

To our coaches, competitors, and members,

Following the 2016 racing season, USRowing's Board of Directors and staff conducted a full review of the working conditions at USRowing-owned championship events.

To this end, a subcommittee of the Board was formed, and worked with staff to develop solutions for improving the racing experience of competitors, staff, referees, volunteers, and rowing fans.

From this committee came a number of initiatives that will be enacted at the 2017 USRowing-owned events, beginning with the youth championships in May.

- Increased referee staffing -- USRowing is committing to providing funding for a 25% increase in the number of referees at its owned events
- Attracting top referee talent -- USRowing has committed a number of resources with the goal of attracting top referee talent to our most prestigious events. These include full travel reimbursements, to remove the financial burden of officiating USRowing's biggest events.
- Limiting the number of working hours in a single day -- USRowing's events have grown to levels that push the boundaries of physical daylight, physical safety of competitors and referees, and the work conditions and recruiting efforts for volunteers to staff the events. To these ends, USRowing is committed to keeping the planned racing schedules to no more than 8.5 hours of racing in a single day (generally, 8am-6pm). This will provide for improved fairness in a number of areas:
 - Officials and volunteers will be in better physical condition on the later days of the events, which typically host the most important races,
 - Improve each event schedule's ability to accommodate weather delays and interruptions,
 - Limiting the hours that coaches and athletes have to be ready to compete.

Enacting these improvements requires USRowing to make additional investments in the event budgets.

After the budget approval in December, USRowing staff has again worked with the Board of Directors in an effort to restructure the entry fees for USRowing owned events, making an effort to limit the amount of increase to regatta entry fees necessary to meet these investments.

At the regional level, USRowing worked to level pricing inequities found across the country. The west coast events were paying significantly higher entry fees than their counterparts in other regions. Those prices have been brought even with each other, resulting in increases for the events in the Southeast, Northeast, Mid-Atlantic, and Central regional events. From that equitable foundation, all regional events saw a 10% increase to reach the final entry fee numbers:

2017 USRowing Youth Regional Entry Fees	
8+	\$ 215.00
4x/4+	\$ 160.00
2x/2-	\$ 88.00
1x	\$ 66.00

2017 USRowing Masters Regional Entry Fees	
8+	\$215.00
4x/4+	\$ 160.00
2x/2-	\$88.00
1x	\$ 55.00

Entry fees for the national championships were set an average of 20% higher than the regional events, to represent the increased demands and prestige of these events.

2017 USRowing National Championship Entry Fees			
	Youth Nationals	Club Nationals	Masters Nationals
8+	\$ 248.00	\$ 248.00	\$ 248.00
4x/4+	\$ 182.00	\$ 182.00	\$ 182.00
2x/2-	\$ 121.00	\$ 121.00	\$ 105.00
1x	\$ 77.00	\$ 77.00	\$ 66.00

Along with the improved safety and fairness aspects, USRowing is also committed to elevating the experience at these championship regattas by providing programming and special events to create the “championship” atmosphere fitting for USRowing’s “Championship” members.

The new pricing structure will benefit coaches and competitors both on and off of the water.

If you have any questions about these, or any of the changes coming for 2017, feel free to contact alvin@usrowing.org or james@usrowing.org.

We look forward to a great racing season.

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Susan Smith, USRowing
Director, Member Programs and Services