
Ontario Athletes Achieve 6 Medals and 4 Qualifications for Pan Am Games at 2023 Continental Championships

AUGUST 16, 2023 | TORONTO, ON. – Ontario athletes achieved success at the AMBC Elite, Youth & Junior American Boxing Championships hosted in Cali, Colombia from July 31 to August 10, 2023. Six athletes won medals in their respective categories (two gold and four bronze) and all four Elite Ontario athletes qualified for the upcoming [Pan American Games](#).

YOUTH

51-54kg – [Karan Sembhi](#) (King of the Ring)
54-57kg – [Victoria Vergos](#) (Steele Boxing) – BRONZE MEDAL
60-63.5kg – [Owen Paquette](#) (AFT Boxing Brantford)
71-75kg – [Parminder Panu](#) (King of the Ring) – GOLD MEDAL

ELITE

48-51kg – [Justin Parina](#) (Kombat Arts) – BRONZE MEDAL – QUALIFIED FOR PAN AM GAMES
48-50kg – [Mckenzie Wright](#) (City Boxing) - BRONZE MEDAL – QUALIFIED FOR PAN AM GAMES
52-54kg – [Scarlett Delgado](#) (Destiny Boxing) - GOLD MEDAL – QUALIFIED FOR PAN AM GAMES
57-60kg – [Garinder Takhar](#) (Knockout Brampton) - BRONZE MEDAL – QUALIFIED FOR PAN AM GAMES

The athletes' focus, skills, hard work and dedication to training were on full display as Ontario and Canada's athletes brought their all into their matches across the eight days of competition in Colombia. The event featured 219 athletes from 20 countries, and Canada's Youth and Elite team won a total of 22 medals: six gold, eight silver, and eight bronze.

"My bout against Mexico will always be a fight that I will cherish forever," said Justin Parina regarding his exciting quarter-final victory against Mexico's Christopher Guzman Acosta. "This fight displayed my great conditioning and especially my mental strength! The fight with the Mexican slugger was a war of attrition and finesse. During the fight, I would think of my family and push harder because the winner would place in the top four to qualify at Santiago, Chile in the 2023 Pan American Games. In the end, I won decisively, and I was very happy knowing I qualified for the Pan Am Games!" he said.

Scarlett Delgado's technical display of skills was in full force with two decisive unanimous victories on points against Costa Rica's Nicole Barrantes Matley and Ecuador's Helen Michelle Sanchez Palacios to secure her second Continental Championship title. "Some of the takeaways from this Continental tournament was how important it is to stay present and in the moment. There are a lot of external factors that happen at these international tournaments that are beyond our control and have the potential to affect our performance," said Scarlett. "Staying present in the moment and focusing on what I can control during my experience really helped me to preserve my mental energy and manage my stress responses, which ultimately is why I never felt drained mentally or physically going into my matches."

Mckenzie Wright, Garinder Takhar, and Justin Parina faced tough opponents in their semi-final matches—with an extremely close split decision loss for Justin—and emerge even more determined and experienced to take on the international stage again at the Pan Am Games. Team Canada topped the medal standings in the Elite category overall with four gold, five silver, and three bronze medals.



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The Youth team athletes also made Ontario proud with their performances. Karan Sembhi, Owen Paquette, and Victoria Vergos fought with courage and determination in their quarterfinal and semi-final bouts respectively with Victoria claiming a bronze medal in her first international tournament.

Parminder Pannu advanced to the semi-final round and defeated Mexico's Brian Fabian Beyer Lopez with a unanimous decision. In the thrilling final bout against Guatemala's Andres Andhu Flores Hernandez, Parminder took the win with a second-round stoppage and claimed the gold medal.

Whether they were seasoned veterans or embarking on their first international tournaments, all athletes gained valuable international experience and learnings as they prepare for the next steps in their boxing journeys.

The Elite athletes will now turn their focus to preparations for the 2023 Pan Am Games in Santiago, Chile from October 20-November 5, 2023. The Pan Am Games is a direct qualifying event for the 2024 Olympic Games in Paris, France.

"When I stood on the podium, I was very proud and eager for the future because I have secured my spot to my very first games, 2023 Pan American Games, where I have my first shot to Qualify for the Paris 2024 Olympic Games!" commented Justin.

"Next in the agenda in preparation of the Pan American Games is a decent rest period, and then back to training. The goals in training will stay the same, we just have a little more time in these upcoming weeks to periodize the training intensity. We will definitely be working on funding for the upcoming training camp and the Pan Am Games," said Scarlett. "Consistency is what transforms average to excellence."

Boxing Ontario would like to congratulate all the athletes on Team Ontario and Team Canada on their performances at Continentals, commend them on their hard work and dedication leading up to the tournament, and for representing Ontario and Canada so impressively. Congratulations to Mckenzie, Garinder, Justin, and Scarlett on the incredible accomplishment of qualifying for the Pan American Games!

Boxing Ontario would also like to thank the Team Canada and Ontario coaches for supporting the athletes during training camp and competition in Cali, including Ontario coach Sebastian Cordova (DC Boxing Academy Guelph) who was selected by Boxing Canada to accompany the team and support the Youth during competition, and Coaches Socrates Celestial and Syd Vanderpool who were able to support their personal athletes, Justin Parina and Scarlett Delgado, as part of the [High Performance Personal Coach Pilot Program](#).

Links to finals results, replays of the bouts, and athlete profiles are available on Boxing Ontario's [website](#).

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About Boxing Ontario:

Boxing Ontario is the only governing body for Olympic-style boxing in Ontario. As such, it is affiliated with Boxing Canada (CABA), and the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture, & Sport. Founded in 1972, Boxing Ontario encompasses over 150 clubs, 1,500 competitors, and more than 12,000 recreational members.

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Interview Opportunities:

Interviews are available virtually, via email or phone with:

- Athletes and coaches (contacts available upon request)
- Board Members (contacts available upon request)
- Erik Olsen (Executive Director, Boxing Ontario)