

Cycling

The Oregonian TUESDAY, AUG. 19, 2008 | 12TH OF 17

ALL-TIME EVENT MEDALS

FRANCE	38	21	22	81
ITALY	33	16	7	56
ENGLAND	10	20	19	49
USA	13	14	18	45



TODAY'S TV HIGHLIGHTS

2 a.m.: Women's soccer semifinal; men's basketball: Argentina vs. Russia; baseball: USA vs. China;

men's cycling track finals;

men's team handball: Germany vs. Denmark; weightlifting; beach volleyball (live), MSNBC

10 a.m.: Men's volleyball: USA vs. Japan; men's beach volleyball quarterfinals; track & field; men's 3m diving (live), NBC

6 p.m.: Gymnastics recap; equestrian: team jumping final (taped), Oxygen

8 p.m.: Beach volleyball: semifinals; gymnastics: men's individual rings and vault finals, women's individual vault and uneven bars finals; track & field: men's long jump final, women's 800m final (live), NBC

9 p.m.: Men's freestyle wrestling: 55kg, 60 kg (live), CNBC

11 p.m.: Women's basketball: quarterfinals; men's beach volleyball semifinals; table tennis: singles;

cycling: various track finals;

women's team handball (live), USA Network

THE GEAR

Racers wear form-fitting singlets made of smooth, wind-resistant materials such as nylon. Helmets are required in all events, and pursuit riders wear unique, aerodynamic helmets that sweep back over the rider's neck.



THE BIKE

Track racers ride highly specialized – though simplified – bicycles. They have only **one fixed gear**, meaning they can't coast and that it takes a lot of energy to accelerate. Often times **rear or both wheels** are disks instead of traditional spoked rims and hubs, and are installed with smooth, high-pressure tires to reduce friction. There are no brakes installed; cyclists stop by pedaling back.

THE VELODROME

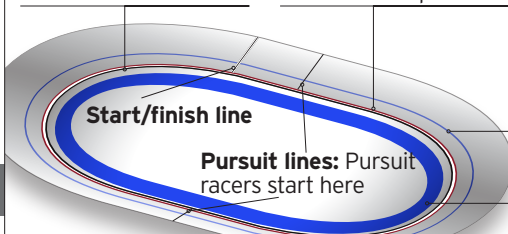
Track cycling events take place on a 250-meter indoor track with high banks to allow for riders to approach 40 mph and still take the tight turns the short distance creates (the Olympic running track, for example, is 400 meters around). The banks in the curves can be up to 45 degrees and 12 on the straightaways.

Pole line: The black inside line of the track. It's 250 meters around.

Sprinter's line: A red line three feet from the inside edge of the track. Riders cannot pass to the inside of it.

Stayer's Line: At least eight feet from the pole line, riders in the keirin race cannot pass to the inside of it.

Blue band: A warm-up lane not used in competition.



THE OBJECT

Track cycling is a racing sport in which athletes ride specialized bikes on a highly banked track called a velodrome. There are a variety of types of races on the track, and the Olympics also feature road, mountain and BMX cycling events.

THE COMPETITIONS

Sprint: A 1,000-meter, two-person race (three- and four-person in repechage and consolation races) in which only the last 200 meters are timed. In the first 800, riders jockey for position.

Team sprint: A 750-meter event in which teams of three riders race at full speed. Each rider leads one 250-meter lap and pulls off the track after leading to leave the remaining teammates to lead or finish the race.

Individual pursuit: A race in which two competitors start on opposite straightaways and attempt to catch and pass each other to win. If no rider is overtaken, the fastest to finish 4000 meters (2.5 miles) wins. A four-rider team event follows similar rules.

Points race: A 40-kilometer (24.9 miles) event in which the fastest rider of every 10th lap of the 160 is awarded points: five points for first, three for second, two for third and one for fourth (double for the final sprint). A rider who goes a lap up on the field gains 20 points. The rider with the most points after the lead rider has finished 40 kilometers wins.

Madison: A two-rider team variation of the points race. Its 200 laps make it 50 kilometers (31.1 miles) with scoring sprint laps occurring every 20th.

Keirin: A 2,000-meter (1.2 mile) race in which the first 1,400 meters' pace is set by a motorcycle that starts at about 20 mph and reaches about 30 mph before exiting the track and allowing a sprint for the finish.

OLYMPIC DEBUT: 1896

Mountain biking was added in 1996 and BMX is new this year.

ONE TO WATCH

England's **Shanaze Reade** won 2007 world titles in track and BMX

U.S. HOPEFUL

Jennie Reed won 2008 women's keirin world championship