

2026 USRowing RowFest National Championships

Athletes & Coaches Meeting

Open/U23/Youth/U17 Racing
July 6, 2026 - 7:00 p.m. EDT



Welcome & Introductions

USRowing and our local host partners are excited to welcome everyone to the 2026 USRowing RowFest National Championships from July 11-14!

Tonight we have the following people on the call:

USRowing: Jake Robinson, Meg Gaba, & Emily Goldsmith

Chief and Deputy Referees: June Harper, Blake Ebright-Jones

Agenda

USRowing

Key Takeaways/Introductions
Review of Registration & Venue Schedule
Pre-Arrival Checklist
Membership & Compliance

Chief Referee

Referee Welcome
Traffic Pattern(s)
USRowing Rules of Rowing
On Land & Water
Unsportsmanlike Conduct

USRowing, LOC, Chief Referee

Safety Plan
Venue Information
Experience

Q&A

Key Takeaways



- **Safety both on- and off-the-water continues to be the top priority at all USRowing events.**
- **All teams, coaches, athletes, spectators, and other team representatives are responsible for information in this Athletes and Coaches Pre-Regatta Meeting, the regatta entry packet, and any information posted on the event website.**
- **Have fun and row hard!**

Registration and Venue Schedule

- **Trailer Arrival Window**

- Friday, July 10 – 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.
- July 11-14 – 8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

- **USRowing Registration Tent**

- Friday, July 10 – 11:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.
- July 11-14 – 6:00 a.m. – end of racing

- **Practice**

- Friday, July 10 – 2:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.
- July 11-14 – No practice available.

- **Weigh In Window**

- 6:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m., every day
- All coxswains & athletes **MUST** weigh-in during this window.

Review of Registration and Venue Schedule

- **What to Expect at RowFest?**

- National Championship caliber racing at varying race distances
- International Rowing Challenge
- Community Building & Networking Opportunities

- **Schedule**

- Posted July 6
- Progressions will not change after 9:00 p.m. the night before racing

- **Bow Numbers**

- Alpha-numeric sprint racing bow numbers will be at the docks

Pre Arrival Checklist

- Have you reviewed the **USRowing Code of Conduct?**
- Have you reviewed **the event entry packet?**
- Are your athletes up to date on their **USRowing memberships?**
- Are your athletes, coaches, and support staff compliant with their **SafeSport training requirements?**
- Are your coaches/support staff on the **RegattaCentral Roster?**
- All clubs must pay their **entry fees** before racing!

COMPLIANCE

Membership & Compliance

	Membership Tier	Waiver	Self-Attestation	SafeSport Training	Background Check
Athlete	Championship	Required	Required (18+)	Only required if you regularly row with an athlete who is 17 years old or younger.	Not Applicable
Coach	Basic	Required	Required	Required	Required
Supporter	Supporter	Required	Required	Required	Not Applicable

Register Coaches & Support Staff

USRowing RowFest National Championships

Jul 11, 2026 To Jul 19, 2026 » sprint » Ford Lake Park » Ypsilanti, MI (USA)

Hosted By: USRowing » USRowing Owned

1,414

Entries

109

Clubs

Register

INFORMATION

Overview

News

FAQ

Contacts

Sponsors

History

Venue

Volunteer

Event List

Clubs

Entries

Heat Sheet/Draw

Results

REGISTRATION

Dates & Deadlines

Rules & Eligibility

Registration Form

Coaches & Support Staff

My Entries

My Invoice

Compliance

View

Edit

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Welcome to the 2026 USRowing RowFest National Championships!

The 2026 USRowing domestic regatta entry packets were posted for a comment period to all members from December 1 to December 31, 2025. The final entry packet for the 2026 USRowing RowFest National Championships was published February 1, 2026.

For the final entry packet, click [here](#)!

For real-time regatta updates, text **#RowFest26** to **+1 (609) 354-7711**.

Schedule, Draw, & Results

Click [HERE](#) for the event list order and a tentative schedule. This schedule is tentative and will change after the standard entry deadline.

Athletes & Coaches Pre-Regatta Meeting

IMPORTANT! The RowFest Athletes and Coaches Pre-Regatta Meeting will be divided into two separate meetings; one to address the Open/U23/Youth/U17 events that will happen from July 11-14, and one to address the Masters events that will happen from July 16-19.

Open/U23/Youth/U17 Events: Athletes and Coaches Pre-Regatta Meeting will be scheduled for **July 6, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. ET**. This meeting will take place virtually, via zoom. Register [HERE](#).

Masters Events: Athletes and Coaches Pre-Regatta Meeting will be scheduled for **July 6, 2026, at 8:30 p.m. ET**. This meeting will take place virtually, via zoom. Register [HERE](#).

Traffic Pattern Maps

MINOR ATHLETE ABUSE PREVENTION POLICY

MAAPP

**Thank you for helping ensure
all athletes are safe, supported,
and strengthened.**



Learn more about the MAAPP.



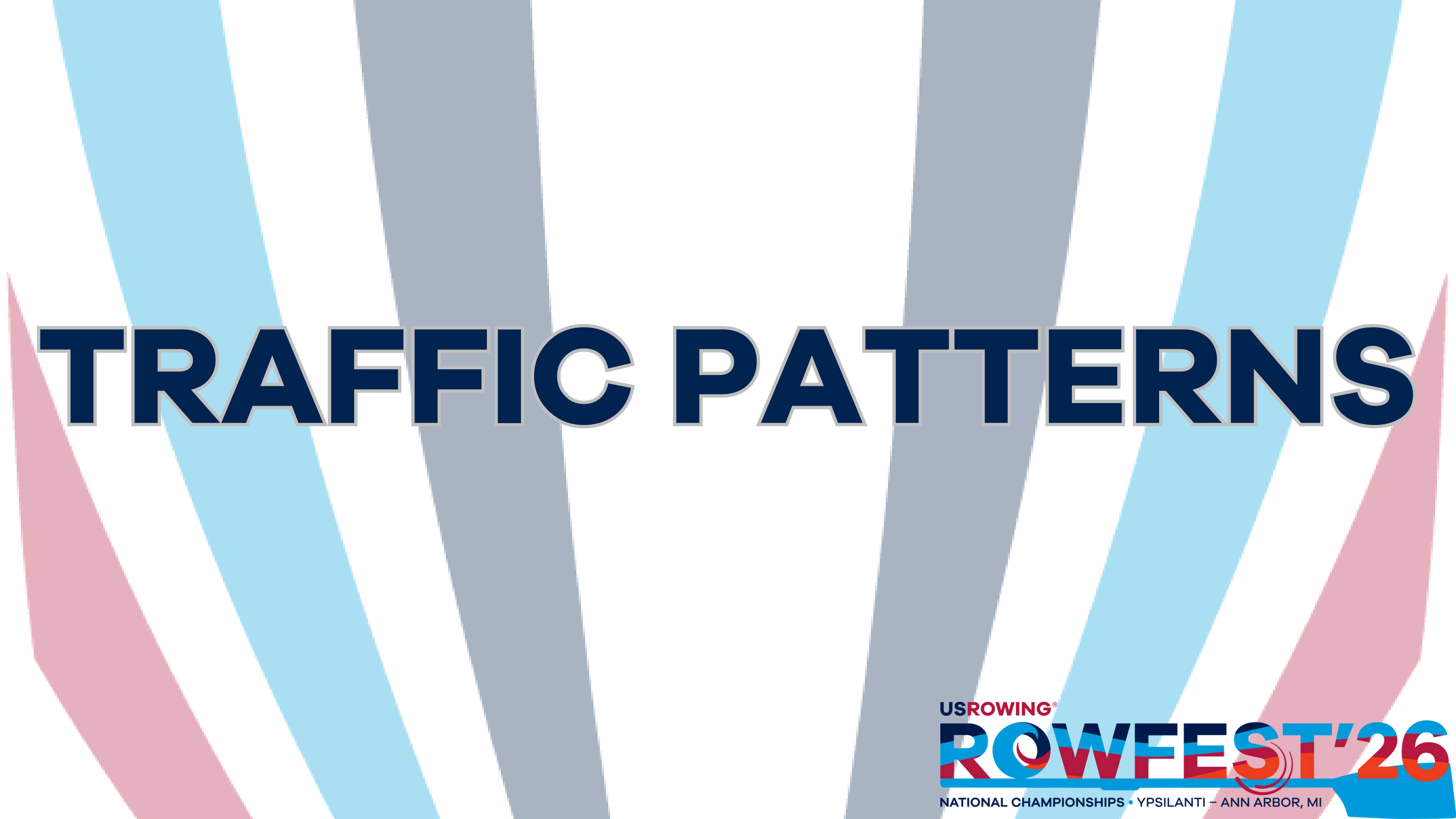
REFEREE WELCOME

Referee Welcome

- 30 of the the most talented and experienced referees from across the country, representing all six USRowing regions.
- Officials were selected for this regatta by the Referee Committee in conjunction with the Chief Referee.
- 2 major objectives - Ensure your safety and the fairness of each and every race.

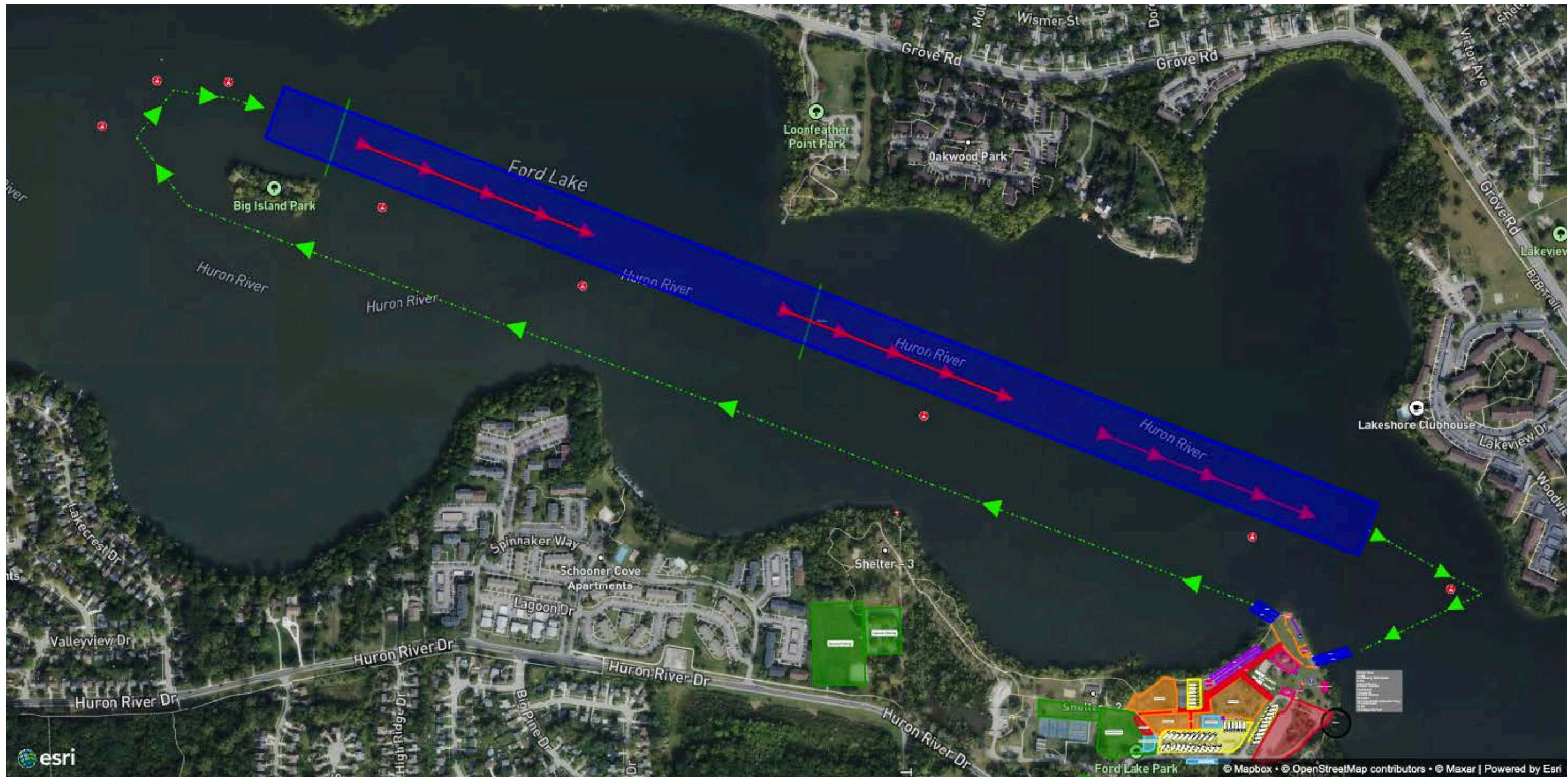
Regatta Reminders

- This is NOT a rules clinic (some rules cited)
- Additional info found in USRowing Rules of Racing and the Regatta Packet.
- Purpose of this A&C is to highlight issues specific to this venue, and to remind you of some standard regatta practices.

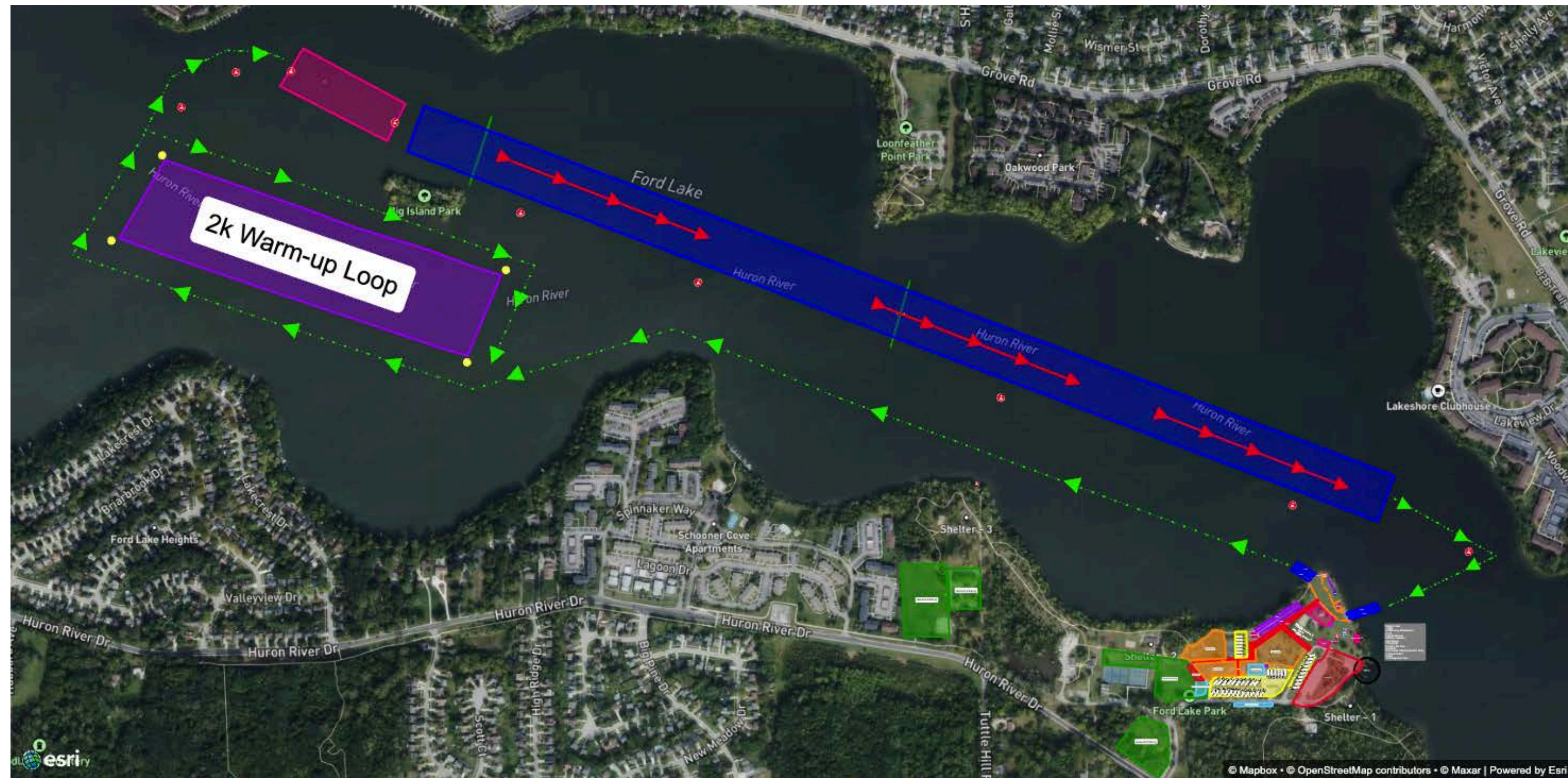


TRAFFIC PATTERNS

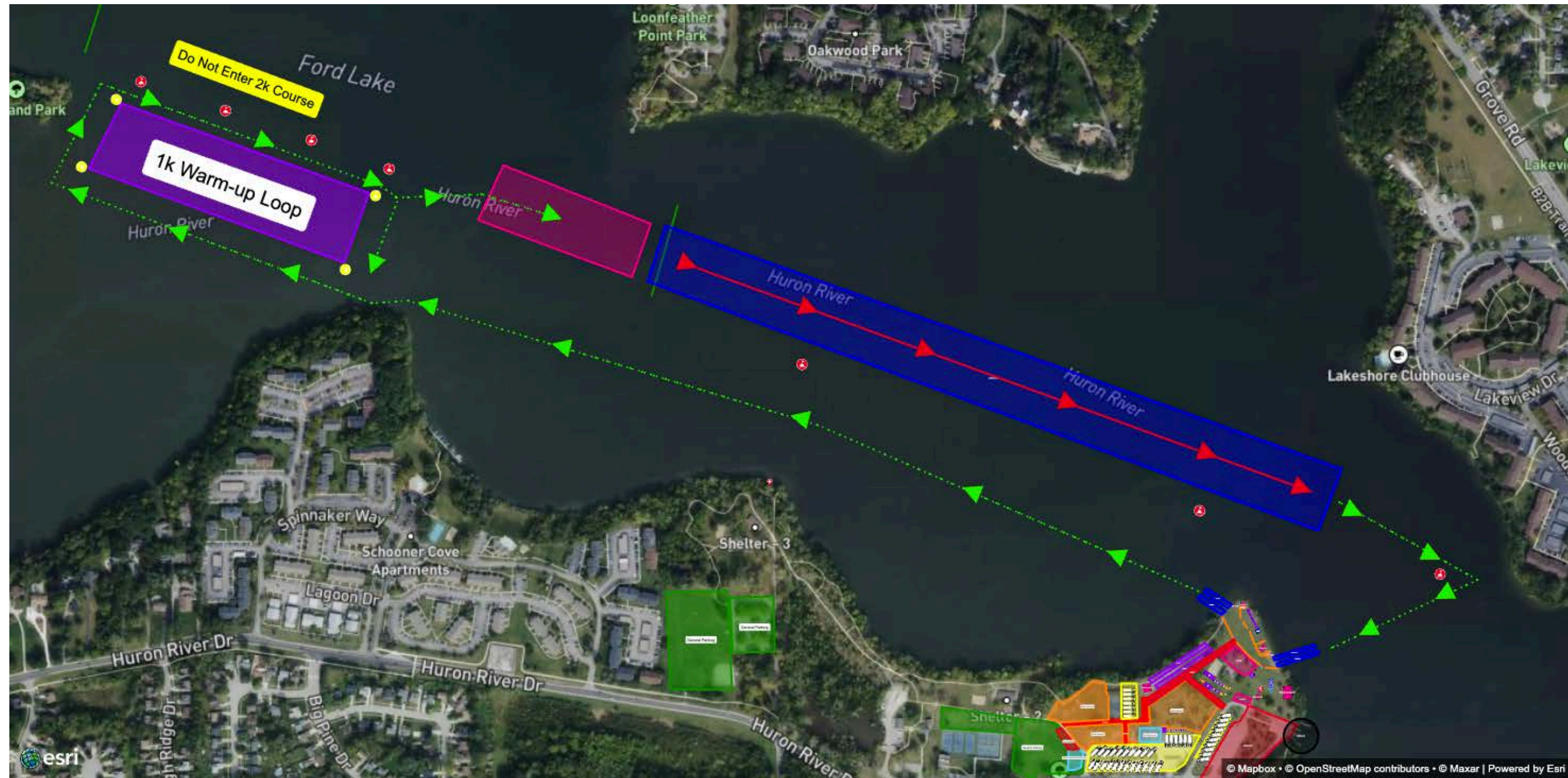
Venue & Traffic Pattern: Practice



Traffic Pattern: Sprint Racing- 2,000-meter



Traffic Pattern: Sprint Racing- 1,000-meter



USROWING RULES OF ROWING

USRowing Rules of Rowing

- It is your responsibility to know and understand the 2026 USRowing Rules of Rowing.
- Have your equipment prepared in advance of launching. You will not be permitted to launch without:
 - Bow balls supple, bright colored, and firmly attached (Rule 3-105)
 - Rapid release mechanism to quickly disengage a rowers feet from the shoes or foot stretcher (Rule 3-108a)
 - Heels tied to no more than 3" off the foot stretcher (Rule 3-108b)
- Know your event number and race start time when launching.
- All athletes must have a credential to launch.
- Broken Equipment - alert the nearest referee and we will work with you, where possible.

ON LAND & WATER

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On Land - 1

- Weigh-ins will be available each morning of U23/Open racing (no Youth or U17) from 6-10AM.
- Weigh in at least 1 hour before your first event or face a penalty (differs for coxswains vs lightweights).
- Weigh in once for the duration of the July 11-14 racing (for both coxswains & rowers); priority will be given to upcoming events.
 - You must weigh-in wearing your team issued racing uniform and bring your credential.
 - Rowers in lightweight boats weigh-in together.
 - Coxswains must bring their own deadweight.
 - Keep your wristband for the entirety of the regatta.
- When checking in with Control Commission for sprint racing, they will issue you an alpha-numeric bow number for your race to assist in marshaling. Look for others with your alpha designation on the water!
- Coxswains, you need to know the event # and time of your race.
- All athletes must have their credentials and matching uniforms (except composites) to launch.
- Return all bow numbers when recovering.

On Water - 1

- **In proximity of the course**

- If a race is in progress, stop rowing until the race passes.
- Do not stop on the start line or where you will drift into the way of the aligner or following referees.
- Do not do power strokes/sequences along the race course as a race is approaching you.

- **Warm Up**

- Follow the Traffic Pattern - know what they are for each day.
- Once in the warm up circulation, do not cut across the warmup area or you will be assessed a penalty.

On Water - 2

- **Sprint Starts**

- Leave the warm-up pattern 15 minutes prior to the start of your race for staging by the Start Marshals. You will be lined up bow-to-stern in reverse bow number order (2000m) for efficient entry into Lane 1. For the 1000m Start, boats will be lined up 4321 and 5678 for entry from both sides for the Start platform.
- Once the previous race has cleared breakage and the Starter has called you in, enter your lane immediately and lock on.
- *Know how to scull your point once attached to the stakeboat.*
- You must be locked on 2 minutes prior to your race; failure to do so will result in a Warning.
- The race may start at any time after the 2-minute announcement.
- Hands will not be recognized during the Start procedure.
 - We will use a flag start. Each crew's name will be announced, **"Attention"** will be called followed by raising the start flag. Then simultaneously **"Go"** will be called out and the start flag will be quickly lowered. Go on the movement of the flag!
 - If the Starter is interrupted, crews will hear **"As you were"** and we will resume.
 - At the starter's discretion and if conditions warrant, we may use a Quick start. Quick Starts will be announced by the Starter and the starting sequence would be **"Quick Start, Attention, [flag raised], Go."** Crew names would not be announced.
- What to do if you aren't ready: don't row! The Starter will assess whether the failure to start is justified.
- If you leave the start, you have accepted the start and can no longer object to it.
- The Starting area (for broken equipment) is the first 100 meters.

On Water - 3

- **Sprint - Racing**

- The following Referee will move behind the boats and use the white flag to direct your shell while calling your crew name - use the stroke to communicate to the coxswain.
- A red flag stops the entire race.

- **Finish**

- Hear a horn at the finish.
- Row through the large orange buoys at the finish line, and remain there until all boats have finished AND the Referee raises the white flag declaring the race official.
- Any/all objections must be raised on the water.
- If there is a question of fairness or another issue, please have one person raise their hand at the finish and talk to the referee. Please have in mind:
 - **What happened to you**
 - **What impact it had on the outcome of the race**
 - **What remedy you are seeking** (Ref: Rule 2-603)
- After your conversation, let the referee know if you accept their decision or plan to submit a protest. You will need to submit the protest in writing on the form available at registration. The written protest is due within 1 hour of recovery, along with \$50. Protests should be submitted to the Chief Judge at Finish or the Chief Referee. [Rule 2-604 thru 2-608, 2026 USRowing Rules of Rowing].

Unsportsmanlike Conduct

“Unsportsmanlike conduct” shall include, but not be limited to, failure to heed the instructions of Race Officials, use of obscene language or gestures directed at a Crew/ Team or other person in attendance at the event, delaying a race without just cause, intentional or flagrant disregard of principles of safety and fairness, or abusive behavior toward a Race Official, Team member, spectator, or person at the event, as witnessed by a Race Official.

These rules apply both on and off the water.

[RoR 1-202pp & 2-410]

SAFETY

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Staying Safe & Informed

- We are monitoring conditions closely. Sign up for our official text alerts to receive real-time updates!
- EMS is stationed by the recovery docks.
- Water refill stations are available.
- Safety is our top priority, and it relies on all of us working together.

Safety on Venue - Clear Course Plan

- All crews must listen to the officials' directions.
- All docks will be designated as recovery docks.
- Crews currently on the race course must proceed down the course toward the launch/recovery docks.
- Crews in the travel lane, warm-up, or staging area should turn toward the finish line and move down the travel lane toward the launch/recovery docks.
- Once the race course is clear, crews in the travel lane may also proceed down the course if directed by an official.

Safety on Venue - Clear the Course Plan Cont.

- 1) Referees on the water will sweep the course and follow shells to finish and launch docks.
- 2) Control Commission will direct the dock master in recovering boats and crews expeditiously and safely.

Coaches:

- Account for all athletes, including those athletes coming off the water.
 - Secure boats and equipment whether at the dock, alternate landing sites or trailers.
- 3) Evacuate the venue if required. Official emergency communications will be sent out via the SMS texting system, event regatta system, and on the venue video board.

VENUE INFORMATION

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On-Site Parking

Trailers

- All trailers must be registered prior to arriving on site, form can be found on RegattaCentral or entry packet.
- Trailers will be parked by USRowing on a first come first serve basis
- **Note:** To make room in the trailer yard for crews arriving Wednesday for Masters racing, Youth, Open, and U17 teams may be asked to move their trailers after racing concludes on Tuesday, July 14.

Team Vehicles/Cars

- All parking is \$10 per day/per vehicle
 - 1 comp'd pass per team
- Park Staff will assign your spot
- Cash is preferred
- Shuttle services for General Parking areas, 8am-7pm
- No shuttle on Friday, July 10th or Wednesday, July 16th.

Venue Map



Volunteer Requirements

- For every USRowing-owned regatta, every registered team will be required to provide at least one (1) volunteer to work one (1) 4-6 hour shift during the regatta.
- Volunteer sign-up can be found on RegattaCentral, or scan QR code below.



EXPERIENCE

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500-Meter Night Sprints

- **Tuesday, July 14**
 - Youth, U17, and Open Men's/Women's 4x & 1x racing opportunities.
- **Registration opens July 6 and will stay open until events are full!**
 - Come decked out in your best neon, glow-in-the-dark outfit for the opportunity to win a best-dressed prize!

College Fair

- **Saturday, July 11, and Sunday, June 12.**
 - Meet and greet at the College Fair tent.
 - Deadline for college coaches to register is **Wednesday, July 8, 2026 at 11:59pm ET.**
 - Deadline for athletes to register is **Friday, July 10, 2026 at 11:59pm ET.**
- Attending is free. Parents and club coaches may join the athlete.

Real-Time Regatta Updates

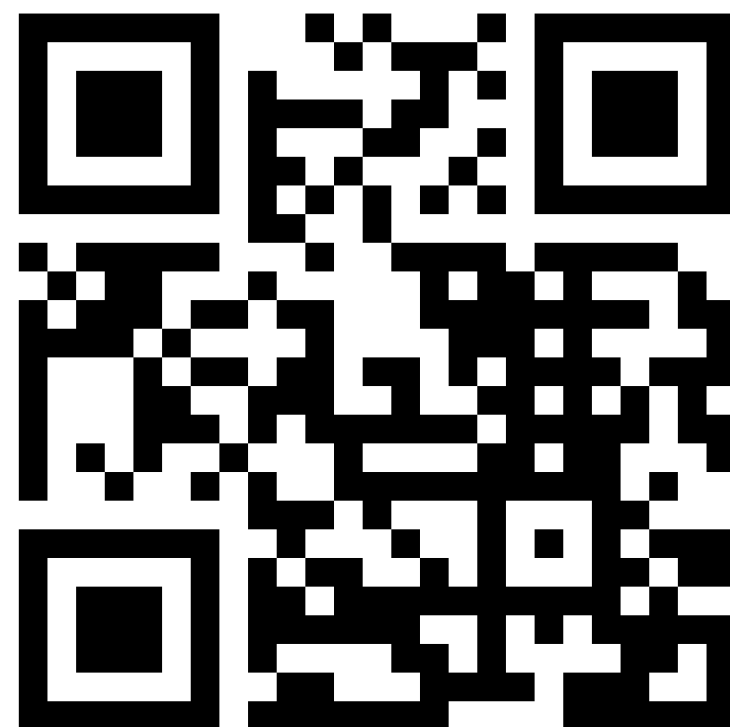
For real-time regatta updates,
text #RowFest26 to +1 (609) 354-7711
or scan QR code below.

After texting, remember to click the link to add
your contact information to our community list.



Livestream

- Access the livestream on [Overnight.com](https://www.overnight.com)!
- Scan the QR code below:



Disability Accommodation Request Form

- USRowing makes every effort to follow best practices for accommodating people with disabilities at our events. We appreciate you contacting our team well in advance of the event so we can best serve you.
- The Disability Accommodation Request can be found on the 2026 USRowing RowFest National Championships home page, or found in the entry packet.
- For more information please contact: **community@usrowing.org**

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GET READY TO RACE!!



Questions? Please contact:
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