

Several names floating around regarding who will be first to ride track



Three-time Olympic Cycling medalist Curt Harnett (left) and world-renowned track designer Dale Hughes check out the Siberian spruce wood that was used to construct the velodrome track. *Julie Slack / Canadian Champion*

World-renowned track designer Dale Hughes said he's been able to get everyone from inexperienced children to elite riders comfortable riding the track. He said once you've got your speed up to around 20km/h the corners are no trouble to handle.

Construction of the 154,000 sq.-ft. facility is expected to be completed in October with the velodrome opening to the public in November.

But it remains a tightly-guarded secret just who will be the first to ride the track, which will formally be known as the Cisco Milton Pan Am/Parapan Am Velodrome during the games next July.

Reynolds said there are several names floating around.

Three-time Olympic Cycling medalist Curt Harnett enthusiastically offered.

Harnett said the Siberian pine track — the only such Olympic-regulation indoor cycling track in Canada — is expected to be the home of many new track records. He can't wait to ride it.

"I brought my bike today just in case," he said, and suggested they peel back the wrap that lies on top of it to protect it while further construction takes place inside the facility.

Work continues on the fitness centre, along with basketball, volleyball and tennis courts. The 300-m walking/jogging track is 50 per cent longer than the track at the Milton Sports Centre, said Reynolds, noting it will cost \$25/year to use the three-lane track.

Jason Fellen, senior director of capital projects for Pan Am 2015, said the velodrome is more likely to set records because of its location in Milton.

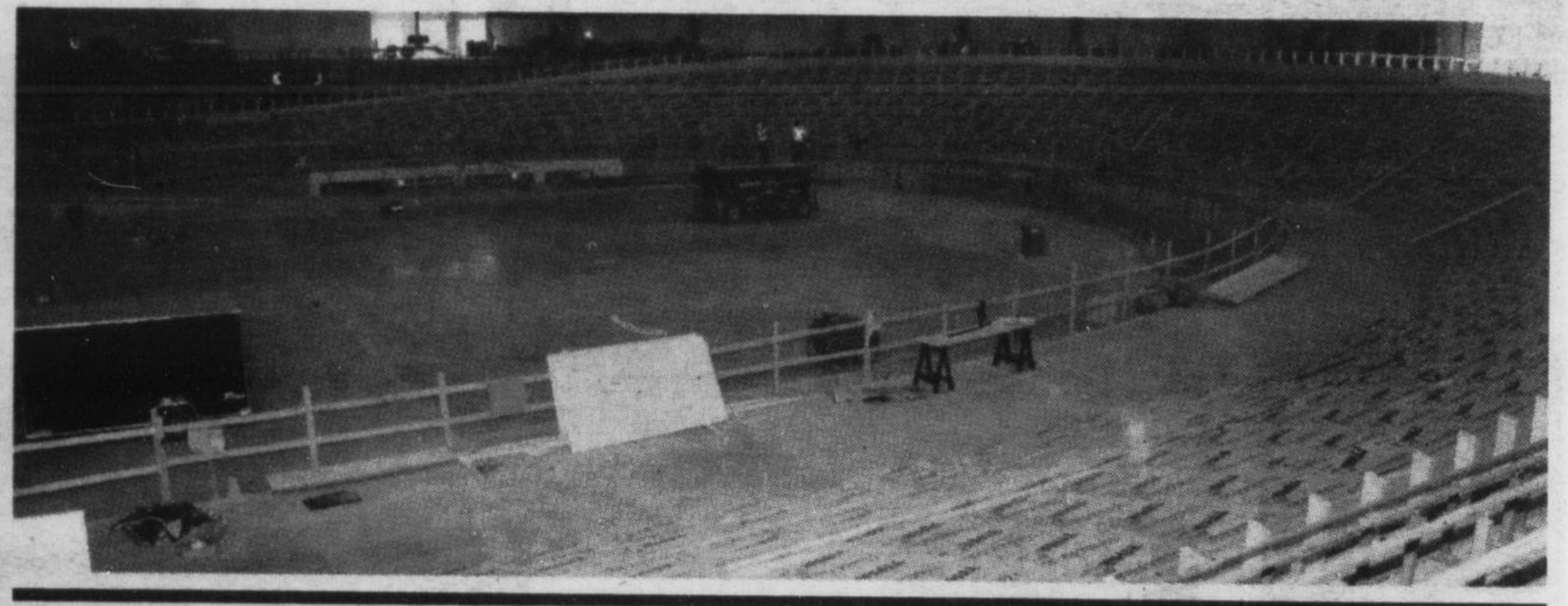
"We're not at high elevations here," he said. "The track will get faster with use too."

For residents who've been watching construction take place over the last year, they can expect terrific views from inside the facility, which cost \$56 million to complete. General public will get into the facility from doors on the Tremaine Road side of the velodrome, Fellen said, while athletes will enter from the escarpment side.

The courts that are in the infield of the track can be used at the same time as the track cycling, but not during race events.

A harsh winter slowed construction and forced a later opening than originally planned, Fellen said.

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