



Hants and Dorset Race Officials meeting

Saturday 15th January 2022

Attending: A Parsons (Chairman), P Staddon, J Bailey, A Stewart, J Fuccio, G Joyce, M Bradbeer, M Viner, J Purkess, P Newman, S Bull, S Clements, P Budd

Apologies: K Warland, R Murphy, C Wall, A Houlton, S Whiting, N Perry, D Latham

Item 1 - Minutes of previous meeting

- Typo error in the minutes "The Umpires Commission is compromised for the association..." it should read: "The Umpires Commission is **comprised** for the association.."
- **J Purkess proposed the minutes, P Staddon seconded. All in favour.**

Item 2 – Chairman's Report, A Parsons

Notes from National Umpires meeting, Jan 8th 2022

Covid related reductions in the number of regattas caused problems with umpires in small regions not attending enough regattas to maintain their 3-year licences – the H & D ARA requirement only to be available works better for us.

Abusive language from a particular school club was noted; BR fines far more than we do for this (HDARA £10, BR graded 4-point scale of warnings and fines which may on the day be as much as £50 for an individual or £250 for a club)

BR male umpire numbers are on a continuous fall, females slightly rising in the past decade

Paddy Ibbotson will step down as NUC secretary this year, successor TBA – will run as a formal appointment through BR.

Some regattas and heads have found a mobile phone app called 'Zello push to talk' (<https://zello.com/>) useful to set up mobile phones as a backup/supplementary 'radio network' which offers a way round problems with poor radio reception over long distances as in head races for example.

BR are setting up a flexible online umpires exam – each region can tailor the choice of questions, whether multiple choice/automated marking or text answers/invigilator marking. It could be opened for a fixed time window so all candidates take in under the same exam conditions.

There is a set of written umpire training material due to be published through BR in April, and the idea of 'bite size videos' for training as has been done by RowCanada. An umpire evaluation form (similar to our own form for assistants) is used in Canada to feedback to all umpires as I understand it (<https://rowingcanada.org/uploads/2019/05/Ump-Eval-EN.pdf>)

The annual review of rules of racing includes some proposed changes to the start procedure – wording to be used by the starter around the 2-minute pre start warning may change, so any HDARA

clubs entering river regattas should check they are familiar with the revised start procedure next season.

There was a presentation on diversity and inclusion in BR umpiring which is worth a read I think.

Key points:

Less % female umpires than in the total rowing community

Very few young umpires

There is no ethnic diversity at all in the umpires

Umpires, like rowers in general, are likely to have attended independent schools and have high income

Rowers see fun and teamwork, the general public still sees rowing as posh and white; coastal, gig and indoor rowing are seen as opportunities to create more diversity and inclusion

Support and resources are being offered to clubs to improve diversity and inclusion; BR is making a submission to Sport England

- AP added that whilst we seem to have all of the regatta's covered for availability this year, we know from previous year where we only had eight regatta's that some regatta's struggled for officials. Therefore, we do need to recruit more officials for the association.
- AP brought up some comments from race debriefs, in particular the distance in between bouys at a regatta. At BTC regatta, the bouys were seemingly less than the 60ft minimum requirement which some fours came very close to colliding. JP confirmed that the rope used for the regatta has 60ft gaps so this shouldn't be a problem and hadn't heard of it being raised in the past. He said he would check that the distances were correct. PS said that the problem only really occurred as the tide dropped, meaning more slack for the vertical buoy lines to merge closer.
- It was agreed that a H&D Race Officials WhatsApp group would be set up prior to the season for Race Officials so that information about racing/last minute arrangements etc can be relayed quickly and efficiently. It can also be used for letting turn umpires know draw of events by regatta control as sometimes there is no chance to do so during the event. PB to set up.
- AP agreed that we should look as an Association at purchasing 2 x pairs of binoculars to be used for Judges to help out at regatta's, CARA do this and their binoculars were very helpful at Southsea regatta.
- AP was delighted to announce that Alex Robertson and Gary Joyce were promoted to Full Racing Official last season. We do not have any assistants moving to full official this season, but hopefully some more in 2023.
- Those officials that are required to retake their officials exam should have received their exam paper.
- AP explained to the Umpires Committee that he is moving away to be closer to his family and so will be standing down as Chair of the Racing Officials. He has spoken to some members about taking over, is awaiting someone to accept the role! Anyone interested, please contact AP.

- John Adam's will not be officiating for this season but AP will write to him in a personal capacity.

On behalf of all of the Race Officials and H&D, we would like to thank Andy for his years of work in Chairing the Race Officials and overseeing the examinations.

Item 3 – Umpires Commission

The Umpires Commission is comprised for the association to deal with official complaints and uphold the rules of racing in light of any disputes. They will also assess and agree the promotion of assistant officials to full status. The commission personnel are all happy to remain on the commission and are as follows:

John Bailey, John Purkess, Martin Bradbeer, Keith Warland & Alison Houlton.

Proposal to nominate the above officials to form the Umpires Commission for the H&D Association for 2022.

Item 4 – Race officials examination

- AP has sent out exam papers to all those who are required to take and complete their exam this year – this includes: Steve Bull, Keith Warland, Mark Viner, Martin Bradbeer, Ray Murphy and Simon Clements
- No Assistant Officials are expected to be assessed for Full Official this season.
- Mentoring / Assessing Assistant Officials. MB agreed to work with KW on this with AP standing down.
- MB wanted it noted that there was a lack of reports submitted by officials for last season (only eight regatta's). Can we ensure that reports are submitted so we can provide feedback to regatta organisers? It was discussed if there could be an online reporting system – something to look into.

Item 5 – Race Officials per club

- AP proposed keeping the amount to £100 fine for not supplying two officials per club – all in agreement.
- Currently, the clubs with racing officials are:
 - Bournemouth – 2 P Newman, S Clements**
 - BTC – 1 J Purkess**
 - Christchurch – 2 P Staddon, C Wall**
 - Coalporters – 4 K Warland, P Budd, A Parsons, J Fuccio**
 - Itchen Imperial – 2 M Bradbeer, G Joyce**
 - Lymington – 1 M Viner**
 - Newport – 0? (need to check if Dave Latham is still wishing to officiate?)**
 - Poole – 3 A Houlton, R Murphy, S Whiting**
 - Ryde – 2 S Bull, M Jenner**
 - Shanklin – 2 G Walters, A Robertson**
 - Southampton – 2 A Stewart, J Bailey**
 - Southsea – 0**

Therefore, Newport and Southsea will incur a fine of £100 for no officials supplied and BT and Lymington £50 for only one supplied. If clubs do have new volunteers prior to the season to let PB/MB know.

- PB to produce a recruitment poster for officials and send out to clubs stating that you only are required to help assists at 3 regattas a year and this does not mean a full day. Clubs will be fined £100 for not supplying officials.

Item 6 – Officials availability for 2021 season

- Steve will compile the officials availability and send out to regatta secretaries to request officials for their regatta.
- South Coast Championships, Paignton – Saturday 10th September 2022. Officials for the H&D are as follows:
 - A Houlton – Umpire**
 - J Purkess – Judge (preferably land based)**
 - P Staddon – Umpire**
 - A Stewart – Starter**
 - M Viner – Judge**
 - P Budd – Reserve**
 - J Fuccio – Assistant Official**
 - P Newman – Assistant Official**
- As a side note to the meeting, the SCC AGM is taking place and CARA have proposed several rule changes of which one is reducing the number of races officials should have officiated at from three to one. All agreed that this was not acceptable as the SCC is the largest race of the year, therefore, competent and experienced officials are required. Proposed by the H&D Racing Officials Committee to not support this rule change. All in favour.

Item 7 – Cox of the year

- No changes to how Cox of the Year is compiled on points per regatta and overall. All in agreement is works well with a nominated cox announced at each regatta and presented with a prize and then an overall winner at the end of the year. Transparent and valued by coxswains and clubs.
- Reiterated by G Joyce and others to name 1st, 2nd and 3rd places for cox of the day as this is not only good to be read out at presentation but helps in the standings for the Cox of the Year points.

Item 8 – Insurance for race officials

- The H&D will continue to recompense the £32.50 if requested by officials. You need to fill out the form and send to Sue Southcott, Treasurer for reimbursement.
- JF had not received his reimbursement from last year, will chase Sue. PB said to check her email address as it had changed the previous year.
- PB to send out a copy of the insurance reimbursement form with the minutes.

Item 9 – Safety Equipment

- GJ will be undertaking a pre-season check on the safety bags.
- A problem with the loud hailers as these get damaged in the bags, GJ is going to get some storage boxes to keep them in – bulky must will help stop damage. Thanks to PS for repairing the loud hailers.

- Only 8 lifejackets in the bag – Itchen and BTC to check their boathouses as they may have been used for the Junior Regatta / Foad memorial race?
- Reiterate at the AGM that regatta's must provide their own equipment for officials, the safety launch bags are simply back up if required.

Item 10 – Any other business

- All of the Race Officials wished to pass on their best wishes to Denis Woodford – JP would do this the next time they speak.
- JP also raised the point that CARA are wishing to add the following rule proposals to the South Coast rules which are:
3. Rule 51 Add the following sentence in *red*....

If the umpires have disqualified a crew or is otherwise dissatisfied with the proper conduct of the race they shall hoist a red flag *at the end of the race*, in which case the judges shall make no announcement of the result of until the decision of the Umpires has been notified to them.

4. Rule 52 (b) Add the following sentence in *red*...

To stop the race *a red flag will be waved and a horn sounded, and they will* order crews to return to the start to re-row at a time determined by the Regatta Control.

- All agreed and H&D would support the re-wording of the rule
- PB asked if any Race Officials would be interested in having branded hooded sweatshirts? Some were so PB to speak to Keith.

Andy Parsons thanked everyone for partaking in the meeting and thank you to BTC for hosting and catering the meeting.

Meeting closed at 13:50.