

Canada's Women Go for Gold – Literally – at the Canadian Indoors this Weekend

When Canada's strongest female rowers line up at the Canadian Indoor Rowing Championships this Sunday, spectators may notice a "new" face in competition this year.

Olympian and Rowing Canada Aviron's VP of High Performance, Phil Monckton, is challenging the women to beat his time on the rowing machine and win an ounce of gold.

Monckton, 58, was a bronze medalist at the 1984 Olympic Games in the men's quad. He will bring the gold, donated by Agnico-Eagle Mines, to the Hershey Centre in Mississauga on Feb. 06.

"I don't intend to make it easy for them," said Monckton, who lives in Toronto, "I have been in 'intensive training' preparing for this race, and I am ready to go!"

Lining up alongside Monckton on Sunday afternoon will be Olympians and members of the 2010 World Rowing Championship silver medal-winning women's eight. The senior women's entry includes Darcy Marquardt of Richmond, B.C., Romina Stefancic of Victoria, B.C., Ashley Brzozowicz of Toronto, Andreanne Morin of Montreal, QC, and Krista Guloien of Port Moody, B.C., along with many others from London, Ontario's national training centre.

Olympic bronze medalist and current World Champion (lightweight women's double) Tracy Cameron of Shubenacadie, N.S. and her Olympic rowing partner Melanie Kok of St. Catharines, Ont. will compete in the senior lightweight women's event a bit earlier in the schedule.

This competition is a prime stop to test winter training progress for rowers getting ready for the next season of on-the-water racing. The event attracts rowers and paddlers from elementary school athletes to Olympic medalists. RCA's development coaches will be on hand to share their indoor rowing tips.

This Sunday's all-day event is part of a series of indoor regattas in Canada this weekend - the largest being CIRC, followed by the Monster Erg in Victoria, B.C. (More info at <http://www.govikesgo.com/>). CIRC has 848 competitors registered, 90 ergs (rowing machines) in the arena on "centre ice." Monster Erg will have between 400 and 500 competitors inside McKinnon Gym at the University of Victoria on Sunday. Other indoor events will be held in Regina, Montreal and Dartmouth, NS.

Free admission. See web for directions to the Hershey Centre:

<http://www.cdnindoorrowing.org/location.html>

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