

2010 SSA Pilot Opinion Poll Results

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ALL text responses (no suppression) are listed below. The **View and suppress text responses for question:** selector on the author page may be used to suppress any inappropriate text responses so that offensive language or direct references can be eliminated from a published report. Current suppressed text is presented in red.

Answers to value response questions.

No responsive questions of this type were found.

Answers to short responsive questions.

No responsive questions of this type were found.

Answers to medium responsive questions.

No responsive questions of this type were found.

Answers to long responsive questions.

: Other comments:

...but the bigger problem is getting CDs to call the safety finish in the first place.

1. We should revisit the calculation of safety finish criteria for cylinder finishes. Although simple in concept (200/mi to the edge of the bottom of the cylinder), in practice this is too complex. Just look at how complicated the drawing is compared to the line finish case. 2. We should think about publishing guidelines for finish type (cylinder only) and min altitude/radius when a contest is being held at a site where the field is not closed to other traffic during the finish period. The need is to ensure smooth integration with non-contest traffic in the pattern.

2-- I support 3 day National minimum but do not think it should be devalued. The question really should have been framed so that this option could have been selected. I also think 3 day contests should be required to have 3 1000 pt. days.

5c Allow CD the freedom to make any change to the finish, in a serious safety situation.

A Safety Finish should be defined as whatever it take to allow pilots to land safely. Setting a radius should be completely up to the CD and should be based on the distance required to allow a safe landing outside of the storm area. In some cases this might be the distance from the finish point to the next airport, whereas in areas with good outlanding options but few airports another distance might be chosen. This distance should be set at the beginning of the contest, if possible, but there should be freedom to make a new decision on the fly.

A bigger issue by far is the failure of most pilots to understand what a safety finish is in the first place (see my comments on the complex (an d voluminous) US Rules below) compounded by the failure of CDs to call one when needed.

Allow CD to state a radius as large as is needed.

Allow the increased finish area but add time and distance flown to put the finish at normal point. Add time for the additional distance using the achieved speed of the pilot less 10 percent, thus making it better to fly home if possible.

Allow up to 20 miles. The day is a crap shoot anyway you want to define it. Let luck be an accepted part of the contest equation. It belongs in a highly luck prone sport.

As long as everyone is considered to have finished at the 10 mile radius.

Bottom of finish cone needs to be higher to make it provide true safety. 5 miles out at 1000 feet is a reasonable glide thru a finish gate final glide. Doesnt leave you much altitude to get back out of there and find a safer place to land. Some have said You dont have to come in just above the finish cone, but these are competition pilots and we know that even with a safety finish, the truly competitive are NOT going to throw away altitude by getting to the safety finish boundary 2000 feet above it so they can glide out of the danger zone. First step would be to set the center point of the cone not less than the minimum finish altitude (if using a cylinder), or 1000 feet if using a gate. Adjust finish point to be where you enter the safety finish cylinder, and get rid of the glide to the finish assumed at 60 MPH.

CD needs to have final call on safety. He/she should select the minimum radius consistent with providing a safe alternative.

CDs judgement

Change rule to ten miles.

Eliminate the safety finish rule.

I believe that if were really trying to be safe, the last turnpoint should be declared the finish (with appropriate adjustment to the cylinder) by the CD and pilots be encouraged to land at the most suitable field/airport. Ive seen some thunderstorms that I dont want to get within 20 NM of.

I dont think a radius is needed. If you are above the glide slope that you have determined, then you should be able to decide where you wish to land away from the storm. Some storms are so big that 10 miles isnt enough.

I have never been at a contest where a safety finish was called. Five miles seems fine.

I think pilots have always another option. Wait somewhere until storm passes or land out. This is no different than dealing with storms in the middle of the task.

I think safety finish radius should be CD determined (wx dependent) up to 10 miles.

I would be in favor of increasing the cylinder radius as long as the finish height slope remains at a 200 per mile for whatever the distance the Safety Finish Cylinder is extended to. The last thing you would want to do is encourage people to and in bad weather just to achieve a better score.

I would favor keeping the 5 mile safety finish as is, as long as the RC actively promotes the use of FLARM to help keep the smaller radius safe.

If this is a weather based decision, and the weather is so bad that lives can be put in jeopardy, the task should be canceled. Thinking that another 5 miles will cure the problem seems silly. The fact that its a contest should not cloud ones better judgment.

Instead of only allowing CDs to change the finish radius, maybe give the CD an option to declare a new finish point (circle) along the course line home. The radius of that new finish point could be kept at 5 mi. This would keep the luck factor down since everyone should be coming back from the same direction (assuming were not flying a MAT). Or just allow the CD to use pre-existing turnpoints/start points as the new finish cylinder if that has to be audibled for weather. I think opening it to 10 miles is also acceptable.

Itll be hard for the CD to know the weather out to 10 miles, if its bad within 5 miles already. Perhaps alternate finish points should be briefed if severe WX thought to be likely, and activated as needed?

Keep 5 mile, 10 makes a mockery of a race. Encourage CD to call off the day if its that bad. We should not be rewarding tornado-dodging with points.

Keep the 5 mile finish as the standard. Incorporate a CD authority to designate a specific airport for safety finish which may be more than 5 miles distance. This helps not only keep pilots safe but gives advance notice to retrieve tows and crews. Finish tracking should be no problem since contests use gps.

Minimum radius of 5 miles with a maximum of 10 miles at the CDs discretion.

Please make the safety finish as simple as possible, something that you can easily do in your head in a thunderstorm. 200 feet per mile = 10 miles = 2,000 feet simple.

Powered Pilots are taught to stay 20 nm away from thunderstorms. If a storm is big enough to cover a 10 mile circle around the home airport, a 10 mile safety finish radius still breaks the 20 mile rule. The purpose of the safety finish is to keep the gliders away from a dangerous storm at the home airport. I think the CD should have the discretion to determine the appropriate radius given the conditions. But, the CD also needs to not wait until its too late. There have been several instances where gliders were coming in to land as the storms were out flowing - down drafts, wind shears, rain, lightning, etc.

Ref #4: At no time should a non-finisher receive as many or more points than a finisher. If this should become the case, we will have reverted to free distance tasks.

Remove the safety finish

Safety First, larger than 10 miles if needed, ok with me.

The CD deserves some flexibility to ensure we are creating a safer finish for all conditions.

The CD should be able to define any distance that s/he deems adequate. The CD is not on course and has limited ability to know exactly what area may be safe. Having the ability to define a large diameter finish area is needed. The pilots most likely cannot help either as they are typically far away from the finish area. Safety is key over all other factors.

The CD should have no limits on the radius or raise the limit to 25 miles.

The CD, with or without consultation with his task advisor(s), should be able to state any appropriate safety finish radius he deems appropriate for the safety of the day.

The contest director should have no limits to what he/she needs to call for a safety finish. Sometimes the weather is unpredictable and rapidly changing. If that max is a 30 mile turn area, that provides sufficient area for a very safe finish.

The finish is basically the last turnpoint of any task. There are no provisions but cancelling the day in case one turnpoint gets completely shut down by weather? Why treat the finish any different? No safety finish! The safe pilot doesn't fly into bad weather, may it be at turnpoint or finish. No CD can make any pilot safer.

The only fair and safe decision would be to cancel the task and insist all airborne competitors seek a safe landing option at another airport wherever possible. However we are also faced with the problem of producing a contest out of the available days. Another solution might be to declare a 20 mile finish line perpendicular to the last leg, i.e. last turnpoint to the finish line. Alternatively a finish area that is a 180 degree arc beyond the 20 mile finish line. Valid finish obtained by at least one point recorded within this area. Have not had time to think this through but at first glance both solutions seem to add the safety feature of a wider area and deal with the distance variations more equitably.

The problem with the safety finish is the time that the CD declares it. It introduces a variable into the task for which you cannot account. If you come back early to beat a storm and then the CD declares a safety finish you have given up points that you could have had by staying on task. By the same token I would not want to do away with the safety finish due to the increased margin of safety it provides. I do not have a good answer but I think that increasing the radius to 10 miles at the CDs discretion introduces too many variables.

These should be a rare occurrence but I support the idea of giving the CD the flexibility to make it work and still be safe. I would recommend that it either be 5 or 10 miles to limit confusion (which is abundant anyway) when a safety finish called.

To belabor the obvious : Allow the CD to cancel the task while it is progress for safety reasons!!!! (Since most of the tinkering with US in the last few years has been in the interests of safety, this possibility should have been instituted long ago.)

Use 5 Mile finish area in general, but give the contest director an option to increase it if deemed beneficial.

With a storm right over the airport 5 miles can be too close. Give the CD the ability to decide. With today's weather radar and web access to it almost everywhere the CD can make a good call and keep everyone from endangering themselves or their gliders.

You need to provide for some penalty if the area is or becomes landable after the safety finish has been implemented.

let the CD call as large a safety area as needed for SAFETY

6: Flarm

The Power-Flarm unit will be available in the US this winter. Flarm is an anti-collision device that many pilots have found quite useful in **EuFlarm**

rope, and the majority of European contest gliders are equipped with Flarm. Flarm includes a flight recorder that can be used in US contests and will drive your PDA or other computer. Power-Flarm also detects transponders and ADS-B equipped aircraft. However, Flarm will only be useful if a large fraction of the fleet at a contest are equipped with Flarm. For more information, see the [US Flarm website](#), especially the [FAQ](#) and the [simulation](#) of what the Parowan pilots would have seen with Flarm.

Though many pilots have suggested mandating Flarm, the RC believes that this step is at best premature. We also recognize that the right answer is different for different contests, i.e. 18 meter nationals vs. small sports regionals.

We have no specific survey questions for this year. However, we welcome your input on how aggressively to promote voluntary and coordinated Flarm use, and what practical steps you would welcome. Please comment below.

Flarm technology is here, why shouldn't we embrace it? I think to lose another friend in a mid air would be a terrible event. The RC needs to determine how best to implement Flarms in every competition event. To me this is priority #1. Either buy or rent one, no exceptions. There will be some complaining but there is always some anyway. Because of supply questions possibly implement it over 2 years, but do it that soon, no later. If you want to compete you'll do it. We all bought a GPS didn't we?

Flarm will only be useful if a large fraction of the fleet at a contest are equipped with Flarm. It's only useful if all gliders are equipped and that will only happen when it's mandated.

1. Review European experience thoroughly before rushing into any action. 2. Keep in mind Worlds in Uvalde in 2012 for compatibility for international pilots 3. pilot test (ie in the sense of sample) proposed course of action before large scale commitment. Perhaps try Nationals 2011 as a sample venue 4 I am in favor of some form of well thought out Flarm type implementation

?

Acceptance is the key. Promoting too aggressively will cause acceptance issues.

Against mandatory Flarm use at this point. Dale/Carmen Kramers FlarmFund is an excellent start.

Aggressive promotion - support Dale Kramers program to make rental units available. I have a Power Flarm on order.

Aggressively promote voluntary use. Allow Flarm equipped ships to enter contests late without penalty until over 50% of the fleet is equipped. Recognize the best Flarm equipped performance at the end of a contest if less than 60% of the fleet has a Flarm. Once about 30% of the fleet is flarm equipped require Flarms at national contests.

Aggressively pursue the implementation of Flarm. Its benefits are indisputable.

All for FLARM if it can be done without increasing all ready high entry fees. It should not be required unless

everyone can afford one at a reasonable cost. \$ 1700 is not reasonable for recreational pilots would like to fly contests, and who are income challenged. Adding mandatory FLARM to competitions would decrease contest interest, including myself. I believe the soaring community should be polled on this issue, and not decided by a handful of pilots.

Although Ive only been competing for 2 seasons, Ive already seen some close-calls, sometimes with one or both parties oblivious to the other traffic (especially when on ridges or close to terrain that can camouflage the profile of another aircraft). Although it is an expense, Power-Flarm seems like a really good idea to have in high-traffic environments like contests. I have seriously considered purchasing a number of these units in order to rent them to contest participants, to encourage adoption. If a unit is rented 3 - 4 times a season for about ~\$150 per contest, it would pay for itself over 3 - 4 seasons while also saving contest pilots money over buying one immediately (hopefully giving them a year or two to save up and buy their own after they witness the device in action).

As long as a contest can provide loaner units so everyone has the capability, it seems reasonable to require Flarm use.

At least one independent effort (Dale Kramer) is underway to create a pool of rental units for use at contests, funded by individual pilots. Perhaps the funds available to the committee from sanction fees could support (or at least dovetail with) this effort. The rules committee should strongly advocate and enable the adoption of Flarm in US contests. There are safety concerns related to the introduction of rental/loaner units: 1. We dont want pilots new to the unit trying to figure it out on the first contest day in gaggles. This is especially true in regionals with generally less experienced pilots. 2. Temporary placement of units may have problems with the transmitting antenna effectiveness or GPS antenna interference. This nullifies the value of the unit. How to do this in practice needs to be developed.

At this point, I believe the expense of FLARM is too large, especially for Sports Class competitors that are tr

Collision avoidance equipment is a good thing and my glider is equipped with a Zaon PCAS device. I can appreciate the argument for mandating equipment to speed development and adoption. However, I am adamantly against mandating any current system. There is still too much uncertainty concerning what the government may require and what technologies are going to be dominant. Id hate to spend a couple thousand on something that is only stop-gap (like my Zaon, at least it was cheap), regulated out of usefulness, or is quickly superseded by a newer tech.

Concur that the right answer is different for different contests.

Continue to encourage FLARM or other systems for collision avoidance and when a standard emerges then require it.

Dale Kramer seems to have an answer: www.FlarmFund.com Im OK with allowing contest organizers to mandate as in the case of ELT -- of the two pieces of equipment, FLARM might be the more useful. I intend to fly with PowerFLARM in 2011.

Definitely promote FLARM in the U.S., and I suggest it be mandated for Nationals starting in 2012.

Do all you can to encourage it, but dont mandate it. It has high penetration in Europe but they are not mandating it at contests (yet). It would be great if someone would lease some of these units in the next few years at various contests (e.g. nationals), and recoup their investment by selling them later on (unfortunately I dont have the resources to do it).

Do not agree with mandating Flarm. Agree with promoting voluntary and coordinated Flarm use. At this time, I do not know about about Flarm to decided to buy one or quit flying in Regional Contests. Please send a reprint of the Soaring article.

Dont get aggressive on this one, please. Our current US team members are to be commended for their concern and endorsement of flarm....but its getting a little Over the top in my opinion.

Encourage Flarm, with the intent of mandating it in future. Encourage transponders, possibly making it mandatory in high-risk areas like Reno NV.

Encourage its use where practical. We need to minimize the risk in this sport as much as possible. The age group

participating in soaring contests avoids risk when possible.

Even the inventor does not make FLARM mandatory. Keep it voluntary. The peer pressure deal will work just as it did with SPOT.

FLARM technologies will not certify and market the classic FLARM in the US. PowerFLARM is their only US product. As per information from FAQ only Power Flarm can be used in US. Expensive proposition. Classic Flarm is half price, portable, could be used in different gliders. Classic Flarm with Clearnav is very Powerful instrument. If we can introduce classic Flarm first then more pilots will go for it and in the future they will upgrade to Power Flarm. Flarm should be introduced for contests with more than 50 pilots and up not for FAI class with 25 or 25 pilots.

FLARM technology should be allowed to mature before we adopt those devices in contests.

Far too early to write an effective rule.

Flarm coding should incorporate open standards so that GA aircraft and airliners with similar equipment can interpret the data and locate the glider. I have a tough time supporting a mandate for equipment that the manufacturer has intentionally handicapped in order to maximize financial gain.

Flarm is an expensive choice if it is not widely used and accepted. I fly with a transponder and plan to buy a PCAS. The power flarm includes this feature. I personally would support power Flarm.

Flarm is just the beginning of coming devices. It may be premature to sign onto one manufacturer, however, it is obvious we need something as soon as possible. Europe likes Flarm.

Flarm is only effective if a sufficient number of sailplanes have it. The only way you can ensure 100% equipment is by rule/requirement. One option that should be explored is a contest rental program. With some seed money from SSF/SSA, we could secure several dozen FLARM units, that would be stand alone and installable in any aircraft. Eventually, just like a flight recorder, FLARM should be required equipment for all sailplanes participating in a contest.

Flarm is premature and does not offer sufficient warning information nor notification to other GA or Commercial aircraft. PowerFlarm looks to be much more promising, but is unproven in US airspace. No technology should be mandated that has not been thoroughly tested in the environment for which it is to be applied (US in this case). Anti-collision devices are valuable, and would likely have saved a life at the 15m Nats this past year. I think their use should be encouraged at this point in time.

Flarm is probably a good idea. Requiring Flarm is a really bad idea. If the feature /benefit/ cost set is so outstanding as claimed, then people will buy it. Let's watch to see how this develops and at what price.

Flarm should be made mandatory at contests. It is a safety item, much like the ELT. Anyone who has flown with flarm will agree, there is no reason not to have one - it drastically reduces the chance of mid-air collisions.

Flarm should be mandated for all contests for which there are units available for rent and purchase. Considering the low cost of the PowerFlarm unit and considering the high degree of success and proven effectiveness in Europe and considering the high degree of collision risk that is involved in racing without Flarm, to do otherwise would not be responsible. I left Uvalde after the day 2 collision in despair and intending at the time that I would not race again. There has been a collision at the last two contests that I've attended as well as my last two trips to Uvalde. Enough is enough -- please mandate Flarm so that there is not a preventable death in the upcoming race season. Ignore those who will fret about the cost. They can borrow or rent a unit if need be while saving money for later purchase. Unlike a safety device such as an ELT which impacts primarily the contestant himself, Flarm installation greatly impacts the safety of all other contestants. For that reason, mandating the installation is absolutely prudent and appropriate. This is THE occasion that those in authority must recognize the need for resolute action.

From comments of pilots that have flown with Flarm, the use of this device would greatly add to the safety at our contests. To have the added bonus of Power-Flarm also detecting transponder equipped traffic, makes this system superior, and (in my mind) well worth the extra money.

Get FAA to approve FLARM-equipped aircraft overflying class B/C airspace!

Give it some time. Encourage it, don't mandate it because they are still pricey. Can the SSA afford some as loaner

units at contests? Maybe a possibility if we end up mandating at a later date. Or club/organization that hosts must provide 1 or 2 FLARM units.

Highly recommend, but don't mandate PowerFLARM for at least 3 years. Then, for national contests, mandate PowerFLARM. Regional contests would be exempt from this ruling. I don't believe this will impact the core contest pilots in the FAI classes. Attendance is low in open / standard and is almost at the point of not doing a contest (organizers losing significant money). Regarding sports class, this may remove some from attending, but this would be acceptable in my opinion. Serious pilots will attend. Parowan this year had some very dicey days that funneled many into a corridor because of the task setting. PowerFLARM would have helped, but removing out and return legs by the CD would do a great deal more.

I agree that it is premature to mandate Flarm. After we see how the availability and voluntary adoption of Flarm goes in 2011, then we can intelligently discuss whether or not to make it mandatory.

I agree with the RC completely. PowerFlarm is not even commercially available yet, let alone proven to work well in the field and hence there are no statistics yet that prove it improves safety in a significant manner. I think these units are also far too expensive to mandate. I also do not agree with proposals to mandate them if they are available for rental. I believe the RC should always lean away from policies that increase the cost, equipment requirements and hassle of contest flying and focus on policies to improve accessibility and participation. I believe mandating flarm will drive some people away from contests and create factions of pilots who like to stay on the cutting edge of equipment vs. those who prefer to keep soaring simple and affordable and adopt technologies only once they've been proven and their cost has gone down.

I agree with the premature opinion. It shows great promise, but mandating it at this point would be a bit severe. Will transponders become mandated by the FAA? Still too early to tell...

I agree, that mandating FLARM is at best premature. I also agree that the right answer is different for different contests, i.e. 18 meter nationals vs. small sports regionals.

I already have my order in for the PowerFlarm and will use it at all times. I actively promote the rapid installation for this technology in all XC and contest aircraft. Having flown TCAS equipped aircraft for many years I understand the value and that it is not the distraction in the cockpit that many fear. I would like the contest committee to be fairly aggressive in promoting the use of Flarm equipment in US contests.

I am on the list to purchase PowerFLARM. A few days after the Parowan midair, I nearly had one myself on a 15,000msl converging course with another glider. Through pure luck, I looked over my shoulder and was able to severely pitch down to avoid the impact (will post IGC files on gliderpilot.org). Ultimately I believe the PowerFLARM device should be mandatory for contest flying like having a parachute. Five years ago, my old parachute suddenly could not be re-packed. Without hesitation, I wrote a check for \$1800 to replace it for the coming season. Most contest pilots would do the same if PowerFLARM were mandated. Considering the economy right now... I would not make it mandatory, but would strongly encourage usage at contests. Perhaps leasing them or group buy idea could be used to bring it to everyone at large contests.

I am opposed to rushing a MIRA rule into effect for 2011. I would like the use of FLARM to be encouraged. I would like to see rentals available. I would like all pilots to declare whether they will use FLARM or not at contest entry. I would like FLARM users to be identified on any on line contest entrant list. Let's evaluate FLARM during 2011 and see how many voluntarily adopt it. Peer pressure may prove far more effective than a poorly constructed MIRA rule. Don't forget that US FLARM is not available yet and the projected availability date has already slipped a year in the past year.

I am personally very interested in Flarm after my midair collision at the 15 meter nationals. I would welcome a mandate for its use in all sanctioned competitions. With the use of the FlarmFund there will be Flarms available for rent at the competitions for those that don't already own one. So, I do not believe that it would limit the number of contestants because of price in these competitions.

I believe that FLARM has the potential to be a significant improvement in safety in part because it would allow us to see power traffic better. I do think that FLARM should be mandated for contests for two reasons - it would probably improve the safety of the competitors because they'll be warned of potential conflicts but it might also help us to reduce the potential for conflict with powered airplanes. It could only take one general aviation aircraft to collide with a competitor to provoke the question as to why a large density of invisible aircraft are flying around. Flarm might not make us more visible to other airspace users but at least it allows us to see conflicts

better.

I believe that FLARM is good technology and should be mandated in all competition. A midair can ruin your whole day and puts quite a damper on everybody else's day too. Yes it is expensive, but FLARM will still be a very small portion of our overall investment to go to a contest.

I believe that FLARM should be encouraged for all soaring. It is an individual decision, but I see collision avoidance as an important addition to safety of flight. Because power flarm will help in the busy airspace where I fly, I have made the decision to equip my glider with Power FLarm - I am just as worried about the airliner or 172 that I don't see as I am the glider I don't see. I hope that most pilots see the value in adding this device to our cockpits, and will.

I believe that many contest pilots will begin to adopt PowerFLARM regardless of the SSA position. Therefore it would be a good idea for the SSA to get going on voluntary use of the technology. However, as noted it is only good if everyone has the device. However, I see a problem coming if they are mandated for all contests. While I do not have a solution, I would favor thinking this through carefully. The PowerFLARMS are expensive enough that some solutions - e.g. buying a set of 40 and shipping them to contest sites - is probably not going to work well. One possible plan would be have the SSA provide some smaller number of them for trial use at contests with the expectation that they would be enthusiastically adopted once people saw the benefit first hand. The demo units could then be sold to pilots and most all of the money spent would go back in the treasury.

I don't race enough to warrant buying a FLARM. If available for rent I would use it. I have used FLARM in New Zealand and found it effective. For flying in the states, I would buy a transponder before I would buy a FLARM, because FLARM will do nothing to improve collision avoidance with the majority of traffic I encounter.

I favor mandating compatible anti-collision devices for contests as soon as they are readily commercially available. Since Flarm has the best (and proprietary) software for soaring applications, this may mean that there is only one supplier. Not an ideal situation, but better than the present one.

I feel that powerflarm would be the way to go and that it be highly recommended and become mandatory over some period of time similar to what was done for gps traces versus film.

I have flown over 150 hours with Classic Flarm in South Africa. It is a useful tool but not the holy grail some claim. If different Flarms are using different software versions - they do not communicate. Also, the flimsy mini SD cards are not sufficiently robust for daily contest use. Power flarm is too new and will need beta testing and software revisions before it can be mandatory.

I like Flarm, I have used it at 2 WGC, 1 Pribina Cup

I like PowerFLARM as I normally fly near a large metro airspace. So having all alerts is beneficial. Mandating it would be debated because of the cost, although we mandate the expense of owning a parachute. A cost reduction solution for PowerFLARM is to encourage the manufacturer to market PF to both powered pilots and glider pilots. Expanding the U.S. market would increase sales and encourage a price reduction for unit. Since collision avoidance is in the best interest of the FAA, government support for the unit should be forthcoming. Lastly, expanding the education on the product is important to help persuade purchasing one. But reducing the price (like SPOT) would more easily move the masses.

I like the idea of MIRA (Mandatory If Rentals Available) for the 2011 season. Allow the organizers to decide, just like you let them decide on ELTs. I have one on order, and have offered it to be rented, as I will fly at most two contests per year, and there aren't very many gliders flying where I am. I would, however, use it every chance I have. The simulation is neat, but they should really do some simulations of near collisions.

I like the idea of flarm use for contests. I hope to try it soon.

I plan to purchase FLARM, and look forward to widespread adoption. Recommend for this year CMs be allowed to require FLARM provided rental units are available for contests.

I plan to purchase a Power Flarm. I am in favor of allowing a contest to require Power Flarm. It appears that the effort that Dale and Carmen Kramer are making will provide rental Flarm units. Let's make the 2011 season the start. The mid-air collisions we experienced in 2010 are sufficient evidence that now is the time to avail ourselves of serious collision avoidance technology that is designed specifically for glider pilots. I and others who fly in areas that have heavy airline traffic already have transponders in the cockpit. Now let's use Power Flarm to

help ourselves see and avoid other gliders.

I really like Flarm. I have flown with a Flarm unit in New Zealand for 3 seasons and I feel they are very useful. I'm planning on adding a Power Flarm to my sailplane within the next year. However, I think, we need to be careful to not push the requirements too aggressively. It's also new technology which needs to be used for a season to ensure its working as expected. There have been 3 release date delays this year alone. I realize Power Flarm is derivative work from Flarm, but there are always bugs and issues to be resolved. We should strongly encourage their use in the same vain we have encourage the use of SPOT trackers. You could argue we should be aggressively push SPOT tracker use for safety and logistic retrieve reasons, but we have not and look at the adoption of SPOT trackers over the past 2-3 years.

I strongly believe Flarm should be mandated for US Nationals next year. A pool of rental units should be made available for those who think they cannot afford a Flarm. Flarm should be mandated for Regionals in 2012. I have flown with Flarm in Europe (2006 Club Class Worlds) and found it very helpful. It surely would have help me avoid the midair at Parowan if I and the other pilot had been equipped with Flarm. Flarm will not eliminate contest mid-airs, but it will significantly reduce them. In spite of our efforts, we continue to have midairs and lose pilots. We need to do this! Now! Tim Welles

I strongly support the Dale Kramer initiative and hope that the Rules committee will be supportive by STRONGLY encouraging contest organizers to mandate the use of PowerFlarm once we have enough units to make them available to all contestants. The suggested notion of rental probably should be discouraged, substituting a requested donation instead. I also recommend legal review of the implications here. And I would want legal counsel to address the legal implications of any decision by organizers OR contestants to NOT use available Flarm.

I suggest for national championships making Flarm required. Then maybe a year later, if it went well for the nationals, making them required for super regionals.

I support Dales proposal for voluntary participation as a first step

I support FLARM implementation in the US. In the meantime the RC should discourage 180 deg legs at the end of a long (M)ATs, especially where one of those is a final glide, as weve had with OCs accident. 180 deg legs are fine on ridge tasks, because one expects oncoming traffic and is specifically looking for it.

I support the FLARM Fund position that will be presented to you.

I think Dale Kramer and his mira idea has merit. I do not see the down side of his proposal?

I think Power Flarm is just too expensive, especially when ADS-B is likely in our future. Some argue that the cost is relatively small compared to cost of a glider. Thats for a NEW sailplane. Most folks fly older sailplanes where this isnt the case. I see folks externally talking about setting up rentals and having contests specify if they are mandatory. What bugs me about this is that it is totally outside the rules. Setting a president whee a contest can declare their own mandatory rules outside of the rules process is very bad and should obviate the SSA sanctioning.

I think PowerFLARM is the most positive approach being put forward for collisison avoidance. I am promoting it as hard as possible in the Northwest. Requiring it for contests would be entirely reasonable, probably not in 2011 because it is so new, and we dont even know if the available deadline will be meet. Requiring it in 2012 would be OK. Afterall the competition committee required data loggers in the 1998 open class nationals with no warning, even though cameras were working just fine.

I think having enough FLARM units to rent participants during a contest is a good idea. I support requiring FLARM in contest within two years.

I think it should be required in 2012 but not 2011 as there may be a question of availability in 2011. Dale Kramers Fund should be able to make it possible for all pilots to be equipped in 2012

I think the mid-air problem is a fallout of all the stuff we have in the cockpit today: PDAs, flight computers, etc. which we are not about to outlaw. As far as a practical rule, Id start the clock and state that an FAA ADS-B compatible FLARM-like device will become mandatory 3 years after one is commercially available for <\$1000. Heres anothe suggestion, reduce the contestant limit for a contest from 65 to 50, and raise the entry fee limit.

I think the proposed availability of rental units should allow contests to require that players all be equipped to fly.

I think we need to see where things go regulatory wise with respect to ADSB lest we end up needing an ever increasing list of stuff.

I think we should require FLARM in National contests and give CDs the option to require FLARM in regionals. Hopefully, Dale Kramers effort to establish a fund to enable a number of PowerFlarms to be available for rent will be highly successful so that both suggestions above can be easily handled.

I would ask the RC to actively encourage contest participants to use FLARM, perhaps by working with the SSA to solicit funds to set up a FLARM rental program for sanctioned contests. Were talking about something whose cost is similar to a parachute, which is mandated, and whose use could save lives and equipment.

I would rather not install in my planes a device that only protects me against some types of traffic while I remain exposed to other types. I suggest waiting until this develops further.

I would recommend polling pilot of national and perhaps regional contest to see how many voluntarily adopt the usage of powerFLARM. When contests approach about 50% usage then perhaps we should consider mandating usage at such a contest. Especially if it could be arranged to have a few available to rent by the contestants that do not already have one.

Id give it some time to evaluate effectiveness. Mandating probably isnt the best solution, given that we want to be encouraging more pilots to fly contest, not discourage them due to having to buy more equipment. With that said, having not flown with FLARM, I have heard very positive reports, with the only downside being that people can tend to have their eyes/heads in the cockpit more than desired.

If it saves a single life, it is worth it!!! I strongly encourage SSA to as aggressively as possible push for adoption of FLARM for all gliders. In addition, I would suggest SSA revisiting the transponder requirement policy. A single mid-air with a commercial flight could bring an end to soaring as we know in this country. We have to be much more aggressive on this.

If you dont promote safety as the number one consideration, you are suspect. As soon as Flarm is available, make it mandatoy for the National. See how that plays out and adjust rules accordingly.

Im buying one. This should be encouraged at all contests. Once a significant majority show up flying with FLARM it should then be mandated.

Im for the Flarm, but I dont see why we should pay twice the price of the Europeans for a system that will only offer a few more possibilities only in the interest of very few pilots. Also, currently there is absolutely no insurance that the system will be authorized as presented for the US airspace. I do not like the tactical flying possibilities it offers. This will change completely the way we fly competition. I also think that, unfortunately, it is still premature to purchase that equipment.

Im ready to install a Power-Flarm for next season. I think most contest pilots will voluntarily install one if it is aggressively promoted.

It is very unfortunate that a regular FLARM unit is not going to be available in US. The regular price of PowerFlarm is around \$1700, almost twice what a regular FLARM costs in Europe. We probably will see very little adoption here, on par with transponders. 18 m class will probably be well equipped but adoption at the lower end will be very minimal. I am supporting FLARM concept and I will buy PowerFlarm because I fly 18 m glider and I expect others will buy it too. In my opinion we pilots should unite against PowerFlarm and not buy these expensive units until they offer a simple (Europe style) units for less fortunate in the U.S. Everyone could benefit from such a development. I dont think Flarm folks have best intentions. They are not helping us get this technology going. Maybe should (US) should come up with our own that will be cheap enough for everyone to use.

Its needed, this summer showed that, with Dale Cramers Flarm Fund, I think it is very doable to have flarm required w/in the next 1- 2 years.

Keep looking at Flarm. It appears that enough contest pilots are buying them to try it out.

Make FLARM voluntary, and support efforts to make rentals available at contests.

Make Flarm mandatory as soon as Kramers rental program is complete.

Make a transition from voluntary to mandatory use in the next 3 years in all conteste with 30+ gliders total

Mandate FLARM at regional and national contests, starting in 2012. Parachutes are currently required, and the cost is similar - but FLARM will get used on every flight while the parachute (other than serving as a cushion and fashion accessory) will hopefully never be used. Encourage SSA to strongly promote FLARM adoption by all gliders - via insurance rebates, bulk order discounts, whatever can be done.

Mandate Power-Flarm at all Nationals starting in 2011. It will then trickle down to the smaller contests. Make sure the top dogs all have it and peer pressure will really help get the rest of the fleet in check. I am ready to purchase one as soon as they are available.

Mandating Flarm in contests is premature. However, it may be considered in the future. Once a pilot flies with Flarm in an invironment with other Flarms, he will see the benefit and will not want to fly without it. It is time that we have Flarm. there have been too many midairs and near misses. The RC can set an example and the contest pilots can be a leader in this very beneficial product to our safety.

Mandating at this point is premature, however we should provide a timeline to move in that direction at some point in the future. Example: 2 - 3 years down the road FLARM will be required equipment to compete at the National level. FLARM is useless unless all have it so at some point it must be mandatory. Perhaps an SSA large order discount purchase with rental to contestants during the transition period.

Maybe consideration should be given to annoucing the intent to make Flarm a requirement in contests in (say) 3 yrs ?

My biggest fear in a contest is a midair. At the same time I dont like to see us increase the cost of flying in a contest. If we could get the price for Flarm down more I would be all for it.

No opinion.

OK, Im convinced after watching the FLARM vidio of the Parowan mid-air. Had those guys both had it (neither did) there wouldnt have been a collision. I will buy one before I race again next year. JJ

Organizers currently can require ELTs. How about giving them the same option with FLARM? This would phase the units into use in the more serious events.

Pay attention to the RF that FLARM uses. My understanding is that they operate on a freq that is assigned for other uses in North America, which has not be resolved. They may actually be deemed illegal.

Please aggressively promote voluntary and coordinated Flarm use.

Please proceed forward with all due haste to bring the reality of Power-Flarm to US contest flying, especially at nationals and other contest where a large number of gliders - perhaps a threshold - will be competing. This is the most dangerous aspect of soaring and I believe that despite the cost, we should embrace the technology as a way to save lives and make our sport safer.

Possibly require it first for the more expensive gliders and years later for the sports class and club class if ever.

Power FLARM is just another piece of equipment, like a Flight Data Recorder. The RC decided that the FDR was the way to go to score a contest. They simply need to analyze the capabilities of FLARM and if they believe it will increase flight safety they should make its use mandatory. Its that simple. If other groups want to create a pool of devices for contest use by those who dont own them, thats fine but user affordability should not be a factor if the instrument will truly augment safety.

Power Flarm is not here yet and any decision needs to be delayed until the units are generally available and exact capabilities are understood. I like what I hear about the capabilities but will wait to see exactly what is delivered before I commit to one. When they do arrive all competitors should be encouraged to fly with one but they should not be mandated. One of the last things needed is another barrier to entry for competitions. Lets

concentrate on things like making sure tasks are defined so that departure and approach legs to a turnpoint are at least 40 degrees apart (an oversight on the task at Uvalde was that the entry and departure legs overlapped).

Power Flarms and transponders are in our future. I'd start a marketing campaign, and start talking them up in Soaring. The only thing holding me back is a very small cockpit in an older glider. I just don't know where I could cram all that in and still see out the front.

Power-Flarm is the way to go for safety. I think the SSA has a responsibility to promote early adoption by as many as possible. I feel it is such an important issue, that I would have no problem if the SSA made it a requirement for contest flying next year. It sounds draconian, but it's not such an expensive bit of kit and the technology only works well if most gliders are equipped. At the very least, it should be made mandatory for contests within a very few years with notice given ASAP. Widely adopted at contests will promote its value throughout the gliding community.

PowerFlarm appears to be the best available device to alert pilots of other traffic, glider or otherwise. Promoting its use is the best we can do to get the critical mass of users that make it work in glider-on-glider situations. The SSA/SRA should help making units available at contests, I would be interested in renting and also in buying.

PowerFlarm units should be highly recommended for all contests but not required for a couple of years to allow more pilots the opportunity to own one. Perhaps some units could be made available for rent at the nationals level for those participants that cannot afford to purchase right away.

Promote, but don't require just yet. I would feel better knowing what is around me. Might have saved Chris' life!

Require FLARM for all sanctioned contests.. For those opposed, I would ask them to contact the widow of a deceased pilot involved in a mid air collision and explain their objection. SM

Require it ASAP. Nothing will ever be perfect, but PowerFlarm is a good start. Collectively owned units leased to pilots who don't buy their own (FlarmFund) eliminates the biggest objection. Please don't let this get bogged down in process and discussion--it's for big issues like this that all of our committees, rules, and leaders exist.

Safety should be the #1 priority at all contests & should always be promoted!!! I believe that the Flarm has great potential for safer contests but making it mandatory for the 2010 contest season might prove to be difficult seeing how they are just going to be released here in the US in April. It's hard to see what if any delays might happen with producing, shipping, etc. I believe that for the 2011 contest season they should be encouraged at contest sights by the contest organizers. Dale's proposal for having rental units is a good idea in theory but I believe there will be pitfalls with this plan. Having said this, if all it took was \$1495.00 to save 1 contest pilot's life, then the money would be well spent! If the rules committee decides to take an aggressive stance & aggressively promote usage of the Flarm, then contest pilots can decide whether they want to continue contest flying or not.

Suggest Flarm mandatory for contests >15 entry Flarm should be voluntary - I am choosing to buy one based on experience at WGC and in France. Flarm units can be made available for rent (or rent to own) by powerflarm mfr to increase knowledge and use and therefore sales.

Suggest you get an anti-collision system in place without delay, or there may not be enough pilots around to fly contests. I came close to buying the farm at Region 6 N when an outgoing contestant returning 180 degrees from a turnpoint came within 50 ft of me as I was incoming to the turnpoint. They never saw me, even with two pilots aboard.

The only question is availability and reasonable cost. In the 1970s some pilots still were able to fly a contest without a radio. A few years after GPS became available in the early 90s it became mandatory for contests and now is mandatory for FAI badges. Some contest sites declare mandatory ELT installation. The current initiative to ensure all pilots will have access to a rental Flarm unit is an easy way to gain experience and acceptance. How many people have dropped out of competition because they were unable to comply with radio and GPS requirements?

The technology is changing so fast that any decision made now will almost inevitably become obsolete in the very near term. Further, our competition committee should become proactive and state to those firms that are innovating the new equipment what OUR requirements are. These requirements should include addressing compatibility issues for current generation devices with future generation devices. If this is done, purchase of

current-generation equipment can be done without fear of total obsolescence. That said, if FLARM is to be mandated, it should be done first at Nationals, then migrated down as issues are discovered and resolved.

They are quite pricey for a college student that flies gliders for a living.

This is somewhat complex, with non-obvious ramifications. Preventing midairs with other gliders or non-gliders is an extremely important objective. The Flarms cost as a percentage of the cost of a competitive glider is likely to be 1-2%. Therefore, the RC should probably move to promote Flarm or any equivalent warning system. But it is very important not to let immediate enthusiasm for Flarm blind the RC to the larger issues of collision avoidance not limited to glider-on-glider. For example, the PCAS alternative works (cost about \$440 per receiver) works reasonably well if all gliders are transponder equipped. Since most gliders are not transponder equipped, however, perhaps Flarm is the correct short term solution for glider-on-glider collisions. It will likely cost less and provide more information to the pilot in a glider-only environment than mandating both a transponder and a PCAS unit. Bear in mind, however, that all air carrier aircraft are TCAS equipped as are many higher end general aviation aircraft. The TCAS system will not see Flarm (as I understand the Flarm technology) and will not avoid Flarm-equipped gliders. They will detect and avoid transponder equipped gliders. I've been in two situations where this likely save lives or at least avoided very near contact with large aircraft. One was in a Regional contest at Caesars Creek a few years ago where a 757 diverted around a thermal with 6 gliders in it due to one glider being transponder equipped. The fact that Flarm does not offer this option to the TCAS world is a significant shortcoming. Moreover, while the harm from glider-on-glider contact is great, the harm from a midair with a glider and an air carrier aircraft with passenger fatalities would likely harm glider flying opportunities nationwide in a serious way. Mike Shakman

This was a discussion at the recent SSA Directors meeting. My current understanding is that since this unit emits a signal that the FAA/FCC needs to approve the use of this frequency. I do not believe this has been done. Installation in a Certificated glider would have to submit paperwork to document the installation. There are many unanswered questions for use here in the US. Maybe in another year, this may be ready.

Too expensive for a poor college student to equip his borrowed glider with.

Too soon to tell. More study of actual results in Europe will tell us if the actual midair rate decreases. Read Bob Bucks book The Pilots Burden. Equipment like this stands a good chance of making things worse as people start to pay attention to managing the equipment and/or the notifications from it and fail to do more important tasks. There is also a risk of overdependence on the equipment.

Use MIRA - see <http://www.flarmfund.org/>

Using steering TPs, as in 2010 Hobbs, a few miles from the finish, on MATs, doesnt allow enough altitude, for a successful bail out, if a problem (mid air) occurs. ALL must be highly concerned about safety and safety must be the number one priority for ALL. We have become complacent which allow accidents to happen. Accidents that neednt of happened, have. Lives lost or almost lost. Writing rules after the accident, isnt accident prevention. Now, we have something which will help, to bring accident prevention. Those who have used Flarm and are highly experienced contest pilots, are standing up and saying we need this. Power Flarm will help in accident prevention, yet will it stop all mid airs, no one has that answer. But now, for a few ounces of accident prevention, which could save one human life, has a price tag. See, if Power Flarm were free, only an ill person would NOT want one.....

Wait a year - I think Flarm is a good solution in a year or so. Make it known to the members that 2012 will require Flarm for all national contests.

Wait for the FLARM pricing to come down. And then make sure that there are units available for rent so that all contestants have one.

We need to jump start Flarm. SSA to supply Flarms to contestants. SSA Adds a surcharge to each contest fee, say equivalent to one or two days of the tow fee. Allow contestant to buy Flarms at the end of contest, say at a 10% discount. Good use of Soaring Safety Foundation Funds. They should get most of their money back.

We should wait for ADS-B equipment for gliders to mature, and use it for collision avoidance.

We, absolutely, need to address collision avoidance. I will be installing Power Flarm this winter. It is expensive but so are midairs. I believe that after a short test period it will become evident that we must make it mandatory for most if not all contests. In fact, we can expect that it will become mandatory for almost all gliders (not just in

competition) as ADS-B becomes the norm.

Without a doubt Flarm is the future of collision avoidance. However, I believe that it is premature to require it at contests at this time.

Yes, adoption of FLARM should be fully supported, but not mandated in all contests.

Yes, let's find a practical way to promote flarm. As a competitor who has now, unfortunately attended three contests where mid-air has occurred; Uvalde 2008, Parowan 2010 and Uvalde 2010 where we had a heart breaking fatality. I can tell you I'm very concerned, if we don't act quickly we will lose more pilot participation in contests. We can never fully make our sport risk free but when presented with opportunities to improve the safety of contest flying it's a crime not to do so. Hindsight yes, but Proper Flarm use would have likely eliminated the mid air in all three situations. Additionally, I believe RC should add recommendations for the CD to pay close attention to the turn points used during task calling, Simply put when ever possible the CD should make every effort to have proceeding turn point at 90 degrees i.e box the task, this certainly applies to final steering Turn Points but equally would apply to all TP including TAT with large 30 SM turn areas. I'm not placing blame for any of the mid air on the task committee, indeed I was on the task committee at Parowan, but I do believe in both 2010 mid-air cases the tasks called was a factor.

You could have at least asked if we were ordering Power flarm units (I'd like to see statistics on this)! This really needs to be encouraged at every possible opportunity.

You could make it the option of the contest organizers to mandate use of Flarm for all or a subset of competitors, subject to making units available on a rental basis, at a reasonable cost, to all competitors falling under the mandate.

You will drive more people out of racing if you mandate it.

encourage FLARM, but don't require it. technology is too new (to us US pilots). Encourage PCAS too. Make transponders mandatory for contests in busy areas like Reno.

go slow

it works if all have it , are we ready ? otherwise it can have reverse effect with all electronic we have to survey the life has no price...

no mandating Flarm at this time

should be voluntary

should be voluntary and tested at regionals for applicability. The unit is not even available yet. I definitely agree it is a good safety device along with a transponder. Seems that requiring transponders is more appropriate.

www.flarmfund.org is a very good answer. Allow MIRA (Mandatory If Rentals Available) contests starting with the 2011 season.

8: Comments

In addition to clarifying your views on the above questions, please use the comments section for general comments about the rules. We always want to improve the fairness, enjoyment, participation, and safety of contest flying. We are interested in any incidents or experiences you had that bear on these goals.

#1 - been there, done that. Us rules should specify a procedure, though not necessarily completely cancel the day. For example score all contestants to the last (or next to last, or...) turnpoint prior to the accident location (with appropriate adjustments for finish altitude at turnpoint) and re- (or de-) value the day accordingly. #2 - A one day Nats is still a Nats and a winner should be declared. But a short Nats should have devalued rankings based on the number of days flown. If 3 days means 95, then could 2 days be 75, and 1 be 50? #3 - For MAT tasks, in order to make a second attempt after a finish without landing, your time for the first attempt should have to be either less than 30% (or?) or greater than 70% (or?) of that days minimum task time. The time bracket would prevent people running short triangles and provisionally finishing after each one to avoid a landout penalty. Is that what you meant? #3 - how do you plan to handle finishers who fly through the finish cylinder

high on the way to a close in turnpoint, but then landout trying to return? #5 - see comment to #1 above. #7 - the World Class is dead as a racing class, it is really just a spiffed up 1-26. The only people flying them in contests are a few diehards. Heres another suggestion to reduce the possibility of mid-air, reduce the contestant limit for a contest from 65 to 50, and raise the entry fee limit.

1. Suggest that our default behavior should be leave the rules static, at least those that affect scoring and tasking. Unless technology or airspace or other external factors dictate changes, we should keep the fiddling with these rules to a minimum. Changes in rules are becoming more and more expensive as software changes in both the cockpit (i.e. the moving maps and associated tasking support options) and scoring (Winscore) have to constantly change. So, unless there is a glaring need to fix something, we should try to limit improvements to alternate years or even less frequently IMO. 2. Need to start looking at much bigger picture issues such as demographic and behavioral changes impacting nationals. Having spent considerable time in Europe in the last couple of years, I can now see how much harder it is to compete in US nationals (e.g. driving from East Coast to West Coast) compared to (at most) a 9 hour drive in most EU countries (and significantly less on average). With 2 kids, a wife who works, and a high pressure job, theres zero chance I will be able to attend 2 or 3 consecutive nationals in my class, so I might as well write-off getting serious about Nationals (talent limitations aside). Basically, Nationals in the US are becoming the domain of the retired, independently wealthy, child-less, and/or few who are willing to put family and job at risk. We need to start looking at either cross-class selections, super-regionals, mini-nationals, etc.

4.0 I think we need to explore this further. There should be some emphasis on returning to the home field, even on MAT and TAT tasks that have time limits. Soaring conditions can vary over long distances, on some tasks, going off with no intention of returning, just to gain distance points, seems against the concept of racing and returning. Perhaps there needs to be a larger penalty for returning more 30 minutes before minimum time? Back is good, around and back is better, around and back fast is best! 7.0 Well, we are hosting the other class in 2012, so our costs should be lower for those team members. I do think we should evaluate what classes we do participate in. Perhaps Club, Standard, 15M, 18M, and Open are enough - those seem to be the big ones anyway. Stay away from World/13.5M, 20M Multiplace, etc. PW-5 is still usable in Regionals and Sports Nationals.

7. Field a team only if we have pilot(s) who can finish in the top half of a World contest. Applies to all classes. 1. You could simply state that, in this case, international rules apply to all US contests

Although I fly ASG-29 I support the Club Class selection criteria we currently have in place for the World Team. In my opinion, considering Club Class as lesser than FAI classes is not sending good signals to young or not so young but less fortunate pilots. We have to think about the future. With cost of flying becoming very high and glider prices climbing we have little chance to see brand new faces in the FAI classes.

As regards Question 7.1, we field a team for the Juniors, and the Women (if any want to compete), and these two classes are each without a US Nationals and subject to VERY variable interest and VERY variable pilot quality. The World Class should be allowed to send a team in 2012. We should ALWAYS field a US Team in every class offered at the WGCs should there be the desire and the pilots meet minimum standards. HOWEVER, distribution of US Team funds should be based on overall participation numbers, subject to some minimum threshold.

Also, the RC MUST consider a rule whereby gliders involved in a midair are required to land at the earliest, safe opportunity AND are scored to the point of impact. Convenience should never be a consideration for landing ones injured ship AND I, for one, do not welcome wrapping up in a competition thermal with ANY glider whose airworthiness is or might be questionable. Thanks for your work on these issues.

CONTEST FEES...If you ask anyone in my club, the number one reason they dont fly contests anymore is because of COST. To be more specific, high entry fees with prepaid tows that arnt reimbursable. This is a real sore subject. We need to get back to a basic entry fee and only pay for tows when you fly. Get rid of high fixed entry fees, and you will see more participation in contests. Not all contests do this, and those are the ones I fly at. Sanction FEES also a issue for many pilots.

Conflating all short-wing gliders into, essentially, a second club or sports class is nuts. Sports is Sports! One-design contests should continue to be supported, whether it is the PW-5 or not. Sailing does this and so should soaring. Everything is all about how many dollars the manufacturers can wring out of the wealthy elite pilots each year rather than about how much the pilot can wring out of his machine. Handicapping will never achieve what the one-design already achieves. Real competitiveness should be based on the pilot, not the machine; on flying skills, not monetary resources and the whim of the handicap coupled with the type of day.

Crash Procedures: Canceling a day is a decision not to be taken lightly. We should have a procedure to allow for canceling a day if justified, but it should not be mandatory. Judgement should be allowed. World Class: We have spent a lot of money for the benefit of the very small population of pilots in the World Class. We do not have enough money to fully fund the other classes, which include a much larger population of pilots. The World Class has not been successful in reaching its goal of affordable soaring for the masses. Let it die. Tim Welles

Financial resources need to be focused on a smaller team vs expanding the financial support which would dilute funding available to pilots.

God bless you everyone for taking on this thankless task on the rules committee.

Good survey. Please remember that we want to invite glider pilots who have not flown in a contest to participant. Keep the requirements straight forward and the cost reasonable.

How about an 18 meter non flapped class at regionals or maybe a handicap to make them competitive in 18 meter with the flapped fleet?

I am lucky to still be around. Support for team members is dismal at best especially when any support offered may be a year from the actual event. It would be nice to see the SSA be more diligent with supporting our pilots who have qualified to represent the US.

I am very excited about the changes in the class to define it as 13.5 meter. This will really boost participation. I think we should hold a 13.5 Meter US Nationals as soon as possible. We should also continue to support the existing World Class until it changes to include all gliders under 13.5 Meters. The sooner the better.

I did not vote on any issue. It does no good. The rules committee does what it wants to do. It is clearly out of control. Our sport is dying. The powers to be need to take responsibility. This has happened under their rule. Decisions are made with a few people in mind and no regard for the masses. Look around, the proof is everywhere.

I disagree with the proposed changes to the club class team selection rules, particularly broadening the list of eligible gliders. If implemented at all, that change should be delayed until 2012.

I dont think the world class concept has been accepted to the level that it needs to be supported.the idea of allowing other ships of same span has merit, but I still do not see the numbers work.

I feel the airport bonus should be increased in conjunction with this rule. In the old scoring there was effectively a multi hundred point bonus for landing at the home airport. While that may be too high, this rule change will encourage pressing on in sketchy weather. I think to balance that, we should make a much more significant incentive to land at approved airports...

I have flown at the WGC in the Club Class. It certainly is not the same as the US Sports Class. I hope the RC will listen to the voices on RAS. Expanding handicaps in my opinion will set back efforts in establishing a US Club Class. I urge the RC to hold off one year and score Club Class within the Sports Class Nationals. We can do this without risk. Lets not guess and speculate, instead find out what demand there truly is for a US Club Class. Sean Franke

I like the idea of allowing past US Team pilots onto the club class team. I do not like the idea of allowing non club class gliders back on the selection for team pilots in Club class

I personally would like to see MAT tasks abolished. They encourage scoring pilots by their task selection instead of their flying skills. TATs work very well in handicapped classes to accommodate a wide range of performance of different gliders and I think MATs are not needed.

I support the club class concept. There needs to be a viable competition class that is open for for the masses that cannot afford \$150,000 - \$250,000 gliders. Otherwise the sport will continue to dwindle to only be viable for a handful of the super rich and completely out of reach of the middle class. [The design of new gliders has reached the point of diminishing returns, every 10 percent improvement in performance costs 15-30% more money. This is gradually raising the cost of the winning technology until only the single richest guy can buy it. There needs to be a shelter from this effect]. I dont dislike rich people, just there are not enough of them to keep us a viable competitive sport.

I want to underscore my view of how important it is to give the CD more flexibility to expand the safety finish from 5 miles to something more. I voted for 10 miles in this survey, but would generally prefer a wider discretion. The mis-named safety finish rule is a disaster waiting to happen. Calling a safety finish suggests to pilots (many with little real weather flying experience) that it is safe to return to the airport, which is often not the case; and it suggests that a 5 mile radius is safely flyable, which is also often not the case. I suggest changing the name to weather hazard finish and the radius to at least 10 miles, but preferably to whatever the CG thinks is reasonable. If it reduces the fairness of the competition to prevent killing pilots and breaking gliders, that's a price we should willingly pay. And if the competitive unfairness is really major, the CD can cancel the day.
Mike Shakman

I will try to get you results of a brief poll of Open Class pilots regarding the gross weight rule. Personally, I think that even though the process of was followed, the intent was not. The intent is to test the rule at the regional level, and if it works, move it to the Nationals. Well, the rule was in place for regionals in 2008, but there were no Open Class Regionals in 2008. So, there was no way of knowing if the rule worked. The decision was made based on a few days of same wing loading flying at Hobbs in 2006 and a ridge day in 2008 or 2009. Previous conversations have gotten answers of I won't fly Open Class unless the rule is changed to take away the advantage given to the newer ships (sound familiar to the old ASW-20 versus Ventus crying?) to I am in favor of whatever will increase participation to I think we need to leave it as is at 850 KG in the country of origin, as we need to race here as we will in the Worlds. Steve Leonard

I wish the Rules committee would review some of the recommendations to CDs. I do not think use of all the tasks should be mandated. The MAT is a necessary evil on very uncertain days but should never be used otherwise. Racing tasks are plagued with potential for over or under call plus they create recurring congestion and potential for leaching. I also think some thought needs to be given to the relative responsibilities of task advisers while in the air in unfair conditions (eg. last day at 10 Hobbs). I would also like to get minimums for a given contest firmed up at the beginning of a contest and not fudged when the contest becomes threatened. These minimums are chosen for valid safety reasons and are often stretched just when they are needed most. I also think the CD should have a mandate to hold pilots available to fly until the remaining time in a day does not allow time for launch and a short, safe task (we are losing a good many days due to early abandonment--almost always a lot of pressure from pilots to abandon on these days--the mandate would give the CD some push-back)

I would hope there would be less emphasis on creating new and different classes. There is a dilution effect due to too many classes! Bigger classes are more fun! I'd rather race in a class with 30 pilots, than in one with only 5. The 18 meter class has REALLY had an adverse effect on this....creating its own relatively small class, while shrinking the numbers in 15m and Standard Class. Let the manufacturers and new sailplane buyers conform to a few existing classes, not the opposite....that is, creating a new class because all of a sudden there are a few open class two seaters around. That's the LAST thing we need now....

I would like to see the SSA do more for short wingers such as the PW5s. This is one way to bring affordable competition gliding to more people; it's huge fun and the people are great (like the 1-26 crowd the PW5s mix with).

I would like to see the a US Club Class nationals. This would assure that the people we send to the worlds are the best club class fliers. No matter how you handicap the 18m and new 15m ships in sports class they have several advantages no matter who is piloting them. These advantages cannot be reversed back to a club class glider. Having the Sports Class Nationals decide who is going to be on the US Club Class World team puts too many variables into the selection. If someone wants to be on the Club Team they need to fly club gliders.

I would support the replacement of the Sports Nationals with a Club Class Nats. Sports provides a great venue for entry/exit level run-what-you-brung racing at the regional level, but the National race has always been just another chance for FAI class hotrocks (in latest generation FAI class ships) to collect another trophy, ranking number and US team slot. Enough of that. If the hotrocks want to fly for the Club Class team, they ought to go find a Club Class ship and race it.

IN the scoring question: It is a little confusing (as usual). I fully favor awarding points for the distance. Landing one mile short because of unanticipated sink on final glide or a miscalculation should not result in a potential loss of hundreds of points. For example above. the maximum points a non finisher can get is equal to the slowest finisher. this is wrong. If the winner is 275 miles and finishes and a one-mile short land out flew 300 miles during the same time, who is the better pilot? He should not lose 400 points for one mistake or one bad luck. On the other hand, if the objective is to always land back, then he should not receive more points than finishers.

But, he should definitely receive a high score. The big problem that I have always argued is that one land out ends the contest for that pilot. there is virtually no chance he can finish on the podium. This is unfair IMHO.

If I recall correctly, the Europeans give speed points only if speed is a percentage of the winners speed (60% IIRC). Slower than that and you get distance points only. I would favor that, and distance points as a percentage of the nominal distance in a TAT. Any idea that rewards boldness over timidity is fine. Excessive boldness should be penalized by the score.

In 2012 PW5 pilots should get the full the support of the team captain and all the team facilities used jointly by the classes. But Id support reducing payments to the individual pilots to some basic fixed amount that they would know before they committed to going. We may be in a time to let the classes fight it out for funds and let financial supporters designate the class for their team dollars. Club Class - Give club class a chance. Instead of opening the class to more gliders the US should use the IGC club class list. Pilots have purchased gliders or borrowed gliders for competition based on the rules as they are. This process is continuing and should eventually result in a strong class. Sean Frankes results at the worlds shows the process is working. Please do not make any club class changes during the 3-year cycle for the 2012 worlds. Crash - I think the CD should have the discretion to cancel a day when there is a crash that might require other pilots to abandon the race. I dont think you can write a rule such that a pilot in the air can determine whether a race will be cancelled. We still have to depend on sportmanship and personal values.

In light of The tragic mid-air at Uvalde this summer, I propose contest directors avoid turnpoints requiring 180 degree turns to head to next point/finish if at all possible. I acknowledge this would be difficult/ impossible for ridge flights. My own unnerving experience at Uvalde involved seeing a glider coming at me (I was flying into the sun)seemingly coming out of a fog at a point I would have had no opportunity to take evasive action if he were at my altitude.

In sports class, I dont think that an existing handicap should be allowed to change more than 0.02 in a given year. A few years back the duster changed from 1.48 to 1.84 in a single year. A contest novice acquired one just for the handicap and won a regional contest in spite of a land out (second place finished every day) due to the huge handicap. This year the HP 18 changed by 0.07, not as extreme but still seems like a pretty big change with no basis in contest results. Is it appropriate to potentially allow such changes based on the personal bias of the current handicap committee?

In the case of the Standard Class Nationals, there was no hope for good weather from day one and yet we stuck around to see if we could meet that minimum contest length and in turn put a lot of expensive gliders at risk of some dangerous landouts. Suggestions: Allow for an Alternate to be picked that if by the 3-4th scheduled contest day the weather advisor does not believe a contest will be possible, this remote location may be utilized. Set some safety standards for when a contest day needs to be deemed unsafe. At 2500 AGL (Max Altitude achieved by a contest pilot), a CD should not be able to send pilots into rough terrain. Selection of a Contest Director needs to be an experienced contest pilot in the class of glider being flown. Safety Suggestions: With the recent colision at Uvalde this past 15m Nats, there should be some consideration given into a parameter to be set where turn areas may not be within a certain degree or angle from each other to prevent head-ons. With our small frontal cross section, it can be extremely difficult to spot a closing glider within your glide path. Some consideration needs to go into this to prevent unsafe tasks. Also, I have enjoyed the PCAS system as a cheap collision avoidance system. FLARM looks nice and all, but if we are going to expand this sport, making it more expensive is not the key. Competition Suggestion: I would like to eventually see a Junior Nationals. I guarentee that there would be juniors that would attend and compete for a spot on the US Junior World Team. Putting them against each other will help them train and learn together and give us much better performances around the world. Training Suggestion: How about a world team training camp and experienced coaches? We are getting killed in world competitions. The US needs to do better. The knowledge is out there. Lets find a way to put it together and form a real racing threat to the other teams around the world.

Increase the angle of incidence (min 45 degrees) on steering turn points to provide better separation from arriving and departing gliders for the purpose of avoiding mid airs such as occured at the 2010 15-meter nationals at Uvalde.

It does not seem fair to provide support to a team that might be selected from a pool of only 6 participants. Our limited funds should go to support pilots who have been selected from a larger class pool.

It is time to kill the World Class, the total number of gliders at the Worlds in the class in 2010 shows that it is not worth supporting. The US should consider not adding any new teams and just not participating in the 13.5M and

the Two Place classes. Until we can start winning we need to focus our resources on only a few classes. Support the Club, Std., 15M and 18M. Consider dropping the open and start holding team training camps and advanced racing training. Only send the best to the world not those that can afford to go. We need to develop a fund to support a select number of pilots to the worlds.

It would be great if we could find some way to encourage more pilots to fly in contests. Perhaps find volunteers to help crew and be available to retrieve those who landout. They do not have to support only one pilot. Contests are expensive, so I usually cannot pay for a crew member to come along.

Its appears impossible to fund all of the classes for these soaring events. If the SSA & US Team Committee has the resources to aid in some way, then they should endeavor to aid the US Pilots selected for these events. If a pilot has the resources to pay for this event himself, then let them do so with the US Teams blessing. If not, then maybe the classes that might have the greatest success would/should receive funding. It doesnt matter if these classes are the most popular, priority should be given to the classes that would produce the best contest results.

Keep up the good work, Thanks.

MAT with one TP should be avoided at any cost. To go for National contest and fly task with one TP is like flying OLC. Contest is to fly and compete with other pilots in the same weather conditions and the same area. Driving 1000 miles just to fly MAT with one TP is not fun. In addition MAT results are influenced by luck not skill of the pilot. MAT should be set like true AST just with small flexibility at the end of the task so the slow pilots can get home and fast pilots can get extra one or two TP.

Make sports class handicaps WX forecast dependent by day according to span. One way to do this: Based on the CDs before launch judgement, one level of a four tiered (none, small, medium, large) WX handicap adjustment is applied. The weaker the WX forecast and the larger the span, the bigger the resulting handicap for that day becomes. No, its not perfect, just better than ignoring the significant effect that WX weakness can have on Sports Class scores. Large span handicaps should be increased in weak WX in the interest of encouraging economic Sports Class participation. Give the little guys a chance.

My concern with question 3 is encouraging always doing a 2nd attempt if the conditions are remotely favorable since there is nothing to lose by doing so.

On 4) MAT scoring. This anomaly and many others could be resolved by giving each pilot a score that is miles achieved at his speed in the nominal task time. If the CD sets a 3 hour speed task from A to B to C and home and a pilot takes 4 hours to fly it at 100 mph he gets 300 points (3 hours at 100 is 300 miles). A pilot that flies less than 3 hours just gets his total miles, nothing extra.

One thing is to get CDs to launch the fleet ASAP. If it looks iffy. launch a couple of ships [maybe the contest needs to pay for these test tows and see. One sniffer is great, but to have 3 or 4 ships in the air is much better..

Our Nationals, as in other sports, should not be shortened or devalued. How the US Team committee elects to choose US Team members from our Nationals, is another matter. Wild idea. Play Condor at home and end all Regional and National contest flying. Use the OLC. The money saved by not going to a contest, staying at home, flying the OLC, can be put into a prize pool with some big bucks going to the winners and the current US Team members. The US Team committee can then choose from the OLC who goes to the Worlds. Arent these steps in going towards A GREEN AMERICA. Outcome would be interesting and might produce desired results.....oh ya, baby.

Overflight of a TFR during a contest will lose all points for the day. Since the FAA allows flight over TFRs and now with data loggers to prove the TFR wasnt busted please reconsider this rule. I am still fine with not flying over controlled airspace. The issue is that last minute TFRs like what happened in Logan Region 9 this year caused multiple problems for multiple pilots on multiple days. Yes, you can say it is the pilots problem to stay away from it but please note that 1/3 of the start cylinder was within the TFR area.

Per the thread on r.a.s., I feel Club Class entries for the WGC should be limited to pilots flying Club Class eligible aircraft. This and the 13.5 meter class offer lower cost flying at the World level.

Please consider a safe way to revise the rule regarding Thermal turn direction within 5 miles of the start gate. Perhaps swapping odd/even years (2011=odd=left turn), or swapping odd/even contest days (day 1=odd=left turn). Some gliders, pilots, and weather conditions favor circling CW (me).

Please consider imposing a mandatory minimum time between an in air task change and task open time. I would propose 20 minutes. If the day is so short that 20 minutes cannot be allowed to reprogram the task, review a chart, and be ready to start then the day should be cancelled. Having 30 gliders working a start thermal while reprogramming flight computers is a major safety hazard that must be addressed. I'd actually prefer to see in air task changes, other than perhaps the simple deletion of one turnpoint, be eliminated unless the change is to a previously declared alternate task. All flight computers should have the ability to store and recall predefined tasks and this should require far less head down time than constructing a new task from scratch. Thanks to all of you on the RC for your work in trying to improve the sport. Andy (GY)

Please do not allow planes with engines to compete in sailplane competitions. A pilot flying such a machine has options (or better, THINKS he has options) that those of us flying real gliders do not have.

Please review the penalty for failing to get in the vertical portion of the start cylinder. This year at the 15 meter Nationals in Uvalde, the start height limit was lowered from 6500 which it had been during the practice days to 6000 for Contest Day 1. This was not mentioned during the pilots briefing on Contest Day 1 and was unremarkably placed on the task sheet. I was acting as task advisor and launched 2nd. I stayed high, and as now turns out I never came down into the cylinder from above. I started at about 6,300 or 300 feet over the top of the cylinder. This 300 advantage that I inadvertently and unintentionally gained gave me a penalty of over 260 points. The average rate of climb that day was @500 feet/minute. So, at best I gained about a 40 second advantage on the field with my unintentional high start. My actual speed for the day was 84.5mph which would have given me 985 points and been third for the day. Instead I received @726 points. This effectively gave me no opportunity to win the contest in Uvalde. I clearly made an error on the start and should be penalized. The purpose of this note is to have the committee study the penalty given and see if it is appropriate for the error made. In my opinion the penalty given was a death sentence to my chances to achieve my goals of winning the contest or gaining enough points to make the US Team. I believe a 100 point penalty, although severe enough, would have been more acceptable and encouraged me to stay in the contest and to accept the risk I would have had to incur to attempt to make up the spread. In this day of declining participation in contests and increasing costs of attending contests, both in time and money, the rules should not be so severe as to leave a pilot no choice but to withdraw for an offense that did not give a substantial advantage over the field. Because of the magnitude of the penalty received (clearly within the current rules) I chose to leave the Nationals because my reasons for competing no longer existed for me. Thanks for your consideration. Eric Mozer

Please see my contest safety comments associated with the Flarm question and my follow up Tasking comments.

Q1 - In 2008, I watched a fellow competitor cartwheel into an un-landable field. I abandoned the task and returned to get the crash location to emergency services. Somehow, the pilot was uninjured, but I gave up ~800 points for doing so. While I wouldn't hesitate to abandon the task again in a similar situation and I hope others would do the same for me, it's ridiculous to penalize pilots for doing so.

Q1) You didn't even address the situation where a midair occurs and the pilots fly on to complete a task. Technically, the sailplane is no longer airworthy and should be landed as soon as safely possible. A sailplane in a mid-air can have many kinds of hidden damage which puts other pilots and the public at risk. An airborne visual inspection is totally inadequate to determine airworthiness. Pilots should receive a 0 score to discourage this behavior. Q7) Until we have the opportunity to have SIGNIFICANT participation in a World Class, we shouldn't send anyone. Not even those who can pay. So far this class is a big failure and we should stop spending our limited resources on it.

Question 1 is too broad to give a mandate. Something needs to be done about the sham of a contest we had a Waynesville this year. We missed 4 days! #1 Min distance was flown after cancel (first day of contest). #2 a day was canceled at pilots meeting and the day opened up to good soaring and a club operation continued to late evening. #3 people flew the proposed task after day was canceled 2/3 of the way through launch with people at 5000 ft (second to last day of contest). #4 The last Day was canceled under streeting Cus before grid and K1 flew 240 miles that last day, SM flew 180. I believe that CDing was horribly influenced by people with agendas. We need better CDing and ways to prevent this in the rules. Also, better site selection where the no ballast rule can't be abused. Weatherman should not be a pilot in contention. Task advisors should excuse themselves if they are within 5% of first place.

Question 1: Day should not be cancelled if the crash has no impact (can't think of another word) on competition. Last day at Uvalde this year would be such a case. Question 7: Fund all classes in proportion to number of nationals entries in selection years. (For Club Class this means only non-FAI pilots who fly allowed gliders at

Sport Nats-8 this year.)

Question 7 doesn't come close to covering the territory exposed by the coming IGC Class changes. To wit, there will be 2 new classes: 20-m two seater and 13.5-m. World comps will include 20-m in 2014 and 13.5-m in 2015. There may be a 13.5-m trial event as early as 2013. So, what is Rules Committee and SSA doing to address the following questions: 7.3 When will the first US 20-m Nationals be held for the purpose of selecting our 20-m team? 7.4 When will the first US 13.5-m Nationals be held for the purpose of selecting our 13.5-m team? 7.5 If no US Nationals will be held for these two new classes, on what basis will our team members be selected? (If you are inclined to answer that the 13.5-m team can be selected from US World class Nationals, please remember that there is also another, equally sanctioned, US Nationals for 13.5-m class sailplanes -- The 1-26 Championships.) I wish you the best of luck in resolving these Solomon-like issues!

----- Next, I have some comments about tasking, US vs FAI rules, scoring, etc. My sense is that much of the dissatisfaction I have heard over the past few years relates to the virtual disappearance of the Assigned Speed Task (AST) from US National level competition in favor of timed tasks (MAT and TAT). For example, only 3 out of 19 tasks in the 2010 US FAI Class Nationals were ASTs, and two of those Nationals had none. Please don't misunderstand me, the MAT and TAT are valuable options, especially for contests including sailplanes with a wide range of performance (e.g., Sports Class) and/or a wide range of pilot skills (e.g. Regionals and 1-26 Championships). However, it certainly appears that a lack of balance between ASTs and timed tasks in the US FAI Nationals has developed over the years. I do not believe that this can be blamed on the weather! I do believe that this has much to do with the shift in tasking philosophy from one of challenge (in which tasks should not be so difficult that more than 20-30 percent of the field lands out), to one of popularity (in which everyone should be expected to finish). Flying an AST is clearly different than flying a timed task. To me, and many I have talked to, the AST is more like racing, while the timed tasks are more like the free-flight popularized by the OLC. I, and others, miss the AST! So, the question to the rules committee is: What can be done to make the AST, or a modification thereof, more acceptable to the CDs? Or, is it doomed to extinction in the US? ----- Finally, I wish to commend the Rules committee for their tireless, and largely thankless, job of ensuring that our sport is fair, safe, and exciting. Thank you, one and all!

Re: the first question - it may be difficult to define ...when help is needed for a crash situation The questions this year are explained and phrased better than ever. thanks for your time and effort- which are a contribution to our sport.

Really good questions this year -- thanks for the effort in preparing them.

Reducing the glider/glider collision hazard at US contests is of great importance. In addition to mandating Flarm, procedural changes are advocated to significantly reduce the mid-air hazard. The prestart interval is particularly hazardous in current racing. Gliders are going in random direction while jockeying to stay high and to stay in position for a start when other competitors leave on course. We should take steps to spread contestants out. At flat land contest sites, distributing contestants across 4 start cylinders reduces the traffic density by a factor of 4 and reduces the chance of a prestart collision by the same amount. At mountain sites, a good alternative would be to allow for the use of a start cylinder that is up to 10 miles in radius. We should adjust the rules to reduce the motivation to hang out in prestart gaggles. Here's one simple way: add 1 second to time-on-course for every 20 seconds between task opening and the contestants start. On task, contestants should not be required to cross paths with other contestants on a thermal flying day. Tasks can be designed to criteria that significantly reduce the collision hazard to contestants. This is achieved by the following: 1. Task leg lines should not cross or come close to one another (excepting that an early leg can cross a late leg to the extent that separation by time is expected). 2. The angle between entry and exit from a turnpoint (or turn area) should meet a minimum criterion of about 40 degrees. It needs to be a large enough angle that it will be unlikely that one contestant will choose to follow the same cloud out of a turn that another contestant is taking into the turn. 3. The current MAT task with its 'go anywhere' component should be eliminated or changed to do away with that element. Gliders cruising in any direction make that task format unacceptably dangerous with respect to mid-air collision risks. 4. For turn area tasking, a larger number of small turn areas should be used in preference to a small number of large turn areas. Smaller turn areas do a better job of controlling the route of traffic through the task area while more turns gives the task designer necessary latitude in setting safe entry to exit angles between the turns. Reducing the maximum allowed turn area radius to 10 miles would provide this safety benefit. After thinking about these issues, I recently CD'ed a 5 day club contest in Arizona. These are workable concepts that will significantly reduce the collision hazard. For some contest sites, turnpoint databases need to be expanded significantly in order to allow for flexibility to design tasks that do not present crossing or acute angle hazards. Since GPS points are suitable, the chore of expanding contest turnpoint files is not necessarily burdensome. Mandating Flarm should reduce the mid-air hazard by perhaps a factor of three. Adopting the protocol outlined here, stands to

Additionally reduce the mid-air risk by a similar factor. Both actions are needed to make the sport acceptably safe.

Regarding the potential changes to the Club Class US Team selection, I am disappointed that there is not a question on this poll which addresses those changes. I believe that the eligibility should indeed be widened to include pilots who have been on the team before, however I think that requiring that pilots qualify for the team in a bona fide club class glider has fostered participation and interest in the Sports Class Nationals as demonstrated by the numbers of club class sailplanes competing the last couple years and the level of commitment to the class demonstrated by those pilots.

Safety! On at least one occasion a task was set such that departing contestants and returning contestants were assigned the same track so that the opportunity for gliders to meet head-on was assured. Special circumstances may have promoted this, but it was a very unsafe task assignment. Routing finishers through a final steering point has merit, but it would be really dumb to have that steering point also as the first turn point.

Section 4: I checked Don't Care because I am denied the option of WTF. This question required 600 words and two tables to define the issue. The US Rules are absurdly complex already, and adopting this change (which I predict only a negligible fraction of respondents will understand) will only make a bad situation worse. There IS a problem with a 60 mile O/R getting a better score than a 276 mile landout but there has to be a better way to resolve it. Motor Gliders Motor gliders enjoy substantial advantages: They allow pilots to press on where others might not, they have a significantly higher wing loading, and they eliminate the need for potentially tiring retrieves. My preference is for them to have their own class - there are now more than enough of them. Failing that, there's not much to be done about the first and third advantages, but it's easy to deal with wing loading: Just allow water ballast.

Short Nationals - the answer here is not to lower the bar by reducing the number of days to make a contest legal, but to fly on the more challenging days - while pilots may whine about landout risks (read their ability to protect their contest position) WGCs are a lot tougher than our Nationals mainly due to tasking in tougher conditions. With AATs we have no reason not to task on tougher days. Landable areas need to be accessible from a tasking perspective on such days for safety, so only the flight is at risk not the glider. Landing out safely is part of the game and contestants should expect this. Short MAT/TAT Scoring - I like the direction this proposal is taking but I do NOT think it's an adequate solution yet so am voting against it - it needs more work and will lead to other problems. I am willing to be involved in helping solve this problem. Please adopt the WGC rule that if you get a fix in the finish cylinder you've finished, independent of whether you land at the home field or not. It's just crazy to treat a finisher like a landout in this scenario..finishers in this scenario get finish height penalties as it is. World Class support at WGC - many nations have withdrawn their support for the World Class - it is therefore no longer a WORLD championship event so I believe SSA support should be withdrawn. When will 20m 2 place contest class be adopted in the USA?? Crash procedures - at Prievidza we lost 2 days to the fatality - 1 for the cancelled task and one due to Russian team considerations - this will be limited to 1 day in a Nationals environment presumably. FLARM is a great safety addition and I endorse it completely.

Some thought should be given to establishing A, B & C tasks at the pilots meeting as opposed making task modifications (with new or deleted turnpoints) after the class has launched. Pre start gaggles with everybody in the same place/altitude at the same time is a bad moment to have everybody fooling with their computer. Especially on low cloudbase days.

Steering turns as in uvalde should not be an in and out causing 200 mph head to head traffic. How the task committee let this go I do not know but a guideline rule or something to prevent this would be good. It could have saved someone's life!

Support for the World Class should be proportionate to the participants in the US World Class Nationals vs. the participants in the other classes. Little participation (6 pilots in 2010) means little support.

TWO things: - There were reports of some aggressive and unsafe flying during the last WGC. I think every possible measure must be taken to discourage this trend. In the US, for example, we had a mid-air at Parowan, UT. Anyone involved in such an event should NOT score that day. - Add a safety distance or buffer zone for airspace violations. During a Regional several years ago a contestant virtually crossed an international border. Two GPS fixes were just barely on the US side, but the actual circle had to cut into the foreign airspace. Cutting it that close should incur penalty.

Thank you all for your service and participation in what is undoubtedly a thankless and under-appreciated task.

Thanks for doing this thankless job!

Thanks guys for all you do.

The 13.5 meter class holds some promise; the L33s and Russias that showed up in this country will fill out the class somewhat.

The 13.5 meter class seems like the best way to salvage the World Class. I hope it will thrive. I don't care if the U.S. fields a World Class team, but if we do, then those pilots should be supported like those in any other class. Club Class: I have been in favor of a club class from the start, simply as one who finds it more fun than the overly broad, and thus poorly handicapped, Sports Class. I'm not so much concerned about picking U.S. Team members or national champions. I appreciate that participation in Club Class has not yet reached the point of making Club Class viable for picking team members. Broadening the subset of gliders allowed to be scored as Club Class is being proposed to address that problem. It might be necessary to do that for the purposes of picking team members, but it will NOT encourage the development of a true Club Class. Anyway, the whole issue comes down to handicapping. Wouldn't it be possible to improve, at least a little, on our currently semi-subjective handicapping system? Aint one or two of youuns on the RC mathamaticsh...mathmatikz..numbers guys?

The SSA has always bastardized the club class so older ships really do not have a reasonable chance in most contests. We should adopt the European method of determining which gliders are permitted to fly in this class.

The US should get out of the habit of treating all the classes equally. This is boring. Do not squash the Club Class, just because it isn't currently a good way to choose Team members. Allow the experiment to continue.

The World Class has failed to achieve its initial goals, is ebbing away and showing no signs of improvement. Realistically, it's already been declared dead by IGC recognition. What would the goal be for prolonging this by sponsoring a team in Argentina. I know that does not provide a warm fuzzy, but that's the reality. It's time to move on.

The big unasked question is- if involved in a Midair collision- should you land the aircraft? Should this be required.? While this seems to be obvious to me it was disproved last summer. If one is involved in a midair in which pieces of either glider become detached, the ability to see and inspect for damage in flight is simply impossible. Anyone involved in a midair should have to land and inspect his ship ASAP. It is not OK to proceed on course after a midair! JOHN Murray

The option to field a team should remain open, however, as long as the participation remains small, no funding should be provided.

The world class is not all that different in participation than the open class. Perhaps some formula for the amount of entries into the class compared to other classes to decide allocation of funds could be developed. i.e. world class has 6 pilots in nationals and 15M has 30. Therefore 15M gets 5 times as much financial support. this would of course have to be allocated for all classes. Lots of chatter about club class. Not sure the right answer but the club class should be supported. The solution of having the club class scored with but also separately from others in the sports class might work.

There are many ideas I would like to document and submit for consideration but I do not have the time for a month or two to document them and I would like to use email instead of this forum. For example, meet validity based on the pilots that are participating or to say another way, ranked pilots bring points to a contest and that determines the validity or maximum points a meet can be worth. Make world team selection based upon the best n number of contests for two years for each competitor. this combined with the previous rule may encourage better regional participation and reduce the dependency on attending nationals since the concept of having to qualify for a nationals is gone (all you need know is a OLC flight of a certain distance and a checkbook). These concepts are used in the US hang gliding competition scene and work well. Thanks for your efforts Ron Gleason

There does seem to be a lot of rule changes over time and we do seem to be diverging from what the rest of the world does. Why don't we just leave the rules alone for a while?

This year the requirement to call finish was removed from the rules. I believe this was a mistake. Even though all start and finish info is now accomplished using GPS, the finish call is an important position report to all other pilots about to land. In fact I think a down-wind to runway XX mandatory call should be added to the rules. This along with the 4 mile call gives a clear flow indicator as to traffic finishing and about to land. In addition to

adding the above landing calls, I believe a quick radio check between the tow pilot and glider should be accomplished as the rope is hooked up. The tow pilot calls, JJ this is blue tow---how do you read? Assuming I hear this call I respond ----Loud and clear. I now know who is towing me and that I can communicate with him should the need arise. We have had 4 fatalities in region 11 in the last 10 years that could have been prevented if the tow pilot and glider pilot had simply established radio communication before starting the tow. Clem Bowman was one of them flying in the standard class nats at Minden and Clem was on the wrong frequency when the line crew called RELEASE after Clems stab fell off while at start of takeoff. I believe the above recommendations reflect good airmanship and I would like to see them in the rules. JJ Sincliar

This years collision at Uvalde was probably partially the result of a task course that resulted in conflicting traffic. In the Arizona racing series, we have made conscious efforts to avoid this scenario. Perhaps guidance on this would be useful (maybe even a rule).

Unless the World Class is substantially expanded it needs to go away. These ships can fly in Sports Class with appropriate handicap.

Use the money saved from canceling the World Class for club class and make a gliders available for young competition pilots.

Very disappointed that the question concerning no water contests was not included. I would propose that in these contests that contestants should be allowed to ballast up to a similar wing loading to the heaviest contestant in their class. This is already allowed of course, but the original intent did not consider motor gliders. Adding in the order of 100# of permanent ballast in the cockpit presents a safety issue. 10 or 12 Gallons of water ballast is the obvious solution and should be allowed..

WGC selection (club class); We need the best possible representation in all classes. A qualifying pilot regardless of prior WGC participation has earned a spot on the team, and should not be denied it. However, that pilot MUST and I repeat, MUST, have earned that spot in the class of glider that he will compete in at the WGC.

We had one of our best showings at the World Class this year with FP nearly making the podium. I would rather see us drop the Club Class since it is such a convoluted mess we have there. That being said, I am not in favor of adding support for a 20-meter Two-seater class until we have significant representation at a Nationals for this class, say, at least 20 participants.

We have too many competition classes worldwide and in the US. Lets cut the ones where participation is insignificant.

We need an east and west multiclass nationals and a plan to take the nationals online at some point in the future. the current team selection system is breaking down - I dont see many folks keen to fly Cordele next year.

We need to have 13.5 class Regionals next year and a Nationals the following year. The same for unflapped two-place 20m class. They both can be coordinated within the Sports Class & World Class Regionals and Nationals.

What position is being taken on allowing newer gliders to qualify the pilot for club class worlds? Is anyone thinking about the regular guy in a true club class glider ?

While I think handicaps need to be reviewed I cant complain because I dont have any suggestions.

With respect to question 4 and TAT. Reading the day and determining how to play the TAT to gain points yet come home is surely the challenge for the pilot. Those that read it wrongly and have too short flights should clearly get less points, but likewise those that read it wrongly and try for too much (and land out) should also have less points than those who read it correctly and maximize the day and come home. Which is the bigger misjudgement? i.e. maximizing the day while coming home should be most rewarded.

World Class is a dying class as evident by the same exact competitors every year, even at the world level. The little funds we do have should be funneled towards classes that have a bigger showing at contests.

World competitions. I am more and more not interested. Both as a participant and as an an observer. So support where the interest is. Support the largest class and let the others struggle. Concentrate the power and maybe we will have a winning team.

Would advocate complete overhaul of the way we approach international competition. The pendulum has swung so far in favor of participation that it seems were stretched too thin--constant fund-raising and turnover with suboptimal development in what is a very different type of racing than what we do at home. No successful sporting endeavor works this way, as the British decided a few years ago before changing their approach (and look at them now). Pick a knowledgeable veteran of international soaring (could even be foreign), sign them up to a ten-year commitment as coach/GM/czar/team president and give them discretion to identify talent, develop it, and pick the best T-E-A-M with the ultimate goal of winning. Our current process is expensive, inconsistent, and only one gold medal (podium?) in my lifetime. Lets try something different!

- Short MAT/TAT Scoring I do not support the change as described above. I was at Montague for Day 5 flying in Open Class. It was a VERY fluky, difficult, and luck prone day due to the wind. I think, the score formulas did exactly what they are designed to do.
- Club & Sports Comments: At this point, I do not believe, we have enough pilots to support a Club Class nationals as a stand alone national contest. Club Class needs to continue to be part of the Sports Class Nationals. As a regional Club Class contest, we should let anyone run a Club class regionals if they want to put the effort in. There have been discussions about letting any pilot fly on the U.S. Club Class team. I think this is a very good idea, thereby sending the best pilots the U.S. has to offer. However, I believe, the pilot should be flying a Club Class sailplane from the FAI Club Class sailplane list just like you do for the U.S. Team slots for the FAI Classes (Std, 15m, 18m, and Open). If you are serious about getting a U.S. Team slot on the 18m team, you fly a competitive 18m sailplane. We should expect the same from someone qualifying for U.S. Club Class team slots. We should also be sure to call tasks which seriously consider the performance of the Club Class ships. Finally, if we are going to make changes to how we select pilots for U.S. Team slots, we should do it on a contest year (i.e. 2011) which is not being used to select a pilot for the team. In summary, I believe we should do the following:
 - Continue the Sports Nationals as we had in Parowan this year
 - Tasking should favor the performance of the Club Class sailplanes which did not happen in Parowan this year during the windy days.
 - U.S. Team pilots can be any pilot flying a Club Class sailplane (from the FAI Club class sailplane list). The pilot(s) with the highest score during the Sports Class Nationals flying a Club Class sailplane would get the team slot(s).

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