

Historic First IHRA-Sanctioned F1 Powerboat Racing Event to Kickoff 2026 in Bradenton Florida

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EINPresswire.com/ -- The Bradenton Area River Regatta, Manatee County's largest and FREE spectator event, returns to the shorelines of Bradenton and Palmetto for its 11th year on Friday and Saturday, February 20 and 21, 2026, featuring a historic milestone for the sport of powerboat racing.

For the first time, the Regatta will host

Formula One Powerboat racing as the first powerboating event officially sanctioned by the International Hot Rod Association (IHRA). The event will showcase some of the sport's most powerful and technologically advanced race boats and will serve as the kickoff event for

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Leah Martin

competition under the IHRA Powerboating umbrella, marking a significant expansion of IHRA's motorsports portfolio. “Bringing the IHRA F1 Powerboat Series to Bradenton represents the kind of forward momentum we are building across all IHRA disciplines,” said Leah Martin, President of the International Hot Rod Association. “This event reflects our commitment to growth, innovation, and delivering world-class racing experiences while honoring the history and passion that makes powerboat racing so special.”



The IHRA F1 Powerboat Series will headline the weekend, supported by additional racing classes including F-Lights and Tri-Hulls, the latter appearing for the first time at the Regatta. Together,

these classes will deliver the most dramatic and high-performance racing experience ever offered to spectators along the Bradenton and Palmetto riverfronts.

“We are extremely proud to bring the IHRA F1 Powerboat Series to such an iconic event here in Bradenton. This historic milestone begins a new chapter in powerboat racing as the IHRA embarks on its quest to become the world's premier powerboat sanctioning body,” said Tim Seebold, Managing Director of the IHRA F1 Powerboat Series.

Continuing its popular two-day, all-FREE format, the Regatta kicks off Friday, February 20, with Friday Night Flash, featuring a spectacular drone light show culminating in fireworks, along with live musical performances from 5 to 9 p.m. at the Bradenton Riverwalk Pavilion Stage.

Saturday's activities begin at 10 a.m. and center around the Regatta's marquee attraction, The Florida Formula 1 Championship powerboat racing, alongside live music, family-friendly entertainment, and waterfront festivities throughout the day. The weekend concludes with a FREE racing awards ceremony at the Palmetto Marriott Resort and Spa beginning at 6 p.m., followed by a concert featuring Florida's premier Beach Boys tribute band, Beach Buoys.

“The City of Bradenton and our partners, the City of Palmetto and Manatee County, are proud to welcome the River Regatta back for its 11th year,” said Bradenton Mayor Gene Brown. “This event has been an incredible economic driver and tourist attraction, and we are thrilled to host bigger, faster, and more powerful Formula One boats for the first time.”

Additional event updates will be available at bradentonarearegatta.com. Photos and video assets are available through the website's Press section. Fans can also follow updates on Facebook at facebook.com/RiverwalkRegatta.

[About the International Hot Rod Association \(IHRA\)](#)



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MISSION
TO UNITE AND ELEVATE MOTORSPORTS ACROSS LAND AND WATER—DELIVERING WORLD-CLASS COMPETITION, RACING, UNFORGETTABLE COMPETITOR AND FAN EXPERIENCES, AND TOUCHING EVERY COMMUNITY WITH MEANINGFUL IMPACT.

GENERAL INFORMATION
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MEDIA
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VISION
IHRA WILL BE THE UNDISPUTED GLOBAL AUTHORITY OF MULTI-DISCIPLINE MOTORSPORTS—THE PROFESSIONAL STANDARD UNITING DRAG RACING, POWERBOATING, PULLING, AND STOCK CAR COMPETITION UNDER ONE SANCTIONING POWER.

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F1 POWERBOAT SERIES



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BRADENTON AREA RIVER REGATTA

FEBRUARY 20-21

PALMETTO • BRADENTON

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Founded in 1970, the International Hot Rod Association (IHRA) is one of the world's premier motorsports sanctioning bodies, governing competition across multiple racing disciplines. With a focus on safety, professionalism, innovation, and racer-first operations, IHRA sanctions events and championships throughout North America and beyond. IHRA is committed to growing motorsports through strategic partnerships, community engagement, and delivering world-class racing experiences for fans, competitors, and host communities.

For more information, please contact: info@ihra.com For media inquiries, please contact: media@ihra.com

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