



Sanction Applications and the Changes to the Rules of Racing

This information is intended to make you aware of sanction-related changes emanating from the changes to the Rules of Racing that were approved at the recent RCA Semi-Annual Meeting.

As was the case in 2022, one of the thrusts of the RCA Rules of Racing Review Working Group was to reduce the number of requests for exceptions that were required on the sanction application. The Working Group continued the previous approach, where appropriate, which was to allow an Organizing Committee to indicate the details of their customizations in the Regatta Package. The PRA sanction reviewers will be looking for that detail in the Regatta Package as part of their approval process.

*Changes within the existing Rule, or a new Rule, **are written in red.**

The specific rule changes that affect sanction applications follow.

Rule 1.6 Exceptions

This specifies the rules that may not be varied by an exception request. One addition was made:

- 2.10.1 prohibiting U19 Weight-Restricted rowing. FYI, this Rule will only become effective on April 1st, 2028.

In addition, an asterisk [“*”] was added to all rules that may not be varied by an exception request.

Rule 2.1 The Definition of a Competitor now reads:

For the purpose above, a competitor may be a member of more than one club but no competitor may compete for two different clubs at the same regatta, except that a rower may compete for their club and/or university and/or province and/or school at the same regatta, where permitted by the regatta and outlined in the Regatta Package.

This change simplifies much of the previous Rule 2.1 and gives discretion to the OC to set up their own requirements, provided that it is declared in the Regatta Package.

Rule 2.3 Categories of Rowers and Proof of Age and Identity

Definition of a Novice was added to the Rule.

- **Rule 2.3.10** Novice competitors are those in their first year of racing, unless defined otherwise in the Regatta Package.

Definition of a Composite was added to the Rule.

- **Rule 2.3.11** Composite The Organizing Committee may allow for composite crews in the Regatta Package. A composite crew has members from more than one club.

Rule 2.8 Masters Age-Adjusted Time Systems now reads:

Additionally, if insufficient entries are received to warrant a race in an age category, the Organizing Committee may combine events and apply an age-adjusted time to the actual

finish times of the older crew(s)/sculler(s), using an age-adjusted time system. **Two examples of age-adjusted time options may be found in Appendix 7.**

The old Rule allowed only the two published Age-Adjusted time systems.

Rule 2.10.1 Weight Restricted Events – this new Rule reads:

- *** 2.10.1 Effective April 1, 2028 weight-restricted events are events for athletes 19 years of age and older, on the day of competition, where there is a maximum weight stipulated for the rowers.**

Note the “*” denoting that the Rule may not be varied by an exception request.

Rule 2.10.4 Weight-Restricted Event Weigh-ins now reads:

- *Scheduled weight-restricted events at regattas must include weigh-ins.*

Note the “*” denoting that the Rule may not be varied by an exception request.

Rule 2.11 Weighing of Athletes in Weight-Restricted Events now reads, in part:

For their official weigh-in, the rowers shall wear their racing uniform. Rowers in crew events shall present themselves at the weigh-in centre as a complete crew. **Rowers must also present government-issued photo identification, showing date of birth. For official weigh-in the following times will be applied:**

The requirement for ID at weigh-ins is effective on April 1st 2028, as it is tied to the implementation of the prohibition on U19 lightweight racing.

Rule 8.6 Coach and Team/Club Representatives Meetings now states:

Prior to the start of the regatta there shall be a meeting hosted by an Organizing Committee representative along with the Chief Umpire. The meeting will communicate key information concerning racing and safety to all rowers and coaches. Each club must appoint a representative to attend this meeting. Crews shall not race unless their club representative is present at the meeting or makes arrangements to receive equivalent information directly from the Organizing Committee representative.

The Rule now specifies that crews for clubs not represented at the pre-regatta meeting may not race unless their club has made arrangements with the OC to receive the information from that meeting. As attendance is mandatory, the time and place for the meeting must be included in the Regatta Package

Rule 9.1 * General

Note the “*”, denoting that no sub-element of Rule 9.1 may be varied by an exception request.

Rule 9.1 General

The old preamble stated: “**Each round of an event shall finish at least two hours before the following round of the same event*”.

The new preamble states: “**In the case of an event following a progression system and with a racing distance of more than 1000 m, each round shall finish at least two hours before the following round of the same event.**”

Rule 9.3 Progression systems

The old preamble started with: “*The following are the types of progression systems that could be used at a regatta. Organizing Committees have the option of electing to draw multiple finals for the same event.*”

The new preamble states: “The following are **some** types of progression systems that could be used at a regatta. Organizing Committees have the option of electing to draw multiple finals for the same event.”

This allows flexibility for an OC to utilize a progression system that is not one of those listed.

The old preamble continued with: “*Progression systems other than the ones listed here could be used but the Organizing Committee would need to obtain approval in the regatta sanction application before publishing them in a Regatta Package:*”

The above was replaced by: “Progression systems other than the ones listed here **can** be used **and the Organizing Committee must submit them as part of the sanction application before publishing them in a Regatta Package**”

The new preamble defines the process for an OC that wishes to utilize their own progression system.

9.7 Assistance to a crew within a race

A crew that has capsized may get back into a shell during a race, with or without assistance, complete the race, be placed, and be eligible to advance to the next round, unless the Regatta Package states otherwise.

This new rule provides clarity on outside assistance for a capsized crew, and allows the OC to not permit assistance. This could be used where Cold Water or similar protocols are in place.

Rule 11.6 Composition of the Jury

The old Rule states “*The Jury members shall be holders of an RCA Umpire’s license or as described in 11.4. For all regattas, there shall be at least four (4) RCA licensed Umpires, which may include the Chief Umpire.*”

The new Rules reads:

- * The Jury members shall be holders of an RCA Umpire’s license or as described in 11.4.
- 1. For sprint regattas, there shall be at least five (5) RCA licensed Umpires, which may include the Chief Umpire.
- 2. For Time Trials there shall be at least five (5) RCA licensed Umpires which may include the CU.
- 3. For Head Race regattas, there shall be at least five (5) RCA licensed Umpires, which may include the Chief Umpire
- 4. For Indoor regattas, there shall be at least two (2) RCA licensed Umpires which may include the Chief Umpire.
- 5. For Coastal Beach Sprints regattas there shall be at least five (5) RCA licensed Umpires, which may include the Chief Umpire.
- 6. For Coastal Endurance regattas, a calculation will determine the number of RCA licensed Umpires (which may include the Chief Umpire): a minimum of four (4) RCA licensed Umpires, plus one (1) licensed Umpire for each Key Turning Mark.

Note the “*” denoting that the Rule may not be varied by an exception request.

The umpire requirements for each regatta type are shown in the numbered bullets.

Rule 13 Coastal Rowing Rules

Rule 13 is new, and is a rewrite of the previous Appendices 3 [Coastal Rowing Rules] and 4 [Beach Sprint Rules].

The rule is too long to reproduce in its entirety for purposes of this document!

There are no new requirements applicable to the review of either the Coastal or Beach Sprint sanction application.

Appendix 1 Time Trial Rules

The old Rule 3.1 stated: **3.1 Umpires** To fulfill RCA regatta sanction requirements, a time trial will need a minimum of four RCA licensed Umpires including the Chief Umpire. In principle, the four Umpires will be assigned to the start area, the finish area, the control commission and on-water duties.

The new Rule 3.1 states: **3.1 Umpires** To fulfill RCA regatta sanction requirements, a minimum of **five** RCA licensed Umpires, including the Chief Umpire. In principle, the **five** Umpires will be assigned to the start area, the finish area, the control commission and on-water duties.

This reflects the change from four umpires to five, to be consistent with Rule 11.6.2.

Appendix 2 Head Race Rules

The old Rule 3.1 stated: **3.1 Umpires** To fulfill RCA regatta sanction requirements, a head race will need a minimum of four RCA licensed Umpires, including the Chief Umpire. In principle, the four Umpires should be assigned to the start area, the finish area, the control commission (launch area), and on-water duties.

The new Rule 3.1 states: **3.1 Umpires** To fulfill RCA regatta sanction requirements, a head race will need a minimum of **five** RCA licensed Umpires, including the Chief Umpire. In principle, the **five** Umpires should be assigned to the start area, the finish area, the control commission (launch area), and on-water duties.

Members of the Jury may have dual roles. The Organizing Committee, in consultation with the Chief Umpire, may also appoint volunteers to support the Jury in its work.

This reflects the change from four umpires to five, to be consistent with Rule 11.6.3., plus provides clarity around dual roles within the jury.

Appendix 3 Indoor Rowing Racing Rules

11. Virtual Events: Indoor rowing competitions may include a virtual or hybrid portion to be chosen by the Organizing Committee and published in the regatta package.

This new Rule allows an Indoor rowing competition to have in-person and on-line competitors, and must be declared in the Regatta Package.

Appendix 7 - Masters Age-Adjusted Time Systems

The old preamble read: *Below are options that Organizing Committees may consider for calculating masters age adjusted times.*

The new preamble reads: **Below are options that Organizing Committees may consider for calculating masters age-adjusted times.**

The Organizing Committee may use these or develop its own Age-Adjusted Time System, provided it is submitted through the sanctioning process, approved and published in the Regatta Package.

This allows an OC to develop their own age-adjusted time system, and defines the process for doing so.

Appendix 8 - Progression System options

The old preamble read: *In principle, the progression system should be devised to ensure that, as far as is practical, the fastest rowers have an opportunity to compete in the final race of an event. Noted below are options for consideration by regatta Organizing Committees, which may be used individually or in combination, are as follows:*

The new preamble reads: In principle, the progression system should be devised to ensure that, as far as is practical, the fastest rowers have an opportunity to compete in the final race of an event. Noted below are some options for consideration by regatta Organizing Committees, which may be used individually or in combination. **The Organizing Committee**

may develop its own Progression System, provided it is submitted through the sanctioning process, approved and published in the Regatta Package.

This allows an OC to develop their own progression system, and defines the process for doing so.

FEEDBACK

If you have any feedback or queries, please contact the RCA Safety and Events Committee via [Mike Bagshawe](#).