



Referee Committee

Minutes of Meeting
June 3, 2015
Telephone Conference

Attendance:

Referee Committee:

Tom Fuller – Co-Chair
Chris Lang – Co-Chair
Ruth Macnamara – Vice Chair, Secretary
Marcus McElhenney – Athlete Representative

Regional Coordinators:

Jorge Salas, SE
Roger Frederick, MW
Howard Meisner, NE
Dee McComb, NW

USRowing:

John Wik – Director of Referee Programs

Absent:

John Musial, MA – Regional Coordinator to Committee
Lloyd McDonald, SW

Tom Fuller called the meeting to order at 8:05 P.M.

1. Pocock Shoes - Lang

Chris Lang reported that there was a misapplication of the USRowing Rules of Rowing, Rule 3-108 Footgear Release, at the NW Regional qualifier. It appears the FISA rule was applied instead of the USRowing Rule. Pocock put a statement up on its website and Facebook Page stating that their foot stretchers met the requirements of Rule 3-108 and that they were in full compliance of the Rule. After a conversation between the Referee and Pocock, Pocock took its statement down off their website and Facebook page on 6/1/15.

Chris Lang indicated that there was discussion among the Referees involved about submitting a rule change regarding the Footgear Release Rule to bring it closer to the

FISA rule. The topic will be addressed when and if a Rule Change is submitted through the normal process in the fall.

US Rowing Rule 3-108 Footgear Release ()*

Where the feet of the Competitor are held in place by footgear affixed to the structure of the boat, the design of such footgear shall provide for the quick release of the Competitor's feet in case of emergency, without the use of hands. Any pull strings shall not allow the heel to raise more than three inches (7.5 cm) above the foot board to which it is anchored.

FISA Rule 39 Free Construction Page 62

2.5. Quick release foot stretchers - Quick release foot stretchers - In all boats the foot stretchers, shoes or other devices holding the feet of the rowers shall be a type which allow the rowers to get clear of the boat with no delay. Where shoes or other devices holding the feet will remain in the boat, each shoe or device shall be independently restrained such that the heel will not lift more than 7 cm. In addition, where laces, Velcro or similar materials must be opened before the rower can remove his feet from the shoes or other device, these must be able to be released immediately by the rower with a single quick hand action of pulling on one easily accessible strap.

2. SafeSport Updates – Wik

Currently there are two SafeSport issues being reviewed. One is in the Board/CEO Grievance Process and the second is going through the Referee Committee Process.

John Wik stated that not all complaints need to go through the SafeSport Process. It is possible to file a complaint to the Chair of the Referee Committee or the Director of Referee Programs through IOP Section 28. This would be a more internal process where the Director of Referee Programs would investigate and bring the findings to the Referee Committee for suggested action.

SafeSport is in place to handle issues of bullying/ harassment and or sexual misconduct.

A question was posed about a report to the Regional Coordinators about which Candidates or newly licensed Assistant Referees are in compliance with SafeSport Training and Background Checks. John Wik indicated that he is able to provide the Regional Coordinators that information.

3. Drones - Howard Meisner, representing the Regional Coordinators

Howard shared with the group instances of Drone use throughout this spring. One in particular, at IRAs at Mercer Lake, showed the danger of Drone use. A Drone was sighted and immediately the LOC / Chief Referee contacted local law enforcement because Mercer Lake and ECAC have a no Drone policy. This particular Drone had engine failure, sputtered and fell to the ground on shore. The operator was never identified.

Summary is that we are seeing more Drone use at regattas. It was suggested that the Regatta Packets need to state the Policy for that particular regatta. The LOC needs to work in conjunction with the Chief Referee to enforce the Policy in affect for that Regatta. It was suggested that we need a best practices policy.

John Wik stated that USRowing has a Drone Policy. It should be used. If there are problems with the current policy, USRowing welcomes suggestions from the Referee Committee and Regional Coordinators.

USRowing Drone Policy

USRowing recognizes the need to provide competitors, spectators, and other people in attendance at regattas a fair and safe environment, while continuing to provide spectators, coaches and fans – both onsite and via live streaming – a more dynamic environment in which to watch and enjoy the sport of rowing.

To this end, USRowing has developed the following policies regarding the use of drones and media launches at USRowing Registered Regattas.

The Local Organizing Committee, working in conjunction with the chief referee, is charged with approving the use of any and all drones at the regatta venue both on shore and in the field of play, including the airspace above the course (in accordance with local and FAA drone regulations for the specific venue), and approving the use of any/all media launches on the field of play.

Anyone wishing to operate a drone at the regatta venue, including media, competing organizations (including athletes, coaches, support personnel, parents or fans) or spectators, must have prior approval from the LOC.

Any drones operating in the field of play must be controlled from a media launch with an experienced drone operator and launch driver. The drone itself must remain at least 10 meters behind the crew in its lane and at least five meters above the highest point of the referee launch. In addition, all media launches, with or without drones, must keep an appropriate distance behind any crews in contention, so as to not wake any crews with the opportunity to advance.

4. Advanced Referee College Topics - Lang / Wik

Referee College is seeking input from the Regional Coordinators for topics at the Advanced College. They received John Musial's suggestion of the Roles and Responsibilities of the Chief – prior to the regatta. Chris Lang stated that the goal is to have the attendees leave the College with a notebook with a checklist and timeline and a complete overview of what needs to be done from the time you are named Chief until the Regatta is over.

A little off topic, FISA - Chris Lang reported that they are looking into identifying four regattas each year that a FISA umpire will have to be evaluated at one of them to be able to submit their name for the following calendar year's regattas. It is still in the infant stages; needing to identify regattas, evaluators. Chris reported that they would like to go back to the days where FISA umpires received mentoring from more senior umpires.

Instructors for the Advanced College are: Bob Appleyard, Jean Reilly, John Walker, Kirsten Meisner and Chris Lang (rep from Referee Committee).

One Advanced College will be held in Chula Vista, Nov 5-8, 2015, approximately 20 attendees.

Second Advanced College, December 3-6, Philadelphia, PA, Annual Convention. The scheduling of this event is TBD. They want the attendees to be able to participate in other Convention Activities and not miss out by attending the College.

Regional Coordinators would like to see the curriculum.

Jorge asked a question regarding the Evaluation Process that was introduced at the 2014 Convention, where are we with this? John Wik indicated that he has not followed up on that topic with Bob Appleyard or Mary Bush (the presenters of this topic at the 2015 Convention). One evaluation form has been created for the Starter Position but they have not asked anyone to work on the evaluation forms for the other positions. This is to be addressed in the near future.

5. Mentoring Program – Wik

The Mentoring program is a new program that is supported by USRowing. Funding has been made available for this program.

The mentoring program is not to replace the current observation/blue card requirements of Candidates. This program is designed to enhance the candidate process. It will allow for a more nationalized approach to train candidates.

The Referee Procedures Manual will become the textbook to train Candidates. The Procedures manual will be put on line. Short video clips depicting the positions and procedures are being developed. Access to the videos will be included in the text of the on-line manual, giving candidates access to both the textbook and videos.

The Regional Coordinators will be asked for input on potential mentors. Approximately 20 mentors will initially be selected from across the country. Each of these will be asked to mentor approximately 5 candidates. Each Mentor / Candidate pair will spend three 30 minute sessions reviewing the textbook and videos and discussing/and answering more in depth questions they may have. Each mentor will be compensated at the rate of \$20 per session, for the time spent with their Candidates.

Prior to the roll out of the program, it will be beta tested.

There was discussion on how to select the mentors and what qualities must they have. In addition, discussion was had on how to select which candidates to put through this process. Currently there are over 160 candidates in the RDS. Many of those will have advanced to Assistant Referees before this program goes in to affect. Many questions were asked about the timeline for implementation. John Wik indicated that they hope to have it up and running by the end of June/ beginning of July.

6. Recruitment / Training / Advancement – Wik

This is a very important item. The Referee Corps has become limited in its ability to staff the expanding number of USRowing registered regattas. The Referee Committee and Regional Coordinators need to continue to focus on recruitment, training and advancement of new candidates. With 160 candidates in the RDS this spring, we are well above our normal 30-35 per year. But, it doesn't lessen our need to address this issue in the near future.

7. Golden Oars – Wik

John Wik received a call from Beth Kohl regarding the format of the Golden Oars Reception this year. This year the Golden Oars is changing the format of their event. Instead of individual speakers recognizing the recipient of each award, a video presentation will be used. This requires additional lead time. USRowing is asking the Referee Committee to identify the Jack Franklin Award recipient by July 31, 2015. This raised concerns about moving the date forward and the Committee asked John Wik to see if the deadline could be moved back. There was a suggestion to move the presentation of the Jack Franklin Award back to the Convention. John Wik is to ask each of the previous 3 recipients which they would have preferred, the Golden Oars or Convention.

John Wik spoke to USRowing and got an extension to August 31, 2015.

Chris Lang made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Marcus McElhenney seconded the motion.

Meeting adjourned at 9:20 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth Macnamara
Vice Chair, Secretary
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