



# Day 1 2009 CrossFit Games

Five WODs have narrowed the field at The Ranch in Aromas. Only 32 competitors will compete for the overall title on Day 2.

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Mike Warkentin

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The contest to decide the Word's Fittest Man and Woman began three seconds after the American national anthem ended.

"Three, two, one... Go!" said Games Director Dave Castro.

Moments earlier, Coach Greg Glassman had opened the Games with a brief speech to a loud and enthusiastic crowd gathered in the sunshine at The Ranch.

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The athletes, all carrying computer chips, sprinted over the timing pads and across the Stadium to open the run down the road and up and around The Hill. As expected, Spealler came down The Hill first but was being stalked by Finnish firefighter Mikko Salo. When the two entered the Stadium in a sprint to the finish, it was Speal still in front, adding yet another impressive performance to a list that goes back to the 2007 Games.

Sarah Dunsmore won the women's event, Lauren Erwin was second, and Carey Kepler was third.

When asked if The Hill was as steep as he thought it would be, James (OPT) FitzGerald—who was covered in dirt and grass—was blunt: "It's worse."

After opening the competition with an endurance event, Games organizers chose a deadlift ladder for WOD 2.

Sixteen men managed to pull their way through a series of bars loaded from 315 to 505, creating a log-jam tie for first.

Jerome Perryman boasts a max deadlift of 606 and blitzed through the bars.

"It was pretty easy, yeah," he said. "I wish they would have gone up a little higher to separate us more."

Twenty-one females broke the 300 lb. mark, and Cyndi Frieling PR'd by 10 lb., lifting 375. Caroline Attmore and Jenny Olson tied for second, both with 355.

WOD 3 was a sprint with sandbags on shoulders—one 35 lb. bag for women, two for men. Athletes tore out of the Stadium and up the hill only to find a grind of a climb on the way up the viciously steep slope.

For some the sprint turned into a walk. For others, such as Pat Barber, it was top gear all the way. Barber set the pace early in the heats with a 1:06.8 that stood for several heats.

Barber actually had a false start, which oddly worked to his advantage. He was one of the few athletes to carry his sandbags behind his neck and dropped them as he was loading.

"I picked them up on my shoulders turned around and I was like, 'Well, whatever. Looks like I have to play catch-up,'" he said. After the restart, Barber loaded the bags with ease and ripped up the hill.

The men's event was won by Icelander Sveinbjorn Sveinbjornsson, with Spencer Hendel and D.J. Whickham close behind. Annie Thorisdottir won the women's event in 1:07.4, with Carey Kepler second and Lauren Pryor third.

The fourth event was a "blue-collar workout" that featured 500-meter rows bracketing a sledgehammer stake drive.

Jeff Tincher, a firefighter, set the tone in the first heat with 5:26.8. Other competitors struggled badly with the sledge, with one competitor breaking four of them before completing the event. Others were bleeding after wild swings found flesh instead of metal.

Tincher's strategy was simple: "I was tapping it... I just made sure it was solid in my left hand. It stopped wobbling, I stepped back, and it wobbled a little bit. Three more taps and it stopped wobbling, and then it was just chopping wood or chopping a hole in a roof."





Tommy Hackenbruck crushed the WOD in a top time of 4:36 and attributes his success to his old job: up until three months ago he worked construction and used a hammer six days a week for three years.

"I got a text message from my wife when the WODs were posted," Hackenbruck said. "She saw wall ball and sledges, so I got pretty excited being a tall guy who swings a hammer for a living."

The top men's finishers were Hackenbruck, Jeff Leonard and Moe Kelsey. Sarah Dunsmore won her second WOD of the day with a speedy 5:33.8, and she was followed by Katie Hogan and Carey Kepler.

Saturday's final WOD was savage: three rounds of 30 wall-ball shots and 30 squat snatches. Early in the first round of the first men's heat, it was clear the workout would be a challenge that would send many athletes home from the games with a solid kick in the ass.

The powerful Josh Everett was in the first heat, and other competitors were watching him closely to get a feel for the WOD. Everett is the best Olympic lifter in the Games, but 75 lb. is a met-con weight that had him struggling for breath, wincing and grabbing his back.

Vic Zachary from Bayou City CrossFit was in the same heat and said the WOD was brutal.

"On everything else today you were able to rest... but with this your legs were already burnt and you just keep going," Zachary said. "Your snatch and your wall ball, it was just legs, legs, legs."

At the end of the night, Jason Khalipa, Tommy Hackenbruck and Blair Morrison had the top times. For the women it was Carey Kepler, Sarah Dunsmore and Rebecca Voigt who crushed the WOD.

The regional qualifiers produced CrossFit's top athletes, and the Day 1 WODs distilled them further. Only 32 athletes will return to compete on Day 2, where one man and one woman will be crowned the 2009 CrossFit Games champions.



### Top 16 Men

1. Tommy Hackenbruck
2. Moe Kelsey
3. Mikko Salo
4. Peter Egyed
5. Steve Willis
6. Spencer Hendel
7. James FitzGerald
8. David Millar
9. Sveinbjorn Sveinbjornsson
10. Blair Morrison
11. Patrick Burke
12. Jason Khalipa
13. Jeff Leonard
14. Jeremy Thiel
15. D.J. Whickham
16. Michael FitzGerald

### Top 16 Women

1. Tanya Wagner
2. Annie Thorisdottir
3. Sarah Dunsmore
4. Carey Kepler
5. Charity Vale
6. Kristan Clever
7. Lindsay Smith
8. Cyndi Frieling
9. Laura DeMarco
10. Christy Phillips
11. Jolie Gentry
12. Lauren Pryor
13. Jenny Olson
14. Stacey Kroon
15. Crystal McCreynolds
16. Tamara Holmes