



## Referee Committee

Minutes of Meeting  
October 29, 2014  
Phone Conference Call

### Attendance:

#### Referee Committee:

Tom Fuller – Chair  
Chris Lang – Vice Chair  
Ruth Macnamara - Secretary  
Lloyd McDonald – Regional Coordinator  
Marcus Mc Elhenney – Athlete Representative

#### Regional Coordinators:

John Musial, MA  
Jorge Salas, SE  
Roger Frederick, MW  
Howard Meisner, NE  
Dee McComb, NW  
Lloyd McDonald, SW – Regional Coordinator to Committee

#### USRowing:

John Wik – Director of Referee Programs

#### Guests:

Christine Collins, Co-Chair of the High Performance Committee (HPC)  
Mike Zimmer, National Team Programs Manager  
Tom Mandle, Trials Coordinator  
Rachel Le Mieux, Co-Trials Coordinator  
Gary Caldwell, NE Representative to the Board of Directors  
Laura Kunkemueller  
Kirsten Meisner  
AJ Dominique, USRowing Events Manager  
Allen Eubanks, Youth Committee SE Representative, Chair

### **I. Call Meeting to Order (Tom Fuller)**

- A. The first purpose of tonight's meeting is to provide the Referee Committee and Regional Coordinators with an opportunity to hear from our guests their final comments regarding the proposed changes to the

*Rules of Rowing* for 2015, and for the Referee Committee/Regional Coordinators to ask any final questions of our guests regarding the proposed changes.

- B. The second purpose is for the Referee Committee and Regional Coordinators to resolve outstanding Parking Lot issues, and issues we have with certain of the proposed changes to the *Rules of Rowing* that we flagged as rule changes we wanted to revisit. (These are identified below in sections III. and IV.)
- C. The Referee Committee and Regional Coordinators will determine at least two meeting dates in the first two weeks of November to finalize our discussion of all proposed changes to the *Rules of Rowing* and to conduct a vote by the Referee Committee, during a meeting in which the Regional Coordinators will also be present and able to participate, but not vote, whereby the Referee Committee will agree on its recommendations to the USRowing Board of Directors for all proposed changes to the *Rules of Rowing* for 2015. (A vote will be taken only if we do not have a consensus.)
- D. We have formally requested a review of the proposed reorganization of the *Rules of Rowing*, the LOC Guidance Manual and the Referee Procedures Manual for “unintended consequences” from names submitted by the Regional Coordinators and others. They have been given a deadline of November 14<sup>th</sup> by which to submit their comments.

## **II. Final Discussion of the Proposed Changes to Article VI Trials Rules submitted by the HPC (All)**

- A. The purpose of this discussion is to solicit final comments and/or questions regarding the HPC’s submission for changes to Article VI.
- B. Christine Collins Submitted additional comments before the meeting:

*You had asked me after the call to provide you with an opinion on "why now" for the proposed changes. I have thought about this quite a bit because I appreciate the concerns voiced on the call that it might take some time to ramp up our trained referees and because we just finished going through this year's selection procedures draft.*

*For what it's worth, it's important in my view to do this now because we are in the last pre-Olympic year selection process and the year of the Olympics is not the year to make significant changes to our Sel Pros (Selection Procedures) both from the athletes' and the USOC's perspectives. As you know, the USOC only reviews our Sel Pros in the Olympic year and we want to work out any kinks in the Sel Pros before 2016 so we are 100% confident in*

*that process before it gets tested by the USOC in the Olympic year. Also, if there are any adjustments that need to be made, we have a year to fix them.*

*As for why we wouldn't wait until 2017, that is two years away and since we are talking about trying to improve our elite athletes' performance at Worlds and the Olympics, then we need to do everything possible as soon as possible -- even if it seems like a burden or merely an administrative change to some. The USOC just increased our funding for 2015 by quite a bit, at the expense of other sports, because they think we did well last year, we are a good investment, and 2015 is going to be a telling year.*

*Finally, I have been told that the USRowing Board has requested a revamp of the Rules on many grounds and this is just one component of that. Assuming those changes go forward, it makes little sense to hold these changes back rather than bundling them with all of the other changes.*

C. Tom Mannle submitted additional comments:

*#1 Currently, Trials/Selection events use Article VI of the Rules of Rowing. These Rules contain two instances of "FISA inserts", i.e., sections where the current rules and procedures of FISA are used in lieu of the non-Article VI provisions of the Rules of Rowing, specifically:*

- 6-203 International Classification and Eligibility Rules, and*
- 6-305 Starts*

*The proposed revision would adopt the FISA Rules of Racing, but also include two "USRowing inserts", either in the revised Rules of Rowing or the National Team Selection procedures, specifically:*

- Current 6-306 The Race ("misadventure")*
- Revised 6-105 Penalties for Interference in Trials Races*

*(The Time Trial misadventure procedure is included in both)*

*The result of the proposed change appears to be substantially similar to the status quo. But the proposed revision requires both athletes and Trials officials to dip into and out of the FISA Rules of Racing, the Rules of Rowing, and the National Team Selection procedures, and master the other FISA Rules not now included, to acquire a thorough, complete and comprehensive understanding of the rules and procedures under which Trials and Selection events will be conducted.*

*This is overly complex and more complicated than the current procedure, and the reality is that the required body of knowledge will not be both "simple" and "in one place" as the proponents of the revision assert. The Committee should consider this revision in the light of Occam's Razor, and not let entities multiply except of necessity.*

*#2. Building on the last paragraph of General Comment #1 above, the Trials Coordinators believe that there is unknown but potentially significant implementation risk in adopting the proposed revisions, in no small part due to the additional training effort required bring the Trials pool of officials up to speed on the new requirements. Will any training resources be provided by USRowing to help implement the proposed revisions?*

*#3. There is a great deal of reliance placed on moving important content to the National Team Selection Procedures. However, the 2015 NTSP have not been published for public comment, so it is impossible to ascertain whether there are any discrepancies/conflicts (NB: there have been in the past) between the NTSP FISA Rules of Racing, and the Rules of Rowing as revised.*

*The proposed revision should not be approved unless and until this review has been completed*

*#4. My experience as a Trials official extends continuously from 2001 to the present. I am not aware of any instance where an athlete or crew has been disadvantaged at a FISA event because FISA Rules of Racing were not in force at a Trials/Selection event. The current Article VI provides protection to the athletes and significant advantages to USRowing to select the most competitive team to represent the United States, that will be lost if FISA Rules of Racing are adopted to the extent proposed. Given the additional complexity described above, and importance of Trials events as we enter the last 2 years of the 2013-2016 quadrennium, revision of Article VI in the manner proposed puts at risk the conduct of the remaining Trials events during this period.*

- D. Tom Fuller opened up the discussion by offering Tom Mannle to ask any further questions he might have of the HPC members that were present.

Tom Mannle said he didn't have any further questions but would be willing to answer any questions HPC might have of him.

Mike Zimmer had nothing new to offer but emphasized that the intent of the change is to streamline the process for the selection of athletes at the trial events to make them as similar to a FISA event as possible. Mike asked Tom Mannle to comment further on how the revisions don't match the intent.

Tom Mannle stated that what he heard on 9/24 from the HPC was a desire to do away with some of the revised rules proposed, i.e. misadventure and adding back the presumed penalty for interference to be exclusion. If this is the desire, that is not what you are getting with this rewrite. Misadventure is not a procedure, it is a rule. The current rule is USRowing Rules with FISA inserts and includes misadventure and

exclusion is not the presumed penalty for interference. There are still going to be three places to refer to get all the rules for trials: National Team Selection Procedures; USRowing *Rules of Rowing* Article IV as revised; and FISA Rules and associated By Laws. If simplicity is desired, that is not what you are getting.

Rachel Le Mieux echoed Tom Mannle's comments. Having read Christine Collins comments regarding "why now", the rewrite is not doing what you want it to. There is a disconnect with the desire to do this and what these proposed Rule Changes get us. Put FISA in totality if that is what you want. Our original intent was to pick the fastest athlete. This feels like a piece meal approach. I'm happy to implement whatever rules the HPC desires but what is proposed doesn't match what you state your intent to be. There is a risk in doing this now. I have concerns of how and why now.

Mike Zimmer – Tom Mannle did you get any further feedback from Curtis or Christine regarding your comments.

Tom Mannle – No. I spoke to Matt Imes on Monday regarding item #3. Where are the National Team Selection Procedures? It is difficult to render an opinion whether the goals have in fact been accomplished without seeing the rewrite of the Selection Procedures. Tom Mannle stated that Matt Imes said they would not rewrite the Selection Procedures before the rule changes were accepted. If and when the Board approves the changes, then the HPC will revise. Tom Mannle doesn't feel all the pieces are in place to make a decision. One major component is missing.

Christine Collins – I just finished reviewing the draft 2015 Selection Procedures. They will be posted for public comment Friday afternoon. The public comment period is 30 days. After that, HPC will review the comments and if any need to be integrated, they will be at that time. They will then be submitted to the Board for approval at their December meeting. I feel you are putting the cart before the horse. We will not integrate a rule change before it is approved by the Board. If necessary for this group, we can come up with a draft for the Referee Committee. There is plenty of time between the Board meeting and when the Selection Procedures have to be finalized that if there were major changes to the Selection Procedures, we can repost for comment. We would really like to make FISA the baseline for these rule changes. If we choose, we can later eliminate misadventure and interference. We really want to align ourselves with FISA so the athletes are comfortable as possible using the FISA rules. The HPC has jurisdiction over the Selection Procedures.

Other Comments?

Lloyd McDonald – Consideration needs to be given about how to license referees to work trial events. Three options: FISA Umpires only; relicense National Referees to be qualified to work Trials Events; or do nothing.

Tom Mannle – I would not characterize the opposition as being vehement, just in principal. HPC does have control. I would have liked it if you had consulted those that actually do the work: Rachel and myself as the Trials Coordinators and the Trials Chiefs.

Laura Kunkemueller – That is not accurate Tom. This was not done in a vacuum. The HPC did consult with me, Howard Meisner and Kirsten Meisner. This was not drawn out of thin air.

Tom Fuller – If anyone has additional comments, please send to my attention and I will distribute to the group.

**III. Discussion of the Parking Lot Issues: (All) (Let me know if I have missed any Parking Lot issues. These issues were discussed but not all members were present.)** Laura, Howard and Kirsten submitted written remarks to the Parking Lot issues; a copy of their comments is attached to these minutes.

- A. Do just the *Rules of Rowing* go to the Board for final approval of changes, with the LOC Manual and the Referee Procedures Manual under the custody of the Referee Committee with guidance as to changes set out in the Internal Operating Procedures, or does the Board have final approval authority over the entire package? (September 15, 2014 Conference Call) [tf comments: the consensus of the parties participating is that the Board will retain authority over the reorganized *Rules of Rowing* which include the *Rules of Rowing*, the LOC Guidance Manual and the Referee Procedures Manual. We will solicit Laura’s, Kirsten’s and John Musial’s comments to make sure they are on board with this opinion.]

**Discussion:** Laura, Howard and Kirsten agree that the Board has the approval authority. John Musial and Chris Lang Agree.

**CLOSED**

- B. Change from the USRowing Referee Committee to USRowing. (September 22, 2014 Conference Call) [tf comments: We seemed to be in favor of this but I would like to give folks one more opportunity to address the issue. I believe we need to develop a clear procedure as to what “USRowing” means and a well-defined “place” for all inquiries, referrals, protests, etc., to go.]

**Discussion:** Chris Lang – add a general email that can be forwarded to the responsible person. John Musial agrees with Chris, just be consistent as we don't want anything lost. John Wik stated that USRowing can add an email account for this and post it into the *Rules of Rowing* book.

CLOSED

- C. Changing the numbering system within the *Rules of Rowing* to have consecutive numbering instead of leaving the numbering system static, even when a rule is removed from the *Rules of Rowing*? (September 22, 2014 Conference Call) [We are OK with the numbering system used in the reorganized *Rules of Rowing* document. We will solicit Laura's, Kirsten's and John Musial's comments to make sure they are on board with this opinion]

**Discussion:** John Musial – if cleaning up, straighten out the numbering system.

CLOSED

- D. Discussion of the asterisk (\*) rules. (September 22, 2014 Conference Call) [tf comments: We will wait until Laura, Howard and Kirsten are all available to participate in this call which I believe will be October 29<sup>th</sup>; John Musial should be back from Australia for this discussion as well.]

**Discussion:** John Musial and Chris Lang keep the asterisk in the rule book.

- E. Matching the definition of "Junior" with what the USRowing Youth National Championship Regatta requirements are for eligibility. (September 22, 2014 Conference Call) [tf comments: We will try to get the Youth Committee to provide the Referee Committee with their input; we will also discuss this Parking Lot issue in light of the changes submitted by AJ. CEO/Board action may be needed with the Youth Committee. **New information:** John Wik asked the Youth Committee to provide us with their input no later than November 1, 2014.]

**Discussion:** Allen Eubanks stated that this was a Rule change in the recent past. They decided to keep the traditional definition of Junior.

Tom Fuller – in concurrence with AJ's proposed Rule change submitted, the definition of Youth is to meet the Eligibility standard for Youth Nationals.

AJ Dominique – The proposed new age groups gives USRowing the opportunity to expand to different athletes down the road. The categories as they stand now are getting a little fuzzy. These new proposed age groups will be cut and dry for eligibility. It allows for more options and opportunities.

Allen Eubanks – with the new proposed age groups, an athlete can row up an age category but not down.

The question was asked will this limit the number of boats an organization can enter, would this limit the number of athletes who can participate.

Allen Eubanks – that would be up the LOC for each regatta. This option would provide a fairer playing field. If there is a Rule, it needs to be enforceable. Using the age categories proposed makes it easy to enforce. With the proposed U23 age category, it covers the college athletes. No plan for U13 at this stage; in time, there may be a need for it.

Tom Mannle – does this amplify the number of events and crews at clubs? It is already a huge event, how would this change affect Clubs?

AJ Dominique – This would cause reorganization between Clubs and Elites. USRowing looks at this as an opportunity to restructure.

AJ and Allen offered examples of past experiences where the new structure would make for cut and dried decisions.

- F. Clarify the ineligible or medical substitution issue – clarify why an athlete is ineligible for substitution. (Came up at the 2014 Youth National Championship Regatta) (September 22, 2014 Conference Call) [tf comments: We will wait until Chris Lang and John Musial can join the call for clarification as to what exactly is the issue with respect to the interpretation of “medical substitution” as it pertains to a lightweight athlete who fails to make weight after having participated with her or his crew in an earlier race within the same event on a previous day from Ms. Lang’s perspective.]

**Discussion:** Much discussion ensued. Different scenarios were constructed and options discussed. Question of whether the lightweight substitution is a Medical issue or an Eligibility issue.

Allan Eubanks stated that from the Youth Committee’s perspective, it is a medical issue when a junior lightweight weighs in more than the 1.0 variance allowed for a second weigh-in.



Chris Lang asks the question, is the lightweight out for one event or all events if they don't make weight in their first weigh-in opportunity.

In multi day regatta, if a crew weighs in and makes weight and rows one race and then on the next day, one athlete doesn't make weight, can they substitute on the medical substitution or is the whole boat excluded because of an ineligible athlete?

Allen Eubanks – once the crew has raced, they can't substitute for future rounds in that event.

**ACTION:** Tom Fuller asked Chris Lang, Allen Eubanks, AJ Dominique and Lloyd McDonald to get a consensus among themselves and draft language to support it and bring back to the group next week.

- G. General discussion of Article 5 Regattas and the amount of material moved to the LOC Manual. (September 22, 2014 Conference Call) [tf comments: The group did not seem to have any outstanding issues with respect to this Parking Lot issue, so it is closed as it pertains to the members in attendance on the conference call. We will solicit Chris', Laura's, Kirsten's and John Musial's comments to make sure they are on board with this opinion.]

Chris Lang is ok with this. John Musial defers to the majority.

- H. If the Board approves the proposed reorganization of the *Rules of Rowing*, the Referee Committee may need a notification process for the Board if we feel there are emergency "fixes" necessary as the reorganized *Rules of Rowing* are actually implemented. (October 8, 2014 Conference Call) [tf comments: We will continue this discussion as a group; my recommendation would be to hold it for the October 29<sup>th</sup> agenda so we have the most people present for the conference call.]

Lloyd McDonald agrees that there should be no ad hoc process.

Chris Lang disagrees. We need an outlet if there are any unintentional consequences. I would want the Board to approve sooner rather than waiting for the Rule Change Process.

Tom Fuller – Executive decision – We won't include a process in this revision but if an issue arises, at that time we will send our recommendation to the Board and ask how they would like to handle it.

**IV. *Rules of Rowing* "Revisit" Issues: (All; 1 hour) (Let me know if I have missed any.)**

- A. Rule 2-608 Appeal from the Jury (September 22, 2014 Conference Call)  
No issue - CLOSED
- B. Rule 3-102 General Requirements for Boats (September 22, 2014 Conference Call)  
No issue - CLOSED
- C. *Rule 3-102 General Requirements for Boats (September 22, 2014 Conference Call) DUPLICATE OF B*
- D. Rule 3-104 Minimum Weight of Boats: more complete listing of what is “approved” to be included in the weight of the boat. (September 22, 2014 Conference Call)  
No issue - CLOSED
- E. Rule 3-110 Bow Numbers: Composition/construction/functionality of bow numbers. (September 22, 2014 Conference Call)  
Chris Lang rescinds her objection. CLOSED
- F. Rule 4-101 Amateur Standing: Who is the primary sanctioning body for a Registered Regatta; this may include a definition of “Scholastic”. (September 22, 2014 Conference Call)  
No Issue – CLOSED
- G. Rule 4-102: Doping (September 22, 2014 Conference Call)  
No Issue - CLOSED
- H. Rule 4-103.2 Classification by Skill: No enforcement is proscribed unless someone files a complaint. (September 22, 2014 Conference Call)  
Listing is OK; enforcement OK - CLOSED
- I. Rule 4-104.3 Lightweights: Questioning of the use of the word “scholastic”. (September 22, 2014 Conference Call)  
Howard has addressed this – no further issue - CLOSED
- J. Rule 4-105.1 Coxswain’s Weight: Make explicit the coxswain must have their weight with them in the proscribed location when they cross the finish line in order to be placed. (September 22, 2014 Conference Call)

This has been addressed. There was a consensus among the group to recommend changing the language to “shall be excluded” for consistency.

- K. Rule 5-101 Types of Regattas: Howard and Laura were to rewrite and bring back to the group. (September 22, 2014 Conference Call)

Tom Fuller – don’t need this. Howard, Laura and Kirsten have removed because all of these rules are written for Registered Regattas.

CLOSED

- L. Rule 5-103 Regatta Director: Issues regarding eligibility and logistics. (September 22, 2014 Conference Call)

No issue. CLOSED

- M. Rule 5-102 Regatta Secretary: “Question about a clear standard about where things are going.” (September 22, 2014 Conference Call)

Howard addressed. CLOSED

- N. Rule 5-105 Control Commission: Point was made that if parts (b) 5 and 6 are moved, they should still be deleted. (September 22, 2014 Conference Call)

Discussion – Leave 5, remove 6 from the Referee Procedure Manual.

Closed.

- O. Rule 5-201 Submission of Entries: Need input from Membership; John Wik to get back to us. (September 22, 2014 Conference Call)

John Wik said this is ok, signed waiver.

- P. Rule 5-203 General Requirements for Entries and Affiliation: John Wik will check with Membership to clarify the several issues brought up. (September 29, 2014 Conference Call)

Gary Caldwell recommendation is leave as is.

- Q. Breakage – Only in first 100 meters, after starting commands have been given.

Lloyd McDonald stated that this may have unintended consequences. The athletes will hide their breakage in the warmup area and wait until the starting commands have been given.

Discussion ensued. This will need to be voted on during the final review in November.

R. Who has the authority to suspend races and restart racing.

Discussion – concerns about unintentional consequences if it is not the Chief Referee. This will need to be voted on during the final review in November.

Gary Caldwell, on behalf of the Board, took this opportunity to thank everyone who has been involved with the reorganization over the past three months.

**V. Schedule November 2014 Meetings: (All)**

Wednesday November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2014; 8PM EST  
Wednesday November 12<sup>th</sup>, 2014; 8PM EST

**VI. Adjourn**

Motion – Marcus McElhenney  
Second – Chris Lang

Meeting adjourned 10:10pm

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth Macnamara  
Secretary  
USRowing Referee Committee  
[carczar01@aol.com](mailto:carczar01@aol.com)  
703-201-4547