

# ACRA 2012 Update

Coaches,

I hope your spring seasons are off to a smooth and safe start. This update is to get you some important information about the ACRA National Championship next month. If you are no longer affiliated with the program, if you could please forward this to the new program contact so I can invite them to this list I would greatly appreciate it. There are some exciting changes to how the ACRA National Championship regatta will be run this May and I want to be sure everyone gets this information.

## **REPECHAGE SYSTEM IMPLEMENTED**

The first change is that the progression system will now use repechages as opposed to the traditional heat-semifinal-final format we have used the past four years. The ACRA Board felt with the diversity our national championship offers that this is a fairer system to employ since most events cannot be seeded fairly given lack of cross-regional results in most events. FISA uses a repechage system for the World Championships and Olympics. The main difference with the FISA system and the ACRA system is that ACRA will advance as many crews out of the heats as is mathematically possible that will allow us to run as few races as possible. This means that in most scenarios of 24 entries or under at least two or three crews advance from a heat, making racing more meaningful in both heats and repechages.

## **EIGHTH LANE TO BE USED**

The ACRA Board has decided to take the opportunity that Lake Lanier's course offers, and implement an 8-Lane progression system for events number 12 or more entries. This move will allow 8 crews to race for medals, as well as reduce the overall number of races needed to complete the regatta. Last year 94 races were needed to crown champions and with the eighth lane it would have been reduced to 81, without using repechages. Even with repechages, which increase the number of races needed, it could have been done in 86 races. This is over an hour less needed, and significantly reduces the number of races needed on Sunday for finals, putting everyone on the road a little earlier.

The Board unanimously decided to try this for the 2012 regatta. The full details of the progression system will appear in the regatta packet eventually, but an example of how it would work for a 16-crew event would look like this:

Two Heats of 8, Top two to the final on Sunday, the remainder to the reps

Two Reps of 6, top two the final on Sunday, the remainder to the petite final

Every crew will still have at least two races, which is something nearly every coach has expressed a desire for over time. This also allows us to have athletes race in only one race on Sunday – the day of the Grand finals, for events numbering 32 or under (in 2011 there were no events with over 22

entries) which is also something many coaches have expressed a desire for. We also wanted to have a system in which petite finals numbered at least 3 crews and make the effort to get into the final a meaningful one, and we were able to set this up for most situations.

Most of our athletes have not rowed in a regatta that uses repechages or eight lanes – it should make for an exciting end to their season. The full progression system will be made known on the ACRA website ([www.americancollegiaterowing.com](http://www.americancollegiaterowing.com)) and in the entry packet very soon.

## **REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN**

Registration has been open for some time for the 2012 regatta. Remember that the first step in the process is to pay organizational dues, which is again \$100. Go to [regattacentral.com](http://regattacentral.com) and click on the “clubs” tab. You will find the American Collegiate Rowing Association on the list – click on it and it will guide you through the process. Joining the association will be necessary before you are allowed to enter. Even if you send no entries to the regatta, there is a benefit to paying this as you can nominate your athletes for academic , all-region, and All-American awards.

## **REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE ELECTIONS TO BE CONDUCTED IN JUNE**

Election of board members happens every June. In odd numbered years the three officers (President, Secretary, and Treasurer) are elected, and those positions are open to any coach of a member institution from anywhere in the United States. In even number years the six regional representatives are elected. Both officers and regional reps hold their position for two years. Currently the six regions breakdown in the following way:

REGION	STATES IN REGION	CURRENT REP & AFFILIATION
Northeast	Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont	Rachel Rawlinson, New Hampshire
Mid-Atlantic	Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Virginia, West Virginia, Washington, D.C.	Frank Biller, Virginia
Great Lakes	Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin	Kurt Butler, Notre Dame
South	Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee	Jonathan Miller, Vanderbilt
Plains	Arkansas, Colorado, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South	Jeremy Streumph, Kansas

	Dakota, Texas, Utah, Wyoming	
West Coast	Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Oregon, Washington	Desmond Stahl, UCSB

Regional Reps main duties are to communicate to and consult with the member institutions, participate in monthly board meetings, participate in committee work (awards, bylaws, eligibility, and championship) and do other meaningful tasks as the board determines. If you have a vision of how things should be done, and some energy to put towards ACRA then consider running for a position. Current reps will inform me through the spring of their intentions to run again or not, and any new nominations will be taken in May. An election will be held using online polling in June for the membership of that region. It is important to note that if you are elected to a regional rep position it does not prevent you from running for an officer position the following year.

### **WEEKLY POLLING BEGINS TODAY**

Desmond Stahl is the ACRA Director of Polling and has already summoned coaches to participate. While polling doesn't directly carry over into seeding for the regatta, it does give coaches a sense of who the top seeds are headed into the seeding process. All head coaches are invited and encourage to participate in the weekly poll for the varsity and novice eights. Polling is conducted through an online survey, which Desmond provides the links and instructions in his weekly email. If you have not received information from Desmond email him at [Desmond.Stahl@essr.ucsb.edu](mailto:Desmond.Stahl@essr.ucsb.edu) and he can include you on the weekly email list.

### **NOMINATIONS FOR AWARDS COMING SOON**

Kurt Butler is the Chairman of the Awards committee, and he will soon be contacting everyone for their school's nominations for Academic All-Americans (3.5 GPA or higher), All-Region athlete nominations, and regional coach of the year nominations. These awards are selected the week prior to the ACRA National Championship by the entire board, nominations being due the week prior to that. Start thinking about who from your team you would like to nominate. As a reminder, you need to be a member organization for your athletes or coaches to be nominated. Kurt will be sending specifics for the criteria of each award within a few weeks.

### **TRAILERING GRANT REINSTATED THIS YEAR**

I am happy to announce that after moving to Lake Lanier last year and a bump in the number of entries that ACRA is financially in the black. With the expected number of entries we expect to be able to re institute the grants to those traveling to the national championship from greater than 500 miles away. At this point at least \$2500 is dedicated to be returned to programs who apply. The intention is to help defray the fuel costs teams encounter from traveling long distances. A very simple formula is used that involves the number of miles traveled, and how many seats the trailer is carrying, and what total number of seat miles traveled is as a percentage of what everyone travels. That percentage is applied to the total pot, and you will have returned to you a portion of that. While it isn't likely to cover all of your costs, most people agree that every little bit helps. I will be taking

applications in the week leading up to the national championship, and a check will be cut back to the program upon confirmation of your load at the regatta.

This is a busy time of the year for rowing coaches and rowing student-athletes. We are looking forward to another season concluding in Gainesville in a little less than two months.

Cheers,

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