



USRowing®

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

**July 9, 2005
Princeton, NJ**

In attendance: Robert Appleyard, Bill Collins,
Rachel Le Mieux, Tom Lotz, Tom Mannle,
Larry Tolle, John Walker, Amanda Watlington
USRowing Staff – Jody Pope
Absent: Lyn Wylder

1. **CALL TO ORDER** (Appleyard 8:09
AM, July 9, 2005)

2. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES
(MARCH 2005)**

Collins suggested several edits to the draft
minutes. These were discussed and
incorporated where appropriate

MOTION: *Lotz moved to accept the minutes
as amended; Collins second*

Mannle indicated that the final minutes would
be published in the two column format

Approved 8-0

3. **ACTIONS TAKEN SINCE MARCH
2005**

Refer to executive session report re: Charles
Percy Regatta

4. **TREASURER'S REPORT AND
BUDGET (Collins)**

- a. reiteration of regional allocation amounts
and procedures, relative to decisions
reached in March 2005
- b. expenditures to date
- c. regional budget reports
- d. year end position

Collins presented the status of the 2005 budget,
and expenses to date. Le Mieux asked about the
accounting for the initial issue items, Collins

replied that the expenses involved, although
reflected in the regional budget category,
actually would be drawn from the centralized
national "pool" established in March, 2005.

Collins discussed other items; travel expenses
for the Commission looked on target, but
without savings as in past years because of
airfares not declining. Collins also suggested
allocating the small "reserve" to the Referee
College and Commission travel.

Appleyard stressed the importance of keeping
track of the regional expenses and fairly
accounting for all items, to determine the
appropriateness of the total amount and
allocations for the regional budgets. Le Mieux
asked what the regions could not spend their
budgets on; because of the differences in the
number of referees, an equal regional allocation
might get spent inequitably.

Lotz asked about re-printing the Referee
Training Manual; Appleyard postponed the
discussion until the next agenda item

Collins to request regional budget updates from
the representatives on September 1, 2005.

Collins to prepare budget update and outlook to
Commission, based on the regional reports.

5. **STANDING SUBCOMMITTEE
REPORTS, AND PRIORITIES
THROUGH DECEMBER, 2005**

- a. grievance/appeals (open) Appleyard noted
that he had appointed Tolle and Wylder as
chair and alternate, respectively. Tolle
reported no activity
- b. ethics and performance (Mannle). No report
- c. publications and recognition (Watlington).
Appleyard commented that the Clipboard is
in "limbo"; USRowing is about to roll out a
new version of the website; Pope indicated

that July 16 is the target date, and that Referee content has been moved.

Appleyard noted three options for continuing distribution of the information traditionally contained in the Clipboard: hardcopy/mail; softcopy/email, and continuing updates on the USRowing website. Appleyard noted that he had withdrawn from active direction/editorship of the Clipboard.

Appleyard pressed to make a decision about the appropriate method on information dissemination; he would like a mailing to go out, perhaps indicating any new information about distribution.

Watlington asked how many referees would be missed if distribution did not include hardcopy/mail; Mannle and Collins indicated that it would be very small.

Appleyard indicated that the Commission needs to decide how to provide the newsletter type information, and more immediately what information needs to go on the website. Of the current material, what should be restored on the new site. He suggested “turning off” the Referee Resources and Documents sections of the website until the content has been referred. Discussion suggested that these should stay “live” and reviewed piece by piece.

Lotz indicated that the Referee Training Manual needed an edit, and that it should be reproduced again this year. Appleyard indicated that he could obtain the editable original content. Discussion ensued about the role of the Commission as the review board.

Appleyard asked to call for nominations for the Wolf award early this year, and will

work with Watlington to publish the call for nominations and process them for consideration by the Wolf Committee.

Collins brought up the service awards described in the IOP; awards have not been provided since early in 2004. Members agreed to identify those referees eligible for awards as of December 31, 2004, and issue the appropriate certificates as soon as possible; awards based on 2005 service to be distributed in early 2006.

Tolle stated a desire to upgrade the recognition items for emeritus referees. Watlington to inventory the content on the website and provide a list of suggestions and recommendations; members to provide comments to Watlington by July 31.

Commission members to review the existing Referee Training Manual and provide suggested edits to Watlington by August 15. Mannle to ascertain the possibility of donated printing services.

- d. rules and safety (Collins) Collins asked about the USRowing-sponsored changes to the Rules approved at the March meeting; Pope indicated the changes had been incorporated into the 2005 edition of the Rules.
- e. curriculum, training, evaluation (Walker) Walker stated that the Referee exam is about 75% complete, and will be completed by the end of August.

Watlington discussed the need to keep some organizational questions; Lotz discussed keeping the questions but changing the weighting. Walker stated that no other part of USRowing required knowledge of the organization to participate. Collins noted that no current



training program includes organizational information. Le Mieux indicated that knowledge of the organization, while perhaps important, might better be included at another career point.

MOTION: *Mannle moved to replace the organizational questions on the Assistant Referee exam and replace them with test items that had more to do with Assistant duties; Lotz second.*

Watlington stated that there is more to being a referee than waiving a flag, and that the organizational questions were important.

Approved 6-2

Walker to provide revised versions of both exams by August 31, 2005.

- f. policy and procedures [IOP discussion](Lotz/LeMieux) Lotz brought up the requirements for reinstatement, to be included in the IOP, and requested clarification. Discussion ensued; the basic policy for reinstatement, as recorded in the minutes for 2003, is for the applicant to pass the Assistant's exam, and if formerly a Referee, then to pass the Starter and Referee position portions of the practical evaluation (formally titled "Judge-Referee Oral Examination Guidelines, Version 1.0,)

Walker distributed the actual language agreed to in December 2003, which reflects "practical evaluation" without regard to specific positions. Members agreed that the December 2003 language reflects the Commission's current intent, and should be reflected in the IOP.

Collins led a discussion and review of the changes to the IOP that have been recently approved, but not yet reflected in the IOP Collins to provide an updated version of the IOP, reflecting all approved changes, by August 31, 2005. Once finalized, responsibility for the updating of the IOP

passes to the Policy and Procedures subcommittee (Lotz)

6. COMMISSION LIAISON REPORTS

- a. Insurance and liability (Appleyard)
Appleyard distributed a memo from Lloyd McDonald about insurance issues and NASO membership. NASO has updated their coverages for watercraft-based activities. Based on McDonald's recommendation, the Commission declined to endorse or recommend NASO membership. Individual referees are free to make their own decisions.
- b. masters (Tolle) Tolle reported that the masters community has brought up the issue of static refereeing again, and that the Masters Committee petitioned the Board to have a trial of this approach at the USRowing Masters Nationals. The Board declined to authorize a trial, and referred the matter to the Referee Commission.

Watlington asked about the real reason underlying the request, and suggested that "wakes" were not the issue, but that the definition of what constitutes "rowable water" might be.

Walker suggested that members of the Masters Committee have an opportunity to observe on the water the safety and fairness issues associated with static positioning.

Tolle discussed some items associated with the USRowing National Championships

Appleyard/Tolle to request the Masters Committee to explain the specific reasons and purposes underlying the request for static refereeing. Tolle/Lotz to work out the details of providing on-the-water observations at the USRowing Masters Nationals

- c. junior – youth (Le Mieux) No report.

- d. safety (Le Mieux) Le Mieux reported that the Safety Committee continues to meet via teleconference. The poster is being updated, and the Safety DVD is available for a nominal fee. The USCG grant for approximately \$6000 was received, and will support the poster updating and buying PFDs for demonstration purposes. The Safety Committee is also working on what information will go on the USRowing website.

Re: the death of the BC lightweight rower at Dad Vails, Appleyard asked for a review of procedures for weigh-ins that are being used at regattas Lotz will send information about the British safety code to Commission members

- e. adaptive rowing (Walker). No report
f. high performance committee (Appleyard). No report
g. technology (Watlington) Watlington reported that changes are being contemplated for the data call; Pope previously reported that the referee data base has been transferred from Access to SQL.

7. COMMISSION OPERATIONS AND GOVERNANCE

- a. referee database management and administration. Appleyard indicated there is no new information to report since the last update in March. Lotz asked about the recent update of the database forwarded by Pope
- b. referee license administration. Appleyard reported that the process decided upon in March has been fully implemented, and that Pope has been actively processing the new licenses.
- c. Use of Basecamp. Appleyard stated a desire to continue the use of basecamp through the end of the year, at a minimum. He thought the capability was proving useful

- d. end of term dates for Commission members. Appleyard reported on suggestions to make the terms of the regional and at-large representatives co-terminus at the end of December each year, rather than split between December (at large) and March (regional). The issue is when can USRowing conduct elections; an outside entity is used to conduct and certify the results. Collins indicated that it would be desirable for newly elected regional representatives to begin their work in January, rather than March. Collins, Mannle, and Le Mieux to discuss potential changes to the end of term dates and report to the Commission.

8. REGATTAS AND EVENTS

Tolle and Watlington provided brief updates on the status of the Nationals and Masters Nationals

Lotz distributed a request from the Youth Advisory Committee for designating the current USRowing National Youth Invitational as a national championship regatta, and containing a description of the ancillary issues involved. Lotz described 5 issues:

- National championship status
- Definition of “youth” for purposes of classification by age
- Location of the regatta
- Selection of referees
- The possibility of 2 national championship regattas for this age level

After discussion, the Commission recorded the following straw votes on the issues involved (Yes-No-Abstain)

- That the USRowing Youth Invitational be considered a national championship. 7-0-1
- That the proposed definition of “Youth” as a separate classification by age not be added to the Rules. 8-0-0

- That it be recommended to the Board that it determine the intent of the Youth Advisory Committee regarding location. 3-3-2
- That Referee selection be handled in accordance with established policy and procedures governing other USRowing National Championships. 8-0-0
- That the Board be notified that approval of the request may result in two national championships. 1-4-3

9. REFEREE TRAINING

Appleyard distributed the list of applicants for the Julian Wolf 2005 Referee College. He reported that he had several requests for financial assistance. There is a 25 person limit on the number of students. Appleyard is also working on identifying the faculty to teach at the College

10. NEW BUSINESS

- a. coxswain weight for mixed events (Le Mieux)
MOTION: *Le Mieux moved that the wording Rule 5-310f, dealing with the placement of weights in mixed events, be repeated in 4-109a; Appleyard second*
Approved 8-0
- b. placement of coxswain weights in bow-loaded shells (Appleyard; Siconolfi query [1-25-05]) This is a proposal from Mike Siconolfi; the issue is whether coxes carrying a great deal of weight in the bow creates a safety hazard. LeMieux asked for a straw vote on the issue of limiting the weight that needs to be carried, to avoid developing a bulky weight that might prove to be a safety hazard. Discussion tabled. LeMieux to explore with the Safety committee alternatives to providing safety when weight is added to ensure fairness
- c. inclusion of training on the Rules of Rowing in the USRowing coaching education curriculum (Lotz).

MOTION: *Le Mieux moved to recommend to USRowing that a 1-hour session on the Rules of Rowing, to be provided by a Referee Clinician, be included in the Level I, II and III coaching education curriculum; Walker second*

Approved 8-0

- d. Rule 2-207(a) (Lotz) Lotz explained his interest in the issue of the minimum number of PFDs assigned to a launch. LeMieux to discuss the requirements for PFDs in launches with the safety committee.
- e. Rule 8-105 (Lotz)
MOTION: *Collins moved to substitute "regional representative" for "USRowing Referee Commission" in Rule 8-105; Lotz second*
Approved 5-1-2
Collins to redraft the text of the revised Rule for distribution and approval
- f. Mannle discussed two proposals that he will develop and distribute for further consideration: Codification of the role of the Ombudsman; and use of the white flag/alert commands under Rule 2-408. Mannle to develop and distribute his proposed Rules change by August 15, 2005
- g. Term limits for Commission members. Collins would like to adopt term limits for Commission members, given that the terms are now standardized at the longer length of 3 years
MOTION: *Collins moved to limit terms of Commission members to two consecutive terms, for a total of six years, Tolle second.* Appleyard asked to take a straw vote on the issued, with further consideration to be provided in December, if the straw vote is favorable; Collins agreed
Straw vote results 6-1-1 (Yes/No/Abstain). Lotz to develop language for the IOP to be voted on in December, 2005
- h. Oversight for referee database. The role of the Vice Chairman for maintenance of the database has been transferred to the staff of

USRowing. Lotz moved to include as part of the Vice Chair's responsibilities oversight rather than actual maintenance of the database. Lotz to develop revised wording for IOP.

- i. LOC responsibilities for providing emergency response at a regatta. Discussion tabled until the December, 2005 meeting
- j. potential change to duties of the Chief, to inform referees of the insurance status of the regatta. Discussion tabled until the December, 2005 meeting.

11. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Appleyard presented the correspondence with an aggrieved party appealing to the Commission; distribution to the Commission reflects conclusion of the issue.

Regional reports

NE: Watlington reported on the less-than-desirable conduct of an official; since the official in question has declined to renew membership in USRowing, the Chair will notify the official by mail that the official's license has been revoked. of her license

SW: Collins reported on an official with experiencing difficulties performing to standard; action was taken to initiate a leave of absence.

Collins also reported on a site he thought was inappropriate and potentially dangerous for hosting events. USRowing staff will send the LOC a letter outlining the expected standards of performance, but potentially there will be no support provided if conditions do not improve

MA: Mannle distributed the current strength trend data for the MA, reflecting an increase in the number of officials. He also discussed how to deal with inactive or ineffective clinicians

NW: LeMieux reported that there may be some LOC issues coming up that might affect the conduct of events. She also asked for approval of the reinstatement of Lecher Ross.

MOTION: *Le Mieux moved to approve the reinstatement of a NW official; Collins second*
Approved 7-0-1

MW: no report

SE: no report

12. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:29 PM July 9, 2005.