



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

**March 4-5, 2005
Anaheim, CA**

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

1. **CALL TO ORDER** (Appleyard
6:33 PM, March 4, 2005)

2. **INTRODUCTION OF NEW
MEMBERS**

Appleyard welcomed the new members to the Commission: Lyn Wylder (At Large), and Amanda Watlington (Northeast Region), and thanked Jody Pope for attending.

3. **ROUNDTABLE – PRIORITIES AND
GOALS**

Appleyard indicated that he had three items he wanted to focus on:

- how we're managing information, specifically the referee database. At this meeting, the Commission has an unprecedented opportunity to revise the procedures governing the database and "just fix it."
- On the process of training, to package the basic curriculum into a suitable format for nationwide delivery via standardized clinics.
- Finally, what are we going to do about recruiting and retention? It's OK to talk about the problem, but not as good as trying to fix it. We have to think about new approaches. What are our

requirements, and are they still serving us well, and what's the impact on recruiting and retention?

Collins stated that he tends to think of personal priorities, and Commission goals. One of the goals is to cycle through the entire training program over a 4-year period. It would be helpful to have the training material approved in December so that it could be used in clinics in the following year, i.e., a standard set of slides that could be adapted for use. Also, re-do the start video as a DVD.

LeMieux is planning to incorporate the data about un-reimbursed expenses from the data call into her report about burdens on referees, and would like the Commission to be in a position to vote on a proposal to help ameliorate this issue by the summer meeting, details to be developed. A short term goal is standardized training material. Long term, she would like to see some movement to "fund" referees, in addition to what they already receive.

Lotz wants to obtain more and younger full referees. He has a number of senior referees, and they need to step aside once in a while. Would like to work and be involved more in the data call, and would like to leave the present meeting with the system established for regional rankings.

Mannle's goals from last year continue: having the structure and content of training more explicit, and better linked to levels of competence expected, and a focus on the soft skills side of refereeing, e.g., communications, human relations, etc. He would also like to initiate discussion on including the role of the Ombudsman in the Rules, and starting to develop guidance about how to manage dual and tri-meets.



Tolle stated that we are still losing the battle about getting enough referees. He would like to define/clarify the role of the Chief, and provide more training. There needs to be a "lesser" designation for officials, because they do work for which a license is not required, and concentrate on using referees to fill those positions which are more critical. It is also important to better match training and standards to do what is necessary to run a regatta.

Walker wants to complete the revision of the referee exam by summer, and come up with recruiting material that can be used nationally. Also, develop one source for information and forms.

Watlington has two dimensions of interest, regional and broader. Regionally, recruiting needs to build on the foundation developed by Bruce Soden, and have continuing emphasis. More broadly, technology is a focus, and how it can be harnessed to support both recruiting and especially training. The number of clinicians is adequate, but they need more referees. The sport is growing exponentially, but the referee corps is growing arithmetically. This is ultimately unsustainable.

Wylder stated that the relationship with the NCAA should be better defined and clarified, and the shortage of referees generally is an issue, because the NCAA pays well for officials, and may be affecting the market for officials in some areas.

Pope would like the members to use/rely on the USRowing staff more, and put more information on the website.

4. REVIEW OF COMMISSION OFFICER DUTIES

Appleyard reviewed the duties of officers as described in the IOP, and proposed the following changes:

- IOP 11. The Secretary keeps minutes of the Referee Commission meetings

MOTION: *Lotz moved to accept Appleyard's recommendation, LeMieux second*

Approved 9-0

- IOP 10. The Vice Chairman assists the Chairman in his/her duties and takes a leadership role in defining Referee Commission activity with respect to domestic events (such as national championships).

MOTION: *LeMieux moved to accept Appleyard's recommendation, Wylder second*

Discussion on the motion focused on the desirability of including some responsibilities for the database in the Vice Chairman's responsibilities.

Motion tabled pending discussion of database procedural revisions

5. OFFICER ELECTIONS FOR 2005-06 TERM

LeMieux indicated that it was important to understand how many years were remaining on the terms of each member, so that officers could be selected with this in mind, and preparation for succession could be included.

Appleyard indicated he is at present undecided as to whether he'll seek another term as an At Large member, at the end of 2005. He might be able to do so at the summer meeting.

LeMieux indicated that the Commission might consider electing a Vice Chair with

the idea that that person would be groomed to take over as Chair.

- a. chairman
LeMieux nominated Appleyard
Approved by acclamation
- b. vice-chairman
LeMieux nominated herself
Collins nominated Wylder
Wylder elected 7-2
- c. secretary
Mannle nominated himself
Approved by acclamation
- d. treasurer
Tolle nominated Collins
Approved by acclamation

6. USE OF E-MEDIA TO MANAGE COMMISSION DISCUSSIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS (APPLEYARD)

Appleyard has been asking about tools and systems generally available that might be helpful for the Commission to conduct business. Email is OK, but difficult to use for some topics, hard to maintain a focus, etc. He asked for specific suggestions.

Wylder noted that large projects typically used web-based project management tools, and the one she is currently using might be good for the Commission to consider; the product is called BaseCamp, there are others. Cost is approximately \$25-\$50/month

LeMieux suggested that Commission communications be sent out on a more regular basis, batch mode, so there weren't a number of items that had to be dealt with on a daily basis.

Mannle asked if a trial period could be arranged, for whatever tool contemplated.

Appleyard's goal is to improve the Commission's ability to communicate effectively and execute the tasks and action items assigned.

Wylder to investigate near term implementation of BaseCamp or similar product, sized for 10 users. Mannle and Watlington to assist. Implementation desirable by April 1st.

7. REVIEW REMAINING AGENDA AND TIMELINES

- a. prioritize critical decisions and business
- b. prioritize the necessary outcomes for this meeting

8. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES (DECEMBER 2004)

Minutes accepted as approved per the IOP

9. ACTIONS TAKEN SINCE DECEMBER 2004

No report

10. TREASURER'S REPORT AND BUDGET (Collins)

- a. expenditures to date
- b. regional budget reports
- c. regional expenses and charges – what should we fund?

Collins presented the 2004 approved budget, and 2004 actual expenses. There is a surplus of \$2580, based on the revised budget of \$15000, which reverts to USRowing. For 2005, the Commission budget is \$20,000. There was some discussion about whether USRowing would actually approve a budget of \$22,000.

Watlington inquired about the purpose of the Referee Stipend fund; Collins explained that it originated from selling pins and patches, and that it used to provide funds for

attendance at the Referee College for those who would be unable to attend for financial reasons. Average disbursement is in the \$100-200 range. The new license cards were funded by donation via the Referee Stipend fund, and Collins is investigating obtaining a new source of referee pins, to be funded by the fund, and reimbursed via purchase.

Collins initiated a discussion of options for determining a proper allocation for each region, since the regions differ in terms of the number of referees. These options include equal dollars; some fixed dollars plus some variable dollars; and smaller equal funding plus a centralized pool to meet contingencies.

Mannle suggested that until there is more detailed information about what funds allocated to the region are actually being spent on, it would be hard to decide among the alternatives; Appleyard said that a decision could be made at the December meeting.

Discussion continued about the list included in the list distributed by Collins. The bulleted list provided by Collins, with the exception of the regional meetings, was agreed to by the members. Mannle noted that the new revised budget total for each region is now \$750.

Appleyard announced that the Commission's budget had been confirmed at \$21, 000, an increase of \$1000.

MOTION:*Lotz moved to provide a referee crest, patch, and one nametag to each new referee, effective from the 2005 calendar year, sent directly from USRowing upon notification, with regional budgets debited for the amount, not to exceed \$16 plus shipping; Walker second.*

LeMieux asked to table the motion until the methodology for determining regional allocations was determined; Lotz second.

Mannle stated that waiting to approve the expense until the methodology for allocating funds would be counterproductive, because six months would go by and nothing would be done. LeMieux stated her budget plan was made, and approving the motion would require her to spend money that she had not planned upon.

Motion to table Approved, 4-3-2

MOTION:*Lotz moved to approve Collins allocation proposal number 3, with the fixed amount provided to the regions as \$750, leaving a regional budget total of \$4500, and a pool of \$1500; Walker second.*

Appleyard indicated that the process for approving expenditures out of the pool should be posted via an email, and approved on an up/down vote. Wylder stated that the funds might best be reserved for national versus regional uses, but she could see both sides of the issue.

Approved 7-2

Appleyard reinitiated discussion on the tabled motion.

MOTION:*Mannle proposed an amendment, to strike the language debiting regional accounts for the expense involved in supplying the 4 initial items, (i.e. crest, patch, nametag, and license card) and applying the expense to the \$1500 centralized pool just established; Lotz accepted the amendment.*

Approved 7-1-1

MOTION:*LeMieux moved to allocate the additional funds to the regional unallocated pool, just established; Tolle second.*



Collins noted that current travel expenses were running about as budgeted, but that a reserve might be necessary.

MOTION: *Collins moved to keep the additional \$1000 in a reserve against future contingency, Lotz second*

Approved 9-0; Collins and Appleyard to determine whether the budget increase of \$2000 for 2005 has been approved.

11. STANDING SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS, AND REVIEW OF PORTFOLIOS

- a. grievance/appeals (open) This had been headed by Bruce Soden, so a new subcommittee head is required. Soden developed a set of procedures governing the handling of appeals, which Appleyard is confident will work well; the specific procedures have yet to be approved.
- b. ethics and performance (Mannle) Mannle discussed the memo he distributed in February, including a proposed referee Code of Conduct, and revised IOP language for handling a complaint against an official. Mannle asked for comments on both not later than March 31, 2005. Members to provide comments to Mannle by March 31, 2005.

Mannle to present revised code of conduct and IOP language for Commission approval via email. Mannle to coordinate with Wylder on use of management coordination software for this process.

- c. curriculum, training, evaluation (Walker) Walker is the process of developing the revised referee exam, and will report on it at the Summer meeting. He also is developing some

concepts about recruiting, also to be presented at the Summer meeting.

Appleyard asked whether recruiting should be transferred to another committee; Walker indicated that it would be, and he would transfer the materials to whoever was assigned.

Tolle asked whether questions about what version of the on-the-water exam should be used were to be entertained now or at someplace else in the agenda; Appleyard indicated that the discussion under referee ranks would be more appropriate

Walker to present the revised Referee exam at the Summer meeting of the Commission

- d. rules and safety (Collins) No report
- e. policy and procedures (open)
- f. publications and recognition (open)

12. APPOINTMENT OF SUBCOMMITTEE HEADS FOR THE 2005-06 TERM

Appleyard asked each member to state their preferences for serving as subcommittee heads

- a. Collins: Rules and Safety
- b. Watlington: No preference
- c. LeMieux: Policy and Procedures
- d. Wylder: Grievance and Appeals
- e. Walker: Curriculum, Testing and Evaluation
- f. Lotz: Grievance and Appeals, or Policy and Procedures
- g. Tolle: Grievance and Appeals

Appleyard made the following appointments:

- a. Rules and Safety: Collins

- b. Publications and Recognition:
Watlington
- c. Curriculum, Testing and Evaluation:
Walker
- d. Policy and Procedures: Lotz, LeMieux to assist
- e. Ethics and Performance: Mannle

Appleyard tabled the appointment of a chair of Grievance and Appeals, pending discussions with Wylder and Tolle

13. COMMISSION LIAISON REPORTS

- a. Insurance and liability (Appleyard)
Appleyard reported on insurance issues, including the latest developments concerning NASO, as reported by Lloyd MacDonald. At present, there has been no determination that a revised NASO policy covers referees in the routine scope of their duties. McDonald to advise.
- b. masters (Tolle) With the departure of Margot Zalkind, there is less emphasis on moving to a regional structure.
- c. junior – youth (Le Mieux) No report; it is continually difficult to obtain information about junior issues that need to be addressed by the Commission
- d. safety (Le Mieux) USRowing has amended the safety video, and it will be distributed on DVD and VHS tape, for a charge. Please note that oars are no longer considered flotation devices. The safety committee asked for a USCG grant to update safety materials. The safety committee is considering making it mandatory for USRowing referees to wear PFDs when on the water; Appleyard asked to have the requirement stated as applying to all launch occupants, and not single out referees.
- e. adaptive rowing (Walker). No report
- f. high performance committee (Appleyard). No report

- g. technology (Watlington)

14. APPOINTMENT OF COMMISSION LIAISONS FOR THE 2005-06 TERM

Appleyard made the following liaison appointments:

- Juniors: Lotz
- Adaptive rowing: Lotz
- High performance: chairman of the Referee Commission (Appleyard)

Collins suggested merging the concepts of trials coordinator and high performance liaison; Lotz suggested that this might be a conflict. Appleyard noted that HPC policies require communications via the Commission chairman.

Wylder suggested establishing a liaison with the NCAA; Collins commented favorably. Appleyard asked Wylder to act in this role for the time being; Wylder is the Chief of the NCAA championships. Tolle asked about the need to establish liaisons with other conferences, such as ECAC. LeMieux and Mannle indicated that a liaison function with other groups that did not have a relationship with USRowing would be useful.

Lotz reminded the members that the purpose of the liaison was to have a single point of contact on the Commission, for the convenience of the group involved, and to distribute the workload.

Appleyard reviewed the existence of the technology subcommittee, how it came into being, and that Watlington is the technology liaison with USRowing staff who are revising the website.

15. COMMISSION OPERATIONS AND GOVERNANCE

- a. IOP maintenance and review. Appleyard stated as a functional objective that the most current version of the IOP should be available on the website. Collins distributed a current version of the IOP to be used as the basis for changes and updates. He also distributed an itemized list of the planned changes to the IOP. Appleyard asked to create an audit trail for the IOP to trace the language back to a formal decision made by the Commission. Appleyard also asked Lotz to develop a standardized process for making changes to the IOP; perhaps using management coordination software. Finally, the “official” IOP should be updated and available in real time to the Commission members.
- b. referee database management and administration. Appleyard outlined his vision for revising the database and the procedures for its use. Watlington provided a current report on the database. The current data call is a “beta” testing of the general applicability of the concept, ie, web-based updating. She is working with Kirsten and Howard Meisner, and Roxanne Everetts on security issues. Watlington indicated that more functionality would be available in the next six months. Lotz asked to discuss and resolve various issues of policy before implementing them in technology. Appleyard asked Lotz to participate in an ongoing capacity to help address these issues. Mannle asked about the merging of the updated data call data with the current version of the data base, and how to address near term requirements such as listing the data in the rule book. Appleyard asked Watlington to play the role for the Commission that Everetts did in the past, and to take physical possession of the data base; Watlington agreed. LeMieux

asked to include an item about changes to the data call on the agenda for the Summer meeting.

- c. referee license administration. Appleyard asked Lotz and Watlington to develop a process for issuing license cards for new and promoted referees.
- d. standard process to notify and record official actions taken by the commission regarding individual officials (Lotz). Lotz reported on referees whose license has been revoked, but who have continued to officiate, claiming lack of knowledge about the revocation. Appleyard to coordinate with Lotz.
- e. location and date for Summer, 2005. Members discussed various merits of dates, and meeting in Seattle, Princeton, NJ, and Philadelphia.

MOTION: *Watlington moved to have the Summer meeting of the Commission in Princeton, NJ on Saturday and Sunday, July 9-10, 2005; LeMieux second*

Approved 9-0

16. REGATTAS AND EVENTS

- a. proposed rules changes for national championship events and classifications (Pope) Appleyard reviewed the changes to the Rules governing classification by skill at national championship regattas, as requested by Pope. Pope reported on the history of the issue, and the results of a task force she put together. Mannle noted that restriction on former members of the National team competing as seniors vs. elites was not constrained by time, i.e., a rower on the National team in their 20’s would be prevented from competing as a senior in their 50’s. Mannle suggested that the restriction be limited to 5 years after completion of tenure on the National team. Pope reported that the time limit is being



investigated, but no consensus has been reached. Lotz asked about the timing of the proposed change; Pope explained that it was intended to be in force for the 2005 national championships. The Board is prepared to act as soon as the Commission decides.

MOTION: *Lotz moved to approve the change to the rules as proposed by Pope; Wylder second*

Approved 8-0-1

- b. USRowing funding for referees at national championships (Appleyard/Pope) The Commission had approved a jury of 26 officials for each of the two national championships, 4 per region plus Chief and Deputy. Pope reviewed the financial implications for this year. She has a budget for travel reimbursement (not including lodging) of \$4500 per event, or \$173.08 per official. An extensive discussion ensued concerning reducing the numbers drawn from each region, as approved in December 2004, versus lowering the level of travel reimbursement, which had been approved in March 2004.

MOTION: *Appleyard moved to provide 3 fully-funded referees from each region to the national championship regattas, plus an additional 6 officials drawn from the host region, who would be reimbursed for lodging. The requirement of 26 officials per regatta (24 plus Chief and Deputy) remains in effect; Walker second.*

LeMieux noted that she would be voting against the proposal, because it reverses decisions made previously, from which the Commission now appears to be backtracking

Approved 6-2-1

- c. policy governing referee appointments for national championships Mannle presented the results of the beta test of a

comparison between the current process for establishing a regional order of merit list for selecting officials for the national championship regattas, and a prototype new method. Mannle explained the particulars of the new method, and the results of the application in the NW.

Discussion ensued about the use of the order of merit list, and its application to the selection process.

MOTION: *Mannle moved to (1) adopt the prototype evaluation method as described to establish a regional order of merit list (2) to use the unweighted average of the three domains included (3) to incorporate the preference data obtained from the data call to establish an initial list of the officials selected to attend the national championship regattas on a fully-funded basis, and (4) to allow the regional representative to make one exception to the selection list for each regatta for purposes of career development; Lotz second.*

Approved 9-0

- d. USRowing nationals (Tolle) Tolle reported on the preparations for the USRowing national championships; he mentioned the possibility of allowing races to be followed by one official, to conserve resources. Mannle pointed out that if there were four boats in a race, then two officials were required to follow, and this was an asterisked rule.
- e. masters nationals (Watlington) Watlington reported on the Masters nationals
- f. USRowing youth invitational (comment by Lotz) Lotz reported on the Youth Invitational

17. REFEREE RANKS AND REQUIREMENTS

- a. policy for reinstatement of former referees Appleyard reviewed the

reinstatement policy as approved in 2003, and the procedural implications as described in an email message. Regional representatives may approve petitions for reinstatement, subject to notification to the Commission, or intend to deny the petition if there is an objection. The individual may appeal a denial to the Commission. Mannle asked about time limits for reinstatement, versus re-entry process, especially but not limited to the overlap between Leave of Absence and resignation, for short periods. Discussion suggested that time limits did not need to be established. Lotz to develop revised IOP language to reflect reinstatement policy, as amended by the discussion.

Mannle to develop language guiding communications with the official seeking reinstatement around reasons for objection and opportunity to appeal

- b. approve IOP requirements for Assistant Referee. Appleyard reviewed the recent history revising IOP 37 et seq, instantiating the decision made in March 2004 to allow Assistants to remain at that rank. The members discussed a number of minor amendments to the wording, including changing the requirement in IOP 38 from 4 regattas to 4 regatta-days

MOTION: *Watlington moved to accept the wording to change IOP 37 et seq as proposed by Walker, as amended; Wylder second*

Approved 9-0

- c. Assistant Referee exam content and grading (Lotz)[Walker departed 2:56 PM; items concerning Assistant Referee exam tabled until his return]
- d. write objective criteria to distinguish between Assistant Referee and Referee Appleyard opened the discussion about distinguishing between Assistants and Referees. LeMieux noted that the only

distinction now is that Referees can be Chiefs. Mannle read an example of defining Referee as distinct from Assistants. Appleyard indicated that he wants to focus on this issue and have more detailed discussion on it at the Summer meeting. Tolle indicated that the criteria for being a Chief should also be added to this discussion. Mannle to circulate the language he read to the members, as a basis for the discussion

- e. establish standard criteria and standards for advancement to Referee [taking into consideration the change in rank structure passed in March 2004]

18. REFEREE TRAINING

Appleyard made a suggestion that there are several presentations available, and these should be used as the starting point for the development of standardized training material, especially if the management coordination software is available Mannle suggested that Appleyard, as the dean of the referee college, be charged with establishing a curriculum development committee to development materials for use at the College, which could then be reviewed by the Commission, modified, and posted on the website

19. COMMUNICATIONS

Appleyard mentioned the continuing importance of the Clipboard, and emphasized to Watlington the need to continue to publish it. Watlington mentioned the possibility of “blogging” the Commission efforts; Appleyard asked to table this idea until the members can be better informed about what this means. Lotz noted that the “commission comments” he has prepared have not yet been published.

20. OLD BUSINESS



- a. costs for becoming a referee and maintaining or advancing to Referee (Le Mieux). LeMieux presented a report on the costs involved in becoming, continuing, or advancing as a Referee. Tolle inquired as to the ultimate purpose of the analysis; LeMieux responded that it was to provide a detailed and systematic estimate of financial contributions to USRowing made by referees, and the costs incurred upon being licensed. LeMieux to provide the Excel files involved to the Commission members. Members to provide feedback and comment for update.
- b. process to work with individual referees who are not meeting competency standards (Mannle). Mannle presented a set of proposed procedures concerning enforcing compliance for the administrative requirements for maintaining a license. The possibility of suspension of license for not maintaining membership, and notification to potential chiefs, was discussed. Tolle noted that new requirements for maintenance for Assistants have been approved, and these need to be taken into account as well. Mannle to revise language and distribute to Commission; inclusion in the IOP to follow.

21. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Siconolfi query [1-25-05] regarding placement of coxswain weights
- b. discussion of Rule 2-207(a) (Lotz)
- c. review of IOP #26: wearing of USRowing insignia at non-registered regattas (Lotz)
- d. formal inclusion of training on the Rules of Rowing in the USRowing coaching education curriculum (Lotz)
- e. assistance from USRowing on referee materials (Le Mieux)

Under items a-e in new business, tabled, but information will be circulated.

Mannle will also add items for inclusion in the Rules of the role of Ombudsman and guidance for conduct of dual and tri-meets.

22. EXECUTIVE SESSION

regional issues

Regional reports:

SW: no report

NW: Lemieux is submitting a letter to be considered as a FISA umpire

SE: no report

MA: Mannle distributed MA data

NE: No report

Tolle reported that former officials are using the available training materials to conduct clinics for their own purposes. Our material is not copyrighted; Appleyard noted that there are some indications that officials are being “privately” developed, and the materials are being used.

Watlington and LeMieux indicated that copyright was automatic upon completion; Wylder stated that “USRowing” should be on all materials

Appleyard reported on selecting officials for Trials; Laura Kunkemuller and Kris Grudt will be Chiefs for NSR I and II, respectively, and Collins will be chief for World Championship Trials.

The following nominations for international juries were submitted to FISA:

- World Championships (Gifu JAP): Vajda, Walker
- Junior World Championships (Brandenburg GER): Willenbring
- World Under-23 Championships (Amsterdam NED): Lang
- World Veterans Regatta (Strathclyde GBR): Grudt, Walton, Wylder, L

- World Cup I (Eton GBR): Reilly
- World Cup II (Munich GER): Wylder, L
- World Cup III (Lucerne SUI):
Zandbergen, Chen
- World Masters Games (Edmonton
CAN): Walker, Scurria, Lang

Collins suggested the Secretary send a letter to Jim Warmington thanking him for the uses of the facility, and John Walker's contribution.

LeMieux asked about her proposed thank-you gift to the Meisner's and Everetts for their work on the data call.

Appleyard wants to make the Summer meeting of a different type, with a limited and concentrated focus on selected items.

23. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:17 PM
March 5, 2005.