**USRowing Drone Policy**

4/21/15

Earlier this spring, USRowing surveyed referees and coaches across the country about the use of drones at regattas.

As this is a rapidly evolving space, we wanted to get a better idea of how prevalent drone use has become at regattas, and what kinds of safety and fairness concerns have arisen. The response from both groups was tremendous and extremely valuable as we considered developing a drone policy for registered regattas.

USRowing recognizes the need to provide competitors, spectators, and other people in attendance at regattas a fair and safe environment, while continuing to provide spectators, coaches, and fans – both onsite and via live streaming – a more dynamic environment in which to watch and enjoy the sport of rowing.

To this end, we have developed the following policies for 2015 regarding the use of drones and media launches at USRowing Registered Regattas. As drone technology and its use continues to evolve, we will make adjustments to this policy as necessary.

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The Local Organizing Committee, working in conjunction with the chief referee, is charged with approving the use of any and all drones at the regatta venue both on shore and in the field of play, including the airspace above the course (in accordance with local and FAA drone regulations for the specific venue), and approving the use of any/all media launches on the field of play.

Anyone wishing to operate a drone at the regatta venue, including media, competing organizations (including athletes, coaches, support personnel, parents, or fans), or spectators, must have prior approval from the LOC.

Any drones operating in the field of play must be controlled from a media launch with an experienced drone operator and launch driver. The drone itself must remain at least 10 meters behind the crew in its lane and at least five meters above the highest point of the referee launch. In addition, all media launches, with or without drones, must keep an appropriate distance behind any crews in contention, so as to not wake any crews with the opportunity to advance.