



2024 OWRC Open Ocean Regatta

Press Release

February 1, 2024

The Open Water Rowing Center of Sausalito, CA, and event sponsors NeloUSA, Pocock Racing Shells and Maas Boat Company, will host the Open Ocean Regatta on Sunday, April 21, 2024. A long-time epicenter of open water rowing, OWRC is excited to welcome the growing international Coastal Rowing community, with two exciting new race courses that are set against the scenic backdrop of one of the world's most iconic structures – the Golden Gate Bridge – and one of the most beautiful and dynamic bodies of water in the world – the San Francisco Bay. As always, OWRC also welcomes the traditional rowing, flatwater rowing and paddlesport communities.

Competitors will choose between four race courses of varying length and degree of open water exposure. All courses start and finish in the waters immediately adjacent to picturesque downtown Sausalito.

- **The new 23 km Endurance Course** will go under the Golden Gate Bridge, out to Pt. Diablo along the rugged northern shore before turning back in to San Francisco Bay, where the course circumnavigates iconic Angel Island, and transits up the dynamic Raccoon Strait before finishing in downtown Sausalito.
- **The 15 km Diablo Course** will also go under the Golden Gate Bridge and out to Pt. Diablo before returning to SF Bay and transiting to Belvedere Pt. and Cone Rock on the way back to Sausalito.
- **The 10 km Strawberry Course** heads north into the sheltered waters of Richardson Bay, surrounded by the beautiful Marin communities of Mill Valley, Tiburon and Belvedere. This course is open to all, and is the best option for flat-water rowing shells.
- **The 6 km Belvedere Sprint Course**, in full view of Alcatraz, the San Francisco skyline, Angel Island, Belvedere and Sausalito, is perfect for coastal sprint rowers who are accustomed to racing this distance. It is also a fantastic course length for SUP competitors.

Racing will start at or close to 8:30 AM Pacific Daylight Time. A detailed class starting schedule will be posted closer to the event date. The longest courses are expected to take between two and three hours to complete. Competitors will be greeted with food and drink as they return to OWRC at the Schoonmaker Marina. Demo booths and representatives of regatta sponsors Nelo Rowing and Pocock/Maas will be displaying the latest coastal and open water rowing shells. The event will conclude after a festive award ceremony.

OWRC has hosted visiting rowers from all over the United States and parts of Europe. We cordially invite all coastal, open water and flat water scullers to participate in the regatta and experience rowing in these special waters.

Sausalito, Marin County and the greater San Francisco Bay Area are amazing places to visit with plentiful lodging options and activities to enjoy. Within a two-mile radius of OWRC are the Golden Gate National Recreational Area, Mt. Tamalpais State Park and Angel Island State Park – all offering some of the best hiking and scenic vistas in the world. San Francisco, with all of its cultural and culinary delights, is a short 10-minute drive south across the Golden Gate Bridge. Point Reyes National Seashore and the Sonoma Coast can be reached in 45 minutes by car. The famous Sonoma Valley and Napa Valley wine regions can be reached in less than one hour by car.

For those not familiar with the terms, 'open water rowing' and 'coastal rowing' are very similar to flat-water rowing that many know by the nickname, "crew." Flat-water rowing is primarily a sport defined by individuals and teams sprint-racing side-by-side in straight lines over a 2,000m distance. Typical flat-water races last 6 - 8 minutes. Open water rowing and coastal rowing, on the other hand, take place in dynamic, exposed, sometimes rough waters that can have strong currents. Typical race distances can take up to two hours to complete. Coastal 'beach sprint' events, such as those being added to the 2028 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles, race out and back through the surfline. While the body mechanics of the rowers is nearly identical to flat-water rowing, the rough conditions dictate use of slightly different boats that are designed to tolerate the rough conditions and not fill up with water. Open water and coastal boats are often wider, flatter, shorter and have low-volume cockpits that self-drain. Because coastal boats must endure the pounding surf, they are constructed more robustly and weigh more than open water shells.

All regatta information will be kept current at the OWRC website: www.owrc.com. For more information, please enquire by email at regatta@owrc.com.