

## Let the CrossFit Games Begin

Behind the Scenes at The Ranch in Aromas, California

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Mike Warkentin

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**The equipment presently at The Ranch reads like an affiliate owner's wish list:**

- 15,000 pounds of bumper plates
- 30 rowing machines
- 50 barbells
- 40 plyo boxes
- 50 med balls
- 12 GHDs
- 50 sets of dumbbells
- 15 squat/press stands
- 25 sets of rings
- 50 sandbags
- 60 kettlebells
- 50 jump ropes
- 20 sets of parallettes

*Just days from now, over 2,500 people will converge on The Ranch to watch the world's fittest athletes compete.*

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### The Gear

That list includes just about every piece of equipment you'll ever see in a CrossFit WOD—and it's all available for use during the 2009 CrossFit Games, to be held July 10-12 in Aromas, California. The workouts themselves are still a closely guarded secret, but it's clear that organizers will not be limited by gear when programming the WODs that will challenge the world's fittest athletes.

According to CrossFit HQ, most of the equipment was purchased from [Rogue Fitness](#) at a cost of about \$25,000. [Sandbag Fitness Systems](#) provided the sandbags, while the kettlebells came from [Torque Athletic](#). [Sorinex](#) delivered the GHDs, and [Regupol America](#) came through with \$10,000 in flooring.

[Garage Gym](#) supplied 10 bars and a host of bumper plates for the warm-up area. [Gymboss](#) provided over 900 timers, and [York Barbell](#) delivered the squat press stands. [Rage Fitness](#) is behind the jump ropes, and [Forged Clothing](#) will be supplying the athletes with shirts.

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While you're trying to figure out what it all means, rest assured that the mountain of gear at the site will require the top athletes to be masters of every CrossFit movement. Specialists need not attend—and cheaters are similarly unwelcome.

The exacting standards of judging that characterized the first two CrossFit Games will be in effect once again, and [Skins USA](#) will be on hand to take urine samples from every competitor. The samples will be analyzed for performance-enhancing substances at a cost of well over \$20,000. Positive tests will erase an athlete's placing and result in the forfeiture of any prizes.



*With less than a week to go, Games Director Dave Castro discusses coverage details with filmmaker Sevan Matossian.*

With competitors pushing themselves well into the red in the California heat, a large medical team of about 17 will support the athletes as they compete. Made up of volunteers and health-care professionals, the crew will deal with everything from cramps to calluses.

### The Facility

The Ranch itself has been modified for this year's event—to the tune of about \$98,000. The main competition area was paved in May and June to offer athletes more stable footing, and the hill around the competition area has been re-graded. Rugged athletes will be happy to know that the nasty terrain of the surrounding trails remains savage and unaltered.

Over 200 volunteers will help run the Games, keeping score, judging, compiling data and filling a wide variety of support roles. While many reside in California, volunteers are flying in from all over North America and beyond to be a part of the event.

Approximately 2,500 spectators are expected at The Ranch—a number that's three times larger than the attendance for the 2008 Games. To service the army of CrossFitters, the site will feature bleachers, a host of food vendors, a beer garden, a kids' area and a seemingly endless row of portable toilets. Space will be provided for both those who choose to "camp" in an RV and those who don't mind nylon walls and doors with zippers instead of handles.

New to the event will be a JumboTron, which was added to the list after CrossFit Games Director Dave Castro saw one in use at the Hell's Half Acre Regional Qualifier in Texas in early May. Aside from broadcasting movement-standards videos and live coverage of the events throughout day, the JumboTron will screen Sevan Matossian's *Pulling John* on Friday evening, July 10. A recent selection of the South by Southwest Film

Festival, the documentary follows world-champion arm wrestler John Brzenk as he defends his title against two younger challengers.

The Games promise to be a multimedia extravaganza. Justin Judkins will host special editions of *CrossFit Radio* on Friday evening and throughout the day on Saturday and Sunday. Four video crews and seven still photographers will document the events from every angle. An incredible 60 terabytes of hard-drive space will be at the Games site to accommodate the IT requirements of the

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*About \$55,000 was spent paving the competition area and re-grading the land around it.*

## Behind the Preparation ... (continued)

media teams and event staff. Verizon and AT&T plan to increase network capacity in the area for the duration of the competition, allowing CrossFitters around the world to access instant updates that will be uploaded after the scores from each event are compiled. The staff of the *CrossFit Journal* will be on hand to produce constant updates and reports.

The official program *Unknown and Unknowable: The 2009 CrossFit Games* will be available online and at the Games site for \$20. A full-colour, 158-page publication featuring the history of the CrossFit Games, summaries of every qualifier, stats and pictures of every competitor, and a message from Coach Greg Glassman, *Unknown and Unknowable* is the definitive guide to the Games.

### 3-2-1... Go!

From start to finish, thousands of hours have gone into organizing the 2009 CrossFit Games and making sure they challenge the sport's fittest athletes. But when the competition begins on July 10, the Games won't be about hours.

They'll be about seconds.



### About the Author

*Mike Warkentin is the staff writer for the **CrossFit Journal**. He'll be covering the CrossFit Games live from The Ranch, along with a team of video crews and still photographers. Visit the [2009 CrossFit Games](http://www.2009crossfitgames.com) website for continually updated multimedia coverage from July 10 to 12.*



*The large collection of gear at The Ranch is a programmer's dream: anything is possible.*