

BY DEMOCRAT AND CHRONICLE



Abundant waters create boating opportunities

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With no shortage of water, facilities and expert skippers, Rochester has a rich history in the sport of sailing.

That tradition continues this summer when the Rochester Yacht Club hosts the J-24 World Championships from Sept. 13-21. The prestigious event will take place on Lake Ontario off the Port of Rochester with 120 to 140 sailing teams expected.

RYC has hosted many national and world sailing events, with sailors attracted to the close proximity to the racing course and Lake Ontario's challenging conditions. Nobody knows those conditions better than Rochester's Mike Ingham, a six-time national champ in the Thistle Class and North American J-24 champion.

"You have to be prepared for anything coming into the worlds here in Rochester," Ingham told the race's website. "You need to be a heads-up sailor to sail here."

And when it comes to boating in the Rochester region, one merely needs to pick his or her head up to bump into water and some form of floating recreation.

Boating was once the transportation mode that enabled exploration and development of upstate New York, but today's pleasure boating industry is big business.

New York ranks seventh in boat registrations with about 500,000. Florida and California are Nos. 1 and 2. The economic impact of boating in the Lake Ontario/Erie/Finger Lakes region, where roughly 5,000 jobs are impacted, is \$600 million, not including paddle sports, according to research by the New York Sea Grant and Cornell University.

"In the greater upstate area — the Finger Lakes and Rochester — boating is an extremely important part of our recreational and tourism economy and our way of life," said Dave White, Sea Grant recreation and tourism

specialist. “The waterways are what have drawn us here historically and what keep many of us here today, mainly because of the variety and diversity of our resources.”

Lake Ontario, its three major bays (Braddock, Irondequoit, Sodus) and the Finger Lakes overflow with marinas, launches, nationally renowned yacht clubs and boating organizations that cater to sailing and power boating.

But if you don't have a boat, sightseeing, dinner and adventure cruises are available. The Harbor Town Belle (585-342-1810), a unique 80-foot paddle wheeler, docks at the Port of Rochester.

For a quiet water option, kayak rentals are available for exploring Irondequoit Creek at BayCreek Paddling Center (585-288-2830) and Oak Orchard Canoe and Kayak (585-288-5550) on Empire Boulevard.

You also can experience wetlands in the town of Greece. Contact Braddock Bay Paddlesports at (585) 392-2628.

To the south of Rochester are the tranquil Finger Lakes, a chain of 11 cold, deep, glacial bodies, each bearing a Native American name. Boat rentals are available at the City Pier in Canandaigua.

For the ultimate in elegance, a dinner or sightseeing cruise aboard the Esperanza Rose (315-595-6618) on Keuka Lake has become a must-do on the summer calendar.

Meanwhile, boating on the Erie Canal — like taking a trip back in time — has become increasingly popular. Part of the 524-mile New York State Canal System that opened in 1825, the canal connected the Hudson River in the east to Lake Erie in the west.

The navigation season runs from approximately May to November.

A canal cruise aboard the Colonial Belle (585-223-9470), boarding at historic Packett's Landing in Fairport, is a can't-miss date. Or how about a week's vacation aboard a fully equipped houseboat? Numerous businesses have sprung up offering overnight rentals or day trips. Go to nyscanals.gov for a listing.

LAUNCHES AND MARINAS

For the location of public boat launches in New York, go to www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/7832.html.

Brighton Crew: www.brightoncrew.org.

Brockport Yacht Club: 7493 Sandy Harbor Drive, Hamlin. (585) 964-5239 or www.brockportyachtclub.org.

Canandaigua Yacht Club: 3524 County Road 16 on Canandaigua Lake. (585) 396-9200 or www.sailcyc.com.

Finger Lakes-Ontario Watershed Paddlers Club: www.flowpaddlers.org.

Genesee Waterways Center: 149 Elmwood Ave., Rochester. (585) 328-3960 or www.geneseewaterways.org.

Genesee Yacht Club: On Genesee River. Entrance is on Marina Drive, off Pattonwood Drive. (585) 266-9796 or www.geneseeyc.org.

Hobie Cat Fleet 295: Off Lighthouse Beach, Parma, near Lake Ontario Parkway. www.fleet295.com.

Kayak Adventures: 1 Seth Green Drive, Rochester, NY 14621 (585) 704-2327 or www.kayak-adventures.org.

Lock 32 Whitewater Park: Clover Street, Pittsford. (585) 328-3960 or www.geneseewaterways.org.

Newport Yacht Club: 694 Seneca Road, on Irondequoit Bay. (585) 266-1170 or www.newportyc.org.

Oak Orchard Yacht Club: 1103 Archbald Road, Waterport, Orleans County. (585) 682-9793 or www.ooyc.org.

Pittsford Crew: 2800 Clover St., Pittsford. (585) 234-7463 or www.pittsfordcrew.org.

Pultneyville Mariners Sailing Club: Mill Street and Lake Road, Pultneyville, Wayne County. www.sailpmc.org.

Pultneyville Yacht Club: Route 21 and Lake Road, Pultneyville, Wayne County. www.pultneyvilleyachtclub.org.

Rochester Canoe Club: Sailing organization located at 2050 Bay Shore Blvd., on Irondequoit Bay. (585) 288-2380 or www.rochestercc.org.

Rochester Offshore Powerboat Association: www.rochesteroffshore.com.

Rochester Rowing Club: Contact Genesee Waterways Center. (585) 328-3960 or www.geneseewaterways.org.

Rochester Yacht Club: 5555 St. Paul Blvd., Rochester, on Genesee River. (585) 342-5511 or www.rochesteryc.com.

Sodus Bay Yacht Club: 7431 Irwin St., Sodus Point, Wayne County. (315) 483-9550 or www.sodusbayyc.org.

Adventure Calls Outfitters: Whitewater rafting guides based in Le Roy, Genesee County. (585) 343-4710 or www.adventure-calls.com.

BayCreek Paddling Center: 1099 Empire Blvd., Penfield. (585) 288-2830 or www.baycreek.com.

Erie Canal Boat Co.: 7 Lift Bridge Lane West, Fairport. (585) 748-2628 or www.eriecanalboatcompany.com.

New York State Canals: www.canals.ny.gov.

Oak Orchard Canoe and Kayak Experts: 2133 Waterport Road, Waterport, Orleans County, (585) 682-4849, and 1350 Empire Blvd., Penfield. (585) 288-5550 or www.oakorchardcanoe.com.

Pack, Paddle, Ski: South Lima, Livingston County. (585) 346-5597, www.packpaddleski.com.

Rochester Sail and Power Squadron: www.usps.org/localusps/rochester.

Silver Waters Sailing: Lessons, and day trips on Lake Ontario. 12025 Delling Road, Wolcott,

Wayne County. (315) 594-1906 or www.silverwaters.com.

U.S. Coast Guard: Summerville Station, 5500 St. Paul Blvd. Irondequoit, (585) 342-4149.

U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary: 520 River St., Rochester. (877) 875-6296 or www.rochesterboating.org.

GREAT LAKES BOATING

Boaters interested in port hopping along the Great Lakes Seaway Trail can use a new online resource at seawaytrail.com/boating. The site includes aerial photographs of 24 major ports on lakes Erie and Ontario with a complete list of services available. Call (315) 646-1000.

HOME

TOP

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