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2026 IRA National Championship Coming to One of America's Best Rowing Venues: Sacramento State Aquatic Center-Lake Natoma

Sacramento State Aquatic Center, Lake Natoma, California – The Intercollegiate Rowing Association, in partnership with presenting sponsors Visit Rancho Cordova and Visit Folsom, is proud to announce that the 123rd IRA National Championship will be hosted at the Sacramento State Aquatic Center on Lake Natoma. The 2026 regatta, which convenes the fastest D1 men's heavyweight, men's lightweight, women's lightweight and D3 men's heavyweight crews, will run from Friday, May 29th through Sunday, May 31st, 2026.

Following six years on the East Coast, the IRA is excited to return to the West Coast and Lake Natoma for the fifth time since 2009. "Lake Natoma is one of the premier rowing venues in the country," said Laura Kunkemueller, IRA Commissioner. "The Sacramento State Aquatic Center staff consistently delivers both the infrastructure and the operations to create a top-notch regatta for athletes and coaches. Visit Rancho Cordova and Visit Folsom provide support for all of our competitors and for spectators coming in from outside the area. We are looking forward to working with these teams again to present an excellent championship experience for athletes, coaches and spectators alike."

Brian Dulgar, the Aquatic Center Director, commented, "We are honored and excited to be the host of this year's IRA National Championship and to showcase the oldest collegiate sport in the country."

For Marc Sapoznik, CEO and President of Visit Rancho Cordova, the excitement is palpable. "This regatta is bigger than ever before. Bringing back these top-tier collegiate rowers is a huge win for our region, and our collaboration with Visit Folsom makes everything possible. We'll see significant economic impact to both communities with full hotels, busy restaurants and bustling activity centers as a result of this event."

"We're honored to welcome the IRA National Championship back to Lake Natoma—one of the nation's most prestigious rowing events at one of America's top rowing venues," said Joe Gagliardi, CEO of Choose Folsom organizations, which includes Visit Folsom, the Folsom Chamber of Commerce and Folsom Economic Development. "This event showcases world-class collegiate athletes and brings tremendous energy and economic impact to our region. Folsom is proud to help create an unforgettable experience for teams, families, and fans."

For more information about the Intercollegiate Rowing Association or the 2026 National Championship, please visit [the IRA website](https://www.irarowing.com) or contact Kayleigh Durm at kayleigh@irarowing.com.

About the Intercollegiate Rowing Association

Dating back to its founding in 1894, the Intercollegiate Rowing Association has consistently sought to celebrate the best of men's collegiate rowing. As host of the nation's oldest collegiate national championship, the IRA crowns heavyweight national champions in four events, culminating in the James Ten Eyck Memorial Trophy that is awarded to the overall team points winner, and lightweight national champions in three events. Women's lightweight rowing was added to the regatta in 1997 with three events and in 2022, a Division 3 championship was added with two events. Operating independently of the NCAA, the IRA has embraced its commitment to its 65 member schools and the student-athletes and coaches who represent them and looks forward to another year of fast, competitive racing.

About Visit Rancho Cordova

[Visit Rancho Cordova](#) is the official tourism organization of Rancho Cordova, California—a vibrant community where over 90 languages are spoken and small-town warmth meets global flavor. Rancho Cordova proudly opens its arms to every family, road tripper, and adventure seeker looking for an unforgettable experience. Come see what makes this quirky destination one of Gold Country's hidden gems!

Representing 17 lodging properties, quirky outdoor attractions, and thriving major events, Visit Rancho Cordova helps welcome more than 880,000 visitors each year and delivers over \$325 million in annual tourism impact. For more information on Rancho Cordova, [visit our website here](#) or [explore affordable hotels here](#).

About Visit Folsom

[Visit Folsom](#) is the official destination marketing organization for the City of Folsom, California. Nestled at the base of the Sierra Nevada foothills, Folsom is known for its vibrant historic district, scenic outdoor recreation, and family-friendly attractions. With over 50 miles of trails, two lakes, and a charming blend of history and modern amenities, Folsom offers an exceptional getaway for visitors of all ages.

Representing 8 hotel properties, a wealth of outdoor attractions, and a calendar packed with events like the Folsom Pro Rodeo, the Foothill Wine Festival, and the California International Marathon, Visit Folsom helps welcome more than 2 million annual visitors to Folsom Lake State Recreation Area alone. Folsom also serves as the ideal basecamp for exploring the rich history, wineries, and outdoor adventures of California's Gold Country. Visit Folsom's efforts deliver over \$200 million in annual tourism impact, driving sustained economic benefits for local businesses and the community.