fastest wins.

GUIDE TO THE GAMES

One lap of the Hardwood course spans just over five kilometres.

Nations competing

A field of 37 athletes — 21 men and 16 women — is anticipated. Canada automatically qualified two men and two women as the host country.

Canada's team

Women

Emily Batty, Brooklin, Ont.; Catharine Pendrel, Kamloops, B.C.

Men

Raphael Gagné, Québec City; Derek Zandstra, Trenton, Ont.

Tournament format

Unlike sports that plod toward conclusiveness with several preliminary heats, Pan Am mountain

GUIDE TO THE GAMES

bikers only get one race to prove their mettle (and to win a medal). The women compete on the morning of July 12, and the men's race is set for the afternoon.

Results from 2011 Pan Ams

Men

1. Hector Paez, Colombia; 2. Max Plaxton, Canada; 3. Jeremiah Bishop, U.S.

Women

1. Heather Irmiger, U.S.; 2. Lorenza Morfin, Mexico; 3. Amanda Sin, Canada.

Why it's worth watching

Some people climb mountains. Most regard them with distant unease. Only a select few think to zigzag around them on a springy pair of wheels, pursuing global

GUIDE TO THE GAMES

glory and the admiration of curious fans. The next best thing to actually doing it yourself, as always, is watching.

Competition outlook

Men

The outlook is positive for Canada. Zandstra (31st) and Gagné (34th) enter with the second- and third-best international rankings among Pan Am racers, boding well for a dual medal shot. Argentina's Catriel Soto is 27th on a world list heavily dotted with Swiss, French and other European racers.

Women

Canada's chances are even better on the women's side. Catharine Pendrel, the 2007 Pan Am champion, is ranked second in

GUIDE TO THE GAMES

the world, and will be expected to win at Hardwood Hills. Team-mate Emily Batty is eighth-ranked internationally, while their next-best competitor — Brazil's Raiza Goulao-Henrique — currently is 24th.