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26th Annual 'Rose Bowl Regatta' Sets Sail January 8-9

Event To Attract Hundreds Of Student Sailors From Across The Country



The Rose Bowl Regatta returns to Long Beach in its 26th year on January 8 and 9. The national collegiate and high school sailing draws between 400 and 500 competitors to the Alamitos Bay and Long Beach harbor near the Belmont Pier. (Photograph provided by the U.S. Sailing Center of Long Beach)

Segerblom said he's anticipating 400 to 500 sailing competitors from 31 colleges to participate this year with 17 university teams from outside of California, some including Georgetown University, College of Charleston, Western Washington, U.S. Naval Academy, Hawaii and Notre Dame. Teams from California include such colleges as Stanford, UC Berkeley and UC San Diego. Colleges must apply for a berth through the national college association. The high school teams participating, Segerblom said, are

expected to be similar to previous years.

Last year, during the regatta's 25th anniversary, Point Loma University took the championship and Georgetown won the 26-boat college competition. Palo Alto was the top performing team in the high school silver division.

Segerblom said the competitive sport of sailing is all about a team effort. "College and high school sailing is a team sport, so you have a group that sails in the boats for a couple of races and then they come in and they rotate other members of their team," he said. "They keep doing that all day, back and forth . . . each team has two divisions. So the USC team has a couple of sailors sailing in A division and they rotate with their sailors in B division, so the combined scores make the team score."

This year, in addition to Alamitos Bay, a portion of the races are being moved out into Long Beach harbor to utilize a new dock recently built at the end of the Belmont Pier, enabling sailors to tie off and sailing coaches to observe nearby. "Having a venue that is very close to the racing like the Belmont Pier is great for everyone," he said.

Wind conditions have typically been a major factor during the race, mainly due to the winter months having less onshore currents. The regatta this January is good practice for sailors in anticipation for the strong thermal sea breeze during the spring time when Long Beach plays host to the college national semi-final championships involving 36 of the top college teams from around the country. The regatta is also a way for college campus sailing coaches to recruit high school sailors, Segerblom said.

For more information about the Rose Bowl Regatta, the U.S. Sailing Center or the USC Sailing Team, visit www.usclub.org or www.uscsailing.org. ■

■ By **SEAN BELK**
Staff Writer

A long-standing tradition of collegiate waterfront rivalry is set to ring in the New Year. The 26th annual "Rose Bowl Regatta" is expected to line the coast with hundreds of sailors and sailing enthusiasts from colleges across the country and surrounding high schools racing small two-person sailboats on January 8 and 9.

Coinciding with college football and the Tournament of Roses, the weekend-long sailing event has grown to become the largest such combined scholastic sailing competition in the country, first started in 1985 by University of Southern California (USC) and California State University, Long Beach (CSULB) sailing teams.

"Long Beach is famous amongst the sailing world as a great place to sail," said Mike Segerblom, executive director of the United States Sailing Center of Long Beach and among the first sailors to start the original competition with longtime sailing partner Jay Golison. "It's a very popular event . . . It's as much of an event as it is a competition."

Offering a wide range of sailing programs at the Alamitos Bay Peninsula at 5489 E. Ocean Blvd., the Sailing Center organizes the event each year. The center also runs college sailing programs, learn-to-sail programs, basic keelboat certification programs and the sailing team programs for Wilson, Poly and Los Alamitos high schools.

The competition is hosted by the USC varsity sailing team and based at the Alamitos Bay Yacht Club. The Ayers Hotel in Seal Beach is the host hotel. Other regatta bowls in the country include the Orange Bowl Regatta in Miami and the Cotton Bowl Regatta in New Orleans.