POST'S GUIDE to the PAN AM GAMES



By Erika Gilbert, National post

Venue

Ontario Place West Channel

Venue acronym OPW

Landmark status

Medium

The venue is part of CIBC Pan Am Park, which comprises all the facilities at Exhibition Place. The Ontario Place West Channel is located along a man-made channel by Lake Shore Boulevard and Lake Ontario and named for nearby Ontario Place (a multiuse site that formerly included a theme park and is now under redevelopment). The venue

includes grandstands that will give spectators a view of the swimming course, finish line and area where athletes transition from swimming to biking and from biking to running.

Other events at venue

Athletics, road cycling (Pan Am and Parapan Am), open water swimming, waterski/wakeboard

The venue page at the TO2015 website as road closure maps of the various event courses.

Transit options

CIBC Pan Am Park is served by a number of TTC buses and streetcars:

• 509 Harbourfront streetcar from Union Station (Line 1)

- 511 Bathurst streetcar from Bathurst Station (Line 2)
- 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. If you must drive, be prepared to be frustrated by road (particularly Lake Shore Blvd.) and parking lot closures and Pan Am-related traffic.

For exact directions, try:

Triplinx.ca

TTC trip planner

Schedule

July 11 Women's race July 12 Men's race

See the full competition schedule at the Pan Am website

How the sport works

As the prefix suggests, triathlon involves three elements swimming, biking and running. In that order. The distances vary — the Pan Am Games uses the Olympic-distance 1,500-metre open-water swim, 40-kilometre bike ride and 10-kilometre run.

Nations competing

Twenty countries have registered athletes to compete in the triathlon, with 66 in total on the event's provisional list.

Canada's team

Women

Joanna Brown, Carp, Ont.; Paula Findlay, Edmonton; Ellen Pennock, Calgary

Men

Kyle Jones, Oakville, Ont.; Tyler Mislawchuk, Oak Bluff, Man.; Andrew Yorke, Caledon East, Ont.



Kyle Jones at 2012 Olympics

Tournament format

One women's race, one men's race. Top three finishers get medals.

Results from 2011

Women

- 1. Sarah Haskins, United States
- 2. Barbara Riveros Diaz, Chile
- 3. Pamella Nascimento, Brazil *Men*
- 1. Reinaldo Colucci, Brazil
- 2. Manuel Huerta, United States
- 3. Brent McMahon, Canada

Why it's worth watching

Because that's a lot of ground/ water to cover in the two-ish hours it takes Pan Am athletes to complete the race, and it's pretty impressive. And there are Olympic berths to compete

for — one each for the men's and women's gold medallists. Then there's the Paula Findlay story. After a tearful last-place finish following an injury and an undiagnosed iron deficiency at the 2012 London Olympics, where she was a favourite, the Canadian struggled to get and stay healthy for two years before returning to international competition last summer. Her comeback is one to keep an eye on. Plus, you know, there are worse ways to spend a summer morning than sitting by the lake.

Competition outlook

Canada, the U.S., and Brazil have historically won the most triathlon medals at the Games, and Mexico and Argentina have

also succeeded in qualifying a lot of athletes. In addition to Findlay, the Canadian team includes World Cup medallists Pennock and Yorke. The U.S. team includes Haskins, the defending Pan Am Games champion, and multiple medallist Hunter Kemper.

Photo: Sean Kilpatrick, The Canadian Press