

# NORTHERN REGIONAL UMPIRING COMMITTEE

Chair: Dr. R. Mortimer Vice-Chair: Mr. C. Curtis Secretary: Dr. D. Jones  
Members: Mr. M. Bell, Ms. L. Forster, Dr. P. Hoare, Mr. J. Mulholland,  
Dr. A. Oakenfull, Mrs. L. Pain



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Report to the Northern Regional Rowing Council AGM 2023.

## **MEETINGS OF COMMITTEE**

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The committee met on 27<sup>th</sup> February and on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2023. Adhoc discussions were conducted via email as needed.

The committee membership remains unchanged from 2022. Much of the meetings was taken discussing plans for umpire training and umpire seminar preparations.

## **UMPIRE COHORT**

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As things stand we expect to have 30 licenced umpires registered to the Northern Region as at 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024. This is an increase of three over the year with three new umpires qualifying in the year. Congratulations to Izzy Friedlander (Tyne ARC/Durham Regatta), Chloe Kelly (Durham ARC) and Harry Longbottom (Butler College) our newly qualified umpires. We thank David Brindle (Tees RC) who retired at the end of 2022 after 5 years service.

Renewals are about to be made for those with licences expiring at the end of 2023. Dilwyn Jones is coordinating this for the Northern Region. We expect most to renew for a three year term although a couple will likely be only a one year renewal due to lack of activity during the Covid years.

All umpires have renewed their British Rowing membership due 30<sup>th</sup> September and hence none are currently suspended from the National Umpiring Register.

## **MULTI LANE ENDORSEMENT**

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Louise Forster completed the multi-lane umpiring endorsement training and passed both theory and practical exams in September. The region now has six multi-lane endorsed umpires.

## **TRAINING AND NEW LICENCES**

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Umpire numbers are still low and we often struggle to staff regional competitions. We continue to focus on training new umpires and are continuing to look at ways of mitigating the shortness of the regatta season that limits opportunities for training under supervision. In recent years we have not set deadlines/time limits for people to complete training but this seems to have been counter-productive and we are contemplating requiring that candidates complete within one season with maybe an exception to extend into the next season where justified.

Of the 2023 trainees, 3 are now qualified, and the remaining 4 have yet to take the theory test. Hopefully most of them will take the test in early 2024 and move on to the practical training together with at least 1 from earlier years.

Planning for a new round of training is underway and we hope to start theory training before Christmas. 6 people have signalled an intent to train since the last theory course (more always welcome!) and this will go some way to helping to alleviate our umpire numbers problem. However retaining candidates through the long training process is an issue.

We still have a number of competition organising clubs who are under-represented in the umpiring cohort and this needs urgently addressing by those clubs.

## **SEMINARS**

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Our spring and autumn seminars were held in a hybrid manner in person and online via video conferencing and both were well attended.

## **COMPETITIONS**

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The competition calendar has mostly returned to normal post-Covid and we had a good spring and summer season of racing. The autumn weather has however caused many competitions to be cancelled causing disappointment for clubs, competitors and organisers alike. We often have difficulty fully staffing all umpiring posts and must ask clubs to help us identify potential trainees.

Competitions have in most cases improved the supply of required equipment and assistants but there are a number of items to address still. Louise Forster in her dual role as NRUC member and NRRC competitions co-ordinator has been busy collating and will be providing feedback to competitions in advance of the regatta season.

## **BOATS AND CONTROL COMMISSION CHECKS**

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We would like to remind all competitors of their responsibility to ensure that their boats are safe and suitable for the conditions – it has been noted over the course of the year that there were a significant number of failures at Control Commission. This will be a focus of the coming year and boats and crews failing any spot checks will not be allowed to boat until the problem is properly remedied. Also remember that competitors (with the exception of coxes) are expected to wear the racing strip of the club they are representing. Please ensure that you are race ready.

## **NATIONAL ISSUES**

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The National Umpiring Committee met via phone/video conference a number of times during the year with Richard representing the region. In addition to this Richard is a member of the Rules of Racing Panel along with exams and CPD/training working groups.

In April the Rules of Racing changed to bring the minimum weight for coxes of women's events up to 55kg to match that for open events. More recently in September British Rowing updated the Competition Eligibility Policy to restrict the women's category to those who were assigned female at birth. Competitions have adjusted to these changes with no noted issues.

Of particular concern is the change of British Rowing/competition insurance providers as of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023. There are still a number of clarifications pending as to what Umpiring activities are actually covered by the insurance.