



**USRowing**

**Minutes of  
The US Rowing Association  
Referee Commission Meeting**

**July 10, 2004  
Princeton, NJ**

In attendance: Robert Appleyard, Bill Collins,  
Roxanne Everetts, Rachel Le Mieux, Tom Lotz,  
Tom Mannle, Bruce Soden, Larry Tolle  
Absent: John Walker

**1. CALL TO ORDER:** Appleyard (9:13 AM)

**2. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

**a. Prioritize critical decisions and business**

Appleyard indicated that he wanted to take committee reports before proceeding to other business.

Prioritize the necessary outcomes for this meeting.

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM March 2004:**

Mannle presented a series of needed clarifications to the March minutes. The group discussed formatting and posting of the minutes on the USRowing website. Soden motioned to approve the minutes, Mannle seconded. (Approved, 8-0)

Mannle to make needed corrections and transmit to Jody Pope as approved. Mannle was reminded to remove executive session minutes from the version posted to the website.

**4. COMMISSION ACTIONS SINCE March 2004 MEETING:**

None Reported.

**5. TREASURER'S REPORT**

**a. 2004 budget performance to date**

Collins presented the 2004 budget, updated to reflect expenses to date (Attachment 3). No significant reallocations seem to be necessary. At the present rate of expenditure, the Commission might exceed the approved budget total.

**b. Projections and priorities for 2005**

Appleyard reported that he had been in contact with Tom Fuller, the USRowing treasurer, requesting the Commission 2005 budget request before the end of August. Appleyard has reason to believe that the Commission budget for 2005

might be increased significantly in support of referees (excluding administration) and that the Commission should plan on this basis. The budget request should focus on ongoing operations rather than one-time special projects.

Members engaged in an extensive discussion about potential items for priority consideration in the 2005 budget submission. Items identified included a recruiting video, larger regional budgets, an annual national clinicians conference, initial issue items for new referees (e.g., patch, tab, pin, nametags), reprint of the referee training manual, and initial printing of the Chief referee training manual.

Appleyard indicated that the Board is hearing that referees have a significant financial burden and that referees feel unappreciated for the work that they do. Appleyard felt that the appropriate focus for the use of any additional monies should be on increasing the quality and availability of referees, through more and more structured training, with no financial burdens imposed on those providing the training.

**c. Action items necessary for submission and approval of the 2005 budget**

Members agreed on the following line items to be included in the 2005 budget proposal:

Annual printing/reprinting of referee training manual type materials

Production and distribution of CD with standard training materials

Recognition/welcome kit for new referees

Members agreed to a regional allocation of \$1500 per region.

Regional representatives to provide justification for a regional budget level of \$1500 to Collins by July 31, 2004

**d. Preparation and implementation of a standardized expense tracking form to distribute to Clinicians**

Collins to send out a proposed form; upon acceptance, regional reps to review clinician-submitted expenses, communicate with Collins re: authorization, and coordinate with USRowing re: payment.

**6. Subcommittee Reports**

**a. Grievance /Appeals subcommittee**

1.) Subcommittee report (Soden)

Acceptance and approval of written procedures for handling an appeal under Rule 2-608.

Soden distributed reformatted draft appeals procedures for the Referee Commission (Attachment 1).

Members discussed the need for the Referee Commission member to be the chair of the appeals committee.

Tolle commented that several items that had been discussed previously were not reflected in the current draft, e.g., who can call a meeting, procedures to resolve informally without a meeting of the committee, etc.

Soden responded by explaining the concept of operations for the appeals committee.

Discussion ensued about various wording changes that might be included in a revised document, especially but not limited to use of an ombudsman-type process as part of the appeals process.

Soden moved to adopt the draft procedures as written, Le Mieux seconded.

Appleyard moved to table the motion pending completion of discussed revisions; Soden seconded.

Soden to prepare revised draft, incorporating changes as discussed, NLT July 16, 2004. Vote to be taken by the Commission via email NLT July 23, 2004.

2.) Call for new business items.

**b. Ethics and Performance Subcommittee**

1.) subcommittee Report (Appleyard)

Appleyard indicated he had not yet appointed a chairperson.

2.) Appointment of a chairperson

Appleyard indicated that Mannle and Lotz had indicated interest in being chair of the ethics and performance subcommittee.

Jay Jacobus has expressed interest in serving on the E&P subcommittee. Soden indicated that Mike Siconolfi also expressed interest.

Appleyard to discuss further with interested parties.

3.) Call for new business items

**c. Education, Publications and Recognition Subcommittee**

1.) Subcommittee Report (Everetts)

2.) Preparation of Level II clinic material for 2005 (body of the race)

Soden asked if the body of the race material would be compatible with the "Webinars" that are planned for the NE referees; Everetts indicated that this technology accommodates Powerpoint, which is what the material is presented in.

3.) Central archive and distribution of approved clinic material (Collins)

Collins asked whether the most current versions of the exam could be included in the proposed CD.

Appleyard asked who was responsible for preparing the final versions of the material and burning the initial issue of CDs; Everetts indicated that she would arrange a small group of volunteers.

Appleyard asked about approval of the content; materials to be distributed in advance for approval at the December meeting; production to follow approval.

Everetts to distribute materials as they become available, all content to have been distributed and reviewed NLT December 1.

4.) Referee newsletter – material for a fall issue (Everetts)

Everetts reported that next issue of the Clipboard was tentatively scheduled for publication on August 15th. Theme is emergency preparedness and response.

Appleyard asked if there would be enough Commission-related material that would need to go out in the August or another issue in 2004, e.g., Commission elections, Wolf and Franklin awards, etc.

Everetts to provide names and contact info for newly-licensed and advancing referees to for recognition in the Clipboard.

5.) Focused publications (Lotz)

- a) misconduct and grievance
- b) off-the-water protests
- c) assignment of race lanes
- d) "commission comments"

The Commission discussed Lotz's proposal for a column to be included in the Clipboard, topics a-d as shown (Attachment 2). The Commission asked to delete the paragraph on the use of the megaphone/radio to provide the time to the Chief Judge.

6.) Referee recognition awards (Collins / Soden)

Collins raised 2 points: length of service awards, and certificates for those attending the College. Everetts also indicated that certificates for

participating in the Olympic trials were also appreciated.

Soden suggested a “referee of the week” concept; Collins responded that regional representatives should distribute news of their cadre to others.

Tolle indicated that the MW region had a Dutch Zandbergen award internally.

Appleyard indicated he would turn the 5- and 10-year length of service certificate template over to Everetts for production and distribution

Everetts to produce and distribute the length of service certificates.

#### 7.) Update of the website (Collins)

Collins reiterated his concerns as contained in a previous email about the staleness of the information on the website.

Appleyard indicated the need for a referee, close to the Commission, to act as the editor of the referee portion of the USRowing website. Mannle suggested advertising for the position in the next Clipboard.

Everetts to develop a job description for the referee web editor

Appleyard asked if the regional representatives would like to have a section of the USRowing website devoted to regional issues; most representatives indicated they would.

8.) Scheduled commission mailings & notifications.

9.) Call for new business items.

### d. Rules and Safety Subcommittee

#### 1) Subcommittee report (Collins)

Collins reported that the proposed Rules changes were accurately reflected in the agenda.

#### 2) Rules proposals, pending

a) Rule 4-104(b)(2): proposed re-wording (Appleyard).

Members discussed a proposed wording change clarifying the intent of the rule.

b) Proposed change to Rule 2-408, from Executive Committee.

Members discussed whether to remove the asterisk to make the rule more restrictive, i.e., remove the referee’s discretion to impose a penalty. Lotz commented that the language proposed by Mannle in a separate memo seemed to address the issue at hand without removal of the asterisk.

Appleyard commented that rather than “mandating exclusion” the revised language should be changed to “mandating a specific penalty, as otherwise provided for in these Rules” at the end of subsection 2) of Rule 2-408.

Soden moved to adopt the language proposed by Mannle; Collins seconded. Motion tabled pending revision.

c) Rule 2-606(a): proposal to increase the fee that accompanies a protest (Lotz)

An extensive discussion ensued among the members about the pros and cons of increasing the fee. Lotz noted that the fee goes to the LOC, not USRowing.

Le Mieux indicated that there were relatively few protests in the NW, most protests came from juniors, and that some junior crews were resource constrained.

Collins moved to table the discussion for a year to obtain a better idea about whether a higher fee would discourage frivolous protests, or unfairly disadvantage some teams; Soden seconded. (Approved 8-0.)

3.) Adding specific references to the misconduct and grievance procedures (Lotz).

Lotz proposed to add a citation and a web address to the end of 2-608 (f), for information about the USRowing Grievance procedure.

Tolle moved to adopt Lotz’s proposal, Soden seconded. (Approved 8-0.)

4.) Rule 2-410 (outside assistance): (Le Mieux)

Le Mieux reported on a letter received from a referee in her area reporting on a specific incident, and indicating that the first and last lines of the Rule are in conflict.

Collins to prepare a response to the author of the original letter, emphasizing reliance on the human voice exception provided for in the Rule.

5.) Grant request for safety equipment used by referees (Le Mieux)

Le Mieux reported on her efforts to obtain a grant to provide material assistance to referees, especially for (but not necessarily limited to) safety equipment. USRowing would, as a non-profit organization, be in a position to act as a grantee—but there are also other local organizations that could also qualify as grantees.

Everetts had reported to Le Mieux on the drowning death of a coach in Alexandria, VA, re-emphasizing the need for referees to wear Personal Flotation Devices (PFD). Discussions

ensued about the mechanics of obtaining a grant or setting up a different sustaining mechanism to provide PFDs to new and existing referees. There is also a broader issue concerning initial and/or replacement issue of referee-specific items to referees, to minimize financial burdens.

Discussion ensued among the members, attempting to clarify the specific proposal(s) or action items to be considered by the Commission.

Everetts reported in more depth on the recent drowning death of the coach, and the need for referees, as the face of USRowing, to be the face of safety and set the example re: wearing of PFDs. Everetts would like the Commission to recommend that referees wear PFDs whenever they are standing in a launch following races. If the Commission agrees with this approach, then an addition to the safety checklist should be considered. Further, that PFDs should be provided to referees as an example of what is considered important.

Appleyard indicated that his preference would be that such a statement not be issued prematurely, because it would be seen as adding to the burden of being a referee. If the need could be matched with a source or mechanism of supply, such as a grant, this would be a good convergence, and the recommendation and the supply could be addressed in the same communication. At a minimum, USRowing discounts and merchandising should be offered to those who want to obtain a PFD.

Lotz indicated that it would be inadvisable to develop a proposal now for referee material assistance beyond PFDs/other safety items.

Appleyard indicated that he would handle the initial conversation re: grant and other matters with USRowing, with Le Mieux to remain involved as specific discussions moved to the staff level.

6) Call for new business items

Collins raised the issue of whether a GPS constituted a violation of the rules regarding electronic devices 3-106.

Members agreed that use of a GPS was a violation of Rule 3-106, but that since the rule is non-asterisked, an LOC could allow use of a GPS where it was deemed beneficial to safety, such as long head or expedition type races.

Collins also indicated that it would be desirable to add the FISA allowances for wiring to Rule 3-104 defining boat weights.

Collins moved to add the FISA allowances to Rule 3-104; Le Mieux seconded. (Approved 5-3)

**e. Recruiting, Testing and Training subcommittee**

1.) Subcommittee Report (Walker – in absentia). Walker not present; Appleyard reported on the recent revisions to the Assistant Referee exam. The most current version is dated June 2004.

Lotz raised concerns on the questions in the exam concerning the organizational structure of USRowing; he believed that the minutes reflect a desire to re-weight these questions to place less weight on these test items.

Members agreed to have the grading and content of the exam reviewed as part of the next revision cycle.

Appleyard reported on Walker's efforts to develop a recruiting poster.

2.) Need to revise referee rank and license requirements

3.) Implementation of the "regatta day" work unit.

Le Mieux indicated that it would be important to clarify the impact of the regatta day concept on both national and FISA prerequisites prior to the December meeting, so that the impacts could be completely clear for implementation in 2005.

Appleyard to contact Walker to obtain a recommendation on the issue for US referees; Le Mieux to develop a recommendation for FISA

4.) Accommodation of the Commission's decision to allow referees to choose which rank (Assistant or Full) they desire to hold and retain.

Appleyard to contact Walker to obtain a recommendation on the issue for US referees

5) Call for new business items

**7. Commission Liaison Reports**

**a. Insurance and Liability (Appleyard)**

Appleyard reported on information developed by Lloyd MacDonald:

NASO insurance does not cover working from a motorized boat; NASO might consider revising their coverage to include such coverage

MacDonald will obtain a copy of the Masters Rowing Association (MRA) insurance policy to ascertain whether officials are covered for those regattas.

Tolle indicated that the message to referees should be that their participation in non-registered

regattas are not covered by USRowing insurance, but rather the insurance of the sponsoring organization. Referees should check the specific requirements for coverage (e.g., membership in the sponsoring organization) before participating in non-registered regattas.

**b. Registered regatta task force (Appleyard)**

Appleyard reported that a proposal is being submitted to the Board to establish separate classifications for different types of registered regattas. This proposal identifies the participation of referees in the registered regatta structure.

**c. Masters (Tolle)**

Tolle reported on the mechanics of the system for identifying competitors at the Masters Nationals.

**d. Junior – youth (Le Mieux)**

Le Mieux reported on her contacts with the Youth Committee.

**e. HPC – Trials (Appleyard)**

All Trials are over for the season; the events went off calmly and with high standards, and received good feedback from all concerned.

**f. Adaptive rowing (Walker)**

Appleyard reported that USRowing will be developing, at FISA and IOC behest, an adaptive rowing program that will be more comprehensive than current local initiatives.

**8. Commission Operations and Governance**

**a. IOPs (Collins)**

Collins reported that he has marked up an IOP; he inquired about whether the “track changes” mode in Word is a useful way for communicating potential changes to the IOP to the Commission; members indicated that this method is fine.

- 1) Policies that govern communications via e-mail.
- 2.) Updated reinstatement procedures.
- 3.) Updated procedures for selecting Commission officers.
- 4.) Inclusion and updates to Commission standing subcommittees and appointed liaisons.
- 5) Other updates or changes.

**b. Motion to revise the Commission’s subcommittees (Mannle)**

Mannle briefly explained the rationale supporting the proposal, and inquired whether members are ready to vote without extensive discussion.

Mannle indicated that in the interests of time, he would table the motion for consideration at the December 2004 meeting

**c. Process for nominating candidates for at-large Commission appointment.**

Appleyard stated that his goal is to have a nomination deadline.

Everetts inquired whether it would be advisable to change the process to a nationally-elected position. Collins responded that this might become a popularity contest, and the Commission would have then to work with a person who might not be otherwise qualified.

Mannle indicated that the process used in 2003 required submission of nominations for both regional and at-large members was handled via a central process coordinated by USRowing.

Appleyard to check with Jody Pope re: the inclusion of nominations for at-large member in the USRowing process.

1.) Publication of notice and solicitation for nominees.

Everetts to include details in the next issue of the Clipboard. Deadline for receiving nominations ahead of December meeting.

**9. Regattas and Events**

**a. USRowing Nationals (Tolle)**

Tolle reported that indications were that the regatta would be broadly representative, with approximately 1200 competitors.

**b. Masters Nationals (Lotz)**

Lotz discussed the enforcement of the advertising rule, and substituting a local referee for a funded referee from another region.

**c. National team selections and trials (Appleyard)**

See HPC – Trials Commission Liaison Reports above

**d. Reports or incidents from other events**

**10. Referee Support and Finances**

**a. Ad hoc committee report on financial burdens affecting recruitment of new officials (Le Mieux)**

Le Mieux reported that several referees are providing her with information about the startup costs associated with becoming a referee. For younger candidates, these costs may preclude their commitment to be a referee; many new referees cannot afford the initial acquisition of clothing and equipment. Average cost for required initial

issue is estimated to be \$375, desirable items add more costs (e.g., Gore-Tex rain gear).

Le Mieux indicated that the Commission should consider providing gratis the initial issue of required equipment as listed in the Referee Training manual.

Mannle estimated this outlay at \$12K per annum; \$400 per 30 new referees annually. He noted that this would consume most of the increase being proposed for the 2005 budget and would specifically require sustainment into future years. He suggested that it might be better to provide some items to all referees, but reserve discretion to provide other items to some but not all referees. He suggested organizing the equipment items into packages that could be pre-described and priced.

·Le Mieux indicated that she was preparing a fuller report for the Commission to consider ways to ameliorate the financial burdens associated with becoming a referee.

**b. Proposals for training and recruitment projects, funded through sponsoring organizations (Soden/Appleyard).**

Motion to reduce USRowing membership dues for non-competing referees (Collins).

Collins explained his rationale for making the request. Referees whose sole function in USRowing is to provide volunteer services as a referee should pay a reduced rate. The benefits to USRowing would be to enhance recruitment and retention of referees, and to provide additional recognition of the services provided.

Everetts indicated that she would prefer that this be a retention rather than a recruitment tool, and that any reduction in dues be based on a certain length of service.

Further discussion focused whether the proposal to the Board should include a specific dollar amount, or just generally propose a non-specific reduction. The Commission is on record on the latter.

Collins moved to recommend to the Board to reduce the dues for non-competing referees to \$25 annually; Le Mieux seconded. (Approved 6-2)

Appleyard to prepare a document to submit to John Dane and Don Langford for consideration.

**11. Other Business, Old and New**

**a. Referee College (Appleyard)**

·Appleyard distributed a list of participants for the Referee College (Clinicians) (Attachment 4)

**b. Update to annual data call (Mannle)**

·Mannle indicated a need to include a request for out-of-pocket expense information in the annual data call. Mannle also expressed a desire for the data call and supporting data base to be converted to a web-based application.

Everetts indicated that she was preparing a proposal re: web-hosting the data.

Everetts to include a request for expense information in the annual data call.

Everetts to report to the Commission on web-hosting the data base at the December 2004 meeting

**c. Annual referee evaluation procedures (Mannle)**

Mannle identified a need to expand the pool of evaluators used to select juries for national championship regattas, and more broadly to think about both the mechanics of evaluation and other purposes to which evaluation/ranking might be put.

Mannle to develop proposal for revising annual evaluation/ranking of referees.

**d. Call for new business items**

**12. Executive Session**

**13. Adjournment**

Appleyard moved to adjourn the meeting; Soden second. (Approved 8-0).

Meeting was adjourned at 6:13 PM.