

# Tips for a Trainee Umpire

---

## Starting out...

- Familiarise yourself with club or school colours before the start of the regatta.
- Arrive at the regatta at least one hour before Start Time.
- Attend the pre-regatta meeting – note any special circumstances which apply
- Collect your Life jacket, Radio, Day sheet, red & white flags, megaphone – a pen!
- Do you have enough clothing to accommodate any changes in the weather? Sunscreen?
- Check with Chief Umpire – when returning to the start – at speed up the centre, or quietly, on the outside of the course, incrementally moving up?

## On the water

- Move into the centre when proceeding at speed to the start – **stop** to allow wash to disperse evenly under your boat, before turning off the course at right angles in plenty of time, so that oncoming crews experience no wash as they go by.

## At the Start

- Protocol at the Start is the order of the umpires depends upon the order of arrival.
- Assist where possible and if necessary, to marshal crews towards and into the Starting Zone.
- Identify the crews in the race you will take, marshal them ahead of time ( unbuoyed courses) in order to avoid time delays.
- Move the crews into position in order, if not already done by the Starter, or Start Marshal. This may be done by an Assistant Starter through the PA system, especially at Karapiro and Ruataniwha.
- Ensure that crews have plenty of room between them (if on an unbuoyed course).
- Straighten crews before the race begins to avoid early clashes, especially novices or coxless boats.
- Check your crews - bowballs in place? coxswains' lifejackets? bow numbers? No crew may start if there is no bowball in place, or the coxswain does not have a lifejacket.
- Check to see that the course is clear of obstacles such as umpire's launches, skiffs or anything else which could cause a collision.
- Ok? Hold your white flag above your head to indicate to the Starter that the race is ready to be brought into line. Remember – YOU are responsible for the fair running of this race.

## On your way

- During the race, if you see a problem about to occur, go to the crew/s concerned, hold your white flag above your head, name the crew and point your white flag in the direction you want the crew to go. You may also have to tell them how to avoid an incident. Lower your flag quickly and deliberately to the side in which you want the crew to go. There should be no doubt as to which direction the crew should go. Hold the flag in this direction until the crew has made an adequate correction to their course. If the crew's correction is not effective, repeat the gesture.
- For clashing of blades, or an unfair start in the Start Zone (not already noted by the Starter), hold up your red flag, tell all crews to stop and return to the Start. Here you have to use your commonsense as there are times when the weather conditions or tide are such that you will need to carry on with the race. You will need however to justify your actions to crews involved and avoid any possibility that crews will protest at the Finish.

- A false start? This is usually spotted by the Starter, or the Aligner, not by you. Hold up your red flag, tell all crews to return to the Start. The Starter may award the offending crew a yellow card. (Two penalties and the crew is excluded).
- During racing, ensure all crews have a fair chance. If you have to pass a crew to speak to or to look out for crews in the lead, move out wide to avoid washing crews at the rear of the field.
- Do not trail the crews at the back of the field unless racing is close and it is unavoidable. Remember to look after the front of the field in particular (while also looking behind) as that is where the first 3 places will come from, especially after the first 1000m.

## At the Finish

- Do not cross the finish line, wait for at least 20 seconds, to check that no rowers are in distress, no rowers or coxswains have their hands up indicating that they wish to speak to you.
- If there is an objection, these are indicated with a hand up on the water. A protest may be written once the crew is off the water which may protest the decision of the umpire. (Includes a fee).
- If the race is in order, show your white flag clearly to the rowers, (hold it out flat with two hands) before finally showing it to the judges, in the same manner.
- If there is a protest, show your red flag to the crews and to the judges, to indicate that the results may not be published until the matter is resolved.
- It is advisable to take notes about any incidents that occur, as you may be asked about them later on, particularly if you are called by the Race Committee to comment on the race in question. They can be as simple as arrows on your day sheet indicating which crews are impeding others with the distance raced written on the side.

## Other tips

- Remember, follow crews at a safe distance, not too close and not directly behind coxless boats as you could be obscuring their steering mark. To the right or the left of the lane is the best place – when the course is buoyed.
- Remember that your boat driver is another set of eyes. Involve your driver in the race too, giving clear instructions as to the positioning of your boat during the race.
- Remember to speak to crews politely and clearly, as you yourself would wish to be spoken to.
- Remember not to carry passengers.

## Capsize

- If there is a capsize, call on your radio e.g. “Rescue, Rescue, Rescue, capsize in lane 3 at the 1700 metre mark”, using even tones. Stay with the crew until a safety boat arrives, ensuring all crew members are accounted for. Use your radio if necessary to request that another umpire takes over your race.

## End of Shift

- Return all gear at the end of your shift, report any breakages etc.
- Attend the post regatta meeting at the end of the regatta to talk about any issues/things which could be improved upon for next time.

## Enjoy your day!