



## Referee Committee

Additional Comments to  
September 24, 2014  
Phone Conference Call

Below are additional comments, submitted to the Referee Committee, by Tom Mannle and John Musial on the HPC Proposed Trials Rule Changes.

Tom Mannle was on the call and had additional thoughts.

1. In support of the proposed change, a desire for simplicity came through a number of times in the conversation, from Christine, Matt, and Marcus. However, it seems to me that in moving to FISA we will still have "USRowing exceptions" to coin a phrase, when now Article VI is USRowing with FISA exceptions. The "USRowing exceptions" still extant in the proposal are

New Rule 6-105 Penalties for Interference. Removing the presumption of exclusion as the penalty for interference is retained; my FISA colleagues indicate that the offending crew would be excluded, and the aggrieved crew included in a re-row

Current Rule 6-306 The Race, aka Misadventure. Retained in the National Team Selection Procedures Time Trials misadventure language. Retained

My point is, if these are enforceable, then there is no benefit to the proposal, IF simplicity is the objective....plus there's a certain degree of implementation risk, as Rachel and I both noted. To achieve the stated simplification, the above exceptions would have to be removed, and go to straight FISA. And I don't know, but wouldn't consistency in that case mean that we couldn't do time trials, rather we'd have to do heats?---but, this is just a guess

2. There were also a number of instances of referring to "one document" or "one location". As a practical matter, the body of knowledge that athletes, coaches and Referees will have to be conversant with will be in four separate buckets: FISA Rules of Racing, FISA By Laws, National Team Selection Procedures, and the revised Article VI....I doubt very seriously whether these will be collected in one physical document.....and interested parties will still have to dip into and out of each to gain a complete understanding of the whole.....

Finally: and this is more of an observation: in at least one place in the minutes there was a hint of exchanging "subjective" rules for objective ones, via this change....since whatever rules emerge will be administered by human beings, there will always be subjectivity in their application. Our task is to reduce this to the absolute minimum, but the subjectivity will always be there....don't want anyone to think otherwise

John Musial was not able to attend the telephone conference call on 9/24/14 and made his comments at the 9/29/14 Referee Committee Meeting.

John's submitted comments:

I have concerns about moving to FISA rules for trails; namely the fairness of trials. We will be asking non FISA referees to enforce FISA rules. The concern being the trials pool of 75 referees (or so) mostly are not versed in the FISA rules. While referees are asked to enforce other LOC rules from time to time; the FISA rules, while similar, have a different philosophical outlook. I would point out 2 of those, the starters role (starter is subservient to the umpire in FISA) and more importantly the enforcement of interference. FISA uses exclusion and re-rows as remedies. While we have those penalties the philosophy is different. There are other differences as well.

I have concern over asking referees to enforce rules they are not versed in. OF course we can give them training and such but does that really impart the wisdom needed to make the right decisions under FISA rules. I think it cannot.

I also have concerns as a chief referee. I've been chief numerous times, including Olympic trials and 2 events in 2014. I am not sure I would (I won't speak for other chiefs) be comfortable with a jury of people not well versed in the rules (FISA rules if used). I can very clearly see an incorrect decision being made. Our referees today are trained and drilled in the USRowing rules of rowing, why would we want to use something else for such an important event.

Additionally it's easy to say we will use FISA rules.....but where does that end? We will need the bylaws etc. also. No doubt some sharp coach will find the loop holes in the FISA rules we aren't enforcing and take advantage or call others on those things.

My suggestion would be if we (USRowing HPC etc.) decide they wish to use FISA rules, we flag the rules we wish to enforce and pull them verbatim into the USRowing trials rules.

These are just my thoughts on this topic. I'm always happy to discuss further.

Respectfully submitted, 9/30/14

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