

## MASTERS NATIONALS SUMMARY 2009

The Riverfront Recapture mens and women's racing teams joined masters rowers from across the United States in New Jersey August 13-16, 2009 for the USRowing Association Masters National Championship regatta. Over 55 Riverfront competitors (rowers and coxswains) traveled to the events on the Cooper River in Camden, New Jersey. All of the races were 1,000-meter sprints. Although the summer weather was hot, the water conditions were uniformly calm over the four days of racing.

Co-hosted by USRowing, Rutgers Alumni Crew at Camden, Cooper River Rowing Association and the Camden County Parks, the regatta featured more than 1,800 entries from 147 clubs competing for national titles in more than 200 events. The regatta was the largest masters national championships in history. Results are available online at [www.racetrak.com](http://www.racetrak.com).

The Riverfront Recapture women's team, with 23 athletes aged 16 to 66\* (\*note, although masters rowing requires that rowers be over 21-years of age, junior coxswains are allowed and some of our coxswains also participate in the RRI HS rowing program), competed in 12 races, often with multiple boat entries in an event. The women's team raced in both 4-person and 8-person coxed boats. Most events featured a "qualifying heats to finals" format, with as many as 18 team vying for 6 positions in the final race. Five of the Riverfront women's team entries made the progression from heats to finals, with wins for three of those boats in their final for a total of two National champion gold medals and one bronze. The Women's Club A4+ was awarded a gold medal on Thursday for their first place finish in 3:55.52, crossing the line over 5 seconds before the second place finishers. On Saturday, the Riverfront Recapture women's Club A8+ won a bronze medal in a close finish in a very competitive race. In the Open AA4+ event on Sunday, the Riverfront women won a gold medal with an open-water win and a time of 3:47.78.

The Riverfront Recapture men's team competed with nearly 35 athletes, ranging in age again from HS-aged coxswains to 70 years old. The men's team entered 24 events, several times with multiple entries in a single event. The men's team competed in single scull, double scull, 4-person and 8-person coxed boats. Riverfront Recapture's Paul Fitzgerald won a bronze medal in his single scull on Thursday following both a qualifying heat and semi-final, with a final time of 3:53:65. Also on Thursday, four men's boats progressed from heats to finals. Medaling that day for Riverfront, the men's Club A4+ and the Club E 8+ both were awarded silver (second place) medals. On Friday, the Riverfront men's Heavyweight B4+ won a gold medal, the C4+ received a third place bronze medal. The Heavyweight A8+ won a silver medal with a final time of 3:07.83. The Riverfront Recapture men's team success continued on Saturday, with a second place finish in the Heavyweight B8+ event (finish time 3:05.82) and a bronze medal in the Club B8+ race. On the final day of racing, Sunday, Sandor Becz placed third in his single scull in the Heavyweight B1x race, with a time of 3:42:26. Two Riverfront Recapture men's team boats made the final in the Club B4+ event Sunday afternoon, for an exciting finish with a bronze medal-win and closely following fourth place. Overall the Riverfront men's team won 10 National championship medals.

This was the largest group of Riverfront Masters rowers to compete in the USRA annual Masters

Nationals. Previously, Riverfront Recapture has sent masters teams to the Nationals in 2005 (Worcester MA), 2006 (Seattle WA), and 2007 (Oak Ridge TN). Approximately 25 women and 40 men are actively training and competing with the RRI masters team this 2009 season.