



Rowing

British

Columbia

RBC Umpire Workshop – Technical Questions

Technical Questions

First, a question nobody asked!

- A crew receiving assistance getting back into their shell is to progress/be placed
 - The decision was made at a Clinician Workshop in April that an athlete/crew assisted back into their shell should advance
 - No rule specifically states that an assisted crew should be excluded
 - The athlete/crew must cross the finish line under their own power to advance



Technical Questions

A Floating Start

- We received the following
 - Start and judge at start and race umpires at start. In recent races, starter and aligner and race umpires have often been instructing crews simultaneously, which is confusing and doesn't always lead to the fairest of starts. Can we sort through what should be the gold standard for starts?

All the above are covered in our *Minimum Standards* document – the appropriate text follows



A Floating Start #1

This only works if everyone works as a team!

1. Race umpires must find the crews for their next race, and get them into lane number order well behind the start line;
2. When it is their race, the race umpires move the crews together, as one line, towards the start using light pressure, only bow or bow pair rowing;
3. In case of current/wind affecting course, the race umpire advises crews on how to correct for this.
 - a) With wind, have crews point their boats into the wind;
 - b) Work on spacing the crews appropriately across the lanes;
4. Select a crew in the centre of the course and key the other crews on the selected crew;



A Floating Start #2

5. Speed up stragglers, slow down leaders – the goal is to have all bow balls hit the line simultaneously;
6. At a pre-determined point, race umpires hand over control to the Judge at the Start;
 - a) When the Judge at the Start is taking over, tell the crews “You are now under the direction of the aligner”;
7. Race umpires should NOT speak to the crews again;
 - a) If you see anything needing correction with crews, use your radio to tell the Judge at the Start;



A Floating Start #3

8. The Judge at the Start should work hard to ensure that no bowball crosses the line – if you have to back a crew, you have lost the battle;
9. If multiple bowballs cross the start line, consider stern-alignment as a last resort. [Not appropriate for “next best time” progressions];
10. A Quick Start should always be used for a floating start.



Technical Questions

Judge at the Start

- We received the following
 - I've seen aligners using their flags while addressing crews before alignment is achieved. Not holding up flag for 20 seconds after start to indicate fair start. How to work with Start on crew instruction. What words to use (or not use) when alignment is achieved.
 - hear all sorts of different ways of addressing distance and movement. How to be equally understandable to rowers and boat holders who may know nothing about rowing.



Judge at the Start #1

- The Judge at the Start should only use the white flag to indicate that alignment has been achieved, and not for any other reason. Not during alignment...
- With regard to the Judge at the Start holding up the white flag for 20 seconds to indicate a fair start: there is no requirement in the Rules of Racing for this. The absence of a red flag indicates a fair start – personally, I drop my white flag pretty much immediately.
- With regard to words when alignment has been achieved: the white flag is raised to indicate that the Starter may commence the start procedure – there is no announcement that alignment has been achieved



Judge at the Start #2

For the distance and movement question, the following text comes from our *Minimum Standards* document

- The alignment of a **floating** start:
 1. Address crews by their bow number;
 2. Use linear distances to identify the required movement of a shell to the bow or to the stern (1 seat, 2 seats, ½ a deck, a deck, ½ a boat, etc.);
 3. Both voice tone and projection should be consistent for all shells regardless of their lane;
 4. Use consistent vocabulary:
 - To request a move toward the bow: “Touch it up (+ a linear distance) e.g. one deck”
 - To request a move toward the stern: “Back it down (+ a linear distance) e.g. one seat”
 - To request a shell to drift: “Let it run”
 - To request a shell to stop: “Hold water”
 - To move the bow of a boat sideways – i.e. align a boat in a cross wind:
 - “Spike it on (+ one side) e.g. port side”

- The alignment of a **hand-held** start:
 1. Use the word “Out” to identify the required movement of a shell away from the boat-holder;
 2. Use the word “In” to identify the required movement of a shell towards the boat-holder;
 3. Address the boat-holder by their lane number;
 - Use the word “Stop” when the shell has reached the desired position.



Technical Questions

Precedence within the Jury

- We received the following
 - I asked my L2 audience about precedence (i.e. which position defers to which at the various stages of the start procedure (Judge at the Start, Starter, Race Umpire). Precedence is discussed specifically in Rules of Racing (for the Race Umpire). But we need clarity on precedence for all the Start phases just as we have Primary and Secondary Race Umpires.



Precedence within the Jury #1

Effectively the Chief Umpire and Deputy Chief Umpire are at the top of the totem pole. However, the umpires at the various stations are in charge of their own area of responsibility.

If we view this in terms of a race:

- **Control Commission**
 - The umpires operate in their own area
 - The CU or DCU are there to support the members of Control should the need arise
- **Starter**
 - Responsible for interacting with the athletes via the Start Script
 - At the appropriate time [the two-minute call], hands responsibility to the Judge at the Start
 - Takes back responsibility when the Judge at the Start raises the white flag;
 - Runs through the remainder of the Start Script
 - Responsibilities end with the “Go” if the start is fair.
 - If the start is not fair, the Starter stops the race by waving the Start Flag from side to side and sounding a horn



Precedence within the Jury #2

- **Judge at the Start**
 - Responsible for the alignment process
 - This responsibility ends when the white flag is raised
 - Responsible for calling false starts. This is done by waving a red flag from side to side.
- Note that the responsibilities between the Starter and the Judge at the Start can vary based on the regatta venue and the sound equipment being used. Sometimes it is more expedient or effective for the Judge at the Start to make the initial race announcement and the five-minute call than the Starter – e.g. at Elk Lake or Delta, if there is no PA System in use



Precedence within the Jury #3

- **Race Umpires**
 - Responsible for the race immediately the Starter has said “Go”
 - The Judge at the Start and the Starter should not be saying anything or directing crews once the race is the responsibility of the Race Umpire
 - Responsible for dealing with an objection if a hand is raised at the finish
 - Responsible for the white or red flag at the end of the race, as appropriate

- **Judges at the Finish**
 - Responsible for the various duties in the Finish Line area
 - Order of finish
 - Verifying the race umpire decision on a fair or unfair race
 - Working with timing and results team to make the race result official, or not publishing the results in the case of an objection



Technical Questions

Evacuation Plans

- We received the following
 - Evacuation of Elk Lake (or any course) when there is wind or an emergency. Procedure, communication and how to account for all athletes. Elk Lake Spring 2023.



Evacuation Plans

This is aimed at the Chief Umpires amongst us...

We'd recommend that you make the jury aware of the evacuation plan for the body of water that the regatta is being held on.

- Possibly ahead of time or during the pre-regatta meeting.
- This should be in enough detail that the umpires know what is expected of them during an evacuation.

Work with the Organizing Committee to ensure bow numbers of shells coming off the water are recorded.

- This is invaluable when determining which shells are still to be evacuated

