



September 23 – October 1, 2017

2017 World Rowing Championships

“we welcome the world”



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Opening Ceremony at the 2017 World Rowing Championships Coming Soon

SARASOTA-BRADENTON, FLA---Saturday, September 23, on the eve of the first day of competition at the 2017 World Rowing Championships, Sarasota-Bradenton residents and the international rowing community will celebrate the biggest event of the year, at Nathan Benderson Park.

Similar to the stunning spectacle that takes place before the Olympic Games, the Opening Ceremony at the World Rowing Championships commemorates the start of the marquee regatta, while paying homage to the nearly 2,000 participating rowers and the dozens of countries they represent.

The free, non-ticketed event will be emceed by a world-renowned NBA public address announcer, who has showcased his talents during NBA All-Star Weekend and the 2008 Olympics in Beijing.

In a stunning display of local talent, the Opening Ceremony will tell the story of Florida's Suncoast and how it became the amazing coastal and cultural community it is today. Acts include:

- Circus Sarasota (Circus Arts Conservatory and Sailor Circus)
- Jah Movement Reggae Band
- Sarasota Cuban Ballet School
- Sarasota Pops Orchestra
- Sarasota Ski-A-Rees Water Ski Show Team
- Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe

At the end of the evening, Creative Pyrotechnics will light up the night sky with a dazzling firework show over Nathan Benderson Park. Spectators can also expect several surprises!

The event kicks-off at 5:30 p.m. with an incredible Fan Fest experience that will invite guests from near and far to engage with Sarasota's finest family-friendly activities. Come hungry because many of the area's most talked about food trucks and restaurants will serve their most popular menu items.

"The Opening Ceremony is something not to be missed," said Sue Brady, the director of production for the 2017 World Rowing Championships. "Guests will experience great entertainment, featuring so many of the amazing arts groups from the Sarasota-Bradenton area. It's going to be a magical evening that will have everyone up and dancing."

The Arts and Cultural Alliance of Sarasota County has been instrumental in assisting the 2017 World Rowing Championships with securing the acts for the extravaganza.

"It's not every day that a community gets an opportunity to have a showcase to the world," said Jim Shirley, the executive director of the Arts and Cultural Alliance of Sarasota County. "The Arts and Cultural Alliance and our member organizations are very excited to take part in this historic event. The Sarasota/Bradenton area is well known as the cultural coast of Florida and we look forward to letting the world know what a great cultural gem they can experience when they visit here."

The admission gate will open at 5:30 p.m. with the ceremony beginning at 7:00 p.m.

Additional details will be announced at a later date.

ABOUT THE 2017 WORLD ROWING CHAMPIONSHIPS

From September 23 – October 1, 2017, the World Rowing Championships, an international rowing regatta organized by FISA (the International Rowing Federation), will be held at Nathan Benderson Park in Sarasota-Bradenton, Florida, the only Grade A course in the United States and *"where world-class athletes come to compete."* In the 48 years of the event's existence, the United States has hosted only one other World Championships, in 1994 in Indianapolis, Indiana.

This weeklong event is held at the end of the northern hemisphere summer. In non-Olympic years, it is the highlight of the international rowing calendar. Rowing takes place in 21 different boat classes for both men and women.

Our goal is to attract athletes, family, friends and fans from around the United States and the world, to attend this world-class event, and grow the following of rowing in the US.

For more information, please visit WRCH2017.com