

2011 RowNS Umpire Report

Overview:

Another great year of racing!

We started off the year by having an umpire committee meeting. This was called so that we could review what was working and was needed to improve our capacity for providing safe and fair regattas. We discussed aspects of safety and equipment and the need to continue practicing uniformity with other regattas across the country.

From our discussions it was determined that there needed to be more safety boats out on the water, particularly in the Fall and Spring. There was a focus to insure that safety boats being used were properly equipped and were meeting or exceeding government regulations.

It was also determined that our current walkie talkies were not adequate. They could not be used for full coverage of the headracing courses and they are prone to running out of batteries and interference. 6 new VHF radios were purchased and are much appreciated!

It was determined that a new timing device was need. The old stopwatches were becoming unreliable and in need of replacement. It was determined at that time, that the purchase of the Seiko watches was probably our best alternative. Two watches were purchased and a little seminar was held for instruction. The watches are a great asset to the tower along with the great volunteers using them.

From our committee meeting it was determined that the Tower could be working a little better to insure mistakes were not being sent out. The process was reviewed, and roles were more clearly defined. The end result is that the Tower is now streamlined and is running very smoothly.

There has also been a continued concerted effort to follow the Start Script laid out by RCA. Besides being mandated to do so from RCA, this allows our athletes to hear the same wording and experience the same starting procedure that they would at any other regatta across the country.

2011 has also brought in the long awaited changes to the Rules of Racing, new umpire licensing levels and assessments, Chief Umpire course requirements, and changes to the National Regatta umpire selection process. Marilyn, as the Umpire Committee rep and I, have been very busy sorting out all the new rules!

Statistics:

Level 1 (Apprentices): 5

Level 2 (Licensed Umpire):10

Level 4 (Clinician): 1

Courses and Clinics:

April 15/16, RCA Clinician seminar (Ontario): Linda

May 2, Umpire / Apprentice license review (Sport NS): Everyone

July 15, Seiko watch clinic (Oakwood House): Everyone

Equipment:

New

2 Seiko watches

6 UHF radios

4 Radio protective bags

Ordered Jackets

Required

More bow markers

“Start” flag

Finish Tower flag

Certified weight for scale

Regattas:

Thank you to all the clubs for their assistance in running the regattas. The use of their club’s facilities, equipment, coach boats etc... is essential to the running of all the regattas and is much appreciated!

Local

The **AIRC** was held in February, at the East Dartmouth Community Centre. The regatta went smoothly and was well attended. There was some discussion regarding the weigh-in and whether our scale was accurate. This was unfortunate because it left doubts in some junior athlete’s minds, but it was felt from organizers and officials that the scale was indeed accurate. Thanks to the clubs for their assistance in using their ergs and to the “tech crew” for setting up and running the event!

IceBreaker, held on the long weekend of May, is continuing to grow. This year’s regatta was Chaired by Jackie Pidduck, who took over the reins from Yetta. It was well attended by a large group of athletes from NB and NL. Consideration should be given to making this regatta a day and a half to accommodate the growing number of athletes and the events requested.

We tried a slightly new format, racing the Seniors with the Masters, in an attempt to accommodate a request for time trailing. Although this wasn’t a time trail format it did allow the two categories to race in a final together. It was met with mixed reviews.

Sprints was held July 16 & 17. Day one was met with cross winds and some tensions. It was felt by some coaches that there were unnecessary delays at the start line and that the restarting of two races (in accordance with the RofR) was somehow unfair. Sunday was a much calmer day all around.

There was extra excitement this year with the addition of a relay. Thanks to Pat for the suggestion.

ATL course again this year was very well laid out with David MacKinnon as the Regatta Chair and Marilyn MacMullin as the Chief Umpire. The regatta had no crashes, which is always a plus. There was a brief discussion after the regatta regarding the “no pass” vs “passing” zone. Marilyn was correct in her decision due to the wording of the package and what was said apparently said at the coaches meeting, but there probably should be uniformity between the ATL and the Chilli regarding the passing zone. There really should be no passing, either completed or in progress, taking place under the bridge.

PEI was in attendance for this regatta! I hope they continue to grow their program and become regulars.

NWAR & Cogswell. It was great that this year’s NWAR was able to take place. We had a visiting umpire from Philadelphia give us a hand at the regatta. It was too bad the wind had not cooperated and several Novice and 2X races had to be cancelled. There is always some discussion at the coaches meeting regarding the passing rule requiring the slower boat to move always to the Starboard or land side, but this is in order to make the course safe and fair. The package as a whole needs to be reviewed and updated.

The running of the Cogswell went off without any problems.

Chilli this year was very tasty. It was a very busy day of racing. The regatta was well attended with crews from NL, NB, Antigonish and metro. The course was laid out well, but there were some misunderstandings around some of the caution buoys. Penalties had to be withdrawn after the regatta, but fortunately no placements were effected except one MMIX (was not for 1st place). The bridge again, gave grief to several HRC crews (fortunately one was severely hurt), and many crews had problems crossing over the no passing buoys at the bridge.

We added sprint racing for the juniors, similar to what we do for the university crews. The added sprinting was appreciated, but the distance raised some eyebrows. I am again suggesting that this regatta be reformatted to 1 1/2 to 2 days, to accommodate the growing regatta.

Regional

There was only one regional regatta that NS umpires went to and that was the 4 Bridges in Fredericton. Bonnie was able to help NB out with that regatta.

National

Mark attended the CURC in Welland Ont, in November.

Linda attended the CMC in Victoria BC, in August and the NRC in Welland Ont, in November.

Both were great opportunities for umpire development.

RCA Working Committee and RCA Rep

Marilyn has been very busy on the RCA Umpire Committee. This year many of the projects and reviews that were taking place last year, were completed and adopted. Marilyn will submit a brief report.

Safety:

Ensuring a safe and fair regatta is an umpire's main objective.

Last year I called for an increase in safety boats, particularly for in the cold weather months. It was great that this year at the Chilli, we were able to use both club boats and the pontoon boats from the paddlers. We are still however, scrambling every regatta for boat drivers, and having to call on the same drivers. It would be helpful if RowNS could identify and train a pool of drivers or we may have to start tapping into the paddlers and end up having to paying people.

Respectfully Submitted

Linda Lee