

Olympics: 2012 technology put to the test

January 19 2011, by Luc Olinga



The Olympic velodrome is pictured at the Olympic Park in Stratford, East London. Testing got underway Wednesday for London 2012 information technology in a bid to iron out any flaws before the Games begin.

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Atos Origin, the event's chief IT provider, launched its technology lab a short distance from the Olympic Park, in which it will test out its equipment on scaled-down replicas of all the Games venues.

A year and a half away from the mammoth event, the French firm unveiled the 2,000-square metre facility in London's Canary Wharf business district.

"Today marks the start of the Practice Olympics," technology integration chief Michele Hyron told AFP.

The goal is to weed out "all the errors in the IT systems to deliver reliable results on time," she said.

Their technology will go through 200,000 hours of tests, rehearsing scenarios such as a flood, network disconnection, a power failure and changes to the competition schedule.

On Wednesday, testing got underway on a first batch of Olympic disciplines: athletics, tennis, basketball, volleyball and triathlon.



The men's 100m final race during the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games. Testing got underway Wednesday for London 2012 information technology in a bid to iron out any flaws before the Games begin.

Around 200 people will work on testing the different scenarios, such as what happens if two athletes cross the finish line at the same time.

"We have to be happy that all the IT systems are ready no matter what happens," said Patrick Adiba, the executive vice president in charge of the Olympics and major events.

Some 900 servers, 1,000 security networks and 9,500 computers are involved.

The budget runs into hundreds of millions of euros (dollars).

Adiba said the Atos Origin programme was on schedule.

"2009 was the conception phase, 2010 construction, 2011 testing and 2012 we go operational," he said.

The intention is to provide race results in a flash, journalists with competition information at the touch of a button and electronic accreditation for athletes, volunteers and media needing access to the Olympic venues.

London 2012 organiser Sebastian Coe added: "When an athlete crosses the line in an Olympic or Paralympic Games, they don't want to wait to see their time flash up on the screen, they want to see it straight away.

"Similarly commentators and those viewing at home want to see the result instantaneously."

Atos Origin group will work alongside other firms such as BT, Cisco, Panasonic, Acer, Samsung, Airwave and Omega in setting up the Games' [technology](#).

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