

POST'S  
GUIDE  
*to the*  
PAN AM  
GAMES



RACQUETBALL

# GUIDE TO THE GAMES

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**BY NICK FARIS, NATIONAL POST**

## **Venue**

Exhibition Centre

## **Venue acronym**

EXC

## **Landmark status**

*Medium*

Typically called the Direct Energy Centre, this is the newest building on the Exhibition Place grounds, near the Toronto waterfront.

## **Other events at venue**

Handball, indoor volleyball, roller figure skating, squash

## **Transit options**

The Exhibition grounds (Pan Am

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Park) is served by a number of TTC buses and streetcars

- 509 Harbourfront streetcar from Union Station (Line 1 subway)

- 511 Bathurst streetcar from Bathurst Station (Line 2 subway)

- 29 Dufferin bus from Dufferin (Line 2) and Wilson (Line 1) stations

- 193 Exhibition Rocket temporary express bus from Dundas West Station (Line 2)

- You can also take the GO Train to the Exhibition stop on the Lakeshore West line.

For exact directions, try:

[Triplinx.ca](http://Triplinx.ca)

[TTC trip planner](#)

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## **Schedule**

*July 19-21* Singles and doubles round-robin matches

*July 22* Singles and doubles round of 16 matches and quarter-finals

*July 23* Singles and doubles semi-finals

*July 24* Singles and doubles finals; team quarter-finals

*July 25* Team semi-finals

*July 26* Team finals

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

## **How the sport works**

There are two (or more) players, four walls and one very bouncy ball. The objective is to knock the ball off the front wall and out of the opponent's reach, hitting any

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surface within the boundaries of play in the process. Points are scored if the ball is hit out of bounds or strikes the floor twice.

Matches are best-of-three sets — the first two to 15 points, with a tiebreaker to 11 if necessary. Players only need a one-point advantage at the end of a set to win.

## **Nations competing**

A total of 56 players (30 men and 26 women) from 13 countries qualified. Canada is the lone country with the maximum number of entrants — eight — while the United States will feature seven.

## **Canada's team**

*Men*

Vincent Gagnon, Montreal; Mike

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Green, Hamilton; Coby Iwaasa, Lethbridge, Alta.; Tim Landeryou, Saskatoon

## *Women*

Frédérique Lambert, Montreal; Michèle Morissette, Baie Comeau, Que.; Christine Richardson, Regina; Jennifer Saunders, Winnipeg

## **Tournament format**

There will be six different events: men's and women's singles, doubles and teams. The singles and doubles brackets will go from round-robin play into the single-elimination medal rounds, while team competitions — featuring three players a side, each individually facing one opponent — start in the quarter-finals.

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## **Results from 2011**

Mexico won five of six gold medals, all split among four players: Alvaro Beltran, Javier Moreno, Paola Longoria and Samantha Salas. Rocky Carson of the U.S. won the men's singles competition. Canada earned two bronze medals.

## **Why it's worth watching**

Squash has received ample hype for its push to be included at the 2020 Olympics, but its wall-ball cousin should not be overlooked. Racquetball is similar, in a sense, to the circus: as spectators watch, the players leap and lunge like acrobats in the enclosed court. Elite athleticism, reaction and hand-eye co-ordination will be on display.

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## **Competition outlook**

Mexico's very best are back. Beltran and Moreno will be the players to beat in the men's doubles and team categories, but Carson is still the preeminent Pan Am singles player, entering the competition ranked second in the world. Everyone will be gunning for him.

Longoria, meanwhile, is the world's best women's player, and could easily claim three gold medals once again, individually and in doubles and team with Salas. American Rhonda Rajsich was the only player to win a set against Longoria in 2011. Distant hopes of an upset reside with Rajsich and Canada's Lambert.