

Practical Rules

Identifications

At the Start of the World Rowing Championships, a Women's 4- arrives with two athletes wearing a full head covering, long sleeves and leg coverings that cover their entire arms and legs but the other two athletes have no arm or leg coverings and are wearing simple visors. As the Starter how would you address this situation?

Prior to 2023, the answer would have been that all four athletes must be completely uniform and the differences in arm covering, leg coverings and headwear were not permitted. However from this year, that has changed, providing the difference in dress is due to religious or other special reason including medical reasons.

With the 2023 Rules Updates, the following provision was added to Appendix R6 BYE-LAWS TO RULE 38 – Commercial Publicity, Sponsorship, Advertising and Identifications:

2) Exceptions to Uniformity for Religious or other Special Reasons

- a) Subject to all other provisions for design, colour and Identifications in these Bye-laws, the length of sleeves and legwear and/or the shape and design of headwear may be different within a crew if one or more members of that crew choose or are required to wear long sleeves or long leggings or to wear recognised religious headwear for religious or other specific reasons which have been approved by World Rowing.*

Where a crew will race wearing clothing which is not uniform in length of sleeves or of leggings or is not uniform headwear under this Bye-law 2) a), they shall notify the President of the Jury in the case of International regattas and the World Rowing regatta office in the case of World Rowing Events before the Draw, together with the reasons for such non-uniformity. In such cases, the colour of sleeves and legwear within the crew shall be uniform. The colour of headwear shall be uniform within the crew as far as the different designs permit.

This new provision allows for athletes within a crew to wear different length of arm coverings or legwear when there is a specific reason such as a religious basis or medical reason. But there are conditions placed on the allowances.

- If more than one person in a crew is wearing longer arm or leg coverings, the athletes wearing the longer arm and leg covering must be uniform and match.
- Where World Rowing requires that the athletes wear a World Rowing undershirt, the World Rowing Undershirt must be visible and not covered by the longer arm coverings.
- The longer arm and leg coverings must meet the World Rowing requirements for identification. They do not provide for additional opportunities for new sponsor or national federation logos or marks.
- Headwear worn for religious reasons maybe different between the athletes as required by their religion but those not wearing religious headwear must meet the normal headwear rule.

- Prior to the beginning of racing, the crew must notify World Rowing, or for international regattas the President of the Jury, that the crew will be racing in non-uniform arm coverings, leg coverings or religious headwear. This allows for the Jury to be aware of the variances.

Returning to the example that we began with, in 2023 the crew is allowed to race with the differences in arm and leg coverings and the religious headwear provided that other requirements are met.

Para-Rowing Strapping

In the event of a Para Rower capsizes, one of the challenges for rescue personnel is to release the straps that maybe holding a rower in the boat. But how many straps and which side they open are two of the major problems confronting a rescuer. Not know this information can delay the rescue.

As a practical solution, World Rowing is introducing a program this year to provide a practical solution to this problem. While it is currently voluntary, it may become mandatory in the future.

Para athletes who have straps (mainly PR1 and PR2) are asked to put bright colored tape on the riggers of their boat on the side that that the straps open. There should be one ring of tape for each strap that the athlete has holding them in the boat.

This simple step can provide a rescue person with a quick indication of how many straps they need to release and which side of the boat or athlete the straps will be located. In the case of an emergency this can save precious time in getting an athlete to safety.

An additional step to aid in rescue is to have different color on the strap at the point where the straps release. This also provides a quick reference for a rescuer.

Please note that the regulations have tightened this year with regards to athletes wearing the required straps. If an athlete rows a race without the required straps attached, the athlete can be relegated to last place in that race. Racing a second time without the required strapping will result in exclusion of the crew.

In order to ensure that crews race with the required straps attached, not only the control commission can check the strapping, but the Starter and the Umpire can also ask a crew to show that their strapping is attached.