



Referee Committee

Minutes of Meeting  
November 9, 2016  
Telephone Conference

Attendance:

Referee Committee:

- Tom Fuller – Chair
- Ruth Macnamara – Vice Chair, Secretary
- Terese Friel-Portell – At Large Member
- Howard Meisner, NE– Regional Coordinator Representative to Committee
- Marcus McElhenney – Athlete Representative (was absent at the very beginning and end of the meeting)

Regional Coordinators:

- Derek Blazo, MW
- Dee McComb, NW
- John Musial, MA
- Mike Rosenbaum, SW

Absent:

- Jorge Salas, SE

USRowing Staff:

- John Wik – Director of Referee Programs

Tom Fuller called the meeting to order at 8:30PM EST.

The purpose of this meeting is to review the proposed Rule Changes for 2017 and the comments that were received during the open comment period. Listed below are the proposed Rule Changes followed by comments received. The Committee reviewed each proposed change and comments.

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**Cover Title – S. Killen**

**Current:**  
Rules of Rowing  
**Proposed:**  
Rules of *Racing*  
**Reason:**  
None supplied.

**Committee and Regional Coordinator Comments:**

Book is the Rules of Rowing – it is broken down into three sections: Rules of Racing, Referee Procedures Manual and LOC Guidance Manual

Failed for lack of Motion

**VOTE: n/a**

**Recommendation to the Board:** No recommendation to the Board

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**1-101 Title – S. Killen**

**Current:**  
These rules are established by the United States Rowing Association (USRowing), and shall be known and may be cited as the USRowing Rules of Racing.  
**Proposed:**  
These rules are established by the United States Rowing Association (USRowing), and shall be known and *shall* be cited as the USRowing Rules of Racing.  
**Reason:**  
Not supplied

**Committee and Regional Coordinator Comments:**

Failed for lack of Motion

**VOTE: n/a**

**Recommendation to the Board:** No recommendation to the Board



**2-205 Violation of Safety Rules – S. Killen**

**Current:**

A Crew that violates the posted traffic pattern, or otherwise operates in an unsafe or unfair manner may be assessed one of the penalties as described in Rule 2-602 (“Types of Penalties”) by any Race Official. Such penalties shall be applicable to the next Race in which the Crew competes.

**Proposed:**

**2-205 Violation of Safety Rules (\*)**

A Crew that violates the posted traffic pattern, or otherwise operates in an unsafe or unfair manner **shall** be assessed one of the penalties as described in Rule 2-602 (“Types of Penalties”) by any Race Official. Such penalties shall be applicable to the next Race in which the Crew competes.

**Reason:**

This would be more consistent with the above Section of 2-203 Traffic Pattern (\*) and Section 2-204 Rowing Near the Course while Race in Progress (\*); and on page 12, Section 1-102 Purpose(\*) "The purposes of these rules are to: (a) provide for the safety of Competitors...."

**Comment (Unknown):**

These proposed rule changes remove necessary discretion from referees and will lead to a greater instance of situations in which the rules cannot be enforced safely, fairly, and/or equally. USRowing has a long history of providing referees with the discretion necessary to do their job. This discretion allows for the fact that we cannot foresee all situations in which a rule will need to be applied—or for that matter—not applied. On the water we are presented with an unfathomable number of situations, each of which requires us to apply the rules of rowing in an individualized, but yet systematic and fair way. Using the term “shall” instead of “may” in this rule would prevent this.

The cited need for the rule change is to increase the “safety of competitors.” I do not disagree that this is an important aspect of our rules and our job. Instead, I argue that the proposed changes to the rules do not promote this result. We already require referees to establish the facts they saw, apply the correct rule, consider the different ways to enforce that rule—including doing nothing—consider the equities of the situation, consider the effect the possible decisions, and then to make a decision. By changing the word from “may” to “shall,” we will be preventing referees from being able to consider the option of “doing nothing.” While on its face this seems trivial, it is in fact a key decision that we each make at every regatta. For example, looking to the proposed change to rule 2-205, the changed rule would require that every instance that there is an infraction of the traffic pattern—no matter how trivial—a referee must assess a penalty. This means that if a referee sees an infraction, but determines it to be trivial and that the safety of rowers is best maintained by continuing to perform the referee’s other duties, the referee must still assess the penalty. For example, if a start marshal sees a minor traffic pattern violation that—in their opinion does not put another rower at risk—the marshal must chose between not following the Rules of Rowing and continuing to marshal at the start line or leave the boats in the start area to assess the penalty. While it may be argued, that this situation is trivial at best, this would ignore the number of boats a start marshal must manage. Furthermore, just because a penalty may include a “warning” does not resolve this safety concern. In order to effectively assess any penalty, including a “warning” involves a discussion with that crew, getting acknowledgement from that crew of the penalty, and possibly dealing with a protest regarding the assessment of the penalty, in a busy and crowded regatta this would likely mean that the referee must leave their assigned location and ignore their other responsibilities, including maintaining the safe rowing environment for all competitors. In the aforementioned situation, we should leave it to the referee to determine if the situation warrants the assessment of a penalty, an option we would be removing by making this rule change.

**Committee and Regional Coordinator Comments:**

Failed for lack of Motion

**VOTE: n/a**

**Recommendation to the Board: No recommendation to the Board**

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**2-310 Broken Equipment – S. Killen**

**Current:**

- (a) "Broken Equipment" shall mean a condition in which any Equipment, as defined in Rule 1-202 ("Other Definitions"), is not in a normal operable state. The following shall not count as Broken Equipment:
  - (1) A condition that is the obvious result of carelessness or neglect;
  - (2) Crabs and jumped slides (in which a Rower's seat comes off its track);
  - (3) The condition of a Coxswain's sound amplification system (including a COX-BOX), a stopwatch, stroke watch, or similar device.
- (b) If a Crew suffers Broken Equipment after launching but prior to entering the Starting area, it shall stop rowing and immediately signal to the closest Race Official. The Race Official shall inspect the equipment for damage. If the Race Official determines that there is Broken Equipment, the Race Official shall communicate with both the Starter and Chief Referee to determine if the Crew will be able to race.
- (c) If a Crew suffers Broken Equipment after the starting commands but before it has left the Starting area, or 20 seconds has elapsed on courses where the Starting area is not clearly marked with different colored buoys, it may stop rowing and signal to the Referee. The Referee shall stop the Race as described in Rule 2-407(d) ("Referee's Instructions to Crews") and inspect the damage. If there is in fact Broken Equipment, the Race shall be restarted after the Crew has had sufficient time to make repairs. If there is no Broken Equipment, the Race may be restarted immediately, and the Referee may impose upon the offending Crew one of the penalties described in Rule 2-602 ("Types of Penalties").

**Proposed:**

Delete 2-310

**Reason:**

Broken Equipment be dropped completely. On page 12, Section 1-102, Purposes (\*) (b) provide for fair and equitable racing... And on page 17, Section 2-101 Primary Duties of Race Officials (\*), (b) "... it is the duty of all Race Officials to ensure that all Crews (shall) have a fair and equal opportunity of winning, placing, or advancing." "shall" being inserted by this author since the section has an (\*). At this year's Masters nationals at the coaches and coxswains meeting The Chief Referee decided to allow 30 minutes under Section 2-310 Broken Equipment, (c) "... the Race shall be restarted after the Crew has had sufficient time to make repairs." It was pointed out by a member of the jury that other Crews may have another race in a short period of time. And that they be asked whether they would wait 30 minutes or withdraw from this one so they could go to the next race. It is unfair to those Crews to have to make a decision because one unfortunate Crew having suffered breakage. Dropping the Broken Equipment section would put the Rules of Racing in align with FISA as contained in Section 1-102 Purposes (\*) "... these rules shall be interpreted consistent with the current rules of FISA."

If the committee decides to retain 2-310 Broken Equipment, I would suggest that all the words "shall" be replaced by the word "will"; particularly since we define "shall" as "must be executed." Further, since 2-310 Broken Equipment does not have an (\*), that it's implementation maybe a limited or modified by the Chief Referee in conjunction with the LOC. In regattas of scholastic/collegian students, where individuals only have one race the implementation of Broken Equipment would be applicable. In regattas where people are racing various events, the Broken Equipment rule should be eliminated. Again that should be the decision of the Chief Referee and the LOC that is responsible for running the regatta.

**Committee and Regional Coordinator Comments:**

Derek made a Motion to accept the Proporsed Rule change. John Musial seconded the Motion.

Discussion.

**VOTE: 4-0 do not accept the proposed rule change (Marcus absent)**

Tom: no  
Marcus: n/a  
Terry: no  
Howard: no  
Ruth: no  
John Musial: no  
Jorge: n/a  
Dee: no  
Mike: no  
Derek: yes

**Recommendation to the Board:** No recommendation to the Board.



**2-310 Broken Equipment – H. Meisner**

**Current Rule:**

**2-310 Broken Equipment**

- (c) If a Crew suffers Broken Equipment after the starting commands but before it has left the Starting area, or 20 seconds has elapsed on courses where the Starting area is not clearly marked with different colored buoys, it may stop rowing and signal to the Referee. The Referee shall stop the Race as described in Rule 2-407(d) (“Referee’s Instructions to Crews”) and inspect the damage. If there is in fact Broken Equipment, the Race shall be restarted after the Crew has had sufficient time to make repairs. If there is no Broken Equipment, the Race may be restarted immediately, and the Referee may impose upon the offending Crew one of the penalties described in Rule 2-602 (“Types of Penalties”).

**Proposed Change:**

- (c) If a Crew suffers Broken Equipment after the starting commands but before it has left the Starting area, or 20 seconds has elapsed on courses where the Starting area is not clearly marked with different colored buoys, it may stop rowing and signal to the Referee. The Referee shall stop the Race as described in Rule 2-407(d) (“Referee’s Instructions to Crews”) and inspect the damage. If there is in fact Broken Equipment, the Race *may* be restarted after the Crew has had sufficient time to make repairs. If there is no Broken Equipment, the Race may be restarted immediately, and the Referee may impose upon the offending Crew one of the penalties described in Rule 2-602 (“Types of Penalties”).

**Reason:**

Changes in 2016 that were approved had a minor drafting error. In addition to the change for the race “shall be restarted immediately” being changed to “may be restarted immediately”, the other reference to the word “shall” should have been removed. This change corrects that error and allows the Chief Referee and LOC to make decisions based on the conditions and schedule in the event that there is not enough time nor safe conditions to restore the Broken Equipment.

**Comment (B. Fraser):**

Recommends alternate wording for (c):

If repairs to the broken equipment can not be completed before the scheduled race time, the Chief Referee may postpone the race so the repairs can be completed, as long as no other crews involved in the same event are adversely impacted, both in the current race, or in any future events the other crews might be competing in.

**Reason:**

There are two proposed changes to this section that are mutually exclusive. The first (proposed by S. Killen) would delete section 2-310 completely. This would be less than ideal because crews would still argue that they had an unfair race (Section 1-102) due to a disadvantage or broken equipment caused on the water through no fault of their own (i.e. a collision with another boat through no fault of the racing crew). This still keeps the definitions of "Broken equipment" for reference, and also allows time for the issue to be fixed and still give the crew a chance to race competitively (NCAA, IRA), as long as there is no other crew in the same race hot seating into another boat afterwards (Masters Nationals).

The second proposed change (proposed by H. Meisner) would still allow a race to be restarted if there is equipment breakage in the first 100m/20 seconds of the race. Due to better manufacturing of equipment, having a breakage at the beginning of a race is extremely rare, and is usually due to poorly maintain equipment, which is not considered Broken Equipment. It is also hard/unfair to stop a race due to breakage when the race is reverse handicapped (staggered start). The lead boat might be 500m+ down the course when the last boat to start has equipment break. It is hard to stop a boat that far ahead, and unfair to them, because they have now raced a longer distance than any other crew in that race. Removing the current section (c) would also bring the rules closer into alignment with FISA's rules.

## **Committee and Regional Coordinator Comments:**

Dee made a motion to accept this proposed Rule Change as written. Tom Fuller seconded.

Discussion

### **VOTE: 5-0 to accept the proposed rule change**

- Tom: yes
- Marcus: yes
- Terry: yes
- Howard: yes
- Ruth: yes
- John Musial: yes
- Jorge: n/a
- Dee: yes
- Mike: yes
- Derek: yes

**Recommendation to the Board:** Accept the proposed change as written.

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### **2-410 Unsportsmanlike Conduct (\*) – S. Killen**

**Current:**

- (a) A Crew or Team that engages in Unsportsmanlike conduct, as witnessed by a Race Official, may be assessed by a Race Official with one of the penalties described in Rule 2-602 (“Types of Penalties”), regardless of whether such conduct otherwise constitutes a violation of these rules. If another Crew’s opportunity to win, place, or advance is affected by such conduct, the Race Official shall take appropriate action to restore that opportunity, pursuant to Rule 2-603 (“Restoring Opportunity of Winning; Altering Results”).
- (b) Any Team member, including a Competitor, who engages in Unsportsmanlike conduct at any time during the Regatta, as witnessed by a Race Official, may have his or her further participation at the Regatta curtailed or prohibited by a Race Official.
- (c) If any Team member engages in personally abusive language or conduct, the incident shall be reported by a witnessing Race Official to USRowing.

**Proposed:**

- (a) A Crew or Team that engages in Unsportsmanlike conduct, as witnessed by a Race Official, **shall** be assessed by a Race Official with one of the penalties described in Rule 2-602 (“Types of Penalties”), regardless of whether such conduct otherwise constitutes a violation of these rules. If another Crew’s opportunity to win, place, or advance is affected by such conduct, the Race Official shall take appropriate action to restore that opportunity, pursuant to Rule 2-603 (“Restoring Opportunity of Winning; Altering Results”).

- (b) Any Team member, including a Competitor, who engages in Unsportsmanlike conduct at any time during the Regatta, as witnessed by a Race Official, *shall* have his or her further participation at the Regatta curtailed or prohibited by a Race Official.
- (c) If any Team member engages in personally abusive language or conduct, the incident shall be reported by a witnessing Race Official to USRowing.

**Reason:**

All, if not most racing, is held in public parks in which LOC is there as a guest; we do not need to jeopardize regattas is being held in public venues.

**Comment (Unknown):**

These proposed rule changes remove necessary discretion from referees and will lead to a greater instance of situations in which the rules cannot be enforced safely, fairly, and/or equally. USRowing has a long history of providing referees with the discretion necessary to do their job. This discretion allows for the fact that we cannot foresee all situations in which a rule will need to be applied—or for that matter—not applied. On the water we are presented with an unfathomable number of situations, each of which requires us to apply the rules of rowing in an individualized, but yet systematic and fair way. Using the term “shall” instead of “may” in this rule would prevent this.

The cited need for the rule change is to increase the “safety of competitors.” I do not disagree that this is an important aspect of our rules and our job. Instead, I argue that the proposed changes to the rules do not promote this result. We already require referees to establish the facts they saw, apply the correct rule, consider the different ways to enforce that rule—including doing nothing—consider the equities of the situation, consider the effect the possible decisions, and then to make a decision. By changing the word from “may” to “shall,” we will be preventing referees from being able to consider the option of “doing nothing.” While on its face this seems trivial, it is in fact a key decision that we each make at every regatta.

For example, looking to the proposed change to rule 2-205, the changed rule would require that every instance that there is an infraction of the traffic pattern—no matter how trivial—a referee must assess a penalty. This means that if a referee sees an infraction, but determines it to be trivial and that the safety of rowers is best maintained by continuing to perform the referee’s other duties, the referee must still assess the penalty. For example, if a start marshal sees a minor traffic pattern violation that—in their opinion does not put another rower at risk—the marshal must chose between not following the Rules of Rowing and continuing to marshal at the start line or leave the boats in the start area to assess the penalty. While it may be argued, that this situation is trivial at best, this would ignore the number of boats a start marshal must manage. Furthermore, just because a penalty may include a “warning” does not resolve this safety concern. In order to effectively assess any penalty, including a “warning” involves a discussion with that crew, getting acknowledgement from that crew of the penalty, and possibly dealing with a protest regarding the assessment of the penalty, in a busy and crowded regatta this would likely mean that the referee must leave their assigned location and ignore their other responsibilities, including maintaining the safe rowing environment for all competitors. In the aforementioned situation, we should leave it to the referee to determine if the situation warrants the assessment of a penalty, an option we would be removing by making this rule change.

**Committee and Regional Coordinator Comments:**

Failed for lack of Motion

**VOTE: n/a**

**Recommendation to the Board: No recommendation to the Board**

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**3-102 General Requirements for Boats (\*) – S. Killen**

**Current:**

- (a) A boat in the sport of Rowing shall have all of its load bearing parts, including the axes of moving parts, firmly fixed to the body of the boat, but the seat of a Rower may move along the axis of the boat.
- (b) The use of “sliding riggers,” in which the fulcrum of the oar is not stationary with respect to the body of the boat, is strictly forbidden.

**Proposed:**

- (a) A boat in the sport of Rowing shall have all of its load bearing parts, including the axes of moving parts, firmly fixed to the body of the boat, but the seat of a Rower **shall** move along the axis of the boat.
- (b) The use of "sliding riggers," in which the fulcrum of the oar is not stationary with respect to the body of the boat, is strictly forbidden.

**Reason:**

Section 3-102 General Requirements for Boats (\*) (a) "... but the seat of a Rower may move along the axis of the boat." The word "may" be replaced with the word "shall"; to be consistent with the section labeled with (\*).

**Comment (D Fronheiser):**

Inserting SHALL in the rule would disallow use of a curved seat track, or a seat track which is at an angle to the axis of the boat.

These are changes I have considered potentially beneficial in many mental boat redesigns.

In many techniques the shoulders of the rower and the angle of the torso follows the handle of the oar in the arc the handle makes. Here the body of the rower is in conflict with the path of the seat. There is the potential for injury. Precluding innovation in the shape and direction of the track.

The track in many boats already has a upward slope. It could be argued that this is not strictly "in the axis of the boat". Sloping seat tracks would then be disallowed if strict adherence to the axis requirement.

**Comment (P Davies):**

3-102 General Requirements for Boats (\*) – S. Killen is ridiculous! Some ocean boats may not have sliding seats: are they to be outlawed!!

## Committee and Regional Coordinator Comments:

Failed for lack of Motion

**VOTE: n/a**

**Recommendation to the Board: No recommendation to the Board**

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### 3-108 Footgear Release (\*) – H. Meisner

**Current Rule:**

3-108 Footgear Release (\*)

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 allows 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 three inches (7.5 cm) above the foot board to which it is anchored. In addition, where laces, Velcro or similar materials must be opened before the rower can remove his/her feet from the shoes or other devices, these must be able to be released immediately by the rower with a single quick hand action of pulling on one easily accessible strap.

**Proposed Change:**

3-108 Footgear Release (\*)

**(a) In all boats, the foot stretchers, shoes or other devices holding the feet of the Rowers shall be a type which allows the Rowers to get clear of the boat with no delay.**

**(b) 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 three inches (7.5 cm) above the foot board to which it is anchored.**

**(1) By January 1, 2018, laces shall not be allowed to secure the feet of the Rower in their shoes.**

**(2) By January 1, 2019, the Rower shall be able to immediately release their feet from the shoes by using a single quick hand action of pulling on one easily accessible strap.**

**Reason:**

There has been a lot of confusion about how to enforce a single hand release on shoes that have proper laces. It has been brought to the Committee's attention that there are many individual competitors and programs that are still using equipment that would be difficult to bring into compliance with this new rule. The new rule clarifies our position by giving deadlines for implementation of two safety standards (no laced shoes on shoes that remain in the boat and a one hand release for all shoes that remain in the boat).

- 1) Separates each of the clauses that made up the single paragraph into individual rules that shall be enforced.
- 2) Provides clear guidance on the removal of laces which are viewed as a significant safety concern in boats where the shoes are not able to be removed (e.g. Shimano shoes). If a rower is using Shimano or similar equipment, laces would still be permissible because the shoe comes out of the shell with the rower in case of capsizing.
- 3) Provides clear guidance that a single release on all shoes that remain in the boat is required. Note that this clause has an implementation date after the removal of laces, therefore, it does not cause an implementation issue of trying to get a one hand release on laced shoes.
- 4) Capitalizes "Rower" to indicate that it refers to the definition 1-202 (v).

**Comment (P Davies):**

Meisner motion: why so shoes have to be independently restrained?

**Comment (J Hotop):**

With regards to the proposed changes to the rules of rowing, the only exception to the proposed changes I would like you to take under consideration is the language to rule 3-108 that was proposed by Howard Meisner. I believe that the proposed adoption date in para (b) 1 & 2 should be the spring of 2017 sprint season or no later than March 1, 2017 due to the safety concerns that an athlete may not be able to safely disengage from the shell in the event of an emergency. As we all know this has been an ongoing concern and waiting another two years would not be prudent. I realize there are cost concerns for some programs, but to me safety is more important.

Please consider in your discussion of the proposed changes.

**Comment (Unknown):**

The proposed change in this rule balances the safety of the rower with the cost to a program to make their equipment safe, and sides with programs who do not want to have safe equipment because of cost. This violates the fundamental goal of our rules, to create a safe rowing environment for competitors. At its heart, last year's changes made to this rule were made to provide a safer rowing environment for competitors and acknowledged a rule change was necessary as programs were not doing this on their own. By allowing programs to delay necessary changes that improve the safety of rowers, we are accepting that rowers will be competing, and for that matter practicing, in an unsafe matter until the given deadlines. We already balanced these competing values, and sided with the safety of the rowers. In addition, any confusion that is cited by the Referee proposing the rule can be simply overcome by referees being reminded to enforce the rule as written. We have already required full compliance with the original rule. This has meant that programs have already been required to make their equipment safe, borrow equipment, or not race. It would be unfair to all of those competitors that were not permitted to race this last season because of lack of compliance with this rule, to now delay the rules implementation.

## **Committee and Regional Coordinator Comments:**

Tom Fuller makes a Motion to adopt this change, Mike Rosenbaum seconded the Motion..

Discussion

No vote.

Terry makes an amendment Motion to remove b(1); Marcus seconds the motion.

Discussion

**VOTE: 5-0**

Tom: yes  
Marcus: yes  
Terry: yes  
Howard: yes  
Ruth: yes  
John Musial: yes  
Jorge: n/a  
Dee: yes  
Mike: yes  
Derek: yes

Terry makes a second amendment to the original Motion to amend (2) to read:

(2) By January 1, 2018, the Rower shall be able to immediately release their feet from the shoes by using a single quick hand action of pulling on one easily accessible strap.

Mike seconds the Motion

Discussion – Should safety responsibility be on the coaches and athletes? The Referees may spot check boats as the crews goes through Control Commission. Is there a process or mechanism to put in place that a Coach has to sign off on the safety requirements when registering for a regatta?

**VOTE: 4-1 in favor of amended motion**

Tom: yes  
Marcus: yes  
Terry: yes  
Howard: yes  
Ruth: no  
John Musial: yes  
Jorge: n/a  
Dee: yes  
Mike: yes  
Derek: yes

Discussion –

Ruth makes a Motion to accept 3-108 (a) and (b) as written and delete b (1) and b (2). Derek seconds this Motion.

Discussion -

**VOTE: 4-1 in favor of Accepting the proposed Rule Change with amendment to delete (b)1 and (b)2.**

Tom: yes

Marcus: yes  
Terry: no  
Howard: yes  
Ruth: yes  
John Musial: yes  
Jorge: n/a  
Dee: no  
Mike: yes  
Derek: yes

**Recommendation to the Board:** Accept the Amended proposed Rule Change to accept part A and B as written and delete B(1) and B(2).



### 3-109 Boat Construction for Coxswains – J. Wylder

**Current Rule:**

A boat in which the body of the coxswain is enclosed, or partially enclosed, within the hull of the boat shall conform to the following requirements:

- (a) The opening through which the Coxswain enters and exits shall be at least 2.30 feet (70 cm.) long when measured along the longitudinal axis of the boat. For a length of at least 1.64 feet (950 cm.), the opening shall be as wide as the inner hull itself.
- (b) The inner surface within which the coxswain’s body rests shall be smooth and free of any obstacles, devices, or other structures that would hinder quick exit.

**Proposed Change:**

- (b) The inner surface within which the coxswain’s body rests shall be smooth and free of any obstacles, devices, or other structures that would hinder quick exit. **An exception is granted for any steering mechanism which is attached directly to the hull of the boat.**
- (c) **Any steering mechanism, such as a tiller, shall have a soft and pliable material on the end of the mechanism of at least 1” by 2”.**

**Reason :**

Newer bow coxed boats had a steering mechanism attached to the side of the hull measuring approximately 10”x4”x2”. They provide a safer option to the center mounted tiller, but since they are mounted in the opening they do not conform to the current wording of the rule. In bow coxed boats with tillers, the design requires the coxswain to push the tiller aside in order to enter and exit the boat. In an emergency, such as when the boat is upside down, it is impractical to expect that to happen. The tillers can extend 12” or further into the opening of the hull and are often modified by teams to make them longer. The tillers do not have anything on the end to prevent injury to the coxswain.

### Committee and Regional Coordinator Comments:

John Musial makes a Motion to accept this rule change as written. Tom seconds the motion.

Discussion

Tom makes a Motion to amend the previous Motion to require covering the end, at least the last 2 inches of the mechanism, with soft and pliable material. John Musial seconds the amended Motion.

Discussion

**VOTE: 3-1-1 not to accept the amendment to the initial Motion**

- Tom: yes
- Marcus: no
- Terry: abstain
- Howard: no
- Ruth: no
- John Musial: no
- Jorge: n/a
- Dee: no
- Mike: no
- Derek: no

Call to vote on the initial Motion to accept the proposed rule change

**VOTE: 4-1 not to accept the proposed rule change**

- Tom: yes
- Marcus: no
- Terry: no
- Howard: no
- Ruth: no
- John Musial: no
- Jorge: n/a
- Dee: no
- Mike: no
- Derek: no

**Recommendation to the Board: No recommendation to the board.**



**4-105.1 Coxswain’s Weight – M. Rosenbaum**

**Current:**

- (c) It is specifically forbidden to distribute deadweight throughout the boat.
- (d) A Crew whose Coxswain does not to have their deadweight at the finish of the Race shall not be placed.
- (e) At any time, before or immediately after the Race, the Referee, another Race Official, or a member of the Control Commission may require the weight of the deadweight to be checked.
- (f) Excess clothing, Equipment, electronic systems, tools, or other utilitarian devices germane to competition, shall not be considered part of the Coxswain’s weight and shall not be included as part of any deadweight required under subsection (b) above.

**Proposed:**

- (c) ~~It is specifically forbidden to distribute deadweight throughout the boat.~~ **Coxswains are required to bring their necessary deadweight to the venue for certification during their scheduled weigh-in window.**
- (d) It is specifically forbidden to distribute deadweight throughout the boat.
- (e) A Crew whose Coxswain does not to have their deadweight at the finish of the Race shall not be placed.
- (f) At any time, before or immediately after the Race, the Referee, another Race Official, or a member of the Control Commission may require the weight of the deadweight to be checked.
- (g) Excess clothing, Equipment, electronic systems, tools, or other utilitarian devices germane to competition, shall not be considered part of the Coxswain’s weight and shall not be included as part of any deadweight required under subsection (b) above.

**Reason:**

When 8+ shells can vary in weight by 20 pounds depending on the shell’s age and manufacturer, why are rowing officials worrying over 0.1 of a pound of sand for a coxswain. I think that both the athletes and their coaches should be very aware of what a coxswain weighs well before they arrive at the venue. Coxswains are by their nature prepared individuals; so by

inculcating the rules required to weigh-in 4-106 (a) ( shoes off and in racing uniform) then the coach will know if their coxswain needs 5 pounds or 35 pounds in order to make the minimum weight before arriving at the weigh-in tent.

When the LOC and venue stop enabling coaches and coxswains to make weight bags during their respective weigh-in window then the flow of athletes in control commission has a sense of normalcy. Eight competitors every 7 to 10 minutes , depending on centers, works fine, but the drama of weighing and reweighing the same coxswain in six to seven times in order to get the last one-tenth of a pound is abrogated.

**Committee and Regional Coordinator Comments:**

Tom Fuller makes a motion to accept the proposed rule change as written. John Musial seconds it.

Discussion

**VOTE: 3-2 passes in favor of the proposed rule change**

- Tom: yes
- Marcus: no
- Terry: yes
- Howard: no
- Ruth: yes
- John Musial: no
- Jorge: n/a
- Dee: yes
- Mike: yes
- Derek: no

**Recommendation to the Board: Accept this proposed rule change as written.**

**4-106 Weighing of Competitors – H. Meisner**

**Current Rule:**

- (b) The weight of Rowers in lightweight Events as described in Rule 4-104.3 (“Lightweights”) shall be determined once each day during either the Weigh-in Window or the Adjusted Weigh-in Window but not both.

**Proposed Change:**

- (b) The weight of Rowers in lightweight Events as described in Rule 4-104.3 (“Lightweights”) shall be determined once each day during either the Weigh-in Window or the Adjusted Weigh-in Window but not both.
  1. ***In events where multiple rounds occur in the same day, all competitors shall weigh in during the earliest Weigh-in Window or Adjusted Weigh-in Window regardless of the round in which they are competing.***

**Reason:**

It has been identified that there was an unfair situation in lightweight weigh-in procedures when two rounds of an event occur in the same day. In the case where there are heats on day 1, all competitors weigh-in at the same (or adjusted) window. When the heat winners move directly to the semi-final and all others move to a Repechage and both rounds are scheduled on the same day, the competitors who are in the Repechage have an advantage because they weigh in earlier in the day and can eat and recover from their racing while the heat winners have to wait until the window opens later in the day for the semi-final. Having all of the competitors who move on weigh in during the earliest window allows the same amount of time for those competitors to eat and properly hydrate for their races.

**Committee and Regional Coordinator Comments:**

Tom makes a Motion to accept this proposed rule change as written. John Musial seconds the Motion.

Discussion - look at the FISA rule.

**VOTE: 4-0-1 not to accept this proposed rule change**

- Tom: no
- Marcus: no
- Terry: abstain
- Howard: no
- Ruth: no
- John Musial: no
- Jorge: n/a
- Dee: no
- Mike: yes
- Derek: no

**Recommendation to the Board: No recommendation to the Board**



**4-106 Weighing of Competitors – M. Rosenbaum**

**Current:**

- (c) The weight of Youth Rowers in lightweight Events as described in Rule 4-104.3 (“Lightweights”) shall be determined once each day during either the Weigh-in Window or the Adjusted Weigh-in Window, but not both. Each Youth Rower shall have only one (1) initial opportunity to weigh in. A Rower within one (1.0) pound or less of the weight standard is allowed one (1) re-weigh within the same window as their initial opportunity. A Rower whose initial weight is greater than one (1.0) pound above the weight standard will be ineligible to compete in the Event.

**Proposed :**

- (d) The weight of ~~Youth~~ Rowers in lightweight Events as described in Rule 4-104.3 (“Lightweights”) shall be determined once each day during either the Weigh-in Window or the Adjusted Weigh-in Window but not both. Each ~~Youth~~-Rower shall have only one (1) initial opportunity to weigh in. A Rower within one (1.0) pound or less of the weight standard is allowed one (1) re-weigh within the same window as their initial opportunity. A Rower whose initial weight is greater than one (1.0) pound above the weight standard will be ineligible to compete in the Event.

**Reason:**

I recommend dropping the term (Youth) from Rule 4-106(d). The rule should apply to all Lightweight competitors for the following reasons.

- It has to be safer for an 18 year old to drop one pound in one hour’s time frame than for a 55 year old master to do the same.
- The one pound / one try procedure works and promotes true (read “natural”) lightweights. Having this existing loophole or carve-out for masters creates havoc at control weigh ins. There is only a one hour window to get 6 lanes of crews though one scale and wrist banded accordingly and an infinite number or weigh-in attempts does not help the station function properly.

This will also require the Master’s Nation Regatta to comport with all the rules of USRowing agreed to by the LOC, in this case US Rowing. But then again why would a National Championship regatta not want to abide by the ROR as written.

**Committee and Regional Coordinator Comments:**

Tom Fuller makes a Motion to accept this rule change as written. Derek seconds the Motion.

Discussion

**VOTE: 4-1 passes in favor of the Proposed Rule Change**

Tom: yes  
Marcus: no  
Terry: yes  
Howard: yes  
Ruth: yes  
John Musial: yes  
Jorge: n/a  
Dee: yes  
Mike: yes  
Derek: yes

**Recommendation to the Board: Accept the Proposed Rule change as written.**



**4-106 Weighing of Competitors – M. Rosenbaum**

**Current:**

- (e) The weight of Coxswains as described in Rule 4-105.1 (“Coxswain’s Weight”) shall be determined once each day during either the Weigh-in Window or Adjusted Weigh-in Window but not both. In the event a Coxswain is weighed after the applicable Weigh-in Window or Adjusted Weigh-in Window but before the first Race in which the weight is relevant, the Coxswain may be subject to one of the penalties described in Rule 2-602 (“Types of Penalties”); the presumed penalty for such infraction is a Warning. Failure to weigh-in at any point in time prior to the first Race in which the weight is relevant shall constitute a violation of Rule 4-105.1 (“Coxswain’s Weight”) and result in the Coxswain being deemed ineligible to race.

**Proposed:**

- (e) The weight of Coxswains as described in Rule 4-105.1 (“Coxswain’s Weight”) shall be determined once each day during either the Weigh-in Window or Adjusted Weigh-in Window but not both. **Each Coxswain shall have only one (1) initial opportunity to weigh in and is allowed one additional (1) re-weigh with their deadweight within the same window as their initial opportunity.** In the event a Coxswain is weighed after the applicable Weigh-in Window or Adjusted Weigh-in Window, but before the first Race in which the weight is relevant, the Coxswain may be subject to one of the penalties described in Rule 2-602 (“Types of Penalties”); the presumed penalty for such infraction is a Warning. Failure to weigh-in at any point in time prior to the first Race in which the weight is relevant shall constitute a violation of Rule 4-105.1 (“Coxswain’s Weight”) and result in the Coxswain being deemed ineligible to race.

**Reason:**

Determining a coxswain weight is a finding of fact. By allowing multiple opportunities to allow a coxswain to fine tune their dead weight just clogs the weigh in station with bodies and bags requiring weighing and multiple weigh-in cards until the coxswain is satisfied with the deadweight need to compete for their event which must be then certified by an official. I am amenable to a higher number of re-weigh attempts but want something in writing in the ROR.

**Committee and Regional Coordinator Comments:**

Tom Fuller makes a motion to accept the rule change as written. John Musial seconds the motion.

Discussion

## VOTE: 3-1 Motion Fails

Tom: yes  
Marcus: n/a  
Terry: no  
Howard: no  
Ruth: no  
John Musial: no  
Jorge: n/a  
Dee: no  
Mike: yes  
Derek: no

**Recommendation to the Board: No recommendation to the Board.**

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## Referee Procedures Manual: Control Commission (3): Boat Launching/Recovery (c): Procedure - Boat Launching - Safety Checks (5) – H. Meisner

### *Current Procedure*

#### (5) Procedure - Boat Launching - Safety Checks

- It is the Crews' responsibility to have their equipment in compliance with the rules; the Referee/volunteer may randomly check boats as they are launching to affirm compliance with the rules governing bow balls, quick release and heel ties on shoes, and Coxswain's openings in bow-coxed boats
  - Check bow ball
  - Check for quick release and heel ties on shoes
  - Ensure that both shoes can be opened by pulling with a single hand, single motion. If you are concerned that the competitor's feet cannot be released from their shoes with a single hand motion, ask the competitor to demonstrate the mechanism with the boat in slings.
  - Check for correct size openings for Coxswains
- A boat failing any safety check may not launch until the safety issue is resolved
  - Allow the Crew to place the boat into slings to address the issue. The boat may not proceed onto the launch dock or be placed into the water until the boat is in compliance

### *Proposed Procedure*

#### (5) Procedure - Boat Launching - Safety Checks

- It is the Crews' responsibility to have their equipment in compliance with the rules; the Referee/volunteer may randomly check boats as they are launching to affirm compliance with the rules governing bow balls, quick release and heel ties on shoes, and Coxswain's openings in bow-coxed boats
  - Check bow ball
  - Check for quick release and heel ties on shoes
  - Ensure that both shoes can be opened by pulling with a single hand, single motion. If you are concerned that the competitor's feet cannot be released from their shoes with a single hand motion, ask the competitor to demonstrate the mechanism with the boat in slings.
  - ***If the shoes are laced (no Velcro or similar materials), remind the competitor that they need to be able to exit the boat immediately in case of an emergency.***
  - Check for correct size openings for Coxswains
- A boat failing any safety check may not launch until the safety issue is resolved
  - Allow the Crew to place the boat into slings to address the issue. The boat may not proceed onto the launch dock or be placed into the water until the boat is in compliance

### *Reason*

Adding procedural language to support the changes to 3-108.

## Committee and Regional Coordinator Comments:

Tom Fuller made a motion to approve this Rule Change as written. John Musial seconds.

**VOTE: 4-0 to accept this rule change**

- Tom: yes
- Marcus: n/a
- Terry: yes
- Howard: yes
- Ruth: yes
- John Musial: yes
- Jorge: n/a
- Dee: yes
- Mike: yes
- Derek: yes

**Recommendation to the Board: Accept this rule change as written.**



**Referee Procedures Manual: Finish Area (6): Chief Judge (a): Procedure (5) – Roden**

**Current:**

- As the bow of the first Crew touches the finish line, the *chief judge* shall call out “One!”
  - The Flagperson shall quickly and crisply lower the finish flag
  - The Horn operator shall sound the horn or other noise maker
- Thereafter, as each remaining Crew touches the finish line, the *chief judge* shall call out “Two!”, “Three!”, etc.
  - The finish flag shall be alternately raised and lowered as each Crew touches the finish line
  - The horn or other noise maker shall be sounded to signal to each Crew that it has crossed the finish line

**Proposed:**

- As the bow of the first Crew touches the finish line, the *chief judge* shall call out “**Mark!**”
  - The Flagperson shall quickly and crisply lower the finish flag
  - The Horn operator shall sound the horn or other noise maker
- Thereafter, as each remaining Crew touches the finish line, the *chief judge* shall call out “**Mark**”.
  - The finish flag shall be alternately raised and lowered as each Crew touches the finish line
  - The horn or other noise maker shall be sounded to signal to each Crew that it has crossed the finish line

**Reason:**

Calling One, Two, Three, etc., is unnecessary as stopwatches can capture multiple splits and we no longer assign a judge for each crew. More importantly, the Judges are responsible to determine and record the Order of Finish - this is our priority at the finish line. Calling numbers that don’t correspond to the Order of Finish as it’s being recorded can be confusing, causing potential for errors in the results.

**Comment (D Fronheiser):**

As we move to electronic timing, overspecification of a single method leans toward rules for rules sake.

I work in many varying yet excellent environments where method is dictated by equipment, technology, and staff.

The chief referee, judge at finish, LOC should be free to use the methods and verbage best suited to fair racing.

**Comment (E James):**

I like the proposal on Finish Line Procedure. Calling MARK or bow number is much better. The current procedure confuses order of finish. Please adopt Roden's change.

**Committee and Regional Coordinator Comments:**

Dee makes a Motion to approve the Rule Change as written. Tom Fuller seconds the Motion.

Discussion

**VOTE: passes 3-1**

- Tom: yes
- Marcus: n/a
- Terry: yes
- Howard: no
- Ruth: yes
- John Musial: no
- Jorge: n/a
- Dee: yes
- Mike: yes
- Derek: yes

**Recommendation to the Board: Accept this Proposed Rule Change as written.**



**Referee Procedures Manual: Finish Area (6): Chief Judge (a): Notes (6) – Roden**

**Current:**

- At some Regattas, the Chief Referee and/or the LOC may request that the calls by the chief judge as each Crew touches the finish line to be different from the “One!”, “Two!”, “Three!” described above
  - o Alternate 1: “Mark!” as each crew touches the finish line
  - o Alternate 2: the bow number of each Crew as it touches the finish line (e.g. “Two!”, “Four!”, “Three!”, “Five!”); this would correspond to the order of finish
  - o Work with the volunteers and other referees so that the process chosen at the beginning of the Regatta shall be used consistently across all racing sessions.

**Proposed:**

- At some Regattas, the Chief Referee and/or the LOC may request that the calls by the chief judge as each Crew touches the finish line to be different from the “**Mark**” described above
  - o **Alternate 1: “Mark!” as each crew touches the finish line**
  - o **Alternate 1:** the bow number of each Crew as it touches the finish line (e.g. “Two!”, “Four!”, “Three!”, “Five!”); this would correspond to the order of finish
  - o Work with the volunteers and other referees so that the process chosen at the beginning of the Regatta shall be used consistently across all racing sessions.

**Reason:**

Consistency with proposed procedure change to Finish Area (6): Chief Judge (a): Procedure (5) – Roden

**Comment (D Fronheiser):**

As we move to electronic timing, over specification of a single method leans toward rules for rules sake.

I work in many varying yet excellent environments where method is dictated by equipment, technology, and staff.

The chief referee, judge at finish, LOC should be free to use the methods and verbage best suited to fair racing.

**Comment (E James):**

I like the proposal on Finish Line Procedure. Calling MARK or bow number is much better. The current procedure confuses order of finish. Please adopt Roden’s change.

## Committee and Regional Coordinator Comments:

Tom Fuller makes a Motion to adopt this proposed rule change. Dee seconds the Motion.

### Discussion

Dee makes a modification to the initial Motion. Move the original procedure of call the boats as they cross the finish line: one, two, three, etc. to be the Alternate 1 and make the calling of Mark as each bow crosses the finish line as the recommended procedure. Tom seconds the Motion.

### **VOTE: 4-0 to accept with the modified language**

Tom: yes  
Marcus: n/a  
Terry: yes  
Howard: yes  
Ruth: yes  
John Musial: yes  
Jorge: n/a  
Dee: yes  
Mike: yes  
Derek: yes

### **Recommendation to the Board: Approve the proposed Rule Change with the proposed modified language.**

~~~~~

### Administrative Recommendations:

N Johnson  
Hi John:  
I noticed a couple of sentences that should be reviewed for correction during the 2017 rule change process in the Referee Procedures Manual 2016 section in the 2016 Rules of Rowing,  
Page 67  
II) REGATTA RACE OFFICIAL POSITIONS AND PROCEDURES  
[second sentence]  
"For a Registered Regatta, this requires a minimum of five licensed referee." [referee should be plural]  
Page 115  
(2) Starter  
[fourth bullet point]  
[second sub bullet point]  
"The scribe working with the starter will record the time announced by the ~~scribe~~ [timer] along with the bow number of the Crew."

Housekeeping, no vote needed. Please forward any additional typographical changes to John Wik.

~~~~~

### Red lined version of the Para / Adaptive Rules

The red lined version addresses two issues:

1. Removing the descriptive term (Para / Adaptive) from the Athlete, Competitor and/or Rower to the Event the Athlete, Competitor and/or Rower competes in.
2. Changing the term "Race Official" back to Referee. Also, recommend that the term be changed back throughout the entire book of Rules of Rowing. The definition of "Race Official" **in 1-202 Other Definitions (\*) (r)** reads: *Race Official shall mean any person who possesses a valid USRowing Referee or Assistant Referee license, and serves at a Regatta as the Chief Referee or in one of the capacities described in Rule 2-104 ("Officials").*

**2-104 Officials (\*)** reads:

- (a) For each Race at a Regatta, the Chief Referee shall cause to be assigned Race Officials to perform the following functions:
  - (1) Referee:....
  - (2) Starter:....
  - (3) Judge at Start:....
  - (4) Chief Judge:....
- (b) All persons acting as a Referee, Starter, Judge at Start or Chief Judge at any Registered Regatta shall have a valid Referee or Assistant Referee License.
- (c) International FISA Umpires holding....

**Committee and Regional Coordinator Comments:**

Tom Fuller makes a Motion to adopt the proposed as presented. Terry seconded.

Discussion

Howard makes a Motion to amend the red-line to retain Race Official throughout the red-lined version and the entire Rule Book with the exceptions of 10-504 which are proper changes of the words Race Official to Referee. Terry seconds the amended motion.

Discussion

**VOTE: 4-0 to accept Howard's Motion**

Tom: yes  
 Marcus: n/a  
 Terry: yes  
 Howard: yes  
 Ruth: yes  
 John Musial: yes  
 Jorge: n/a  
 Dee: yes  
 Mike: yes  
 Derek: yes

**VOTE: red-line version of the Para/Adaptive Rules with Howards amendment 4-0 passes**

Tom: yes  
Marcus: n/a  
Terry: yes  
Howard: yes  
Ruth: yes  
John Musial: n/a  
Jorge: n/a  
Dee: yes  
Mike: yes  
Derek: yes

**Recommendation to the Board: Approve the proposed Rule Change with the proposed modified language.**

~~~~~

Derek makes a motion to adjourn. Howard seconds the motion.

Meeting adjourned at 12:37 AM EST.

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth Macnamara  
Vice Chair, Secretary  
USRowing Referee Committee  
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