

2007 SSA Rules Committee Meeting Minutes

Houston TX
November 11th 2007

In attendance:

UH Hank Nixon
A Dave Cole
2XX Dave Mockler
927 Garret Willat
KM Ken Sorenson
X John Good (volunteer)

Election of officers and committee assignments:

RC chair: A
Secretary: 927
Poll: 2XX
Rules Change Summary: UH
Rules writer: X
Pilot Ranking List: John Leibacher
Poll posting Aland Adams
Handicap- A, (need another helper) process of ranking based on another sailplane. Need data and help (Fred Winter was recommended and X will contact)

Schedule:

11/27 Minutes to committee 927
12/4 Draft Rule changes distributed to committee X
12/11 Rules change explanation distributed to committee UH
12/15 Committee responses due back
 Publish our minutes on SSA/SRA websites
12/22 Publish our rules change summary on SSA/SRA websites
01/15 Blue book cutoff date
2007 Pilot Poll
 10/21 closes
 9/27 poll questions to Aland
 9/1 draft poll complete 2XX
 8/22 poll questions to 2XX
 7/14 and 6/14 magazine announcement (Aug and Sept. Issues)

1, 2, 3) Entry Fees: Remde, 927 and Compton email

Discussed the issue of lost revenue to a commercial operation and increase to contest fees. There were questions raised regarding the additional \$25 increase, this was to cover club fees which apply to all pilots at the site. It was agreed that organizers should be able to make a modest profit, however the cost structure does not expect to cover loss from commercial operations.

Basic funding structure is based on the premise that contests are run by volunteers. Looking at contest financials from New Castle and Mifflin there is an ability to make a profit, however their “secrets” need to be taught to others.

- ? Current plan is to have a “site development and site selection committee” which will publish documents for organizers on how to make a successful contest.
- ? There is also a search for a small group of 3 (CD, scorer, chief towpilot), to go to new sites and help a CM and others organize successful contest.
- ? There is also a look into a national fee structure for (off gliderport) a site related fee.

Tow fee increased from \$44 to \$48

Variable:

Regional: \$200 entry fee

National: \$300 entry fee

Fixed:

Regional: \$ 390, 5 day; \$430, 6 day; \$470, 7 day

National: \$ 685, 10day

Entry fees and tow fees were adjusted to follow inflation and fuel costs and in response to requests from organizers.

4) Issue on Tow pilot providing proof of insurance. DB/UH

Discussed the impact of tow planes being used for hire without the proper insurance. It was decided that they must show the insurance required for towing for hire. This change is to help protect the contest organizers. This was brought to us by organizers with concerns that some tow pilots were not covered, and feared they may become responsible.

- ? Tow pilots must show a proof of liability insurance for hire to the organizer.

This is a new requirement in the rules. We will adjust contest fees if necessary to keep an adequate pool of tow pilots if the cost of this becomes a problem for the tow pilots.

5) Buckley comments.

Included as agenda item, but comments not received before meeting.

- ? No discussion

6) Add SRA contribution line onto the contest registration form. KS email

Currently we do not find it prudent to send donations to the SRA through the SSA, at this time.

- ? No change

7) How to get organizers to send in fees and paperwork to SSA in a timely manner.

Discussed the impact of the amount of paperwork that must be filed to SSA office. We were trying to devise a way to get organizers to be encouraged to send in paperwork and money to the SSA office. However every way would require more work to be done by the SSA office staff. At this time we are trying to reduce the time the SSA office staff is required to work on contest related material. There may be a better way later as the SRA begins to grow again. There is a new registration form being produced contests use small area at bottom (pilot license number, name, n-number, insurance, SSA number) This will be 1 page vs 2 previously required with waiver attached. There will also be a sanction fee worksheet, because of fee confusion from organizers. Scores can be found on the SSA website and do not have to be sent to SSA paper form. Flight Logs are also provided online. Financial statement will also need to be sent in. Changes are also going to be made to the Contest manager and accident incident report forms. Article for *SOARING* required for nationals, just recommended for regionals. SSA sanction form will retain a line for the article author in order to encourage a magazine article.

- ? Produce a better more efficient registration form
- ? Sanction fee worksheet for organizers
- ? Eliminate need for scores and flight logs to be sent to SSA office
- ? Contest manager and accident incident report forms changed.
- ? Magazine requirements changed
- ? We are also looking at filling in a new position a “Contest Organization Organizer” this person will not be held by an SSA staff employee and they will oversee contest organizers before and after contests to help keep them on their deadlines and paperwork.
- ? Eliminates need to send in registration form to SSA 13.3.2.1
- ? Eliminate flight logs need to send into SSA. 13.3.2.4

8) ALL launches must turn in a log.

This is no change in philosophy, but wording, housekeeping for X. This includes a relight. Possibly someone goes out has an airspace clearance violation, and then comes back for a relight. Currently they would not have to turn in their first flight log.

9 and 10) Review of section 13 of rules objective of reducing paperwork and associated workload with SSA Hobbs office at the request of the SSA Chairman

Discussed from earlier the need to reduce SSA office staff involvement, this hopefully will start the spark in the SRA involvement which will begin to host paperwork. Online registration is going to be no longer offered because currently there is no way for online payment, this function is time consuming and not necessary because other paperwork must be mailed. Sanction fee will be discussed at a later time. The SRA could hold money to encourage contest organizers to turn in paperwork in a timely manner. Registration form will be changed to 1 page and have no signatures required and mail with deposit check. Owner of sailplane will be included onto waiver consent form.

- ? Rewording of rules to require registration form and deposit required to be sent in for registration.
- ? Eliminate online registration. [Subsequent to the Rules Committee meeting, we learned of efforts by Doug Easton to retain and improve the on-line registration process. The SSA

Chair accepted Doug's initiative, and the plans discussed above to disable that system have been tabled.]

? See 7)

11 and 12) Duration of Nationals change. Cochrane email and poll comment

Discussed the idea of changing from the current 10 day to a 7 day national. This will be asked as next years poll question to see opinions of other pilots. Currently we do not see a valid reason for the change other than allowing pilots to fit into their vacation schedules better. This is a valid argument; however this shorter period makes it more difficult to choose a national champion, because of the possibility of fewer flying days. There is also the issue with driving across the country for fewer flying days.

? No change

13) Pairing of Nationals. Cochrane email, KM

Headline news: Open class is filing for divorce. Change Open class nationals to be combined with Standard Class Nationals. 18meter nationals is large enough to be self sufficient.

Opens/Standards and 18meter on opposite side of rotation. 18 meter pilots commented that they would prefer having the ability to fly both classes. Having them apart will give the ability for pilot not wanting to trek across the country to fly a closer venue.

? Opens/Standard Nationals combined and 18-M Nationals separate starting 2008.

14) Guest pilots (no ranking) and "foreign" (ranking), cannot be called both guests. KS email.

Discussed that a wording change was needed, foreign pilots are changed on score sheet and counted as guests. Foreign pilots cannot get more than 100 for pilot ranking.

? Foreign pilots are considered as guests

15) Rule to allow a sponsor's exemption to preferential entry. RC allowed this type of exemption for Mifflin last year. A email.

Discussed if it fair for an organizer to have an exemption to the preferential entry, we felt it was under certain circumstances. This is to be used at organizers discretion to benefit pilots who are very encouraging and have contributed greatly to that organization. This allows a pilot who may not have the pilot ranking to enter the contest and fly. In addition to number of preferential entry organizers can add 2 glider slots, but cannot exceed 65. This was tried last year with no complaints.

? Rule added to allow 2 glider slots to be added by organizers to help pilots who contribute greatly to an organization.

16) Team entries. Kuhlke email.

Discussed that the wording was still not accurate for actual team entries in rules. 2 seaters can be considered a team. Example: Willat/Robison flying a Nimbus 3dm, ranking is based on Willat/Robison, Willat's ranking has not changed prior to or after that contest. Robison's ranking has not changed prior to or after that contest.

- ? Rewording of rule to accurately portray a team in a 2place ship

17) Clean up shared/team entrants. Email KS

Wording will be changed, shared glider refers to 2 pilots and 1 glider. Team flying will be done in a 2 seater.

- ? Rewording of rules regarding shared and team entrants

18) Rookie entries. Hudson/Skydell email

Discussed the ideas presented regarding 1st timers coming into a contest. CD guide will encourage recognizing and awarding outstanding new pilots. Buddy system will also be encouraged. Having a rookie pilot mark their glider is not necessary. UH is going over this topic at the SSA convention. Pilots are encouraged to attend US Team sponsored soaring camps, as they are tailored for this type of pilot. Regional contests can provide additional informal support and recognition of rookies. Section 7 of the rules will be changed to recommend recognition of outstanding new pilots.

- ? CD guide additions
- ? Update the SRA guide.

19) Minimum number of entries for valid contest. 927 email

With the split-up of 18meter and Open class nationals this should help the participation level at the Open Class Nationals.

20) 850kg max weight-Open class

Discussed the impact it could make on an already shrinking class. At this time no pure glider is allowed to fly at 850kg. This would be unfair to pure gliders, however as discussed last year 2 seat motor gliders can be wavered to fly up to 850kg. A change to allow everyone to 850kg would not increase participation.

- ? Waivers for 2 seat motor gliders to fly over 750kg

21) Limited handicap in Open Class. Northcraft email

Discussed and was remembered that it was tried in the late 90's, was not appreciated and disappeared. This becomes a problem with wing loading and places like Uvalde and Hobbs.

- ? No change

22) No water day decided by CD. KS email

Discussed concept of having this rule, having all pilots unanimously agree is time consuming and difficult if trying to get in a task in a short weak weather window. Conditions make it hard for big unloading, pilots always have the option of not flying with water. Many pilots use this as a tactic, which is used in the Worlds. Nationals there is no change because they decide who flies in the Worlds, however in regionals the CD will be able to decide if the day is to a no water day.

- ? Nationals no change
- ? Regionals, a CD has authority to declare a no water day.

23) In flight weather data access. KM

Discussed the problems of policing because of the ease of these units and pocket sizes. They are still expensive and we feel that they would be a requirement to place well, by allowing an unfair advantage over those that do not have them. The penalty for being caught with one of these instruments in unsportsmanlike conduct.

? No change

24) Open class weights vs allowable glider weight for Schweizer tow hooks. KM

Gliders and tow planes must fly within their design limits.

25) 6.7.3 refers to IGC secure loggers. Look at rule change to allow un-secure loggers. KM

Discussed the cost of a Garmin capable GPS is under \$150. The file stored on the GPS cannot be tampered with; yes it could be after it is downloaded. However the scorer has the ability to require a second download from the GPS device. If the file is tampered with on the PDA, it is useless to be downloaded again, because the corrupted file will be downloaded again.

? No change

26) Point of exit start. Poll comment

Discussed the idea of having the distance start at the point of exit. This was brought up to spread out pilots starting from the closest edge to the next turn. However it really doesn't spread out the start, it just moves the congestion to a better thermal. On a weak day it moves people to the more preferred start which can now be farther away from home and pilots are unable to make it home. This has been looked into by many people and similar to a large start line there still is an optimum point to start. One must remember that glider pilots are like sheep, the optimum start point is the thermal being marked by KS.

? No change

27) "1 hour start" poll comment

The last time this was used was the year I was born 1981, and it was changed to our current system to make things fairer. There is no push from racing pilots who used the old system that they would like to return to the "old" system. The older system gave an unfair advantage to the pilots who launched first if the day is dying. However if you prefer this system we encourage you to fly the 1-26 nationals. It is to our best knowledge the only national contest that uses this start.

? No change

28) Eliminate MAT in favor of TAT only. Sheppe and 2XX email.

the polls did not show support in eliminating the MAT task.

? No change

29) Mixing of finishes in Regionals. Poll comment

Discussed changing the current rule of allowing the CD to use discretion on what finishes he/she chooses to use. This was discussed heavily at the last RC meeting, SRA meetings, etc. We feel that both finishes should be able to be used, and left to the CD. If done properly traffic can be

easily avoided and separated. At Region 12 there was a control point set up to align all finishers to come home from the same direction the FAI classes had a line and Sports class had a 1mile circle. The 1mile finish was situated that the traffic would flow into the traffic finishing from the line.

? No change

30 and 31) Revised scoring system to closer support IGC rules of points allocated between speed and distance. Poll question

There is a strong support shown by the poll for a change that closely resembles the IGC rules. Hopefully you read John Good's report on this for the poll. The overall goal is to reduce the impact of a landout on your score. Currently 400 points goes towards distance and 600 towards speed, now 600 points will be towards distance and 400 to speed. The only difference in points is to someone who landouts, everyone that makes it home will see little difference. Someone that landouts just short of the runway will have a lower point reduction in the new system. This is a major change and will be on a trail basis at Regionals in 2007 and if accepted changed in 2008 for Nationals.

? Scoring formula change 600 points for distance, 400 points for distance

32) Rescoring of a day with "glitch" in scoring program. Murray email.

Discussed the issue of re-scoring an already official day or contest. The decisions made last year determined that if the day has become official, it is official. This in a few very rare situations may seem to be unfair. However ample time is given to competitors to determine if any "glitches" can be found. The scoring program has fixed the "glitch" in reference, but the rule remains unchanged because of having a valid contest within a designated time.

? No change

33 and 34) Actual time scoring of a pilot flying a TAT at or near max distance and home under time, devaluation of a flight suggested above. Poll question

Poll was not in favor of any change. However the CD guide will be written to encourage a longer task incase someone is able to "smoke" the course. Currently the max should sustain a flight of 1.3 of the fastest projected speed. We feel that this is a problem with tasking, not a rule.

? No rule change

? CD guide edit

35) Clarify rules about flight log security. Poll comment

Rules are clear; author knowingly makes questionable comment, which is in fact not true. Cambridge Aero Explorer does not "make" a secure file.

? No change

36) "Winner" defined post-penalty for scoring. Cochrane email

The philosophy is that person did go fastest. X will talk to Guy Byars to look into effective way to implement into scoring program. Currently we have not found a better way, but will look into other options. The only way stated as a case would be a minor airspace clearance violation, any

minor airspace clearance violation results in a 0 for the day and additional 100point penalty. X is going to look into all cases and see if there is a way to get a penalty and change the outcome of others scores. However we think that the case in topic was the only way possible for that to happen, which was a start from the wrong cylinder.

- ? Review to see possible changes in scoring program
- ? No change in rules

37) Task Claim Form Penalty. Woodhead email

Appendix was not up to date and we are deleting the reference.

38) Should the definition of unsportsmanlike conduct be broadened to include anti-social behavior? KM

Discussed the idea of having anti-social behavior to be included in unsportsmanlike conduct. This is not an area of people's social lives that we would care to get involved in, nor do we want to write a rule to include ourselves in such disputes. The organization has a better control and is at the situation, whereas the RC is typically many states away. An organization always has the right to refuse a towing because a person is unsafe. IMSAFE (Illness, Medication, Stress, Alcohol, Fatigue, Eating). This is a rare enough occurrence that there is no reason for a change in the rules.

- ? No change

39) Should we seed Club class team from those flying gliders with handicap range of club class? Mifflin SRA meeting

This does not pertain to the RC however, we do have our own opinions, but they do not matter on the topic. The US Team committee decides this.

- ? Outside of our power

40) Adjust handicap of glider up and down based upon reference weight vs flight weight. 55/A/UH

Discussed some of the flaws of the handicap using the reference weight. The old system is somewhat flawed in the fact that someone flying over the reference weight would get a change in their handicap, however someone flying under that weight was not getting a weight adjustment, which could be close to 100lbs. This new weight adjustment will adjust for all weights not at the reference weight. This new change will make handicapping more consistent between models of gliders. Organizers will need to prepare that all pilots flying Sports class will be using their flying weight.

- ? Handicap adjustments will be made for any weight outside the reference weight

41) Revise Sports Class regional seeding. Poll question

This makes it fair for everyone since a sports class regional would seed pilot to fly in the sports class nationals. 92 ranking now is on par with the FAI classes.

- ? Ranking for all regionals is 92

42) Recognize Club Class Champion within Sports. UH

There will be an addition in the awards section for a club class glider competing within the sports class. This is to help encourage Club class gliders to compete in the Sports Class Nationals. This will tie in with the US Team committee's definition of Club Class.

? Award for highest competing Club Class glider

43) Disallow 2 pilots in 2-place gliders. Charchian email

Discussed the fairness of having 2 pilots in a 2-seat glider. 2 place gliders is not new, and the arguments provided are valid and 2 pilots discussing in the cockpit can be a very strong team. However the benefits of having pilots introduced into competition greatly out way the argument. However view item 16), we feel that the clarification on the Pilot Ranking List settles argument for a pilot to hire another pilot to increase his score.

? No change

44) 2-place glider US Team ranking. Franke email

US Team committee issue, our views do not go very far since it is not our decision. However with the rule change of 2 place ships used as a team, with a team ranking might settle some fires.

? Outside of our power

45) Handicapping- European vs US vs OLC handicaps. Include annual publication date on our Rules schedule. KM

Discussed whose handicap was the best, since many countries have their own, it is ruled that nobodies is perfect. After looking at handicaps we feel that ours is more detailed than any other current handicap available. We also understand that it is not perfect and there are constant adjustments being made. What we would really like is a volunteer, who can analyze the differences between the DAeC, UK, and US. February 15 will be the next publishing change to the handicap list which can be found on the SRA website.

? No change

? Looking volunteer to analyze different handicaps

46) Revisit 9# wing loaded in Standard Class. Poll question

. Poll does not suggest any reason for a change.

? No change

47) Eliminate 5.4.2.1.5 KS

? done for nationals

48) RE: FAI rule 11.2.2.2: Shouldn't the link to rule 11.2.2.8 read 11.2.2.7? Woodhead email

? X doing edit

49) 12.1.4.3 Now reads Start Penalty (Rule 10.8.5.6):penalty = 25+ sum of the following. It should read start penalty (rule 10.8.5.6): penalty = sum of the following. This wording changes makes the wording match what Winscore has been doing, and what was intended

? X doing edit fix, but in reality 25 point penalty is the minimum

50) 11.2.2 Task Evaluation. For a MAT, we inadvertently dropped from the 2006 Rues that the pilot has to tell the scorer which turnpoints he/she was headed for if a landout occurs. They still have to use the landing card (task claim form) to tell the scorer where they were headed when they hit the dirt.

? X doing edit fix

51) A10.12.4 The Worldwide Soaring Turnpoint Exchange server contains access links to official FFA special use airspace data.” Woodhead email

? X doing fix FAA should be used in place of FFA, different organization.

52) Airspace restriction: SUA file vs. Sectional vs. CD instructions. Set priorities. KM, Northcraft

Discussed the issue if a .sua file provided by the organizers was flawed, then what is the correct way of determining the real boundaries of controlled airspace. We feel that the only right thing to do to resolve a discrepancy is use an official FAA airspace documentation. This is brought up with ideas coming from Hobbs 2006, what if an organizer supplied a flawed .sua file. What would be the correct airspace. Should a pilot be penalized because the organizers .sua file was inaccurate, i.e. missing a restricted airspace. Uvalde, Hobbs, Warner Springs do not show Mexican boarder and current rules do not prohibit that airspace, however flights over the boarder are forbidden.

? Official FAA airspace documentation take precedence over a flawed .sua file during a discrepancy

? Mexican boarder must be added to several .sua files

John Goods housekeeping

Need to adjust wording to include Mexican boarder into rules for forbidden airspace. Also work with Liabacher into creating the boarder into the .sua files.

When the organizers gets a TFR NOTAM briefing they will need to tell the briefer that the information will be used in a “pilots meeting” for x amount of sailplanes flying at a soaring contest.

Rule 2.0 NAA- confusion on wording, as to what the NAA does, but the fact that they give us the authority. The wording change is going to include “under authority”, no change in practical sense.

Standard Class glider (appendix) will be changed in definition to align with FAI definition of Standard Class.

10.2.1. Deleting idea of telling who their partner is for critically assembly check.

10.6.6.1 Grid will be selected “at random” rather than “by random drawing”

Sniffer edits

Change to add additional rule change for self-launcher

10.9.2 CD guide should

10.10.2.4 delete to many problems with labeling crew

10.10.2.5 reference to motor glider in allowing self-retrieve

10. Tasks should be set to avoid flight through areas of high density traffic.

11.6 eliminate due to lack of interest

12.1.2 does not cover guest because they are not a regular entrant

12.2.5.4 obsolete rule

Clean up on effects of interrupted flight logs, no change in our intent.