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Oakland Strokes sweep to nationals

Submitted by Rachel Yates

Oakland Strokes Men's Junior Varsity 8+ cross the finish line to secure Gold Photos provided

The longstanding rivalries in the varsity men's programs made for some intense races, with Newport, Marin, Capital and Oakland battling it out in nail biting finishes.

The Oakland Men qualified three of their boats for Nationals and set the stage for some fierce competition in Sacramento in June.

As the varsity men's head coach Brian De Regt noted, "We're very pleased with how the boys handled themselves through the season and rose to the occasion when it mattered most ... The most gratifying part of the weekend was watching our athletes learn what can happen when they fully buy into the process, and discover just how much they're capable of."

As a 'no-cut' program, the success of the Oakland Strokes program is a testament to the commitment and work of the coaching staff at both novice and varsity levels. Many of the athletes who are heading their first, second - or even third - National championships had no rowing experience before joining the Strokes. Instead, most come through one of the summer 'Learn to Row' sessions or joined as novices in the fall. The team heading to Nationals has an eclectic mix of athletes - some who have rowed since middle school, while others joined the program as high school juniors.

What unites them, according to managing director Dana Hooper, is the transformative power of rowing. "Rowing ... is a sport that allows a diverse group of young men and women to come together and learn to work as one, and ultimately achieve goals that are greater than they ever could have achieved individually."



Oakland Strokes Women's Team dominate the medal podium with 5 Golds, 3 Silver and 3 Bronze medals, winning the overall Team Points Trophy.

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