

The duties of the Referee are on the U.S. Rowing website in the rules of rowing (<http://www.usrowing.org/About/RulesofRowing.aspx>). It is daunting to read the entire document, so here is a synopsis.

Basically, a referee candidate will assist a Referee at several different positions. At most Regattas, the Referees and candidates will shift to a different position following a break (this will depend on the length of the Regatta and the number of Referees). Basically, there are 4 positions.

Control Commission

Start

Finish

Referee

The Control Commission is responsible for weighing rowers, checking equipment, making sure boats launch on time. They are often assisted by members of the Local Organizing Committee (LOC).

The Referees at the start make sure that the boats are aligned correctly, and that the race is started fairly. There are several positions at the start (Starter, Aligner, Marshall) and a candidate will assist several different positions. Most of the time the LOC will provide stake boat holders that hold the boats in alignment.

The Referees at the finish (primarily the Chief Judge) are responsible for capturing the Order of Finish and Times. The Finish is also staffed by LOC members. A Referee Candidate usually serves as an assistant to the Chief Judge and helps to determine the correct order of finish and times.

The Referee's follow the boats as they row down the race course. A Referee is usually responsible for several boats. They observe the boats and use a series of voice commands and flags to help the coxswains steer the boats and prevent boats from running into each other or obstacles on the race course. This is a great place to watch a race from, and many Referees will try to get parents into launches following their rower's boat. The LOC provides launch drivers for the Referees so that they can concentrate on watching the boats. Occasionally, Referees will have to pull rowers out of the water or assist a rower in distress.

Being a Referee candidate offers a rower's parent a unique perspective on a regatta that cannot be achieved flipping burgers or launching boats. It is an excellent endeavor for the parent of a graduated rower, a former rower or an older sibling to remain involved in rowing.