

Embry-Riddle's RoboBoat Competes in International RoboBoat Competition at Reed Canal Park

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. — Autonomous robotic boats will fill Reed Canal Park as Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University and other teams compete in the [11th International RoboBoat Competition](#).

Fourteen teams from throughout the U.S. and countries including the Netherlands, Indonesia, India, Mexico and Canada will be participating in the event June 18-24 at Reed Canal Park in South Daytona, Fla.

Student teams, which include undergraduate, graduate and middle and high school students, design autonomous, robotic boats to navigate and race through an aquatic obstacle course. The behaviors demonstrated by these boats mimic tasks that are being developed for coastal surveillance, port security and other types of oceanographic operations. The event is organized by RoboNation, a nonprofit organization, formerly known as AUVSI Foundation, whose mission is to provide a pathway of hands-on educational experiences that empower students to find innovative solutions to global challenges.

"While many people are familiar with driverless cars and drones, fewer people are aware of what an unmanned surface vessel (USV) does or how it works," said Eric Coyle, Ph.D., Embry-Riddle associate professor of Mechanical Engineering and one of the faculty advisors. "This competition provides students a way to understand USVs, from the design of the hull to interpreting system data and dealing with the unique challenges the maritime environment presents."

Embry-Riddle's vessel this year is a fiberglass monohull completely designed and manufactured by the Embry-Riddle team. Coyle said the system utilizes two thrusters that are azimuth to provide steering and forward propulsion. The platform software is built in Robot Operating System and is navigated by using GPS and IMU (inertial measurement unit) guidance, while sensing its environment using a laser range finder and visible camera. The Embry-Riddle team also includes a few students from the Daytona Beach Homeschoolers, who won the event last year.

The competition, which includes practice throughout the week and qualifications on Saturday, June 23, from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., is open to the public.

Various Embry-Riddle departments will also have items on display at the Community Event on Saturday, June 23, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. organized by the City of South Daytona Parks and Recreation Department. Finals are 1 to 5 p.m. on Sunday, June 24.

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